

Calling all Women: History, Memory and Legacy in the Work of the Suffragette Fellowship

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Abstract

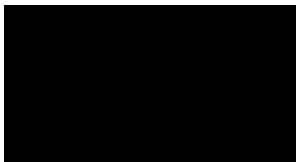
This thesis analyses the history of the Suffragette Fellowship, a group of militant Suffragettes active in British Votes for Women campaign from 1905-1914. After the death of leader Emmeline Pankhurst in 1928, a group of these militant campaigners were concerned about the potential loss of control of their histories. Their group, the Suffragette Fellowship, thus became memory activists engaged in shaping the cultural legacy of suffrage histories.

The study is based on archival research of primary historical documents including newsletters, journals, private and official correspondence, government reports and newspaper archives. It scrutinises the inner workings of the Fellowship showing that it became a vibrant network of enduring feminist friendship circles spanning England and Australia. This research offers a broad historical map of the memory work of the Fellowship by exploring events and personalities that informed and shaped the collective breadth of activities executed by Fellowship leaders on behalf of colleagues, who sought to position themselves as primary protagonists in militant suffrage history.

The research makes a substantial contribution to studies of memory, feminism, and suffrage histories through an analysis of the determined efforts of former Suffragettes and supporters to erect statues and monuments to honour militant suffrage leaders while navigating the problematic politics of commemoration. The study also highlights the ongoing collaborations between the Fellowship and feminist organisations that endured over four decades of collective memory work. The thesis examines the creation of the 'Suffragette Spirit', an ethos forged out of militant activists' memories of the fight amid the bonds of shared trauma, that demanded unquestionable loyalty both to each other and the venerated leaders of the Suffrage cause. By focusing on the memory work of the Fellowship, this research analyses the adaptive re-use of artifacts that were collected and curated by the Fellowship. These artifacts and relics are now the material evidence of the militant suffrage campaign collectively housed within a vast and uniquely feminist archive known as The Suffragette Fellowship Collection.

Declaration

I, Eileen Gaye Luscombe, declare that the PhD thesis entitled “Calling all Women: History, Memory and Legacy in the work of the Suffragette Fellowship” is no more than 100,000 words in length, including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.



Eileen Gaye Luscombe

4 June 2020

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Abbreviations

AFL	Actress Franchise League
NUWSS	National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies
WFL	Women's Freedom League
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union

Sometimes I feel stifled, I was a Suffragette by instinct and intuition as a girl, as a woman I am a Suffragette by experience. – Perhaps I will sometime write my memories of the Suffragette movement providing it is not for publication as I agree with your scheme it will be of value to the women in the future. That may [also] redeem its standing in history – I would like that piece of justice to be done. Gladice [Edith How-Martyn] to Phyllis. 10 September 1927.¹

Introduction

Jill Liddington, reflecting on the 2003 Suffrage Centenary commemoration of the founding of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), observed that 'suffrage pasts are viewed increasingly from a distance, down the wrong end of a telescope', and queried, 'whose memories are being drawn upon and whose history is being honoured?'² This study seeks to examine the lifecycle of the Suffragette Fellowship, founded in 1931 by Edith How-Martyn and Elsa Gye, when militant campaigners regrouped to 'perpetuate the memory of the pioneers and outstanding events with women's emancipation and especially with the militant suffrage campaigns 1905–1914'. The study inverts the telescope to explore a firsthand perspective of proactive commemorative practices of a collective group of Suffragettes.³ The study aims to contribute to a historiographical gap in suffrage histories by examining the broader range of memory and feminist work carried out by the Fellowship by exploring the circumstances of the day that compelled Edith How-Martyn and friends to formalise the Suffragette Club into the Suffragette Fellowship in 1931. The death of Mrs Pankhurst in 1928 triggered a prompt response by fellow campaigners to erect a statute in 1930, and this was the beginning of decades of memory work, which ceased only on the death

¹ Edith How-Martyn, on tour in Karachi, in an intimate letter to her friend Phyllis, possibly Teresa Billington-Greig, 'Gladice to Phyllis', 10 September 1927, pp.124-135. Wellcome Library, b19610634, PP/EPR/A.1/1:Box 1.

² J. Liddington, 'Era of commemoration: Celebrating the suffrage centenary', *History Workshop Journal*, Issue 59, Spring 2005, p.198.

³ M. Lawson in T. Cazalet-Keir, 'I Knew Mrs Pankhurst', Suffragette Fellowship, 1945. Luscombe Collection.

of militant campaigners and supporters. There is a noticeable lack of scholarly research available to explain what measures these women took to uncover and correct what they perceived to be unfair public coverage of their histories. My research uncovers the complex nature of historic legacies to contextualise fractured histories of past relationships and to shine a spotlight on how memories of contested pasts between individuals and authorities contributed to a bumpy legacy that forced Fellowship leaders to take control, via any possible means, for decades.

Most histories of the campaign for women's right to vote, concentrate on the history and personalities of the Pankhurst women. June Purvis, who has published extensively on the lives of Emmeline Pankhurst and Christabel Pankhurst, referring to the writing of Beatrice Harraden, who had stated that Emmeline Pankhurst was a 'champion of womanhood' assured of a 'niche in history'.⁴ Martin Pugh's published work on WSPU leaders focuses on the dynamics of the Pankhurst family, portraying Emmeline and Christabel as problematic women bound up in politics, egos and power.⁵ All biographies of the Pankhurst families highlight the increasing use of militancy by Suffragettes, from the first arrest in 1905 of Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney in Manchester to the cessation of militant activities in 1914, and tend to take the point of view of Christabel and Emmeline or that of Sylvia.⁶ Pankhurst biographies focus on Pankhurst family dynamics, linked via personal politics, and militant campaigning framed around the interplay between the women and the government in a battle of wits: a woman's war in which the political became personal and vice versa. Authors, including Pugh, depict rank and file members of the WSPU as powerless to resist the magnetism of Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. Recent biographies of Christabel Pankhurst, organisational biographies of the Actress Franchise League (AFL) by Naomi Paxton and Suffragettes' histories by Diane Atkinson provide links to Fellowship activities. Paxton points out that Winifred Mayo and Sime Seruya, as members of the AFL in suffrage days, distanced themselves publicly from any connection to the militants in order not to attach adverse

⁴ E. Hill and O. Fenton Shafer, *Great Suffragists – and why: modern makers of history*, London, H.J Drane, 1909, p.280, cited in J. Purvis, 'Niche in History', *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*, Routledge, New York, 2002, p.360. J. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, Routledge, London, 2018.

⁵ M. Pugh, *The Pankhurst's*, Allen Lane, London, 2001.

⁶ S. Harrison, *Sylvia Pankhurst: A Crusading Life, 1882-1960*, Aurum Press, London, 2003. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst A Biography*, 2018.

publicity to their awareness-raising campaigns.⁷ Several authors have published histories that incorporate the afterlives of militant campaigners, however there is little examination of commemorative activities, including the Votes for Women Day in February or Prisoners Day held in October each year. This study will further analyse the motivation of suffrage campaigners to regroup post-suffrage, and the nature of the symbiotic relationship between the Fellowship, the Women's Freedom League (WFL) and former members of the AFL, articulated through the activities of the Fellowship. Claire Eustance's research on the WFL, and research with Angela V John, on male support and involvement in Suffrage campaigns provided new discussions on suffrage history.⁸ Purvis also points out that suffrage histories have become more inclusive, and reflexive, of non-militant activities and individuals placed outside direct militant activity. However, Holton also notes that suffrage historians continue to acknowledge that the focus on militant stories remains the dominant paradigm in suffrage historiography.⁹ Authors focused on suffrage histories, including Liddington, Paxton, Atkinson and Purvis, provide a fuller account of Suffragette lives, beyond campaigning, however Fellowship mentions are fragmentary and brief.¹⁰ Accordingly, this research seeks to contribute a complete history of Fellowship activities and extend public knowledge of selected historical events, highlighting Suffragette and militant histories, recalled later by militant campaigners at Fellowship commemorative events. And seeks to provide additional histories of rank and file Suffragettes to also uncover how women and male supporters responded to criticism of leaders and, by association, themselves. This thesis also explores the level of attention concentrated on the memory of Mrs Pankhurst and on her daughters Christabel and Sylvia to examine the claim that followers had

⁷ D. Atkinson, *Rise up, Women! The Remarkable Life of the Suffragettes*, Bloomsbury, London, 2018. N. Paxton, *Stage Rights! The Actress Franchise League, Activism and Politics 1908-1958*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2018, pp.107-108.

⁸ C. Eustance., 'Daring To Be Free: The Evolution of women's political identities in the Women's Freedom League 1907-1930', PhD thesis, Unpublished, University of York, 1993. A. V. John and C. Eustance., eds, *The men's share?: masculinities, male support and women's suffrage in Britain, 1890-1920*, Routledge, London, 2013.

⁹ J. Purvis, 'Introduction', S. Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History' in J. Purvis and S. Stanley Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, Routledge, London, New York, 2000, p.4, pp.18-22.

¹⁰ J. Liddington, *Rebel Girls : Their Fight for the Vote*, Virago, London, 2006, 'Living with the Memory' p.299. L. Hawksley, *March, Women March*, Andre Deutsch, London, 2013. A. Raeburn, *The Militant Suffragettes*, Joseph, London, 1973. J. Marlow, *Votes for women: the Virago book of Suffragettes*, Virago, 2001. Paxton, *Stage Rights!* 2018.

fetishised the memory of Mrs Pankhurst.¹¹ This study also adds to suffrage historiography by examining the scope and breadth of the memory work of the Fellowship via the perspective of the lived memory of Suffragettes and their allies. Lucinda Hawksley has argued that at the moment of partial votes for women, the WSPU had claimed victory on behalf of Suffragettes.¹² Accordingly, this thesis seeks to extend knowledge in the field to explore the reasoning, tactics and strategies of Fellowship leaders who sought to take ownership as victors of 'Votes for Women'.

Sandra Holton has acknowledged the timely response of the formation of the Fellowship, which was in line with a 'golden aura of nostalgia' following the First World War that encouraged Suffragettes to draw on the 'transformative experience' of suffrage campaigning.¹³ This thesis thus examines the enduring nature of sharing lived memories fuelled by ongoing acts of remembrance and reunion events. As evidence of the vivid memories evoked when recalling the past, Stella Newsome, reviewing original copies of *The Vote* in 1956, mentioned sentimentally to Teresa Billington-Greig 'what days those were'.¹⁴ This thesis also considers whether Edith How-Martyn, as propaganda officer and co-founder of the WFL, and other members, practised a form of selective public memory, preferencing select accounts over others.

¹¹ L. Mayhall, 'Defining Militancy: Radical Protest, the Constitutional Idiom, and Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1908-1909', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 39, no. 3, 2000, pp.340-71.

¹² Hawksley, *March, Women, March*, p.233.

¹³ S. Holton, *Suffrage Days: Stories from the Women's Suffrage Movement*, London, Routledge, 1996, p.4. K. Cowman, *Women of the Right Spirit: Paid Organisers of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), 1904-1918*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2007, p.2.

¹⁴ Stella Newsome to Teresa Billington-Greig, 31 October 1956, The Women's Library, LSE 6.1 Box 2.

Instruments of Memory

Networks

This study sets out to highlight how the Fellowship drew on a strong sense of kinship focused on past events by drawing on a select group of individuals. Many individuals, as highlighted by Cowman, were first drawn together via militant campaigning.¹⁵ As Holton states, the 'webs of love and friendship' among the former militants remained a source of strength and empowerment.¹⁶ Sawyer also argued that the 'sisterhood is powerful' theme was employed wholeheartedly by the Fellowship to draw women together again.¹⁷ This thesis demonstrates the enduring legacy of sister Suffragettes that survived the post-suffrage era. Moreover, the enduring nature of sisterhood underpinned the memory work of the Fellowship, as noted by How-Martyn in 1930, who stated, 'Remembrance is the essence of Comradeship'.¹⁸ Notably, in 1935 Una Duval remarked on changes affecting women since 1918 and harked back to the wonderful comradeship which had survived all vicissitudes.¹⁹ This research seeks to illustrate how the Fellowship developed a series of memory tools, including the establishment of a commemorative calendar by utilising social and feminist networks. Shared memories were re-enacted via memorials and monuments, assisted by media interest, that also assisted in maintaining effective control of the title of 'Suffragette'.

Modelling the Spirit for Feminist Causes

Additionally, despite claims of a 'fractured' period of feminism between the wars, the thesis seeks to uncover the ongoing nature of the relationship between the Fellowship and like-minded feminist groups, focusing on the afterlives of transnational feminist

¹⁵ Cowman, *Women of the Right Spirit*, p.2.

¹⁶ S. Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.27.

¹⁷ M. Sawyer, 'Wearing Your Politics on Your Sleeve: The Role of Political Colours in Parties and Social Movements', *Social Movement Studies*, vol 6, no. 1, 2007, p.46.

¹⁸ 'Mrs Montefiore's Party', *The Vote*, 4 July 1930, pp.5-6.

¹⁹ Una Duval quoted in G. Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, The Suffragette Fellowship, London, 1932. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Harvester Microfilm 1985, Reel 11, 50.82/341-385.

friendships. Such friendships were purposefully renewed by the Fellowship via commemorative activities that helped to safeguard against the loss of shared memories of suffrage campaigning and to advance contemporary feminist causes. Select friends, and supportive speakers, recalling Suffragette memories, were used as drawcards to highlight contemporary feminist causes and to amplify the importance of exercising the vote. Chidgey has argued that public memories of Suffragette victories are limited to the act of winning the vote. This thesis thus considers the reasoning behind the Fellowship's highlighting of suffrage victories by exploring the timing of events and the mutual relationship between feminist groups and commemorative activities.²⁰ Moreover, taking into account the fragmented nature and legacy of militant campaigning, the research investigates how Fellowship leaders navigated contested militant pasts by utilising mutual and strategic allies, including women MPs seeking votes from women.

Julie Gottlieb has argued that historians interested in British feminism, in the years post-suffrage campaigning, have provided new histories, providing a more 'nuanced interpretation' to explore complexities within the feminist movement after World War I to counteract the belief that suffrage campaigners were in abeyance post-1918.²¹ Accordingly, this study aims to further extend the knowledge of feminist histories between the first and second 'waves' by providing a full history of memory work undertaken by the Fellowship, highlighting the interplay of select feminists across Australia and England, actively working together in commemorative work to further amplify women's causes.

The Media

Chidgey argues that the Fellowship was also successful in forcing media outlets, including the BBC, to amend or delete offending content.²² Indeed, Holton suggests that

²⁰ R. Chidgey, *Feminist Afterlives: Assemblage Memory in Activist Times*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2018, p.66.

²¹ J. Gottlieb and R. Toye, 'Introduction' in J. Gottlieb, and R. Toye, eds, *Aftermath of Suffrage Women, Gender, and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2013, p.5.

²² R. Chidgey., 'Feminist Assemblages in the UK: media, memory and archives', PhD thesis, London South Bank University, London, 2013, p.107.

this was a significant cause for the formation of the Fellowship in the late 1920s.²³ Accordingly, this research further examines the nature of the co-dependent relationship between the media, attracted by exciting stories and access to Suffragette objects and relics, and the Fellowship. This research considers the role of Suffragette members, offered as expert witnesses, who sought to cement their authority as keepers of suffrage histories. Furthermore, Cowman has noted the Fellowship relied on established social networks, via word of mouth, to regroup former comrades together, due to police raids confiscating official WSPU membership records.²⁴ This research explores the legacy of those police raids to examine the methodology used by Fellowship leaders to collate and confirm testimonies of former campaigners.

The Master Narrative and Suffragette Spirit – Laying the Foundation

In 1932, at a gathering of the Fellowship, founding member Geraldine Lennox launched into a stirring speech outlining the origins and foundation of the 'Suffragette Spirit', prefaced with a direct quote from Mrs Pankhurst in 1911.

*The men and women of the coming time will, I am persuaded, be filled with admiration for the patient work of the early pioneers and the heroic determination and persistence despite coercion, repression, misrepresentation, and insult of those who fought the later militant fight. Perhaps the women born in the happier days that are to come, while rejoicing in the inheritance that we of today are preparing for them, may sometimes wish that they could have lived in the heroic days of stress and struggle and have shared with us the joy of battle, the exaltation that comes with sacrifice of self for great objects and the prophetic vision that assures us of the certain triumph of this twentieth-century fight for human emancipation.*²⁵

²³ Holton, *Suffrage days: stories from the women's suffrage movement*, 1996, p.247.

²⁴ K. Cowman, 'A Footnote in History? Mary Gawthorpe, Sylvia Pankhurst, The Suffragette Movement and the Writing of Suffragette history', *Women's History Review*, vol 14, no 3 & 4, 2005, p.247.

²⁵ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932. The Women's Library, London School of Economic 7VJH/1/5/10.

Lennox proclaimed to the audience that the core of the Suffragette Spirit was:

*Unswerving loyalty to an ideal – the political emancipation of womanhood, with all that it implied, obedience to leaders, a thorough discipline, and denial of self, with all its petty weaknesses, a sharing of work and hardships, and a magnificent enthusiasm which made all loss and suffering of no account. It was a spirit that would not sit down under injustice – a spirit that meant to get things done. The Suffragette Spirit while it cannot be captured in a net of words it is a very real thing which in its many manifestations was a spirit of joyful sacrifice, a spirit which expressed itself in deeds of daring.*²⁶

Member Marian Lawson also reminded subscribers in *Calling all Women*, 1947 that 'the Fellowship was established with another less tangible aim in the minds of its founders: to continue the good comradeship engendered in the militant movement; to perpetuate the Suffragette Spirit'.²⁷ The spirit was thus created as a construct by founders with the full intent and purpose to establish a foundational truth for Suffragettes to live by.

Laura Mayhall has argued that the Fellowship was a 'significant player in the creation of the post-war memory of militant Suffragettes'. Moreover, the emphasis on the Suffragette Spirit, signifying sacrifice and devotion to the 'sisterhood' and 'crucial in forging a collective identity', that according to Mayhall focused remembrance activities specifically on hunger-striking and forcible feeding.²⁸ However, this research will demonstrate that the 'spirit', when first introduced in 1928, was representative of a broader meaning not centred on Suffragette history and imprisonment. I will argue that it also stood for 'deeds of daring, with accepted unpopularity, hardships and misunderstanding confident in its power to give all to win success for the cause'. Notably 'deeds of daring' encompassed the broader scope of militant activities and not only those who found themselves, unwittingly or deliberately, in prison for the cause. Mayhall

²⁶ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932. Notably, Edith How-Martyn gave a toast to the Suffragette Spirit and uttered the 'net of words' at a Commemoration Dinner in 1928 and reproduced by Stanley Baldwin at the unveiling of the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst in March 1930. 'Suffragette Days Recalled', *Manchester Guardian*, 6 February 1928.

²⁷ Marian Lawson, in *Calling All Women*, Suffragette Fellowship, 1947.

²⁸ L. Mayhall, 'Domesticating Emmeline: Representing the Suffragette 1930-1993', *NWSA Journal*, vol 11, no. 2, 1999, pp.1-24.

has claimed that the Fellowship created a master narrative of suffrage history, founded in the spirit, that preferences and elevates 'authentic militancy'. Mayhall further claimed that the term 'authentic' suggested the path of Suffragettes was direct from the streets to jail and was also referenced at the expense of the public memory of constitutional suffrage societies.²⁹ However, this is a view that does not consider the ongoing feminist work of the Fellowship, or that the constitutional societies conducted their own commemorative duties. The study also seeks to examine the claim that the dominance of the grand narrative marginalised other militant activities, including the militant acts practised by the WFL. However, this thesis demonstrates that Edith How-Martyn, as founder, ensured that the Fellowship also commemorated WFL activities, including commemorating the 1908 Grille Incident as a highly symbolic act of the permanent removal of the fixed grille that forced exclusion of women from participation within the House of Commons. Therefore, this study contends that it was not the original intention of the Fellowship to marginalise other forms of militancy.

This thesis also contends that the 1932 booklet *The Suffragette Spirit*, created to guard against forgetting pioneering women of the past, was also a vehicle to situate the struggle of Suffragettes within a generational struggle of women, representing discipline and bravery in the face of ongoing resistance. This research thus outlines that the spirit, offered as a template for feminists, was created as a tool to educate and inspire younger women and that using the memory of imprisonment was offered as a symbolic tale of caution, and as evidence of the ability of women to overcome entrenched views about gender inequality.

Holton also argues that regrouping of Suffragettes in the decade after the First World War was a 'transformative experience or the highpoint of their lives, or both'.³⁰ Liddington suggests the Fellowship had opened the 'floodgates of memory'.³¹ Chidgey has also highlighted the timely formation of the Fellowship.³² The thesis will highlight the specific set of circumstances in the 1920s and early 1930s that led to the prompt establishment of this memory group, which assisted in creating the 'militant school' of

²⁹ L. Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003, p.4.

³⁰ Holton, *Suffrage Days: Stories from the Women's Suffrage Movement*, 1996, p.4.

³¹ Liddington, *Rebel Girls*, p.308.

³² Chidgey, 'Feminist Afterlives: Assemblage Memory in Activist Times', p.72.

suffrage history. Holton has suggested the Fellowship's central memory work focused on 'heroic individuals' directly involved in a 'major process of social change', and that the Fellowship's remit to capture memories of the militant campaigns was also at the later expense of constitutional Edwardian suffrage campaigns.³³ Accordingly, the research explores the responses of the Fellowship when charged with discounting the contribution of constitutional suffrage societies. Cowman also argues that the early activities of the Fellowship in placing militant activities at the forefront of suffrage history thus discounted, or denied, the contribution of suffrage organisations at that time, whose actions were not considered to be as exciting as militant actions.³⁴ Hawksley agrees, arguing that militants had claimed that the victory of 'votes for women' was due entirely to militant methods.³⁵ Thus, the marked shift in focus, post-war, to the memory of Mrs Pankhurst further enhanced divisions between the constitutional and militant suffrage campaigners. This was despite the knowledge that suffrage campaigning was fought by multiple groups, including both men and women, and government and non-government organisations. Mayhall points out that, 'representations of the movement crystallised into the simple dichotomy of constitutional versus militant'.³⁶ However, a deeper analysis of the records of the Fellowship shows that it was not this simple. Accordingly, this thesis seeks to challenge the claim that militant campaigners continued to claim full responsibility for the victory of 'Votes for Women'.

Cowman asserts that, by the 1950s, the Fellowship had successfully embedded the idea that militancy was only of value in suffrage history if a prison experience was incorporated into the histories involving militants.³⁷ Cowman furthermore asserts that a master, or dominant, suffrage history was established by former militants that had a 'fixed and predetermined' storyline. However, it must be noted that the membership of the Fellowship was open to all who agreed with militant action.³⁸ Mayhall also contends

³³ Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', p.19.

³⁴ Cowman, 'A Footnote in History?' p.3.

³⁵ Hawksley, *March, Women, March*, p.233.

³⁶ L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, p.141.

³⁷ K. Cowman, *Women in British Politics, C.1689-1979. Gender and History*, Houndmills UK; Palgrave Macmillan, UK, New York, 2010, p.66.

³⁸ *Aims and Objects*, Suffragette Fellowship, Reprinted in T. Keir-Cazalet, 'I Knew Mrs Pankhurst', Suffragette Fellowship, 1945. Luscombe Collection.

that in the decade of equal franchise the Fellowship focus on militancy was 'at the expense of the political rationale behind it' and Holton suggested that the historiography of suffrage was not begun in the 1920s but 'on the street corner, in the hustings, and above all, in the prison cell'.³⁹ This thesis will demonstrate that members of the Fellowship represented a diverse range of suffrage campaigners, not all of whom went to prison for the cause, and included members not directly involved in suffrage campaigning. Additionally, of those who did go to prison, not all were forcibly fed. This research contends that the Fellowship chose to use commemorative activities to draw attention to imprisonment to highlight the sacrifice and bravery of women prisoners so as to draw attention to a broader feminist agenda that focused not only on reforms for women prisoners but other feminist causes.

The thesis also explores how Fellowship members found themselves in a position of continually monitoring and defending public slurs against themselves and their leaders as a legacy of public and private debates during suffrage campaigning about the effectiveness of militant activities. Early autobiographical accounts by campaigners, including Sylvia Pankhurst, led to decisive action by Fellowship leaders to project a 'true and accurate account' of militant histories, to preserve reputations by erecting memorials and monuments to fallen comrades, and to respond vigorously to perceived public criticism published in historical accounts by authors considered hostile to the Fellowship.⁴⁰

Politics of Commemorations

Chidzey argued that during suffrage campaigning followers were fully aware they were making history with their actions and set out to amplify their status as inevitable victors by highlighting and venerating militant leaders. After Emmeline died her supporters were proclaiming that their former leader was deserving of a permanent memorial as

³⁹ Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement*, p.135. S. Holton, *The Making of Suffrage History* in Holton and Purvis, eds, *Votes for Women*, pp.13-33, p.21. As cited in Cowman, *Women of the Right Spirit*, p.207.

⁴⁰ C. Rollyson, 'A Conservative Revolutionary: Emmeline Pankhurst 1857-1928', *VQR Journal: A National Journal of Literature and Discussion*, vol 79, no 2, Spring 2003. Reproduced online. <https://www.vqronline.org/essay/conservative-revolutionary-emmeline-pankhurst-1857-1928>. Rollyson also asserts that Sylvia's text in 1931 had set the standard narrative of the Suffragette campaign.

she had proven herself to be of equal stature with male heroes in history.⁴¹ In particular, the statue of Mrs Pankhurst, erected in 1930, has been directly linked by Mayhall to the creation of the Suffragette Spirit that bestowed on the memory of Mrs Pankhurst an authority that would have otherwise not have been possible. Chidgey further asserts that the Fellowship was successfully able to place Mrs Pankhurst at the core of the successful campaign in obtaining votes for women. As a result, Mrs Pankhurst, after her death, had become 'the embodiment and representative' of the militant movement.⁴² The research examines the ways in which Suffragette memorials triggered public discussion contesting the suitability of subjects for permanent memorialisation. It highlights that, once erected, the memorials quickly became infused with shared memories and emotion, representing past and present feminist gains, and were repeatedly used as props to regroup together in reflected glory. Therefore, this thesis explores the relationship between the Fellowship and the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst in Tower Gardens that was the epicentre of memorial services in July each year and how this ongoing usage became representative of a feminist role model.

Museums and the Memory of Things

The research will highlight the rationale for and establishment of the Fellowship-curated Suffragette Fellowship Collection from 1931.⁴³ Sharon Crozier-De Rosa and Red Chidgey have noted that the Fellowship mirrored past suffrage spectacles, utilising 'the colours' to amplify the Suffragettes' public message of triumph over adversity.⁴⁴ To the Fellowship, each object associated with militant campaigning was precious and inherently loaded with meaning, as reflected in the 1950s by leaders who expressed their belief in the 'great feeling of responsibility' to safeguard the 'sacred trust and

⁴¹ *Memorial to Mrs Pankhurst, The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2, Group D, 50.082/1, p.137.

⁴² Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, 2003, p.136.

⁴³ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932, p.16. A notice in *The Suffragette Spirit* notified members of the establishment of a Record Room, intended as a storage facility, public library, and museum of 'relics and objects' of the militant campaign.

⁴⁴ S. Crozier-De Rosa and V. C. Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism, Remembering the Modern World*, Routledge, Abington, 2018, pp.25-26. Chidgey, 'Feminist Assemblage', p.29,72.

respect due to the magnificent women of our country'.⁴⁵ The research aims to extend historical knowledge of the Suffragette Fellowship Collection, to offer an in-depth analysis of the rationale for curating and collecting certain objects and in-house displays in Suffragette museums and the nature of the visitor experience. By analysing the reasoning for, and management of suffrage 'spectacle' created using select Suffragette objects at reunions and shared feminist events, the thesis also provides a history of a range of external exhibitions sponsored by the Fellowship to allow objects and relics to tour England and the history of travel of objects outside Britain. This thesis also explores claims by Mayhall suggesting that the collected Suffragette archive offered a one-sided view of select events in history. It also examines claims that the Suffragette Fellowship collection of documents, relics and objects not only (inaccurately) legitimised militant history but assisted in the production of easily identifiable enduring tropes, as represented by Mrs Banks in *Mary Poppins*.⁴⁶ Accordingly, this research scrutinises the range of objects on display in the museum to question if the 'totality' of the archive is representative of a one-sided, path to prison view of suffrage histories.⁴⁷

The thesis examines how Suffragette memories were staged within the Suffragette Museum and examines whether the Suffragette Fellowship collection was a uniquely feminist archive. Additionally, Mayhall also suggested that, by the 1930s, over-reliance on representations of imprisonment and hunger striking meant that the Fellowship represented forcible feeding as the 'only legitimate expression of resistance', silencing other forms, including passive resistance to tax and census avoidance. This thesis therefore explores the management of non-prison related objects including jewellery and postcards.⁴⁸ I seek to examine silences in the archive, and 'gaps' in commemorative activities surrounding the life, and death, of Emily Wilding-Davison and I consider author claims of orchestrated silences around certain ultra-militant activities, including bombs and arson.

⁴⁵ H. Kean, 'Public Histories of Australian and British Women's Suffrage'. *Public History Review*, vol 14, 2007, p.46.

⁴⁶ Mayhall, Mayhall, L., 'Domesticating Emmeline: Representing the Suffragette 1930-1993', 1999, pp.1-24, cited in A. M. Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, Duke University Press, Durham N.C, 2005, p.15.

⁴⁷ Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit, British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', in Burton, *Archive Stories*: p.247.

⁴⁸ Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit, pp.319-344.

Vigilance

The thesis also demonstrates, in further detail, how concerns about the public memory of militant campaigning were triggered by the publication of select suffrage histories, including Ray Strachey's *The Cause* in 1928, and Sylvia Pankhurst's *The Suffragette Movement* in 1931, perceived by some Suffragettes to be a slur against the memories of the militant movement.⁴⁹ In addition, this research examines the responses of the Fellowship to perceived anti-militant sentiment from authors not involved in suffrage campaigning, nor allies of the Fellowship. It highlights certain actions of the Fellowship when faced with (mainly) male researchers, who had expressed a decidedly masculinist view in published texts.⁵⁰ Historians Brian Harrison and Martin Pugh argued that accounts by suffrage militants were works of fantasy and also suggested that, post-suffrage, members of the WSPU became 'irrelevant'.⁵¹ On the contrary, this thesis demonstrates that Suffragettes from the WSPU, via the inclusive work of the Fellowship, maintained a lifelong interest in women's causes.

Methodology

The theoretical framework of this study incorporates theory of memory, feminism and material cultures via a qualitative approach using primary data from archives situated in Australia and the United Kingdom. Primary materials and evidence of personal accounts and memories are presented first-hand to effectively capture, in vivid detail, the spontaneous recall of Suffragette memories and associated individuals.

Public archives do not hold a collective Fellowship archive detailing minutes, agendas, correspondence to Trustees and Committee members. My initial approach was to source complete editions of Fellowship newsletters – *The Newsletter* (1935–1946) and *Calling all Women* (1947–c1980) – to obtain Trustee details, committee member

⁴⁹ G. Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England 1910-1914*, Transaction Publishers, New York, 1935. E. S. Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, Longmans, Green, London, 1931. H. Kean, 'Searching for the Past in Present Defeat: The Construction of Historical and Political Identity in British Feminism in the 1920s and 1930s', *Women's History Review* vol 3, no. 1, 1994, p.59. Upon release, the 1931 Pankhurst text became the definitive account of the militant suffrage campaigns that continued to reverberate through the life cycle of the Fellowship.

⁵⁰ See Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', in Purvis, Holton, *Votes for Women*, p.22. Purvis, 'Emmeline Pankhurst: a biographical interpretation', p.74.

⁵¹ M. Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain since 1914-1959*, 3rd edition, Macmillan, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2015, p.36.

names, financial benefactor subscribers and member lists. I also sought out archives in public collections at the Women's Library LSE, the Museum of London, the Kenney Papers at the University of East Anglia, the National Library Australia, the State Library Victoria and the University of Melbourne to access microfilm records of the Suffragette Fellowship Collection.⁵² Other archives sourced were the British Library, the National Portrait Gallery Archives, the Parliamentary Archives (London), the National Archives UK, the Wellcome Collection, the City of Westminster Archives and select private archival records of Eileen Casey. I scrutinised images, pamphlets, notices, memoirs and memorial booklets to gain an understanding of the breadth and scope of Suffragette-produced images and purposeful re-use by Fellowship leaders.

Kean and Cowman have previously highlighted the importance placed on collecting private memories of former campaigners.⁵³ This research utilises documents distributed between members of the Fellowship and the exchange of personal correspondence to uncover anxieties over-representation of shared pasts. Letters from ageing Suffragettes revealing personal declarations of deep friendships offer an additional view of shared experiences. Recorded oral interviews offer an additional perspective into the role of the lived memory of Suffragettes to add a further layer of knowledge to suffrage and feminist histories. Additional Fellowship materials in archives included event notices, memorial booklets, and news clippings and journals, including the archive of Edith How-Martyn, who detailed a series of Fellowship meetings and activities involving her feminist work in Australia.

⁵² Note: The Suffragette Fellowship Collection of documents and images, edited by the Museum of London [GB 389 Suffragette Fellowship Collection 1839-1970] Microfilm, 1983. Accessed at the University of Melbourne Library 2017-2018. Records, documents and images are cited within a basic finding guide outlining all items available in Microfilm Reels 1-14. Where possible, in this research, documents and images are cited using Reel numbers and, if available, full reference numbers, or pencilled reference number on imaged documents. <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb389-suffragettefellowshipcollection>. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/18989633?q&versionId=22290761>

⁵³ Cowman, *Women in British Politics*, p. 149; Krista Cowman, 'The Political Autobiographies of Early Women MPs, c.1918–1964' in Gottlieb, and Teye, eds, *Aftermath of Suffrage Women*, pp. 205, 210. H. Kean, 'Some Problems of Constructing and Reconstructing a Suffragette's Life: Mary Richardson, Suffragette, Socialist and Fascist', *Women's History Review*, vol 7, no. 4, 1998, pp.475-493.

Thesis Outline

Thesis chapters are arranged in thematic order - Chapter 1 profiles the founding of the WSPU and highlights events that impacted on the establishment, and management of the Fellowship, focusing on personal politics and relationships with authorities and allies. Chapter 2 outlines the origins and implementation of three commemorative *Days of Obligation*, chosen to highlight three critical events in militant history. Chapter 3, *Memorials and Monuments*, explores the personal and political anxieties surrounding attempts to erect the statue of Mrs Pankhurst, the later addition of the memorial 'wings' to Christabel Pankhurst, and the installation of the memorial to the rank and file in 1970. Chapter 4, *Prison and Prisoners*, focuses on events surrounding Prisoner Day, highlighting the involvement of allied groups, old 'foes' and Members of Parliament linked by an ongoing interest in prison reform aimed at women prisoners. Chapter 5, *The Little Museum and Memory of Things*, outlines the series of Suffragette museums and ongoing memory work utilising collected relics, objects and artefacts and subsequent curating efforts of the Fellowship before handover to the Museum of London. Chapter 6, *The Great Silence*, critically discusses the reasoning of the Fellowship about the silences in public representations of select militant histories. Chapter 7, *Shoulder to Shoulder Redux*, highlights the ongoing feminist work of the Fellowship and uncovers the network of allies to examine the reciprocity of the feminist causes of the day. Chapter 8, *Calling all Women*, scrutinises the meaning and purpose of Fellowship-created publications. Chapter 9, *Friend or Foe?* scrutinises the private world of the Fellowship and response to unrest and anxiety within the ranks caused by distrust of select outsiders. Finally, Chapter 10, *Pankhurst to the Pill*, outlines the concluding decades of the Fellowship and personal views of first-wave feminists towards the emergence of second-wave radical feminists, and the public role of surviving Suffragettes during a time of heightened interest in suffrage histories.

Attached Appendices profile histories of appointed Trustees, the Executive Committee and Ordinary Committee members, the succession histories of select donated objects and suffrage biographies of individuals linked to the history of the Fellowship.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research offers a contextualised, systematic and extensive analysis of the lifecycle of the Suffragette Fellowship to contribute to the fields of memory studies, material culture and feminist histories by examining the afterlives of a select

group of Suffragettes and their attempts to position, and sustain, a collective Suffragette identity from 1926 to the 1970s. The thesis explores the range, breadth and depth of scope of Fellowship-organised activities that ultimately, according to Chidgey, had a significant influence on 'cultural productions' of the women's suffrage movement.⁵⁴ I will also demonstrate the diverse, often fragmented, member base, exploring the collective group of strong, opinionated individuals as they addressed emotional legacies from the past. This research seeks to restore a neglected past by examining the self-reflective point of view of select Suffragettes, and Suffragents, to explore how, and why, a group of women were able to gain a significant foothold in public and cultural memory.

Additionally, this study will demonstrate that women did not cease to be politically minded upon achieving partial votes for women. Many remained equipped with the same focus and determination to achieve further gains for women. The Fellowship established and utilised memory tools, including commemoration, using shared lived histories, including memories of prison and forcible feeding, not simply as an exercise in vanity, but as a way to get things done. Edith How-Martyn understood that providing an organised group for maintaining the sisterhood was also an effective strategy to draw in a receptive network of allied supporters' groups and individuals. Reciprocal in nature, this network not only assisted former militants to retain, and gain, public sympathy, and therefore respectability, but was also utilised to amplify feminist causes of the day.

The aim of this study is to extend the historiography in the field by offering an extension to the 'what they did next' body of research of suffrage histories. I hope that this research highlights the ongoing feminist lives of first-wave feminists by outlining historical evidence that public campaigning of select Suffragettes did not end at winning the vote but was a precursor to the rest of their feminist lives. In effect, this study sets out to demonstrate that the Suffragette Fellowship believed it had an exciting body of history to recall and a legacy to defend and protect, and a belief that it was bestowed with a solemn responsibility to safeguard the public memory of Suffragettes and to inspire successive generations of women.

⁵⁴ Chidgey., 'Feminist Assemblages', 2013, p.106.

Chapter 1 Origins

The Women's Social and Political Union

Women's suffrage organisations in England were active from the mid-Victorian era but despite vigorous efforts by organisations, including the National Society for Women's Suffrage (later the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies - NUWSS) women were not successful in gaining votes for women. In 1889 Dr Richard Pankhurst and wife Emmeline Goulden Pankhurst formed the Women's Franchise League, focused on female enfranchisement. Dr Pankhurst died in 1898 leaving Emmeline to provide for her surviving children, Christabel Harriette, Estelle Sylvia, Henry Francis and Adela Constantina. In 1903 Emmeline and Christabel formed the women-only organisation, the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). According to Purvis, Sylvia Pankhurst stated the name of their organisation reflected her mother's desire to 'conduct social as well as political work'.¹ The WSPU's inaugural meeting on 10 October 1903 included teacher Teresa Billington, who assisted in drawing up a draft Constitution established to form the society's rules and regulations, which included equal voting rights of members to be exercised at society conferences.² Emmeline believed that past attempts by NUWSS groups had been ineffective for too long and that new tactics were required. The motto of the WSPU, 'Deeds, not Words', demonstrated the intent to use direct action to engage the attention of politicians and win over the hearts and minds of the public.³

Tired of politicians continually avoiding the question of votes for women, on 13 October 1905, Christabel and working-class recruit Annie Kenney, armed with a banner proclaiming 'Votes for Women' attended a meeting at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester. A determined Christabel had advised her mother 'we shall sleep in prison tonight'. The women waited for the right moment, when Annie stood up and asked, 'will the Liberal Government give votes to women'? When the question was ignored,

¹ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.378.

² E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. Women's and Gender History, Routledge, New York, 2001, p.726. A. Rosen, *Rise up, Women! : The Militant Campaign of the Women's Social and Political Union, 1903-1914*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London Boston, 1974, p.31.

³ E. Pankhurst, *My Own Story*, Hearst's International Library, Co, New York, 1914, p.19.

Christabel rose, repeated the question and unfurled the banner. Christabel later recalled, 'the effect was explosive'. Attendees began to catcall, and the chair invited the question in writing. Annie and Christabel duly did this and awaited an answer from Sir Edward Grey, but were met with continued silence. Annie rose again, stood on her chair and repeated her question to the meeting. The room exploded with angry men who surrounded the two women while shouting their disapproval at the impertinence of Annie and Christabel. Men began to tear and scratch at Christabel who had tried to protect her friend from blows. Despite the physical attacks, the young women continued to shout out, 'the question, answer the question'.⁴ The crowd continued to yell 'throw them out' and to give cries of 'shame'. The women were forcibly removed by plainclothes police and stewards. Christabel later recalled their actions and the subsequent events of that evening as a chaotic, terrifying and just response to Grey's expressionless, immovable stare.⁵ Outside, the chaotic scene continued when Christabel, determined to be arrested, was held tightly by a policeman and, now unable to strike back, spat or as she termed it 'pouted' at the policeman and was arrested for assault. The next day, Annie and Christabel appeared in a crowded court where Christabel was given one week and Annie three days in Strangeways Jail. Newspapers the next day depicted Annie in her mill dress of shawl and clogs. Fred Pethick-Lawrence noted later that at that moment the new war cry became 'Votes for Women'.⁶

This first militant act resulting in imprisonment sparked a series of open-air meetings and was compared to a people's revolution.⁷ Most importantly, for the WSPU, Christabel and Annie's act of defiance and their subsequent imprisonment achieved widespread media coverage in national and international newspapers that had 'broken the press silence on votes for women'.⁸ The WSPU had discovered how to effectively

⁴ Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, pp.92-93.

⁵ C. Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, Edited by the Rt. Hon. Lord Pethick-Lawrence, 1959, Century Hutchinson, 1987, p.51.

⁶ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, 1959, p52. F. Pethick-Lawrence, 'A Character Sketch of Annie Kenney', *The Women's Press*, 1905, p.35, p38. Annie believed it was then that the real fight for votes for women had begun and that Christabel had declared war.

⁷ Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, 'Suffragette items from Louisa C Cullen'. Postcards depicting crowds uprising against an oppressive government served as a historical parallel to the two Suffragettes who had dared to demand Votes for Women.

⁸ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.55.

capture a headline to raise public awareness for its cause. Assisting this media cause, in January 1906 Charles Hand, a journalist from the *Daily Mail*, termed the militant women Suffragettes; though intended as a slur, this term was readily adopted by the WSPU as a unique moniker that set its members apart from the non-militant suffrage societies.⁹ Also in 1906, WSPU leaders opened an office in London and promptly organised a series of deputations targeting the opening of Parliament.¹⁰ Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence and husband Fred also joined the WSPU, providing access to influential people, expert advice and organisational skills focused on financing, marketing and branding of the organisation.

The militants continued to pester politicians at political meetings and through organising deputations. At one deputation, Annie Kenney and Teresa Billington were arrested and jailed for six weeks and two months respectively, to be spent in Holloway Prison in London.¹¹ It was to be the first imprisonment of a Suffragette in Holloway Prison, a place that became infamous in militant suffrage history. However, 1906 proved to be a disappointing year for suffrage campaigners when two private member bills talked down the question of women's suffrage in the Houses of Parliament. Following each disappointment, supporters of women's suffrage would gather in central London. Photos depicted Keir Hardie speaking in support of the women at Trafalgar Square, women's deputations to the Foreign Office, mass meetings at Hyde Park and headlines announcing, 'women in a state of war'. Arrests following a deputation and attempts to rush the Houses of Parliament on 24 October ensured that the WSPU continued to remain on the front pages of media across England.¹²

⁹ The term 'Suffragette' appeared in the *Daily Mail*, 10 January 1906. That instantly granted WSPU member campaigners as distinct from suffragists, or Constitutional, campaigners.

¹⁰ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.62. Annie Kenney, with limited means, established the first office followed by Christabel, Sylvia Pankhurst, Flora Drummond, Teresa Billington, Jessie Kenney and Nellie Martel. Pankhurst, *My Own Story*, 1914, p.24. Emmeline recalled that between three and four hundred women in the procession, including working-class women from the East End, carried banners in the early processions designed by Sylvia. Emmeline stated that the women, 'were awake at last, they were prepared to do something that women had never done before- fight for themselves. Our militant movement was established'.

¹¹ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.65. The London office, owned by the Pethick-Lawrence's, at Clements Inn was busy and hectic.

¹² Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3 "A Pictorial History of the Suffrage Movement in Great Britain 1906-1913" , Obj: 2004/3/41/Album: 409660549. 'Women Suffragists visit the Foreign Office to meet the Premier, 21 May 1906. State of War', *The Tatler*, July 4, 1906, p.9.

Australian readers were well informed by local media of the colourful events in London, including an article featuring a 'Sydney suffragist', later identified as Nellie Martel.¹³ The illustrated newspaper *The Sphere* obliged the women by publicising suffrage heroines devoting a full page of profiles and photos of Suffrage leaders.¹⁴

In a decidedly militant turn, in retaliation at the government's continued silence on the question of women voters, WSPU members begun to smash windows and chain themselves to railings outside government offices. The following year, in February 1907, militant and constitutional suffrage societies marched in unison to demand that the government give women the vote in the new parliamentary session. Five days later, in response to government inaction at the latest march, Mrs Pankhurst urged a mass of women to 'Rise Up!' at Caxton Hall. The gathering left the hall and marched to the Houses of Parliament. This was a scene repeated many times over the following days.¹⁵

Formation of the Women's Freedom League

The WSPU committee members and executive committee members appeared to be in accord. However, discontent had been brewing between some members, led by paid organisers. Claims of disloyalty were directed against Teresa Billington-Greig, (now married), Edith How-Martyn and Charlotte Despard. Teresa Billington-Greig was unhappy that the constitution, drawn up in 1906, continued to be ignored by Emmeline and Christabel. The discontent came to a head at a meeting on 10 September where Mrs Pankhurst advised those present that the constitution was to be torn up, the upcoming conference cancelled, and a new committee voted on at this meeting. After

¹³ 'Women's Suffrage, A Sydney champion will rouse Australia', *Express and Telegraph*, 25 Oct 1906, p.1. Nellie Martel told police she was an 'enfranchised woman of Sydney and was once a Candidate for Parliament and received 20,000 votes'. 'An indignant Sydneyite', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 Oct 1906, p7. 'Tempestuous Petticoats', *The Daily News Perth*, 25 Oct 1906, p.6.

¹⁴ 'We Want the Vote', *The Sphere*, 3 November 1906, p. 99. Portraits of Mrs Pankhurst, Mrs Pethick, Charlotte Despard, Mrs Martel, Miss Billington, Annie Kenney subtitled 'The Strange Suffragette' outbreak in London. 'Character Sketch Miss Teresa Billington', *The Labour Record and Review*, London, Vol 11, No. 5, July 1906, p.1. Women's Library LSE, 7TBG FL240. Organiser Teresa Billington featured in a two-page spread in the *Labour Record* discussing her arrest and time spent in Holloway prison.

¹⁵ D. Atkinson, *Rise up, Women!* 2018, p.62. Multiple people arrested including Charlotte Despard, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst. WSPU 7/LAC/3 Women's Library LSE, Following the release of Prisoner, the WSPU held a welcome breakfast on 3 April 1907.

calling for the support of all those present, dissenting members, including Charlotte Despard, Edith How-Martyn and Teresa Billington-Greig, left the meeting.¹⁶ Sylvia later recalled that before this meeting Christabel had held concerns that Teresa Billington was the leader in a planned coup of the WSPU.¹⁷ According to Marie Lawson, support for and against the removal of democratic processes within the WSPU had starkly divided the members. The autocratic nature of the WSPU meant its stance was swift, brutal and succinct. Ms Lawson argued it was now 'one society, one rule'.¹⁸ The dissenters from the September meeting went on to form the Women's Freedom League (WFL), with Charlotte Despard as President, Hon. Treasurer Miss Bennet, Hon. Organising Secretary Mrs Billington-Greig and Hon. Secretary Mrs How-Martyn.¹⁹

The Vote was produced to inform members and supporters, and the WFL established branches across England. The WFL was non-violent, preferring direct action by pestering and targeting politicians through disrupting meetings; it declared at a special conference in 1910 that 'no violence should be resorted to nor damage done to persons or private property'. Instead, the focus was on a milder form of militancy carried out via

¹⁶ For further readings refer to Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.97.

¹⁷ Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.263. Sylvia recalled that Christabel held concerns about a planned coup of the WSPU leadership and that the central figure in setting up the split was Theresa Billington-Greig whom she labelled 'the wrecker'. "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, B 023, 1974. Marie Lawson believed that Billington-Greig, as an original member of the WSPU, was also seen by Mrs Pankhurst as a threat to her leadership.

¹⁸ 'Suffragist Split', *The Manchester Courier*, 18 September 1907, p.9. A week later the press reported that it was the dissenting committee members who had decided to act due to repeated attempts calling on Mrs Pankhurst to commit to holding a conference in October 'in accordance with the Constitution'. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2.50.082,p.28. Dissenters issued a circular setting out the events of September 10th and outlined a course of action including an embargo of WSPU funds and to take a vote at the planned WSPU Conference in October. If a request for cooperation is ignored, it is proposed to set up a Provisional Committee including Mrs Despard, Mrs How-Martyn, Mrs Billington-Greig and four other members.

¹⁹ 'The Women's Freedom League', *The Times*, 13 November 1907, p.6. 'Votes for Women', *Women's Freedom League Constitution*, 1907, Smith College Library, GALE/AZHMQC866208685. The constitution of the WFL set out objects and methods to secure the Parliamentary vote for women, 'as it is, or may be granted to men'. The WFL stated it would act entirely independent of all political parties, and oppose whatever government is in power, 'until the franchise is granted'. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, 'Correspondence and Documents WSPU, Reel 2, 50.082, p.2.

passive resistance.²⁰ Members in Scotland refused to pay taxes, a tactic promptly adopted by members in England.²¹

Cascading Militancy

For the militant WSPU, pledging loyalty became a matter of honour and pride. Sylvia recalled that the spirit of the WSPU 'now became more and more that of a volunteer army at war'.²² The pragmatic Christabel later recalled that the split had not resulted in a reduction of support for militancy, but rather had resulted in two Suffragette organisations, both militant in their own way. She stated that 'the rippled waters were soon calm and each of the two organisations had its sphere of operation in the women's war'.²³ As the fallout of the split settled, Christabel and other younger members of the WSPU established the secretive 'Young Hot Bloods'.²⁴

A new feeling of optimism was evident in 1908, a year that began with a 'Women's Parliament', Christabel recalled her mother had announced, 'I have come back to London feeling as I have never felt before, that we are nearing the end of this struggle'.²⁵ However, in a setback to the women, Herbert Asquith, an anti-suffragist, was elected Prime Minister that became the spark that spurred militant supporters into furious action, Winifred Mayo recalled, 'the Suffragettes began to employ more ingenious methods to enter the Houses of Parliament'. Winifred was thrilled to see over two hundred police assembled all over the House of Commons. For her, participation was an exciting affair, listening to speech after speech beforehand; all determined to make

²⁰ P. Monaghan, 'Votes for Women': An Analysis of the Militant Campaign', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol 9, no. 2, 1997, p.68.

²¹ 'Suffragettes not to pay income tax', *The Courier*, 28 February 1908, p.5. Edith How-Martyn, had jewellery and furniture confiscated, sold at auction. Items were purchased by supporters and returned to the tax evaders.

²² Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.265. It was made a point of honour to not question leaders and to 'obey the command of the officials'.

²³ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.83.

²⁴ Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.139. Members included Adela Pankhurst, Vera Holme, Elsa Gye, Jessie Kenney, Charlotte Marsh and Vera Wentworth who pledged to prepare for 'danger duty' at all times.

²⁵ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.87.

the government listen to their demands. Women of all backgrounds, ages and classes testified to the importance of obtaining the vote. Winifred was later arrested and sentenced to six weeks in Holloway, where confinements only served to further assist in cementing the 'sisterhood' of women. Her passion for the cause became more hardened in the fight – Winifred pledged that she would work heart and soul for the suffrage movement.²⁶

The WFL also marched with the constitutional NUWSS, headed by long-term campaigners Mrs Fawcett, Miss Emily Davis and Lady Balfour, in an organised march from the Embankment to the Albert Hall on 13 June.²⁷ The following week, on 21 June, the WSPU held a gathering at Hyde Park where Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence introduced the purple, white and green tricolour scheme of the WSPU.²⁸ Wearing one's 'colours' immediately became a major signifier of belonging to a particular group or organisation.²⁹

²⁶ 'Raids on the Houses of Parliament, Suffragists in Furniture Vans', *Gloucester Journal*, 15 February 1908, p.5. Louie Cullen recalled in February 1908 that she was with a group of women, who attempted to enter St Stephens Hall and prevented by police. There were reports of violent scenes and many arrests. 'Suffragettes Raid St Stephens, Wholesale arrests of the Shrieking Sisters', *Aberdeen Peoples Journal*, 15 Feb 1908, p.13. W, Mayo., 'Prison Experiences of the Suffragette', *The Idler*, April 1908, p.85. Winifred had no reservations in going to prison as she believed she had a duty to the cause and would have felt it 'impossible to leave my friends'.

²⁷ 'The Fighting Suffragettes', *The Socialist Melbourne*, 31 July 1908, p.6. 10,000 'Suffragettes march through London to Albert Hall', *The Daily Mirror*, June 1908, p.8. Women's Library, LSE TWL 21.1 'Leaders of the Suffragist Procession and their Symbolic Banners Commemorating Women of all Ages', *The Illustrated London News*, 20 June 1908, p.21. Observers marvelled at the spectacle of many women wearing Graduate Robes, famous women writers, actresses and artists of all kinds. Banners were held aloft depicting heroic women of the past, including Joan of Arc and Florence Nightingale.

²⁸ 'The Suffragettes Great Demonstration', *The Globe*, 22 June 1908, p.10. Promoted by flyers and posters advertising twenty platforms with women speakers, members including Rosamund Massey, forty bands and seven hundred banners. Printed tissue handkerchiefs depicted over twenty women speakers. Postcards sold after the event depicting a sea of people and WSPU leaders were produced by the WSPU to sell in Suffrage shops. Militant leaders led the procession with handpicked Suffragettes, including Charlotte Marsh, carrying the WSPU banner in the colours. The *Globe* reported of the colour of the crowds and 'exciting struggles' at one platform and a banner snatched and torn to shreds by some in the crowd. Noting that ten thousand scarves and ties in the colours were sold in London on Friday and Saturday.

²⁹ M. Sawyer, 'Wearing Your Politics on Your Sleeve: The Role of Political Colours in Parties and Social Movements', *Social Movement Studies*, vol 6, no. 1, 2007, p.46. 'The National Union of Women's Suffrage NUWSS had incorporated red and white as its signature colour at a street march in 1907'.

However, in a matter of weeks, the WSPU members took to window-smashing. Christabel later recalled it was the first night of mass window breaking as a tactic. Moreover, this event was premised on the 'women's first use of the political argument of the stone'. The explanation offered by the women in court was that despite continued efforts, and failing, to attain their goal they were forced to take 'more militant measures'.³⁰ In October the WSPU and the WFL 'rushed' on Parliament. The WSPU had selected the date of 13 October, the third anniversary of the first arrest in Manchester. Supporters were met with a large police presence, who made many arrests in Parliament Square. The WSPU later awarded bravery medals to members and to Mrs Pankhurst.³¹

On 28 October the WFL successfully carried out a most audacious plan organised by Edith How-Martyn and Teresa Billington-Greig. A network of supporters provided access for the women to the Ladies Gallery overlooking the House of Commons; at a pre-arranged hour, Muriel Matters and Helen Fox attached a chain wrapped around their waists to the ironwork grille that provided an obscured view of the proceedings on the floor below. The women unfurled a banner through the ironwork that immediately became visible, to the astonishment of the men in the chamber and journalists positioned below. After a struggle, the attendants were forced to remove Muriel and Helen, grille and chain attached, to an outer room where bolt cutters removed the chain. Muriel and Helen were escorted outside, where Muriel was arrested for obstruction and sentenced to one month's imprisonment. Parliamentary staff retained the leather belt and chains worn by Muriel and Helen Fox. The Grille Incident, as it became known, was reported widely across England and Australia. The WFL remarked that the Grille incident 'was an outstanding success'.³² After the successful stunt the editor of *The*

³⁰ 'Arrested Women', *London Daily News*, 2 July 1908, p.8. Interest centred on the case of Mary Leigh and Edith New charged with wilfully breaking windows at number 10 Downing St. Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.97. Both women sentenced to two months imprisonment.

³¹ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.103. 'The 1908 Pankhurst Medal', Melanie Unwin, *Parliamentary History Vol 27* (2008) Medal now held in Parliamentary archives. M. Unwin, *Women and the Vote*, 'Holloway medal awarded to Emmeline Pankhurst', Catalogue number: WOA M0564. <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/parliamentary-collections/collections-suffragettes/medal/>

³² M. Nevinson, 'Five Years Struggle for Freedom History of the Suffrage Movement 1908 - 1912', *Women's Freedom League*, c1912/1913 In court, Muriel presented her case as an enfranchised Australian women voter and demanded the same right to vote in England. 'Woman

Australian newspaper requested an interview with the now infamous Australian, Muriel Matters.³³ The WFL later awarded Muriel Matters a silver brooch for her heroic efforts and created merchandising, including postcards with pictures of her, and other WFL personalities. Edith How-Martyn was depicted in prison dress, contrasted with an image of her making jam in her kitchen.³⁴ Further demonstrating the savvy marketing employed by militant campaigners, the WSPU leaders were depicted in a wax tableau at Madame Tussauds in London. WSPU leaders were portrayed with consideration, planning the campaign rather than as prisoners. The timing of the exhibit could not have been more perfect.³⁵ The WFL and WSPU produced a broad range of merchandise during the suffrage campaign that was to become treasured keepsakes of militant campaigners.

Earlier memories of the colour and spectacle of Hyde Park gatherings were now surpassed by images of women struggling with police on public streets, and depictions of struggles, arrests and imprisonments. Police in charge, including Inspectors Scantlebury and Jarvis, also became household names courtesy of ongoing media coverage.³⁶



Figure 1. Inspector Jarvis, Flora Drummond, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, c1908. ³⁷

Suffrage. The Disorder at Westminster', *The Times*, 30 October 1908, The National Archives, Home Office, HO144/891/171454.

³³ The National Archives, Home Office HO144/891/17154.

³⁴ The WSPU released a postcard photo, 'Votes for Women', approx. 1906, Edith How-Martyn in her University Graduate Robes contrasted with an image of her as a prisoner with identification tag F9. 'Mrs Edith How-Martyn,' Hon Secretary, WSPU 4 Clements Inn, Strand WC. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

³⁵ 'Suffragettes in Wax, A cabinet meeting of the militant ladies who seek the vote', *Illustrated London News*, 5 December 1908, pp.34-35. Mrs Pankhurst, Mrs Pethick-Lawrence, Annie Kenney and Christabel posed holding a 'cabinet meeting'.

³⁶ 'Turbulent Tuesday', *Gloucestershire Echo*, 14 October 1908, p.3.

³⁷ The arrest of Flora Drummond, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, WSPU offices at Clément's Inn, 1908. Photographer Arthur Barrett. The Women's Library, LSE, 7JCC/O/02/064

The following year, 1909, began with another Women's Parliament, and another deputation where many women were arrested. Members were later awarded with a striking Illuminated Address.³⁸ To coincide with the opening of Parliament, the WFL devised their next colourful stunt, designed to capture publicity. Muriel Matters was hoisted on board a dirigible, with 'Votes for Women' written in large letters on the side, which was hired to sail over central London on 9 February. Unfortunately, on the day, the airship was blown off course due to intense winds. The pilot, Herbert Spencer, managed to land safely in the top of a tree in Coulsdon, Surrey.³⁹ Muriel continued to be matter-of-fact about the inherent danger of her mission and recalled that she had been more nervous during the Grille Incident in the House of Commons in 1908.

In July 1909, after the first hunger striker, Marian Wallace-Dunlop, refused food in prison and was released after four days, Fred Pethick-Lawrence announced a new policy of passive resistance in prison. This was to become a significant turning point in the militant campaign.⁴⁰ As other Holloway prisoners adopted Marian's lead, the government released other Suffragettes to prevent the political fallout likely to be associated with the death by starvation of a woman prisoner. By September, the government, determined to enforce imposed prison sentences, had introduced forcible feeding of prisoners.⁴¹ In August hunger strikers, including Charlotte Marsh, were

³⁸ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, p.124. Including Mrs Solomon and Mrs Eates and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence. Prisoners presented with a badge of honour, designed by Sylvia Pankhurst, in the shape of a portcullis with an enamelled broad arrow in the colours. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, p.306.

³⁹ 'Women's Freedom League Minute Book', The Women's Library LSE, 7WFL FL55. Muriel Matters volunteered to throw 'Votes for Women' pamphlets into the crowd below. 'Suffragists in the Air', *West Australian*, 19 March 1909, p.3. The dangerous stunt received extensive media coverage across England and the globe. See also R. Wainwright, *Miss Muriel Matters*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2017.

⁴⁰ F. Pethick-Lawrence, *Women's Fight for the Vote*, Women's Press, London, 1910, p.121. Marian Wallace-Dunlop independently adopted a radical new method of resistance, hunger striking. Pethick-Lawrence described hunger striking as a prison mutiny and the ultimate act of passive resistance. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*, Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2, 50.82/1117. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence to Miss Wallace-Dunlop, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence wrote to Wallace-Dunlop to advise that her heroic actions touched her 'to the depths of my being' and 'that 'all other things sink into insignificance'.

⁴¹ Pethick-Lawrence, *Women's Fight for the Vote*, 1910, p.126. Library of Congress, Frederick William Pethick-Lawrence, Carrie Chapman Catt, and National American Woman Suffrage Association Collection. However, Fred Pethick-Lawrence claimed it had served to harden the resolve of activists and also assisted the cause by winning public opinion. 'She went in a Suffragette; she came out a living flame'.

enthusiastically welcomed at a celebratory function and presented with the 'VC of the Union'.⁴² Hunger striking and torture by forcible feeding only served to fuel the esprit de corps of militant campaigners. In September reports emerged that some prisoners were handcuffed for twelve hours and confined in straitjackets for ongoing civil disobedience in jail. In October 1909 Medical practitioners petitioned the Prime Minister, warning that forcible feeding had the potential to result in accidental death and was an ongoing risk to the health of prisoners.⁴³

The WFL's next protest was a disaster, when two members, Mrs Chapin and Miss Neilans, poured a corrosive fluid into a ballot box at Bermondsey. This led to newspaper claims that a polling officer had suffered an injury due to this act. The chemist who had supplied the WFL with chemicals was Edwy Clayton, a friend of husband and wife, Herbert and Edith How-Martyn. Mrs Chapin and Miss Neilans were tried at the Old Bailey and imprisoned for three and four months respectively. The WFL ceased organising further acts of disobedience following the Bermondsey incident.⁴⁴

In a time of cautious optimism, 1910 began with a WSPU-imposed truce, as the leaders had come to believe that candidates and their constituencies were now friendlier to the idea of enfranchised women. However, Fred Pethick-Lawrence prophesied that the proposed Suffrage Bill, if not passed, would court disaster, inviting 'a militancy more serious and more widespread and with more far-reaching results even than that which we have recently witnessed'. The NUWSS commended the WSPU from refraining from violence.⁴⁵ In a further show of good faith several suffrage societies, including the WSPU, the WFL, and the AFL, announced that a grand procession would be held in London on Saturday 30 July. However, the NUWSS declined to take part, stating that

⁴² 'The National Women's Social and Political Union', *Common Cause*, 5 August 1909, p.9.

⁴³ 'The National Women's Social and Political Union', *Common Cause*, 16 September 1909, p.7. Memorial signed by Medical Practitioners. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.116/27, p.137. F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, *Votes for Women*. No 59. September 1909.

⁴⁴ 'Outrages, Legal and Illegal', *Common Cause*, 4 November 1909, p.3. The NUWSS was now scathing of the WFL claiming that it had destroyed the good work of its organisation by peaceful means leading up to this polling day. "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, B 023, 1974. Marie Lawson later recalled that Mr Clayton and his wife were members of the WFL, and Edith was concerned that his name would leak, and his career would be at stake.

⁴⁵ Pethick-Lawrence, *Women's Fight for the Vote*, 1910, p.134, p.142. 'The Armistice', *Common Cause*, 10 February 1910, p.1.

it had failed to achieve assurances that militant tactics would not be adopted.⁴⁶ In the summer of 1910 campaigners organised a demonstration at Hyde Park, with over forty platforms, including the Empire Platforms. Newspapers reported a grand procession of over 10,000 women marchers, two miles long.⁴⁷ One journalist stated that it was the most imposing suffragists' demonstration England had ever known. Over forty bands kept the marchers in time. Former prisoners from the WFL, nurses, actresses, writers and women of the dominions were all represented, including Australian Suffragettes, who marched behind a purple and white silk banner depicting a map of Australia.⁴⁸

However, Fred's earlier prophesy was about to be realised at a notorious event that occurred November 1910 that became infamous as 'Black Friday'. Women and men were subjected to a rough reception by uniformed and plainclothes police. The press captured many photographs of scores of police pushing and shoving protesters. There were numerous reports of women physically and sexually assaulted. Many women submitted official claims of brutality against the police. Witnesses described scenes of utter chaos, wave after wave of protesters hurling their bodies over and over against the police, only to be thrown back into crowds of jeering men. The *Common Cause* reported that the next day over 117 women and two men, including Elsa Gye and Charlotte Marsh, were charged at Bow Street Police Court. The brutality displayed to women on Black Friday led to an increase in public sympathy for the women's cause; it is also thought to have pressured the militants to organise as a guerrilla army, forced to take drastic action that became more and more militant over time.⁴⁹

In December 1910 the question of militancy was noted in the *Common Cause*. The writer, Charles Mabon, confessed to confusion over what he perceived to be a contradiction in the meaning of militancy. He suggested that 'Mrs Fawcett, in her latest manifesto, continues to proclaim herself a non-militant; but only a short time ago she threatened the Government with "rougher and harsher" methods.' Other readers, in the wake of Black Friday, expected that the NUWSS leader would publicly condemn the

⁴⁶ 'The National Women's Social and Political Union', *Common Cause*, 16 September 1909, p.7.

⁴⁷ WSPU 'Votes for Women Official Programme', The Women's Library LSE, 7VJH. 'Women Suffrage Hyde Park Demonstration', *Dublin Daily Express*, 25 July 1910, p.10.

⁴⁸ 'March of 10,000 Women', *Sunday Times* Sydney, 31 July 1910, p.23. That evening two mass meetings were held, speakers included Edith How-Martyn and Mrs Billington-Greig.

⁴⁹ 'The Suffrage Deputation', *Common Cause*, 24 November 1910, p.2.

actions of the WSPU in sending members into battle with the police. Caroline Marshall argued that silence from Mrs Fawcett could be construed as tacit approval. Mrs Marshall believed that the work of the constitutionalists was at risk, noting that with every 'outburst our work is undone, results gone'; other letter writers encouraged the NUWSS to protest against the militant protesters.⁵⁰

A group of Black Friday prisoners, including Rosamund Massey, Adela Pankhurst, Leslie Hall, Emily Wilding-Davison and Lilian Dove Wilcox, embroidered their signatures onto a cloth panel, now held in the Museum of London.⁵¹ In January 1911 Suffragette composer Ethel Smyth, a close friend of Mrs Pankhurst, unveiled, along with Cicely Hamilton, the newly composed hymn *The March of the Women*, which became the battle anthem of the militants. The battle hymn became a staple of morale-building – heard in prison, on the streets, at marches and in meetings.⁵² Also, in 1910, a favoured heroine of suffrage campaigners, Florence Nightingale, passed away and commemorated in suffrage journals and speeches given in her honour. A statue, designed by A. G. Walker, was erected in London as an enduring memorial to her memory.⁵³ The following year, the WFL, in support of the belief of 'no taxation without representation', organised a mass member boycott of the April 1911 UK Census.⁵⁴

In May, arrangements were made for a grand Women's Coronation Procession in support of the Woman Suffrage Bill, to be held on 17 June. Joint suffrage organisations, including the NUWSS and WSPU, would march through London. Speakers for the WSPU included suffragist Vida Goldstein, an enfranchised woman from Australia.⁵⁵ The procession was held to wide public acclaim. The spectacle of the marchers was reported glowingly in the press. Of note was the inclusion of women marchers from the

⁵⁰ 'To the Editor', *Common Cause*, 8 December 1910, p.14.

⁵¹ Museum of London Suffragette Fellowship Collection, 'WSPU Holloway Prisoner Banner', Ref Z6092. <https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/91239.html>

⁵² Ethel Smyth. *The March of the Women*, Bessie Mabel Rischbieth, 1900. Papers and objects of Bessie Rischbieth, 1900-1967 [manuscript] National Library Australia, Object 398549708.

⁵³ 'Florence Nightingale's Funeral', *Common Cause*, 18 August 1910, p.3.

⁵⁴ J. Liddington, *Vanishing for the Vote: Suffrage, Citizenship and the Battle for the Census*, Manchester University Press, 2014. The women premised that if women did not count as citizens, they should not count for taxation purposes. Original data: Census Returns of England and Wales, 1911. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA), 1911.

⁵⁵ WSPU, *Women's Coronation Procession*, 17 June 1911.

colonies, including Australia, New Zealand and India, holding banners aloft and carrying representative objects from each country fashioned in wood. Indian women held elephants, women from New Zealand carried fern leaves, and Australian women carried model kangaroos. However, in a bitter disappointment, the Asquith government failed yet again to agree to the women's demands, instead offering a calculated private members bill that the WSPU believed would be defeated.⁵⁶ Suffragettes once again began to smash windows and target government property, resulting in many campaigners being in prison that Christmas. Women lodged many complaints alleging police brutality.⁵⁷

In February 1912 the WSPU sent instructions to members regarding a mass protest planned for 4 March. In response, nurse Ellen Pitfield wrote to Mrs Pankhurst, 'I am with you heart and soul in this great demonstration. A Soldier to the death'.⁵⁸ On 4 March Suffragettes were positioned in key streets in busy London, where, at an appointed time, stones and toffee hammers were withdrawn from bags and muffs and used to smash windows in unison, resulting in more than 90 women arrested. While in jail, women passed the time crafting and embroidering signatures onto a handkerchief, including mother and daughter Suffragettes Eileen and Isabella Casey, Hilda Burkitt, Kitty Marshall, Janie Terrero and Katherine Gatty. Also in prison for window-smashing were Myra Sadd Brown, Charlotte Marsh and Nellie Crocker, all hunger-striking while sentenced to three months jail. Janie Terrero later recalled the experience of hunger-striking in Holloway. Her primary recall was of a great sense of duty and strength in prison. Janie's message to those who intended to be actively militant was, 'you cannot imagine how strong you feel in prison. The government may take your liberty from you and lock you up, but they cannot imprison the spirit'.⁵⁹ The WSPU also produced

⁵⁶ 'Premier's reply to Suffragists, WSPU's Attitude – Hostilities Resumed', *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 17 November 1911, p.9. The WSPU declared that the decision of the Government is one of 'direct hostility to the claims of women'.

⁵⁷ The National Archives Kew, Metropolitan Police: Office of the Commissioner: Correspondence and Papers, MEP03/203, *Suffragettes Complaints against Police*. Mary Aldham remarked that "I was thrown about a good deal by the police for a long time. My arms were wrenched back and twisted". Nellie Weave witnessed, 'a girl dragged along by a horse policeman. He made the horse gallop and dug his book into her ribs all the time'.

⁵⁸ Emmeline Pankhurst, 29 February 1912. Ellen Pitfield, 'A Soldier to the death'. March 1912 National Archives UK, Director of Public Prosecutions, DPP 1/23.

⁵⁹ Janie Terrero, 'Prison Experience.' *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.70/11.

branded miniature toffee hammers, given as a reward to the window-smashers. Music and games boosted morale despite attempts by prison staff to deprive the women of contact with each other.⁶⁰ Mrs Pankhurst and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence were also in prison, facing additional charges of conspiracy. While in jail, artist Alice Morgan Wright modelled a bust in clay of Mrs Pankhurst.⁶¹ Meanwhile, the NUWSS was keen to distance itself from the latest militant activities of the WSPU, sending a letter to Minister Lloyd George condemning the actions as 'deplorable' and begging to remind the Minister of the 'great bulk of organised Suffragists'.⁶² While the window-smashers and their leaders were in jail, Christabel Pankhurst escaped to Paris to avoid arrest and continued to manage militant campaigning.⁶³ At the same time Adela, demonstrating the strain of constant suffrage work, was diagnosed with pleurisy and sent to convalesce at the Blathwayt property in Bath.⁶⁴ In July militant members of the 'Young Hot Bloods' began an arson campaign targeting private properties of members of the government. Hunger strikers continued to receive medals 'for valour' for the 'promptings of duty and loyalty to a Cause you passionately love, and which is dearest in life to us all'. The media continued to publish images of women mobbed by crowds and reported on instances of violence toward women speakers across England.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, B 023, 1974, B 013 1974. Grace Roe recalled that while isolated in cells Prisoner would scrape their metal knives on the pipes in the cells, 'to cheer us up' and sing *The Women's March* to keep up morale.

⁶¹ <http://nationalwomansparty.org/collectionitems/pankhurst-bust/>, A bronze replica of the bust is held at the Museum of London.

⁶² Militant Fawcett letter to David Lloyd George, 7 March 1912. The National Archives, PRO REF: T172/968b. Fawcett appealed to the Minister not to punish the 'great mass of law-abiding suffragists for the faults of the small section of law-breakers, and above all not to back the policy of these lawbreakers by withholding your support from the Conciliation Bill'.

⁶³ V. Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst, the Wayward Suffragette 1885-1961*, Melbourne University Press, 1996, p.49.

⁶⁴ Adela convalesced at Eagle House in Somerset, known as *Suffragettes Retreat*, property of Suffragette supporters Colonel Linley and Emily Blathwayt. From 1909 the Blathwayt's invited Suffragettes to plant tree saplings to commemorate their visit. Many suffragettes, including Vida Goldstein, were commemorated in the field of trees that became known as *Annie's Arboretum*. <http://www.bathintime.co.uk/image/249454/blathwayt-col-linley-a-view-of-annies-arboretum-and-the-Suffragettes-nest-c-1909>.

⁶⁵ Mabel Tuke, 'Dear Soldier in the Woman's Army', *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 12 June 1912, p.1. 'Suffragettes maltreated in Wales', *The Illustrated London News*, 28 September 1912, p.26-27. Arson became another tactic that would extend to railway stations, cricket pavilions, public stands, golf course clubhouses and post boxes.



Figure 2. 'NUWSS Protests against Violence', c1912.⁶⁶

The Pethick-Lawrence's Depart

In the absence of Emmeline and Frederick Pethick-Lawrence, who were campaigning out of the country, Christabel Pankhurst relocated the offices of the WSPU, effectively cutting loose the Pethick-Lawrence's from the WSPU.⁶⁷ Supporters of the Pethick-Lawrence's later recalled dissatisfaction with the autocratic severing of ties.⁶⁸ Satirical newspapers published cartoons of women asking each other, 'are you a Peth or a Pank?' The day after the WSPU delivered news of the split, Mrs Pankhurst delivered a seminal speech at Royal Albert Hall, defending accusations that the WSPU was risking lives by using arson to target property: 'Ladies and Gentlemen, the only recklessness the militant suffragists have shown about human life has been about their own lives and not about the lives of others'. Emmeline set out her reasoning for targeting property: 'there is something that governments care far more about than human life, and that is

⁶⁶ 'NUWSS Protests against Violence', c1912, The Women's Library LSE, TWL 1999/32/3.

⁶⁷ WSPU Circular signed by Emmeline Pankhurst, 16 October 1912. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, Z6072/i,p.54. Emmeline Pankhurst declaring, "the association between those who remain in control of the Women's Social and Political Union and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence, the Hon Treasurer and Mr Pethick-Lawrence has ceased, owing to contrary views concerning the policy of the Union as it is affected by the present situation."

⁶⁸ Marie Lawson recalled that the expulsion of the Pethick-Lawrence's was 'awful as they were treated rather badly', Interview with Brian Harrison. "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, B 023, 1974, B 023 1974.

the security of property, and so it is through the property that we shall strike the enemy'. To the lawmakers and politicians in England, Emmeline proclaimed that 'from henceforward the women who agree with me will say, "we disregard your laws, gentlemen, we set the liberty and the dignity and welfare of women above all such considerations, and we shall continue this war, as we have done in the past; and what sacrifice of property, or what injury to property accrues will not be our fault". In a rallying cry, Emmeline exhorted supporters to 'be militant each in your own way', calling on supporters to go to House of Commons and refuse to leave, and to pester Cabinet Ministers' meetings. Finally, Emmeline called out, 'my last word is to the Government: I incite this meeting to rebellion'.⁶⁹ Sylvia recalled that Emmeline had called her followers to a 'guerrilla war'. Her followers then began an even more fearsome campaign of bombing vacant buildings. Suffragettes, including Leonora Cohen, smashed a jewel case in the Tower of London; pictures were slashed in public galleries and windows continued to be smashed.⁷⁰ Enterprising businesses continued to capitalise on the infamy caused by militant action by distributing postcards depicting the spectacle of destroyed and damaged churches, all thought to be caused by Suffragettes.⁷¹ Gaunt Suffragettes were photographed and surveilled on release from prison.⁷² In April the *Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health) Act 1913* or the 'Cat and Mouse Act', was rushed into law by the Asquith government. This legislation was in response to ever-increasing militant action resulting in longer terms of imprisonment, as well as claims by the media of the government torturing women, and a vow from Mrs Pankhurst to refuse food until her death. It was implemented to avoid any political fall-

⁶⁹ M. Schneir, 'Emmeline Pankhurst', in M. Schneir, ed, *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings*, New York: Random House, 1972, pp.293-295.

⁷⁰ 'Crown Jewels in Peril', *Dundee Courier*, 3 February 1913, p.5. S. E. Pankhurst, *The Life of Emmeline Pankhurst: The Suffragette Struggle for Women's Citizenship*, Werner Laurie, London, 1935, p.124.

⁷¹ St Catherine's Church, Hatcham, Surrey History Centre, 1913, Surrey History Centre, 8511/169/1-2. Pankhurst, *The Life of Emmeline Pankhurst: The Suffragette Struggle for Women's Citizenship*, 1935, p.128. According to Sylvia, the damage in 1913 alone tallied at half a million pounds.

⁷² 'Victims of the Government', *The Suffragette*, 7 March 1913, p.4. Rachel Peace feared for her sanity after suffering forcible feedings three times a day, stating that, 'I am afraid I shall be affected mentally – I feel as if I should go mad. I have had nervous breakdowns before and now feel sensations of an impending crisis. Old distressing symptoms have re-appeared. I have frightful dreams and am struggling with mad people half the night'. Statement by Miss Rachel Peace. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 50.082, p.84.

out from these developments. Suffragettes on hunger strike were released under licence until good health was restored, on the proviso that they return to prison to complete sentences. Predictably the 'mice' immediately went on the run and were hidden in safe houses across England. Some Suffragettes reportedly fled to Australia.⁷³

In the summer of 1913, a tragic accident occurred on 4 June when Suffragette Emily Wilding- Davison, carrying a flag in the Suffragette colours, stepped onto a racetrack. Most historians believe Emily was attempting to place the flag onto the bridle of the King's horse as it rounded the corner in the Derby. Cameras captured the moment when Emily was struck violently by the horse. She died four days later. The WSPU was swift to claim Emily as a martyr for the militant movement. *The Suffragette* on 13 June featured Emily, her arms reaching out to heaven with angel wings and the caption 'Love that Overcometh', subtitled, 'She died for Women: Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends'. The funeral the next day, organised by Suffragette Grace Roe, was a major spectacle, photographed and filmed for posterity. The coffin, covered with a purple-coloured pall decorated with prisoner-like broad arrows, was placed on a horse-drawn hearse and followed by an empty carriage representing the absence of Mrs Pankhurst, who had that morning been re-arrested. It was followed by a cavalcade of 5,000 solemn Suffragettes and suffragists, dressed in white and wearing black sashes. The funeral was reported widely across the globe, as well as in the next edition of *The Suffragette*. The same commemorative edition also contained photos of burned-out buildings and reports of other acts of arson, including the destruction of a cricket pavilion.⁷⁴ As the country continued to reel in horror at reports of unrelenting ultra-militant acts, committed by a select band of Suffragettes, Mrs Pankhurst delivered a speech from America on 13 November that became known as the 'Freedom or Death' speech. Calling out those who deemed it impossible that women would succeed in gaining votes, Emmeline declared that 'we have brought the government of England to this position, that it has to face this alternative, either women

⁷³ Some mice, including Jennie Baines, fled to Australia in 1913. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, p.116. Chemist Edwy Clayton, Annie Kenney, Harriet Kerr, Beatrice Sanders, Rachel Barrett, Geraldine Lennox and Agnes Lake were charged with conspiracy after materials were found by police that implicated Edwy on suspicion of carrying out experiments 'with chemicals suitable for making explosives'. All the conspirators were sentenced to 21 months imprisonment.

⁷⁴ 'The Burnt-Out Stands at Hurst Park', WSPU, *The Suffragette*, 13 June 1913, p.9. 'The Sad End of the Derby Day Suffragette Outrage: The burial of the militant', *The London News*, 21 June 1913, pp.14-15.

are to be killed, or women are to have the vote'.⁷⁵ The following year, in June 1914, a bomb detonated inside Westminster Abbey, causing minor damage to the Coronation Chair.⁷⁶ *The Suffragette* continued to point the finger of blame at the government for the continuation of militancy and the ruinous effect of forcible feeding, which it described as a method of torture, in addition to the failed outcome of the 'Cat and Mouse Act'.⁷⁷

The youngest Pankhurst daughter, Adela, was dispatched to Australia, provided with a small amount of money by her mother and met on arrival March 1914 by Vida Goldstein and other Suffragettes, including Jennie Baines, who had fled earlier to avoid charges in England. In December, clergy, led by Rev J Drew Roberts and Rev E A Morgan, of the National Political League, organised a mass protest demonstration at Queen's Hall London. Chaired by the Rt Rev Bishop of Kensington, the demonstration was supported by 'a platform of Bishops and other influential officials of the Church, in all parts of the country'. The poster advertising the event proclaimed, 'Prison Torture must Cease' and 'Determined Effort against Forcible Feeding. Come in Thousands to a Great Protest Demonstration of the Clergy'.⁷⁸

It was estimated that by 1914 over 1,000 women, and men had been imprisoned for militant acts to win votes for women. However, with the outbreak of the Great War on 12 August 1914, the WSPU announced a temporary suspension of WSPU militancy.⁷⁹ The Home Office and the WSPU began negotiations to release Suffragette prisoners.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ 'Emmeline Pankhurst, Why we are Militant', *The Suffragette*, 14 November 1913, p.7.

⁷⁶ 'Damaged Coronation Chair', *Daily Mirror*, 13 June 1914, p.8.

⁷⁷ 'As long as their Health Will Stand it!' *The Suffragette*, 26 June 1914. p.1.

⁷⁸ A. Raeburn, *The Suffragette View*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1976, p.73.

⁷⁹ Emmeline Pankhurst, WSPU circular, 13 August 1914, cited in M. Mackenzie, *Shoulder to Shoulder, A Documentary by Midge Mackenzie*, Penguins/Allan Lane, England, 1975, p.282.

⁸⁰ J. Purvis, 'The Women's Party of Great Britain (1917–1919): A Forgotten Episode in British Women's Political History', *Women's History Review*, vol 25, no. 4, 2016, p.2. [England, Suffragettes Arrested, 1906-1914](#) HO 45/24665: Suffragettes: Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested, 1906-1914, Ancestry.co.uk. However, a question mark remained over mice still at large. A letter dated September 7 states that the Secretary of State, 'does not feel able to advise His Majesty to remit the sentences of Suffragettes who are at present illegally at large contrary to the conditions of their temporary discharge'. The letter writer points out that all mice on the run will be required to report to police for the advice of remission of the (their) sentence, 'as long as they abstain from acts of violence or incitements to crime'.

Purvis has suggested that the end of suffrage campaigning at this time was merely a suspension and not the end of militancy.⁸¹

Suffragettes and the Great War, 1914–1918

Though short-lived, several suffrage breakaway groups formed in 1915 and 1916, including 'The Suffragettes of the WSPU', led by Rose Lamartine-Yates, and 'The Independent WSPU', led by Charlotte Marsh. However, none of these groups were able to gain political traction or attract media interest in the same manner as the WSPU or WFL. Notably, it was the Pankhurst family dynamics, including the split of Sylvia Pankhurst from the WSPU and the resultant formation of the East London Federation of Suffragettes, that continued to fascinate the public and the media.⁸²

Finally, on 6 February 1918, after a long and bitter struggle, the *Representation of the People Act 1918* received Royal Assent to give (some) women in England the right to vote in general elections.⁸³ However, suffrage groups, including the WFL, continued to campaign for a full decade until Equal franchise was granted in 1928.

Also, at the war's end, suffragist Helen Fraser suggested the right to enfranchisement was directly linked to the efforts of women during the Great War. Helen believed women had been 'needed', and by doing their bit in the war, the vote would be granted.⁸⁴ In 1917, Emmeline and Christabel established the short-lived Women's Party. Christabel also stood unsuccessfully as a candidate at the 1918 General Election. The following year, *The Sex Discrimination (Removal) Act of 1919* entered the statute books. The Act of 1919 granted further rights to women by removing legal impediments to enter certain

⁸¹ J. Purvis, 'The Women's Party of Great Britain (1917–1919): A Forgotten Episode in British Women's Political History', *Women's History Review*, vol 25, no. 4, 2016, p.2.

⁸² 'Sisters Disagree', *The Evening Star*, Boulder WA, 8 April 1914, p.3. The media reporting, 'there is now authoritative news that Christabel and Sylvia are now in separate camps'.

⁸³ Hawksley, *March, Women, March* 2013, p.223. The vote was granted to Women over the age of 30, who met a property qualification. The same Act gave voting rights to all men over age of 21. According to Hawksley though some activists expressed disappointment at Suffrage leaders for accepting what they considered to be elitist and exclusionary terms the Act of 1918 was accepted as the beginning of Equal Franchise for the women of England.

⁸⁴ H. Fraser, 'Women and War Work', New York: G.A. Shaw, 1918, p.261.

professions, such as law. In addition, it enabled women to sit on juries and hold the office of magistrate.

Suffragettes in the 1920s

The beginning of the 1920s witnessed a surge in publications of suffrage memoirs highlighting personal achievements of suffragists and Suffragettes, including Ada Wright, Annie Kenney, Millicent Fawcett and Dora Montefiore.⁸⁵ In Annie Kenney's *Memories of a Militant*, her foreword declared that 'the Women's Movement appealed to the best and the highest within me. I met some of the finest characters in the world. The experience gained, sacrifices made, labours done, all for a big ideal, were the finest school for the building up of those qualities which I needed to strengthen and evolve me as a human soul upon Life's path'. Annie acknowledged the 'thousands of women, who laboured silently, alone and unacknowledged. I had the honour, the joy, of working with them at brief periods, of suffering with them at others. No companionship can ever surpass the companionship of the militants during the childhood and youth of the Suffrage fight. I dedicate my book to "The Unknown Warriors of the Women's Bloodless Revolution". The publisher's extract rejoiced that now that the passions of the fight were over it was possible to admire the 'courage, resourcefulness and devotion to the cause' and went so far as to label Annie and her friends in the movement as martyrs for the cause. Addressing anti-suffrage rhetoric, a review of the book stated that 'probably she seemed to her opponents a dangerous fanatic, but she reveals herself in this book a true woman, tender-hearted sympathetic, cheerful and gaily humorous whatever happens'.⁸⁶ Annie, who was keen to obtain reviews to include in the foreword of her book, provided advance copies to public figures. Notably, Stanley Baldwin, a

⁸⁵ M. G. Fawcett, *Women's Suffrage: A Short History of a Great Movement*, T.C. & E. C. Jack, London, 1911. M. G. Fawcett, *The Women's Victory and After: Personal Reminiscences, 1911-1918* London, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1920. It is notable that the index of this text reveals one mention of forcible feeding, removal of the Ladies Grille 1908 and no subsequent entry of Suffragettes, Pankhurst, WSPU or WFL. 'The Revelations of Annie Kenney', *The Sunday Post*, 11 September 1921, p.6. Annie Kenney, captioned as a 'famous leader', regaled readers of her exploits as a militant campaigner. Annie believed that 'good humour was the secret to our success' and that militancy was like a 'tonic'. Dora Montefiore, *From a Victorian to a Modern*, E. Archer, 1927

⁸⁶ A. Kenney, *Memories of a Militant*, E. Arnold and Co, 1924. Foreword, vii.

Suffragette supporter and later ally to the commemorative cause, highlighted that Annie had mentioned him in her text and was most appreciative.⁸⁷

Also, in the 1920s a concerted effort to collect and preserve women's unique place in world history was begun by the constitutional Suffrage Society, which set out in 1926 to expand services on offer to women. The Women's Service House established a lending library at its premises at Marsham St in Westminster. Phillipa Strachey, sister-in-law of Ray Strachey and Honorary Secretary of the London and National Society for Women's Suffrage began to collect books, and appointed Vera Douie as librarian in January 1926. Vera recalled that the society had two motives in founding the new Women's Service Library: 'The preservation of the history of the women's movement, in which the society has played so important a part, and the provision of an up-to-date collection of books and reports on social, political and economic subjects useful to the newly enfranchised women now about to play their part in public life'. The first report of the society in 1926 noted there were 70 books and 15 government publications held at the library.⁸⁸

The Suffragette Club

I'm enchanted at the thought of a Suffragette Club, somewhere where social standing is not the test for entrance. Edith How-Martyn 10 September 1927.⁸⁹

In the same year that Equal Franchise was granted to women, WFL members Edith How-Martyn and Elsa Gye established a 'Suffragette Club', advertising a gathering at the Minerva Club.⁹⁰ Former comrades regrouped to dine, talk and reminisce about

⁸⁷ Stanley Baldwin to Annie Kenney, 31 November 1924, The Kenney Papers, UEA KP/AK/2.

⁸⁸ R. Pankhurst, 'Collection Development and Women's Heritage: The Case of the Fawcett Library', *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol 10, no. 3, 1987, p.226.

⁸⁹ Letter 'Gladice to Phyllis', from Karachi, 10 September 1927, pp.124-135. Edith How-Martyn to Phyllis, or Teresa Billington-Greig, Wellcome Library, b19610634, PP/EPRA/A.1/1:Box 1.

⁹⁰ Established by Marian Reeves, of the WFL, The Minerva Club offered members inexpensive rooms to let in Brunswick Square. 'House and Home', *Hull Daily Mail*, 25 March 1920, p.7. For a history of the Minerva Club see Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, 2001, p.125. 'Suffragette Prisoner Dinner', *Illustrated London News*, 11 February 1928, p.226. Dinner attended by Sylvia Pankhurst, Daisy Solomon, Nina Boyle, Muriel Matters-Porter, Teresa Billington-Greig, Mrs Mansell-Moullin, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, Elsa Gye, Sylvia Pankhurst, Edith How-Martyn, Anna Munro and Mrs Hicks-Bull, see Figure no.3

shared histories. Edith later recalled that Suffragettes enjoyed meeting each other again and 'reminisced with laughter'.⁹¹ The idea of the Suffragette club came to Edith How-Martyn when 'trying to find something to express remembrance of the wonderful comradeship of the militant suffrage movement and for the victory of 1918. A note in the Fellowship Collection archive recalled 'that some Suffragettes liked the idea of an opportunity to meet old comrades. Moreover, perhaps eventually to have a home for the flags, banners, records, photographs of the movement and to keep in mind for future generations of women the history, the achievements, the heroism and some understanding of the most remarkable phase of the struggle for women's emancipation. A worthy memorial of this kind can only be created from the Suffragette Spirit and whether it takes concrete shape will depend on the support they feel inclined to give it'.

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At the first 'Victory Dinner' two years earlier, in 1926, the press quoted Constance Collier, who believed that 'none of the pioneers of the women's suffrage movement had received the recognition which they deserved given all the suffering they endured. All of them seem to be forgotten'.⁹³ In February the following year the Suffragette Club organised a dinner to commemorate Votes for Women, and placed a notice in the WFL publication *The Vote* stating, 'It is hoped there will be a great rally of ex-prisoners to meet and greet one another'. The press noted that the 'coming of age' dinner would celebrate a 'somewhat 'extraordinary and yet historical event' and was to be a 'special and exclusive' reunion. The newspaper quipped, 'One can well imagine the reminiscent talks which will be indulged in, and no doubt they will thank the "hardships" they endured were worthwhile in the light of present-day events'.⁹⁴ Thirty women attended another dinner in June 1927 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the first Suffragette arrest in London.⁹⁵ The event attracted worldwide media attention. The audience was

⁹¹ Note on history of Suffragette Club, by Edith How-Martyn, c1928. Wellcome Collection. B18542621, PP/EPR/A.6. pp.8.-9.

⁹² *Memoranda, Suffragette Club, undated and unsigned*, Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Reel 2, 'notes on the Suffragette Club', Z6082, pp.78-79.

⁹³ 'Mrs Pankhurst', *Dundee Courier*, 6 February 1926, p.8. 'Victory Dinner' note and plans 1926-1927, Edith How-Martyn, c1928. Wellcome Collection. B18542621, PP/EPR/A.6, pp.8-9.

⁹⁴ 'Suffragette Prisoner Dinner', *The Vote*, 17 June 1927, p.191. 'Suffragette Dinner', *Common Cause*, 28 January 1927, p.8.

⁹⁵ 'Suffragette Prisoner Dinner', *The Vote*, 17 June 1927, p.191. 'Suffragettes Reunion', *Sheffield Independent*, 21 June 1927, p.9.

entertained by amusing stories from Muriel Matters-Porter and Mary Richardson, who recounted Suffragette exploits including the story of the Grille Incident in the Ladies Gallery and the disturbance of political meetings and pestering of politicians.⁹⁶

In May 1928 representatives of women's organisations and suffrage campaigners gathered to commemorate the life of John Stuart Mill and formed a procession led by Dame Millicent Fawcett. Edith How-Martyn organised a suffrage dinner the next evening at Craig's Court, with speakers including Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, Mrs Zangwill and Evelyn Sharp.⁹⁷ It was at this event that Edith How-Martyn announced that the Suffragette Club had established a series of annual lectures to commemorate women pioneers of history. Edith How-Martyn was keen to record and immortalise 'pioneers who are in danger of being forgotten in these days'. A press release, most likely provided by Edith, argued the lectures had replaced the idea of a statue or tablet to commemorate women who are famous for their 'advocacy of equality between the sexes'. Notably, Edith also believed that London had far too many memorials and that this would, therefore, be an inferior way of 'immortalising pioneers'.⁹⁸

However not long after the commemorative event Mrs Pankhurst died on 14 June and on the 2nd of July, the *Equal Franchise Act* received Royal Assent. On 5 July the WFL held a celebration breakfast at Hotel Cecil, specially decorated in the green and gold colours of the WFL. A reported 250 guests were present to listen to speeches by Mrs Despard and Dame Millicent Fawcett. A breakfast menu, with attendees' signatures, was retained and held in the archives of the Women's Library at the LSE.⁹⁹ Condolences were sent to Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst. *How the Vote was Won* was performed by the AFL, twenty years after the first production at the Royalty Theatre

⁹⁶ 'Twentieth Anniversary of First Imprisonment is Celebrated by Suffragettes', *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 23 June 1927, p.7.

⁹⁷ 'Commemoration of Pioneers', *The Vote*, 18 May 1928, p.7. 'John Stuart Mill Dinner', *The Vote*, 25 May 1928, p.2. Advertised as the First Suffragette Lecture. Mary Wollstonecraft by Miss Evelyn Sharp.

⁹⁸ 'Suffragettes Memorial', *The Nottingham Journal*, 19 May 1928, p.8. As recalled by Geraldine Lennox it was Edith How-Martyn who suggested that the militant pioneers 'be kept in remembrance' by an annual Suffragette Lecture. Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932. Women's Library, London School of Economic 7VJH/1/5/10.

⁹⁹ 'The Victory Breakfast', *The Vote*, 13 July 1928, p.221. 'Women's Freedom League Victory Breakfast', 5 July 1928, The Women's Library LSE GB 106 2WFL/6/4.

in 1908.¹⁰⁰ In Scotland, a suffrage reunion was held on 14 July at a Garden Fair organised by the Edinburgh branch of the WFL.¹⁰¹ The Suffrage society also held a Victory Garden Party led by Dame Millicent Fawcett.¹⁰²

In March 1930, due to public interest aroused by the unveiling of the statue to Mrs Pankhurst, newspapers were again publishing accounts of Suffragettes' exploits. In Leeds, Suffragette Lilian Lenton, interviewed about her Suffragette exploits, retold them in vivid detail, included a photo of the young Lilian as a militant activist.¹⁰³

Formation of the Fellowship

The year following the unveiling of the statue to Mrs Pankhurst, Edith How-Martyn established a Fellowship of Suffragettes, most likely to secure legal protections around the growing inventory of objects, artefacts and relics donated and collected by organisers of the Suffragette Club. Edith proclaimed that 'the informal association of Suffragettes known as the Suffragette Club, which has given opportunities for Suffragettes to renew old comradeship, has now taken more definite shape as the Suffragette Fellowship'. Membership of the Fellowship, payable with a subscription of Two shillings and sixpence was broad in scope and open to all Suffragette prisoners; members of militant societies, including the WSPU, WFL, Men's Political Union and Men's Federation of Women's Suffrage; and husbands, wives and descendants of Suffragette prisoners. Membership could also be by invitation of the committee. All pioneer women who declared their sympathy with the militant campaign, including those who agreed with the Suffragette Spirit and friends of members in sympathy with the spirit and activities of the Fellowship were also welcomed as associates.¹⁰⁴ The Fellowship was officially launched in July 1931 by Edith How-Martyn and 'kindred souls' at a party where decorations were in the colours of the WFL and the WSPU and the Constitutional colours of green, white and red. The founding committee pleaded with

¹⁰⁰ 'Victory and After Day', *The Vote*, 19 October 1928, p.334.

¹⁰¹ 'Women's Suffrage Reunion', *The Vote*, 22 July 1928, p.7.

¹⁰² 'The Victory Garden Party', *The Vote*, July 27, 1928, p.6.

¹⁰³ 'Woman Disguised as a Boy', *Leeds Mercury*, 5 March 1930, p.5.

¹⁰⁴ *Suffragette Fellowship*, Circular, July 1931, The Women's Library LSE, 7HFD/A/5/01-68.

members to contribute funds to collect artefacts and records and establish a Record Room and pledged an annual gift to assist with costs associated with the management of acquired archives.¹⁰⁵

During the following decade, the Fellowship appeared to work in an apparent partnership with various producers of media and the public broadcaster, BBC, to preserve, protect and represent memories of the militant suffrage campaign. In 1933, the BBC aired *Scrapbook for 1913*, a play focused on events of the era that also highlighted Suffragettes. Advertised in daily papers as 'a voice from the past, a joy, a sorrow. This oddness, this variety, these strange juxtapositions are the fascination of the scrapbook. Turn the page! Whatever next! These were our yesterdays, theses treasured memories'. The following year, *Scrapbook for 1909* broadcast a microphone medley, including the song, 'The Suffragettes go Militant'.¹⁰⁶ Edith noted with delight two years later that due to recent articles and films of the women's 'amazing victories' they were more known than ever. She noted that 'those of us who were privileged to take part in the struggle have the interesting experience of reading about our movement as a piece of recent history. Sometimes I feel as if I were reading our obituary notices'. Edith also acknowledged that histories of the militant campaign dominated the news at that time, at the expense of the legacy of the constitutional suffrage societies: 'it is as true now as it was twenty-five years ago that quiet, steady spadework is not news, for the work of Dame Millicent Fawcett and her colleagues receives scant recognition in comparison with the campaign of Mrs Pankhurst and the militants'.¹⁰⁷

Notably, Edith How-Martyn, through her work as Director of the Birth Control International Information Centre in London, continued at this time to correspond with feminists across the globe. In 1932 Edith was in contact with Australian feminist Jessie Street, encouraging her to remain in touch and help share birth control news across

¹⁰⁵ In Memory of Edith How-Martyn, *WFL The Bulletin*, 11 August 1961. LOU.LON 533. In 1935 the Fellowship had six Custodians, Una Duval, Elsa Gye (Hon Secretary), Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Mary Phillips (Hon Treasurer) and Olive Walton. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1935. See Suffragette Fellowship, Trustees, Committee members see Appendix 1.

¹⁰⁶ 'Scrapbook for 1909', BBC National Programme, 19 February 1934: <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/>. 'Scrapbook for 1913', BBC National Programme, 11 December 1933: <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/>. Radio Times 1923-2009.

¹⁰⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, September 1935, The Women's Library LSE, PC/06/390.

Europe, Asia and Canada.¹⁰⁸ In other post-suffrage Australian links, Suffragette and author Dora Montefiore, who had died 1934, was remembered by Fellowship members with an obituary published in *The Vote*, which commented on her suffrage work and imprisonments. The WFL highlighted in tribute: 'Hail and Farewell to a gracious woman pioneer and a very gallant fighter in the cause of women's freedom'.¹⁰⁹ Edith's international network of friends shared memories of Suffragette days. Edith writing from Karachi noted her life abroad was boring and 'stifling', and she longed to travel more and meet other interesting women. Yet, as 'Gladice' Edith had also pondered if her memoir should be published despite her acknowledgement that it would be of 'value to women in the future' and noting the contested nature of Suffragette activities, suggested that her account might help to 'redeem Suffragette movements standing in history'.¹¹⁰

This *Origins* chapter has outlined the main events of the struggle to get votes for women in the early part of the twentieth century. The campaign was characterised by staging highly theatrical and symbolic events designed to gain maximum publicity. Women, and men, were imprisoned for the cause, went on hunger strikes and were forcibly fed. During their prison terms, Suffragettes maintained their sense of a common goal and worked together to keep up the 'Suffragette Spirit'. Once the campaigns were successful, the desire to keep in touch and remember these campaigns led to the formation of the Suffragette Club and later the Suffragette Fellowship. The ways that the Fellowship organised year-round commemorative and reunion events will be discussed in Chapter 2, *Days of Obligation*; these days were dedicated to commemorating and remembering others and amplifying past achievements of leaders of the WSPU and militant campaigners of the WFL and WSPU.

¹⁰⁸ Edith How-Martyn to Jessie Street, *BCIIC*, 26 September 1932, Papers of Jessie Street, National Library Australia, MS 2683, Series 3, Obj: 385364352.

¹⁰⁹ 'Mrs Dora Montefiore', *The Women's Freedom League Bulletin*, 5 January 1934.

¹¹⁰ Gladice to Phyllis, Edith How-Martyn, 10 September 1928, Wellcome Collection, PP/EPR/A 1.1 B19610634. In signing off, Gladice expressing her current state of mind, stated, 'oh for a woman to have a mental life of her own'.

Chapter 2 Days of Obligation

Remembrance is the essence of comradeship.

Edith How-Martyn¹

Introduction

This chapter examines the suite of memory work undertaken by the Suffragette Fellowship which on its formation, established a calendar of three commemorative days per annum focused on remembrance; these encouraged Suffragettes to regroup and provided a space where private memories became public and were fused with emotion. Set 'Days of Obligation' gave the Fellowship control over public representations of suffrage histories via specific re-use of suffrage objects to create an interesting spectacle. This spectacle was designed to capture public imagination and media interest, and also attracted special guests, publicly aligning personal empathy to past activities of militant campaigners.

In 1931 Edith How-Martyn issued a notice to Fellowship subscribers setting out the establishment of a series of annual commemorative activities.² In conjunction with a Suffragette calendar, the Fellowship established a mission statement setting out two aims and objectives. The first objective was 'to perpetuate the memory of the pioneers and outstanding events connected with women's emancipation and especially with the militant suffrage campaign 1905-1914'. The second objective was 'to secure women's political, civil, economic, educational and social status based on equality of the sexes and to co-operate from time to time with other organisations working to the same end'.³

¹ 'Mrs Montefiore's Party', *The Vote*, 4 July 1930, pp.5-6.

² Suffragette Fellowship, 'Circular', July 1931, Women's Library LSE, 7HFD/A/5/01-68.

³ Reproduced in Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932, in 1950 'thus keep alive the Suffragette Spirit' was added to the end of Objective 1. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1950.

The proposed commemorative calendar was concentrated on three symbolic Days of Obligation referred to as 'principle [sic] anniversaries'.⁴ These days were 6 February, commemorating the *Representation of the People Act 1918* that gave some women voting rights in Britain; 14 July, to memorialise the birth date of Emmeline Pankhurst; and 13 October to mark the first imprisonments of Suffragettes Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst in 1905 at Manchester.⁵ The Fellowship's repeated use of three days per annum as distinct markers of suffrage histories offered a particular fixed view of militant history but also assisted the Fellowship to collect objects, relics and artefacts relating to suffrage histories. The past became a product repurposed and repackaged via the Fellowship's creation of the Three Days of Obligation as a suite of packaged propaganda, selling a spectacle with live Suffragettes as authoritative witnesses to history. The Fellowship equipped itself with a strategic vision designed to simultaneously smooth over the rough edges of militant suffrage history while also offering a preferred, dedicated heroic version of historic events. Suffragette gatherings were opportunities for old friends to gather, regroup and share Suffragette stories in the presence of media personnel, who took photographs and interviewed militant survivors. Special anniversaries allowed the Fellowship to ride the crest of the remembrance waves; these were occasions when Suffragettes received special attention in the media and they provided the Fellowship with additional public recognition. They became a core component of the Fellowship's memory work. The Fellowship created a sense of anticipation, by calling out to supporters, assisted by other feminist groups, to memorialise the actions of leaders and rank and file Suffragettes. 'Old' comrades, cherished friends and fellow soldiers who had met at the coalface would regroup at a prescribed event to reinforce friendships and memories. At the forefront of these events was a style of staging with selected guests, speeches, the employment of 'the colours' and singing of the battle hymn of the militants. Mirroring commemorative events attached to war, the women would wear medals and sashes and re-use historic banners, all leading to the spectacle of women marching through the London streets, primarily in the vicinity of Westminster, and from Caxton Hall and Tower Gardens. The Fellowship marched at events as if they were returning soldiers bolstered by the occasion; as Crozier-De Rosa notes, as if they were recreating a 'masculine memory of

⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1945, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library on the History of women in America, MC399, Folder 279. The *Newsletter* re-titled *Calling all Women* 1947.

⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, 'Circular', July 1931, Women's Library LSE, 7HFD/A/5/01-68.

protest', the Fellowship was reliving events via a spectacle that had been employed to full effect in suffrage days.⁶

With a specific aim of inspiring and educating the younger generation of women, Suffragettes used heightened recall of exciting triumphal events of the past via storytelling, told with humour and pathos. Select speakers reinforced the importance of remembering by evoking past events, to stress the opinion that full equality was not yet a reality, while also mindful of the inherent danger of their cause being forgotten or made irrelevant in the historical retelling of the English suffrage campaign. The Fellowship entered an enduring partnership with former WFL and WSPU campaigners and made a point of acknowledging the positive contribution of constitutional suffragists to the suffrage campaign. Keeping a watchful eye, the Fellowship was ever mindful that any 'gap' in the remembrance landscape could provide an opportunity for the media, and others, to fill the commemorative void with a version of events that might omit the contribution of militant Suffragettes, by erasure or whitewashing of the involvement of Mrs Pankhurst and her followers.

Fellowship members were offered up as credible witnesses to suffrage history and went on to become guests of honour at special events as 'celebrity' Suffragettes. Called upon to practice repetitive recall of past events, women would use personal memory, harnessed and sanctioned by the Fellowship, to educate, inform and shape public opinion of their shared pasts. However, memory is inherently problematic. Halbwach argues that memory is not a reliving of events, but a 'reconstructive representation' of experiences. Furthermore, reconstruction was not only an individual experience drawn from internal thoughts.⁷ That is, self-reflection, was ultimately shaped, informed and reinforced by the dominant collective group that sought to control the public representation of suffrage histories. Crozier-De Rosa has also suggested that the Fellowship strategically staged events to 'not only remember a historic event or process but to channel that shared memory into activism in the present and future'.⁸

The Fellowship diligently drew members and supporters together by employing marketing tools, such as newsletters, flyers and advertisements in feminist journals,

⁶ Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, p.7.

⁷ M. Halbwach., *On Collective Memory*, L. Coser, ed, Chicago, University of Chicago, 1992. Chapter 1, cited in G. Cubitt, *History and Memory: Historical Approaches*, Manchester University Press, 2007, p.159.

⁸ Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, p.7.

including the Women's Freedom League *The Women's Bulletin*. Following events, key speeches were reported in the *Bulletin* and in *Calling all Women*. Thus, the enduring cultural memory of the militant suffrage histories could remain current in the present day. However, the rise in public exposure caused by advertising and reporting on events often triggered debates about the past motivations and decisions taken by militant leaders and led to questioning of the ultimate effectiveness of militant actions in achieving votes for women.

Commemorative Density

Cubitt argues that commemorative activities act as a type of 'cultural vehicle' that help to create a 'collective past' in groups and that staging of commemorative events encourages those present to act upon memories of the selected past. Furthermore, Cubitt postulates that a fixed commemorative calendar is a tool 'to encapsulate nations' that offers 'sacred peaks' of remembrance.⁹ In formulating their fixed calendar, the Fellowship capitalised on its member base, supporters and allies to present suffrage anniversary days as 'sacred peaks' to develop and foster a stylised version of history. That repeatedly created sacred memory 'spaces', operating within a 'referential space', until well in the 1970s.¹⁰

The commemorative calendar was spaced evenly throughout the year, crossing the seasons from winter into autumn and providing a sense of a continual, unbroken narrative of victories, with heroines on offer who overcame adversity by highlighting three historical markers of suffrage history. The cycle began with Votes for Women Day in February, then moved in July to a celebration of the heroics and leadership of Mrs Pankhurst, through to a commemoration of the sacrifice and suffering of rank and file militant women, and men, of the WSPU and the WFL in October. In addition, special suffrage anniversaries focusing on Silver and Golden Jubilees provided additional leverage to rein in members, combined with offering select keynote speakers who assisted in providing validation of militant methods. The Fellowship dedicated itself to

⁹ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.218.

¹⁰ Cubitt, *History and Memory*:2007, pp.217-220.

offering up a specialised past, staged and shaped via commemorative events held up as a mirror for others to gaze upon, and through which to learn and gain activist strength.

The aim, and ultimate mark of success, of all commemorative events held by the Fellowship was first and foremost the opportunity to draw former comrades together in a collegial social setting by capturing a powerful sense of the past. Members would bear testimony to each other and assist each other by providing clarity or triggering long-forgotten memories. The most crucial element for active participation was a sense of belonging and connection to each other provided via a series of organised, ongoing annual events focused on recognition of the self and shared belief in past victories. The events' demand for an ongoing sense of obligation to the group was key to participation in and the continuing success of Fellowship commemorative events. By offering up created events, and associated rituals and traditions that served as a suite of cultural devices, the Fellowship was able to perpetuate a preferred version of events reproduced via self-representation.¹¹ In addition, the Fellowship's exercise in regrouping to draw on 'social memories' using a raft of cultural devices was 'available both for social use and personal appropriation'; it was not unlike a group of returned soldiers who, as argued by Cubitt, were harking back to the 'days of the battlefields' to produce a common bond of understanding ¹²

Love, Honour and Duty

Practices employed by the Fellowship also mirrored contemporary commemorative practices centred on remembrances of war that incorporated heightened feelings of duty, honour and respect toward fellow militants; these practices relied heavily on bonds of sisterhood forged in the fight and continually fostered at remembrance events. Holton acknowledges that the 'webs of love and friendship' among the militants were a source of strength and empowerment in suffrage days.¹³ Additionally, Mayhall has argued that the Fellowship, via regrouping, was recreating emotion embedded in memories of

¹¹ J. Assmann and J. Czaplicka, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity.' *New German Critique*, no. 65, 1995, p.131.

¹² Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.15.

¹³ S. Holton, 'The making of Suffrage History', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.27.

suffrage militancy, which was also representative of 'trench warfare'.¹⁴ Thus, the bonds of war, created in the heat of the battle and experienced when highly charged with emotions, heightened by lawbreaking and bravery in the face of opposition, was then further strengthened by constant reliving of the past at reunion events. The October event, (Prisoners Day) was a day to remember the bravery of the 'unknown and unhonoured' suffrage fighters. Surviving Suffragettes believed they had inherited a sacred duty to pay a fitting tribute to fellow militants who had sacrificed freedom, health and relationships. The comradeship displayed on Prisoner Day was often palpable.

The heavy use of ritual at events provided a collegial, emotional, comforting environment year in, year out that provided a sense of certainty, and comfort, to participants that what occurred this year would also occur next year. Crozier-De Rosa considers ritual and commemorations as 'mnemonic practices' that carry memory. Thus, the Fellowship relied on ritual use as a mnemonic device to further socially construct and revisit group connections by focusing on select moments in suffrage history, by reconstructing the past via the present.¹⁵

Votes for Women Day – 6 February

The first fixed commemorative day on the calendar was 6 February. Members of the active WFL and former Suffragettes took control of the date in February, as it commemorated the first piece of Legislation that gave partial franchise to women in England, rather than the July day of Equal Franchise Day (July 1928), so as to stamp their authority over and ownership of Votes for Women Day. In this way, the militants were able to obtain co-credit, alongside the suffragists, for the role of the victors in the fight for women's suffrage in Edwardian England.

In February 1928 *The Vote* reported that a reunion of Suffragette prisoners would be held at the historic Caxton Hall on 6 February to participate in an evening of singing and speeches led by Mrs Pethick-Lawrence. Edith How-Martyn directed that speakers avoid the subject of politics as the 'dinner will be a friendly, informal affair' and encouraged speakers to 'tell us the most humorous or thrilling experience you ever had'. *The Vote*

¹⁴ L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, pp.63-65.

¹⁵ Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, p.6.

emphasised 'what memories some of these names call up! Sylvia Pankhurst, Mrs Billington-Greig and Muriel Matters, who pulled down the grille in the Houses of Commons, could keep us entertained for the evening, recalling the dramatic events of the past'. The Fellowship issued a media release which promised an 'enjoyable evening to all.'. The reunion was a great success and well attended by over 150 'erstwhile militants' who gathered and told 'tales of the old days'. After-dinner speakers provided vivid accounts of suffrage days, recalling the 'mud march' and experiences in prison during the militant campaign. The feeling of comradeship, and friendships, shine through in the descriptive articles, which reported that speakers who had shown 'unflinching courage' and employed creative use of propaganda and tactics to grow membership with few resources at their disposal. *The Vote* described the militants as 'the women who caught fire, of the militant work' and highlighted the class diversity of the militants; it reported on much laughter as speakers 'described events which at that time seemed desperate but would now be looked back on with a release of that sense of humour, common to all militants, which undoubtedly had carried them always through the most desperate-seeming situations'. Former prisoners stood in silent salute, facing an honour board naming comrades who had since passed away.¹⁶



Figure 3. 'The 10th Anniversary of Votes for some women'.¹⁷

The coming together of militants, entertaining each other with tales of the Suffragette days, heightened the sense of emotion. As highlighted by Cubitt and Chidgey, vivid

¹⁶ 'Shadows of Coming Events', *The Vote*, 10 February 1928, p.5.

¹⁷ 'The 10th Anniversary of Votes for some women', Back Row (L to R) Miss Daisy Solomon, Miss Nina Boyle, Mrs Muriel Matters-Porter, Mrs Teresa Billington-Greig. Front Row Mrs Mildred Mansell-Moullin, Mrs Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, Mrs Elsa Gye [behind] Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, Mrs Edith How-Martyn, Miss Anna Munro, Mrs Hicks-Bull [Amy or Lillian]. Image reproduced with kind permission of the Muriel Matters Society. Published in *Illustrated London News*, 11 February 1928, p.226.

memories of events, blend the past and present together and provide heightened recall of collective memories.¹⁸ Survivors, in reliving those days using only their memories, were 'feeling' their history again, reliving the past through each other by employing a heightened sense of collective duty to each other. Notably, one of the attendees on that evening was Sylvia Pankhurst, who was about to publish her account of suffrage history that would cause much angst among former comrades.

'Votes for Women Day' February 1930 was commemorated at a Victory Dinner at Mack's Restaurant with speeches by Nina Boyle, Flora Drummond and Kitty Marshall.

¹⁹ Following the unveiling of the statue to Mrs Pankhurst in March 1930, the WFL co-hosted an inclusive reunion event with the Fellowship that demonstrated a lack of acrimony despite the 1907 split between the WFL and the WSPU. The daring exploits of Muriel Matters and Teresa Billington-Greig, organisers of the Grille Incident and the dirigible flight, were lauded as symbolic turning points in raising awareness for the cause. In July the WFL hosted a well-attended reunion event at the Minerva Club attended by Sylvia Pankhurst, Charlotte Despard, Mrs Nevinston, Mrs Martel and others. *The Vote* reported that it was a 'happy reunion of old fighters in the suffrage cause – it was true that they looked older than they did nearly twenty-five years ago, but they had the satisfaction of having fought in a good fight and of having won a splendid victory for women'. The host stated it was a dream come true for her to 'feel their handshakes and to be reassured that all was not forgotten, that as long as they were alive, they were bound by the strong bonds of the work they had loved, and which would have such far-reaching results in the future'. Edith How-Martyn summed up the spirit of the evening that 'remembrance is the essence of comradeship'. Edith believed that it was a very great joy to meet co-workers in the suffrage cause and remember their earlier efforts'.²⁰

In 1931 Cicely Hamilton proposed a toast to the Suffragette Spirit.²¹ At a dinner in 1933, in the presence of a large portrait of former militant co-leader Christabel Pankhurst, 100 guests heard speaker Elsa Gye state that 'most of the guests (here) are suffering from broken health because of the great hardships they suffered in their campaign for

¹⁸ Chidgey, 'Feminist Assemblages', 2013, p.19. Cubitt, *History and Memory*:2007, p.43.

¹⁹ 'Coming Events', *The Woman's Leader*, Common Cause, 24 January 1930, p.404.

²⁰ 'Mrs Montefiore's Party', *The Vote*, 4 July 1930, pp.5-6.

²¹ 'Suffragette Club', *The Vote*, 6 Feb 1931, p.6.

votes'.²² Comments at reunion events often implied that attendees who had also sacrificed were part of an exclusive group of individuals sharing a common past; signalling that attendance at reunion events was a form of credentialing into a select community of participants. In 1935 the Fellowship hosted a special celebratory dinner at Hotel Belgravia to mark that year as a special Jubilee Year, commemorating Votes for (some) Women. The dinner featured a range of speakers, including prison governors and mayors.²³ The event also featured reverential and solemn tributes to fallen comrades that mirrored contemporary commemorative events of World War I – over 400 guests stood for a minute's silence in honour of fallen comrades Emmeline Pankhurst, Millicent Fawcett, Constance Lytton and Emily Wilding-Davison.²⁴ In 1939 Votes for Women day was commemorated as a special anniversary, gaining additional attention when over 200 people attended a 'coming of age' of Votes for Women dinner at St Ermin's restaurant. A reporter mused on the irony that Miss Barker, who was Governor of Aylesbury Prison, 'will be dining with some who went to prison for women's suffrage'. Curiously, one speaker had noted, despite evidence to the contrary, that the Fellowship, 'is not an association of society in the usual sense. It has no constitution or rules. It is a fellowship of friendship'. In a jaded, rather barbed, response, one journalist suggested women wore 'clothes which have not yet come around again in the fashion cycle – or perhaps their wearers cared little for chic – lend a slightly stuffy, slightly faded air'. Mrs Mansell-Moullin, described as a 'gracious and dignified lady', had stated, 'We thought women of the future would do such wonderful things. Progress marches slowly. Much has been done, but there is: much more to be done'.²⁵

²² 'Suffragette Fellowship', *The Vote*, 3 Feb 1933, p.7. 'They went to Prison for an Ideal', *Daily Herald*, 6 Feb 1933, p.4. 'Women's Suffrage', *The Western Morning News*, 18 Feb 1933, p.7.

²³ 'The Suffragette Anniversary', *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 8 Feb 1935, p.17. Speakers included Fred and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, Lilian Barker CBE JP, Governor of Aylesbury Prison and Miss Gilliatt former WSPU Prisoner now Mayor of Fulham.

²⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, September 1935, Women's Library LSE PC/06/390.

²⁵ 'Women's Political Coming of Age', *Edinburgh Evening News*, 24 February 1939, p.16. 'Women's Votes comes of Age', *Daily Herald*, 7 February 1939, p.9. Nina Boyle, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, and others photographed for the *Daily Herald*. 'Souvenirs of Suffragette Days', *Examiner Launceston*, 15 March 1939, p.3.

World War II

During World War II, due to the closure of the Fellowship Record Room, the Fellowship held a Votes for Women celebration in 1940 at the Minerva Club.²⁶ The following year a luncheon at Northumberland Rooms celebrated the 22nd anniversary of the 'first victory of Votes for Women' where Edith advised those present that, in case of air raids, an 'A.R.P Shelter (was) available'.²⁷ Drawing a link to the legacy of votes for women, and in particular noting successes achieved due to the efforts of militant campaigners, the Fellowship compared the participation of women in the First World War to subsequent efforts of women in the current war. The Fellowship was keen to point out to readers in its newsletter that it was important to note that 'entry of women into the services is almost entirely due to the Suffrage agitation of years ago'. The Fellowship stated it was not until militancy began in earnest in 1905 that, 'it gave new life and new energy in the other societies, the constitutional Suffrage society quadrupled its activities, so did the women's section of the three political parties'.²⁸ In February a sold-out gathering representing many Fellowship-allied feminist organisations met to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Votes for Women and listened to speeches by Nina Boyle, Mr and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence, Lady Astor, Miss Elvira Laughton-Matthews and Sylvia Pankhurst.²⁹ Sylvia Pankhurst asserted that despite the limitations of war, 'there had been only one announcement, no advertisement, no circulars, yet the response was so overwhelming that the Albert Hall could easily have been filled'. Sylvia reported that Fred Pethick-Lawrence had strikingly addressed those present as 'battle comrades'.³⁰ Sylvia Pankhurst gave a speech in favour of militant activities, stating that without militancy, the vote was not achievable. Despite earlier ill-feeling at the release of her book, Sylvia warmly acknowledged her contemporaries, and was delighted to note that the hall was 'thronged with militants, and though the hair might be grey, in that hour they

²⁶ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1939-1940.

²⁷ Women's Freedom League, *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 January 1940, LOU.LON 640. Speakers Helena Normanton, Irene Stoney and Anna Munro. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 16 March 1940. Madame Odette Keun, spoke on *France and Peace Aims*.

²⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG.

²⁹ '25 Years of Women Suffrage', *The Times*, 26 January 1943, Women's Library LSE, TWL 21.1 The Actress Franchise League, St Joan's Social and Political Alliance, National Council for Equal Citizenship, National Union of Women Teachers.

³⁰ Sylvia Pankhurst, 25 Years of the Vote, *Equal Rights*, Vol.29 Issue 4, 1943.

were as young and vigorous as in the days of the great fight'.³¹ Reunion events thus continued to provide an opportunity for the Fellowship to reinforce the bonds of war, and to reconnect, reinforcing the belief that Suffragettes were victorious, and that militancy had indeed won the day. Individual Suffragettes, on their own, were not able to provide a sizeable and credible testimony of the past unless encouraged and supported by the group. Additionally, Cubitt points out that people do not occupy a 'social vacuum', their 'experience, and remembering that experience, are always moulded by their group connections'.³²

As the years went by, eulogising and memorialising fallen comrades became a familiar component on Votes for Women Day. In 1944 the event became a memorial service by Mari Hussey and Teresa Billington-Greig to the late Elsa Gye.³³ Near the war's end, the 26th anniversary of Votes for Women Day in 1945 became another occasion to reinforce the link between sacrifices connected with war to the heroic legacies of Suffragettes. Miss Reeves drew attention to the 'value of the Suffragette spirit, forged in unforgettable experiences of sacrifice and comradeship'. Linking Suffragette imprisonment with deprivations caused by the recent war, Miss Reeves argued that Suffragettes also worked for 'the limelight', but very little light had penetrated the dark prison cells of the past, where countless women had suffered for their ideals, ideals which were slowly bearing fruit.'³⁴

Post-World War II the Fellowship had adopted a second (feminist) aim: to 'secure women's political, civil, economic, educational and social status on the basis of equality of the sexes, and co-operate from time to time with other organisations working to the same end'. It sought to broaden the range of speakers at commemorative events, including female politicians of the day, who spoke on a broad range of political issues, and debated the modern role of women in society and the ongoing legacy of achieving

³¹ Sylvia Pankhurst, '25 Years of the Vote', *Equal Rights* vol.29, Issue 4, 1943.

³² Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.13. Cubitt also argues that despite previous bonds individuals can and do have different views of 'that time', pp.160-163.

³³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1944. 'In Grateful Remembrance of Elsa Gye', Papers and objects of Bessie Rischbieth, 1900-1967 [manuscript] National Library Australia, Object : 433180222. *Blyth News*, 10 January 1944, p.3. Flora Drummond recalled that Elsa was among speakers on stage at a Suffragette meeting in Nottingham when students let white mice loose on the stage. Instead of the expected screaming and uproar, Elsa calmly picked up the mice returning them to their cage and carried on with her meeting.

³⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 16 February 1945.

votes for women. This was particularly clear in 1949, when the Fellowship held a Votes for Women Day celebration at the favoured location of St Ermin's. Enid Goulden-Bach invited Lady Astor and Mrs E M White, JP to say a few words. In a concession to the guest list, the WFL stated that the evening was a political affair despite the fact that the Fellowship was a 'non-party organisation, but it cannot be said that party politics were kept out of speeches and discussion!' *The Bulletin* described it as an 'altogether a lively and interesting meeting'.³⁵ *The Bulletin* also highlighted that, at a lively gathering in 1950, speakers Helena Normanton and Ethel Wood presented 'good-natured banter'.³⁶ The popularity of Votes for Women Day continued into the 1950s. However, the media had begun to report that the passing of the years was taking its toll on original members.³⁷

In 1951 Professor Winifred Cullis, recalled that on the first march they were met with hostility from crowds, at the second march the crowds were quiet and watchful, by the third march they were met with enthusiastic crowds cheering them on. Mrs Goulden-Bach reiterated to guests, including the first woman Barrister in England, Helena Normanton, that the Fellowship would continue to remember and honour both the constitutional and unconstitutional Suffragettes and that members would continue to 'keep alive the memory of the [suffrage] struggle'.³⁸

The WFL continued to hold commemorative gatherings focused on their leader, Charlotte Despard. However, these events were often incorporated into Fellowship commemorative activities. One noted original WFL member who often appeared at Fellowship and WFL events was Muriel Matters, who gave joyful accounts of her work touring with the first WFL caravan, recalling open-air meetings and the hazards of dealing with a drunken audience.³⁹ In 1951 the WFL and the Fellowship also co-hosted

³⁵ 'Rally of Women's Suffrage Veterans', *The Nottingham Journal*, 8 February 1949, p.1. 'Anniversary of Votes for Women', WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 February 1949, LOU.LON 646.

³⁶ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 February 1950, LOU.LON 470.

³⁷ 'Veterans of the Vote', *Birmingham Gazette*, 30 January 1950, p.4. The *Birmingham Gazette* reported that original Suffragettes are becoming fewer now at annual events.

³⁸ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, January 26, 1951, LOU.LON 217.

³⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 October 1957, LOU.LON 194. Until its demise in 1961 the WFL commemorated the birthday of Charlotte Despard and repeatedly recalled the exploits of the 'Heroine of the Grille', Muriel Matters. In 1960 *Calling all Women* reported that special guests included Reverend Hankinson, Teresa Billington-Greig, Marian Lawson, Naomi Jacob and Muriel

a celebration of the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Lord and Lady Pethick-Lawrence. Guest Mary Phillips, with an eye to the future, proposed a toast to 'the first Woman Prime Minister, whomever she may be'.⁴⁰ Days of Obligation also provided an opportunity to educate each other on conditions affecting women in other countries. In 1951 Eileen Casey spoke of conditions for women in Australia, notably 'the generous social services' and provision of home help for mothers in need. Moreover, the Fellowship had also enabled members of other suffrage societies to share organisational memories that helped to sanctify Suffragette connections.⁴¹ Votes for Women Day in 1952, celebrated at Caxton Hall, showcasing a diverse range of speakers, including politicians, journalists, political leaders and Suffragettes. All present acknowledged the pioneering legacy of the militants. Charlotte Marsh recalled prison days and paid tribute to 'all the societies which had helped to win the vote' and spoke of the 'spadework' of the constitutional societies, the WFL and the AFL. In 1954, following the recent passing of Edith How-Martyn in Sydney, the Fellowship gave her a solemn, silent tribute. Guests, including authors Vera Brittain and Margaret McCarthy, also heard Charlie Marsh recall stories of the secretive ultra-militant, 'Young Hot Bloods', whose motto was 'once a YHB always a YHB'.⁴² Notably, it was those friendships, forged in secrecy, that assisted in forming the everlasting bonds that continued into the Fellowship.

Votes for Women Day 1955 at Caxton Hall featured speaker Doreen Stephens, Head of BBC TV Women's Programmes, Suffragettes Una Duval, and Arthur Barrett, who exhibited his 'unique collection of slides'.⁴³ The lively event garnered a lot of advance

Matters, billed as the 'Heroine of the Grille', who spoke of her exploits on that fateful evening in October 1908. 'They can remember chains in Commons', *Northern Daily News*, 12 October 1957, p.5.

⁴⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 September and 2 October 1951, LOU.LON 217. Mary Phillips was an organiser for the WSPU and later worked with Sylvia Pankhurst. See Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, 'Golden Wedding, Celebration Dinner Programme', 2 October 1951, UEA KP/AK/2.

⁴¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 23 February 1951, LOU.LON 217. Decima Moore reminisced about her experiences in the suffrage campaign as a member of the AFL.

⁴² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 February 1954, LOU.LON 260. President Mrs Goulden-Bach noted that Edith had achieved 'the ambition of a lifetime in the collection of suffrage mementoes, and especially in their transfer to the London Museum'. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 14 January 1954, LOU.LON 260.

⁴³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 4 February 1955, LOU.LON 57. Mr Barrett displayed slides depicting images of Suffragettes marching and arrest of Mrs Pankhurst and colleagues.

publicity, billed as the anniversary of the formation of the WSPU. Many ex-prisoners were interviewed, photographed and captured on film that was later screened on TV and newsreels across the country. The Fellowship was delighted at the press coverage and pleased to note that, as a result, the original room booked was too small to cater for the growing crowd, and a new room was hastily arranged. Speaker Lord Haldane, a known 'anti' in suffrage days, recalled one memorable evening when Suffragettes successfully hijacked a hotel in Birmingham. Lord Haldane noted that when darkness fell the electric lights were switched on to reveal that the name of the hotel, situated high up near the roof, 'blazoned in coloured lights' 'Votes for Women'.⁴⁴ Prison chaplain Reverend Hankinson and Suffragettes wearing full regalia were filmed viewing the *Book of the Suffragette Prisoners*.⁴⁵ The following year Votes for Women Day at the Minerva Club hosted a debate on the effectiveness of militancy. Dame Vera Mathews spoke for the militants and Lady Henley for the constitutionalists. Dame Vera outlined the history of militant action and concluded 'well it is all very old history – in some ways sad and in some ways glorious. Moreover, I do believe that nothing worthwhile is achieved without sacrifice'.⁴⁶ In front of a panel of distinguished guests, including Lady Ravensdale, Enid Goulden-Bach acknowledged the non-militant suffragists, by stating that the 'Royal Assent to the Act of 1918' had in fact 'set a seal on the militant struggle, and on the hard work done for many years by the early suffragists'. The following year Marian Reeves, Vice-Chair of the Fellowship and President of the WFL, reiterated the point that the emergence of the militants re-energised the suffrage campaign. She first noted the history of the constitutional campaign before moving on to later events: 'in 1905 came militancy, from then onwards Cabinet Ministers had a hell of a life'.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 February and 4 March 1955, LOU.LON 57.

⁴⁵ See Chapter 8 *Calling all Women*. The British Pathe clip edited suffrage marches to contrast with the group of genteel, elderly women. *Suffragettes Meet Again*, British Pathe, 1955, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyImzmaypJ8>. Eileen Casey, Mary Richardson, Anna Munro, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Mari Hussey and Mrs Wilcox.

⁴⁶ The WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 13 January 1956, LOU.LON 57. Dame Vera Laughton-Mathews was a Suffragette and sub-editor of *The Suffragette*. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, p.391. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 February 1956, LOU.LON 403. Ashby stated, Dame Vera's 'contribution was excellent from every point of view but could not agree with Lady Henley's implication that a bill giving women the vote would have passed in 1906 if it had not been for militancy'.

⁴⁷ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 February 1957, LOU.LON 194. Speeches by Lady Ravensdale, (1896-1966). <https://www-oxforddnb-com.rp.nla.gov.au/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-71591?rsk=D9Ck6v&result=1>

Votes for Women Day 1958 continued to welcome a diverse group of special guests, including Joan Vickers and Mrs Pandit; the latter gave an account of conditions for women in India and recalled her husband walking in Suffrage processions with Lord Pethick-Lawrence.⁴⁸ At the 1959 Votes for Women Day Lord Pethick-Lawrence, always a diplomatic and inclusive speaker, specifically acknowledged the hard work of the early pioneers: Millicent Fawcett, Mary Wollstonecraft and Josephine Butler. He concluded with the arrival of the militants and Christabel Pankhurst, who 'tore up the ideal of what a "lady" should be'.⁴⁹

In 1959, in recognition of the ageing membership of the Fellowship, the Trustees advised members that it would no longer commemorate Votes for Women Day in February, thus ending three decades of continuous commemoration.⁵⁰ The following year the Fawcett Society, with representatives of other feminist groups, stepped into the commemorative space. However, the scheduled speeches, including by Phillipa Strachey, at St Georges Chapel Westminster took a decidedly anti-militant turn after a laurel wreath was laid below the memorial to Millicent Fawcett. Speaker Mary Stocks, in describing the various suffrage societies, highlighted that the constitutional societies were democratic, whereas the WSPU was militant and undemocratic.⁵¹ The Fellowship was alarmed by the tone of the speeches. Fellowship Chair, Goulden-Bach, expressed her concern that there was no mention in the introductory speeches that the Fellowship had commemorated 6 February for 'many years'. She noted that 'this was misleading to the public, and it was hoped would not occur again'.⁵² Notably, the Fellowship took exception to the perceived attempt to silence their previous work at memorialising Votes for Women Day in

⁴⁸ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1958, Casey Papers, Laughton Collection. Special guests at Votes for Women Day 1958 were Indian High Commissioner Mrs Pandit and Dame Vera Mathews.

⁴⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1959, Votes for Women Day at Caxton Hall included speaker Lady Winstedt.

⁵⁰ The Fawcett Society, *Annual Report*, 1959. Shortly after the Fawcett Society announced it would form a joint committee with the WFL and St. Joan's Alliance to commemorate 6th February each year. WFL, NEC Minutes, 1 December 1959, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106 2LSW.

⁵¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 12 February 1960, LOU.LON 533. Baroness Mary Stocks 1891-1975, Suffragist campaigner and related to the Strachey family. Phillipa (Pippa) Strachey was a suffragist and members of the NUWSS, and sister in law to Ray Strachey. Sutherland, Duncan. "Stocks [nee Brinton], Mary Danvers, Baroness Stocks 91891-19750, women's activist and college head". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 29 May 2020.

⁵² The Suffragette Fellowship, *Meeting of the Executive Committee*, 24 February 1960. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. (Private Collection)

February, and felt compelled to take back control of that commemorative space. Thus, the following year, in February, *The Bulletin* noted that Votes for Women Day was now to be commemorated by two ceremonies. Firstly, by the Fawcett Society, which commemorated with a wreath-laying at St Georges Chapel, and also by the Fellowship at Caxton Hall, supported by the WFL, St Joan's Social and Political Alliance and the National Women Citizens Association.⁵³ *The Women's Bulletin* reported that the Fawcett Society service opened with a reading from the Dean of Westminster. Viscountess Davidson spoke of the pioneering men who had supported the women's cause.⁵⁴ The Fellowship's Stella Newsome, reinforcing the impact of Suffragettes who had achieved votes for women, in her report on the Fellowship's ceremony was delighted that speaker Mrs Whittick had stated that the National Women's Citizen Association had 'grown out of the Suffragette movement'.⁵⁵ The following year, as an attempt to out-memorialise the Fawcett Society, the Fellowship issued 500 flyers and distributed invitations to the National Women's Citizens Association, St Joan's Alliance and the Six Point Group. After that, the Fellowship continued to host Votes for Women Day, including speakers Baroness Summerskill, and other women politicians until the end of the 1960s.⁵⁶ In 1968 Miss Pierotti 'contrasted the three suffrage leaders': Mrs Pankhurst, 'whose attitude was fired by her poor law experience'; Mrs Fawcett's 'intellectual approach'; and Mrs Despard's 'international and theosophical outlook'. The speaker highlighted the inequalities facing women of the day, unable to become ministers in the Church of England, and limitations in the laws that covered the welfare of women and children.⁵⁷ The year 1968 was a special anniversary, a Golden Jubilee Year. Fellowship members offered themselves up with gusto as self-selected specialists on suffrage history, who were able to deliver entertaining stories of daring deeds, imprisonment and stories of

⁵³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 January 1961, LOU.LON 533. The Fawcett Society placed a laurel at the memorial to Millicent Fawcett to commemorate Votes for Women day at St Georges Chapel.

⁵⁴ Viscountess Davidson, (1894-1985) MP. Harwood, Elliot of. "Davidson [née Dickinson], (Frances) Joan, Viscountess Davidson and Baroness Northchurch (1894–1985), politician". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 29 May. 2020.

⁵⁵ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 February 1961, LOU.LON 533. Mrs Whittick, see Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*, 2001, p.301.

⁵⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1964. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1966. Lady Gammans MP, Shirley Williams MP, Elsie Bowerman.

⁵⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968.

escape from the police, to arouse public interest. Mary Phillips recalled that 'she didn't enjoy anything until the militancy began; when I was just a suffragist it was boring'. Grace Roe recalled her excitement at her first exposure to a real-life Suffragette chalking a pavement in Kensington.⁵⁸ In March, demonstrating the historic legitimacy and star power of the ageing Suffragettes, Grace Roe was invited to participate in a special Golden Jubilee celebration also attended by the current Prime Minister and other notable guests.⁵⁹ Shortly after the Golden Jubilee year, with ageing Suffragettes now frail and fewer in numbers, the Fellowship ceased to host Votes for Women Day commemorations. President Grace Roe was housebound by 1976 and died in 1978. It is apparent that any public memory of Votes for Women Day is now lost to history.

The Memory of Mrs Pankhurst

After the death of Mrs Pankhurst in 1928 her supporters set out to establish her as a heroine of the ages.⁶⁰ Memorialisation of Mrs Pankhurst began in earnest in March 1930 with the unveiling of a statue in her likeness in Tower Gardens, followed by the unveiling of her headstone at Brompton Cemetery.⁶¹ Unlike the statue, purposefully built, and

⁵⁸ BBC One, 'Votes for Women, The Story of the Suffragettes', 1 February 1968. On February 1st Charlotte Drake, Lilian Lenton, Mary Phillips and Grace Roe appeared on the BBC1 for *Votes for Women, The Story of the Suffragettes*. Suffragette Fellowship notice, 'A television picture, Fifty Years after Suffragettes', Women's Library LSE 7ELI/A. 'Suffragettes Recall the Battle', *The Listener*, 8 February 1968, Vol 79 No 2028, pp.174-177.

⁵⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968. Special Anniversaries, Votes for Women 1918-1968 Golden Jubilee Celebration, 27 March 1968, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. Grace Roe was invited to speak alongside the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, Rt Hon Edward Heath, and Rt Hon Jeremy Thorpe, Baroness Summerskill, Mrs Cazalet-Keir, Shirley Williams, Anne Mallalieu, Rev Elsie Chamberlain and Joyce Grenfell. Also see Chapter 10, *Pankhurst to the Pill*.

⁶⁰ D. Mitchell., *The Fighting Pankhurst's: A Study in Tenacity*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1967, pp.207-209. Mitchell has suggested, that after her death the followers of Mrs Pankhurst had begun to enter into a 'process of ennoblement and embalming' of their former leader.

⁶¹ 'Dedication of Mrs Pankhurst's Headstone', *The Vote*, 20 June 1930, p.195. *Programme of Service*, Women's Library, LSE 7VJH. The headstone designed by artist Julian Allan is in the shape of a Celtic Cross, embossed with a female figure, hand raised as if in prayer, inscribed, 'In loving memory of Emmeline Pankhurst, wife of R.M. Pankhurst LLD. At rest June 14, 1928' Author visited November 2017 (a posy in the colours had been left at the gravesite) See Chapter 3 – *Memorials and Monuments*.

activated again on a site of Suffragette memory, her gravesite remained a private site of mourning.

Commemoration of Mrs Pankhurst on her birthday was seeded in the British tradition. As Una Duval stated, 'through the ages, it had been the custom of British people to celebrate the anniversaries of people who had worked for human freedom. We remembered today the birthday of Mrs Pankhurst who worked and fought for the freedom of women'.⁶² The Commemoration to Mrs Pankhurst Day centred on the commonly recognised day of her birth, 14 July and became an organised spectacle dedicated to ensuring that their leader remained worthy of remembrance.⁶³ The aim was for a highly stylised ritual event led by high ranking members of the clergy in a solemn, spiritual and emotive service that called on old comrades and allies from across the political and social class spectrum, and across the gender divide. The Fellowship considered attendance on this day to be a sacred duty and obligation to their fallen leader. The Fellowship actively engaged in the reconstruction of the public memory of Mrs Pankhurst, highlighted as a beacon of hope, the most fearless of leaders. The process was ably assisted by the hard work of supporters to secure the location for the statue next to the Houses of Parliament and the successful public unveiling of the statue in March 1930. The day of commemoration to Mrs Pankhurst typically began with a memorial service at St Johns Church, Westminster, and included the singing of two hymns, selected by Christabel, an address by clergy and a rendition of *The March of the Women* and *The Marseilles*, both traditional 'war songs' of the Suffragettes. Elsa Gye highlighted in 1938 that the church was now filled mainly with serious, grey-haired women, some with daughters and granddaughters, whom all came to 'pay homage to a great woman and a great leader'.⁶⁴ The first service in 1931, following the unveiling of

⁶² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 July 1947, LOU.LON 609. Christabel sent a message from America, 'My thoughts are with you, as always, on this day. My love to you all'.

⁶³ On the ten-year anniversary of her death, The Journal of *Equal Rights* published a memorial to Mrs Pankhurst. Elsa Gye qualified the chosen date of commemoration, the anniversary of her birth as the Fellowship, 'wishes to rejoice in the fact that Emmeline Pankhurst was born'. *Equal Rights*, vol 24, Issue 17, 1938, p.320.

⁶⁴ In 1931 Winifred Mayo of the Fellowship advised readers of *The Woman's Leader* that a Memorial service was to be held at St Johns Church Westminster followed by a procession to nearby Tower Gardens to lay flowers at the statue of Mrs Pankhurst. A Suffragette Fellowship *Flyer* noted a celebration of the 'Birthday of the late Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst, whose magnificent and successful leadership of the famous militant Suffragette movement has won for her the recognition in the recent reviews of the 25 years of King George's reign'. The Life of Emmeline Pankhurst, *Equal Rights*, vol 24, Issue 17, 1938, p.320. 'Coming Events', *The Woman's Leader*, 10 July 1931, p.8. June/July 1931, Women's Library 7VJH/1/3/06.

a statue to Mrs Pankhurst's memory in March 1930, was described by the *Common Cause* as 'simple, yet beautiful'. Many Suffragettes and supporters signed the dedication programme later preserved for the Suffragette Fellowship Collection.⁶⁵ Over five decades the Fellowship hosted many guest speakers at the July ceremony, including leaders of feminist organisations from England, Australia, India and the United States, women MPs and women of note in the civil service. Attendees described the service to Mrs Pankhurst as an emotional and moving experience.⁶⁶ In 1937, the commemorative service for Mrs Pankhurst was held in the early evening. The Fellowship were delighted to report on the larger crowd than usual. The Reverend Paul Gliddon, alias 'Charles Gray' Suffragette prisoner, addressed the crowd at the Memorial. However, not all attendees were impressed by the level of emotion displayed at the service. Phillipa (Pippa) Strachey, recalled accidentally entering the commemorative event and described the scene sarcastically as something that 'can (only) perhaps be fully savoured only by those who are well briefed on Edwardian *Suffragetterry*'.⁶⁷ The following year, 1938, Archdeacon Canon Lewis Donaldson gave the address, and Suffragette Myra Sadd-Brown laid a wreath in Mrs Pankhurst's memory.⁶⁸ In July 1939 Christabel attended the memorial event where roses, lilies, hydrangeas and carnations, in the colours, filled the church for the evening service, also conducted by Canon Lewis Donaldson. The women marched out of the church carrying the flowers to the tune of *March of the Women*. A newspaper suggested that the statue,

⁶⁵ 'Emmeline Pankhurst', *The Woman's Leader, Common Cause*, 24 July 1931, p.5. 'Mrs Pankhurst 1931', *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2, 50.082, p.138.

⁶⁶ Letter to unknown from Veronica Bedford, July 1933, The Women's Library, LSE 9/31/55. In 1933 Veronica Bedford described the wreath laying at Mrs Pankhurst statue 'so friendly and simple, such genuine feeling, I enjoyed it all so much.'

⁶⁷ B. H. Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries: Portraits of British Feminists between the Wars*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York: Clarendon Press, 1987, p.182. Harrison describes the scene, 'It went on and on. Companion of Pippa, Thena Clough, made comic interjections in a deep bass voice, but then Mrs How-Martyn got up, indicated that Pippa was sitting in the corner and praised her efforts on spinsters' pensions. Applause followed. This says Pippa, was altogether too ghastly for words; I never knew anything more shocking to the feelings!'

⁶⁸ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 8 July 1938, LOU.LON 717. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1938.

‘seemed to welcome them and perhaps revived for a moment for them that hey-day which usually only comes once in a lifetime’.⁶⁹

The memorial service continued against the backdrop of World War II. In 1942 members, wearing medals, honoured their leader and laid flowers at her feet, joined by young women from the Women in Westminster movement, who observed a minute’s silence after Madame Heisser laid a wreath in memory of women in occupied France.⁷⁰ Services in 1943 and 1944 continued to cement the legacy of Mrs Pankhurst as a symbolic heroine of the ages, representative of all women and girls who suffered and sacrificed during the current conflict.⁷¹ Miss Megan Lloyd George and Lady Astor sent messages of remembrance. Miss George expressed her view that her father had ‘such great admiration and respect for Mrs Pankhurst, and I have been brought up to revere her name’. Lady Astor said, ‘I wish that the thousands of young women who are fighting this battle for freedom in all walks of life could realise what Mrs Pankhurst fought to give them their chance – ignorance, prejudice and centuries of blindness – much more difficult to conquer than the Nazis’.⁷² Noting the difficulties endured by many at that time, reporters cryptically referring to ultra-militant Suffragette activities, stated ‘many of them had suffered from the results of flying bombs, but they did not talk about ‘my bomb’.⁷³ At the war’s end in 1945, Edith How-Martyn, now residing in Australia, marked the Memorial Day to Mrs Pankhurst with fifty women at the United Woman’s Association rooms in Sydney.⁷⁴ In July 1946 women provided a spectacle, as a procession of ‘old

⁶⁹ ‘Pankhurst Memorial Service’, *Manchester Guardian*, 15 July 1939, p.12. The women marched out of the church carrying the flowers to the tune of *March of the Women*. Notice, Suffragette Fellowship, May/June 1939, Women’s Library LSE GB/106/EWD/E3, The service also supported by Women’s Guild of Empire, WFL, Six Point Group, Actress Franchise League, British Commonwealth League and National Union of Women Teachers.

⁷⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1942, The Women’s Library LSE, 7TBG. At Home and Abroad, *I.W.S.G International Women’s News*, vol 36, Issue 11, 1942.

⁷¹ The Catholic Suffragists, Women for Westminster, Les Feminists Francaises placed floral tributes at the statue. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1944, Papers and objects of Bessie Rischbieth, 1900-1967 [manuscript] National Library Australia, Object : 433180222.

⁷² ‘Suffragettes Meet’, *Western Morning News*, 15 July 1944, p.3. Megan Lloyd George, 1902-1966, Daughter of David Lloyd George and first female member of Parliament to represent a Welsh constituency. <https://www.oxforddnb.com.rp.nla.gov.au/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34572?rskey=wT8EbU&result=2>

⁷³ ‘Suffragettes Meet’, *The Evening News*, 20 July 1944, p.3.

⁷⁴ ‘Suffragettes swap jail yarns over cup of tea’, *The Daily Telegraph NSW*, 14 July 1945, p.6.

campaigners and young sympathisers' marched en masse from the Richard Coeur de Lion Statue by St Stephens entrance to the House of Commons, carrying flowers, to the statue of their former leader. Many women wearing campaign medals walked in reverence to their heroine, fully alive in their memory.⁷⁵



Figure 4. Procession in honour of Mrs Pankhurst.
14 July 1946.⁷⁶

Interestingly, in 1948, the event was hijacked by hecklers who targeted speaker Dr Summerskill, who sought to draw attention to the current debates in the country regarding the equal pay campaign. The following day Marian Lawson offered a personal apology to Dr Summerskill and stated that she considered that the Pankhurst memorial meetings were not intended to be political meetings.⁷⁷ The following year journalist Charles Bode published a descriptive piece describing Fellowship female members as women of the 'right type of society mothers and grandmothers'. Bode continued by pointing out that this particular group of women provided unique, evocative and interesting commentary, 'Yet, if you listened to their conversation, you might doubt your ears. They don't talk about old lace and Staffordshire china, nor do they mention their grandchildren or the good old time. After all, those good old times weren't so very good

⁷⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1946, The oldest marcher was Mrs Elizabeth MacLachlan age 92. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 5 July 1946, LOU.LON 119. Images of aged women marching in procession and laying flowers at the plinth of Mrs Pankhurst held in the Suffragette *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London. Reel 14/50.82/1429 -30.

⁷⁶ 'Procession held in honour of Mrs Pankhurst's Birthday', 14 July 1946'. The Women's Library LSE 50.82/1429.

⁷⁷ Marian Lawson to Dr Summerskill, 15 July 1948, LSE 7TBG Box 401.

for them. Police, jail, prison guards, violence and arrests – that's the topic of their conversation'.⁷⁸

In 1950 the Fellowship, always mindful of putting on a show, instructed guests to wear their best regalia as 'the ceremony [at the Statue] is to be Televised'. Footage captured the long 'stream of supporters carrying flowers'.⁷⁹ *The Bulletin* reported that the large procession of 'various women's organisations laying their wreaths and sprays of flowers [was] most impressive, and not least so, was a contingent of schoolgirls in their school blazers – a sight to gladden the heart of an old Suffragette'. The Fellowship's press release asserted that 'our crying need is to present the idea of feminism to the younger generation'.⁸⁰ Dame Laughton-Mathews, in her welcoming speech, warmly acknowledged the younger members of the audience. She noted that 'these schoolgirls know Mrs Pankhurst only as a historical fact, that is what the woman's movement is today. It has become part of English history. That is not to say the fight is over'. *The Bulletin* contended at the end of the evening that 'this concluded another anniversary with its beautiful ritual and friendly meeting, a gathering that is organised year after year from the conviction, as one speaker put it, that a statue alone is not enough in itself to perpetuate a noble memory'. Reporters, noting the effect of advancing age, stated the spectacle of witnessing women marching past the statue of Mrs Pankhurst was 'something fine, as well as a little pathetic'. It is interesting to consider whether (if commentators dared to express the opinion) the sight of former male soldiers marching to commemorate past deeds would also be viewed as 'pathetic'.⁸¹ The following year, July 1951, the event was a testament to the enduring friendships and networks. *The Women's Bulletin* reported that 'old friends met, spoke of old times, gossiped, then made their way to Caxton Hall'.⁸² Vera Brittain spoke of the influence 'the fight for the

⁷⁸ C. Bode., 'Granny's Revolution', *Britannia & Eve*, July 1949, p.25, p.58. Bode noted that brooches worn by the women are 'coveted medals' who in the good old days had been in jail.

⁷⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Anniversary of Mrs Pankhurst Birthday*, 14 July 1950. Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279. 'Political History', *Eastbourne Gazette*, 19 July 1950, p.16.

⁸⁰ 'Flowers for Mrs Pankhurst', *The Nottingham Journal*, 3 July 1950, p.4. Crowds gathered to hear speeches by Lady Pethick-Lawrence, Mrs Barbara Castle MP, Doreen Gorsky and Irene Ward MP.

⁸¹ *The Women's Bulletin*, 9 June 1950, LOU.LON 470. 'Remembering Mrs Pankhurst Birthday', *The Sphere*, 29 July 1950, pp.26-27. Fellowship members, Geraldine Lennox, Janet Barrowman and Barbara Wylie, were photographed for *The Sphere*.

⁸² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 June 1951, LOU.LON 217.

vote had had on her generation' and of her profound admiration for Mrs Pankhurst. Mrs Duval spoke of the nature of Mrs Pankhurst's 'personality and strength' and proudly displayed a white satin banner made from her own dress worn at a votes for women procession.⁸³

However, commemorative events and associated media coverage would often provoke public debates centred on historic actions of the commemorated leaders. In 1952 suffragist supporter Mrs Northcroft took offence when Lilian Lenton's July speech was reproduced in the *Bulletin*. Mrs Northcroft was incensed at comments by Lilian Lenton that women 'owed more to Mrs Pankhurst' than others 'who worked for years, nobody cared' and that 'the milder militancy of the WFL only got publicity and promises'. Lilian later attempted to contextualise her statement by stating she did acknowledge the work of others, and her phrase 'no one cared' was taken out of context when published in the WFL newsletter. In the next edition of the *Bulletin*, Lilian provided further context for her speech, noting that the evening was to Honour the memory of Mrs Pankhurst and that she was 'in no way underestimating the value of the work done by the feminist pioneers, but I was not talking about them. It was Mrs Pankhurst's birthday, and the meeting was to called to do honour to Mrs Pankhurst – and no other'.⁸⁴ The following year many representatives of feminist organisations met at Caxton Hall, where Enid Goulden-Bach, in recognition of the successful work of the Fellowship to immortalise Mrs Pankhurst, stated that, 'she is being dead, yet liveth'.⁸⁵ Dr Fairfield attributed the beginning of the welfare state to the work of Mrs Pankhurst and fellow Suffragettes.⁸⁶

In 1954, suffragist, Miss Picton-Turbervill stated that she 'was an old lady now. But I am determined to come once to pay tribute to Mrs Pankhurst; I feel that I am sailing under false colours for I was never a member of the WSPU but of the NUWSS, led by Dame Millicent Fawcett, whose policy was effective but certainly not dramatic like that

⁸³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 July 1951, LOU.LON 217. Messages received from Annie Kenney, Teresa Billington-Greig and Lady Astor.

⁸⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 July 1952, LOU.LON 504. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1953. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 5 September 1952, LOU.LON 504.

⁸⁵ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 July 1952, LOU.LON 504. St Joan's Alliance, Six Point Group, Women's Guild of Empire, Association of Polish Women in Exile and the Liberal Social Group. Messages received from Mrs Winston Churchill, Mrs Cazalet-Keir and Barbara Wylie. Stella Newsome in *Calling all Women* 1953 reported that Rev. Hankinson had witnessed forcible feedings and eyewitness to 'Emily Wilding Davison's heroic and tragic act'.

⁸⁶ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 July 1953, LOU.LON 99.

of Mrs Pankhurst'. Miss Picton-Turbervill spoke of memories of combats 'between the Suffragettes and the Antis just before the First World War'.⁸⁷ In 1958 a flower-laying service at the statue was led by Belinda Goulden-Bach, a great-niece of Emmeline Pankhurst.⁸⁸ Charlie Marsh spoke of the 'good men', Reverend Hankinson and Mr Brailsford, who had supported women's suffrage. Following the 1959 unveiling of the addition of the memorial 'wings' to Christabel, Speaker Joyce Butler MP highlighted Mrs Pankhurst's work with families and children. She said, 'we cannot all be "stars", but we can show the way that ordinary women can do these things, and we feel the Suffragettes showed the way'.⁸⁹ Notably, despite the addition of Christabel to the memorial to Mrs Pankhurst in 1959, the Fellowship appeared to focus solely on the memory of her mother at July commemorative services.

In 1960, at an evening meeting that followed the wreath-laying service, guests heard distinguished women speakers: Mrs Corbett-Ashby, Mrs Cruickshank, Joan Dugdale and Conservative MP, Mrs Margaret Thatcher. Mrs Cruickshank gave an account of her Suffragette activities.⁹⁰ The service to Mrs Pankhurst continued in the 1960s without interruption. Female politicians, from both sides of politics, provided support to the Fellowship to commemorate the public memory of Mrs Pankhurst, and by association, also their perceived support for militant activities.⁹¹ Grace Roe highlighted to attendees that, despite the focus on Mrs Pankhurst on her memorial day, the Fellowship was 'not a Pankhurst organisation, but will pay honour to all leaders of women'. Grace spoke of Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence and Mrs Despard as pioneers of the militant movement. Mary Phillips diplomatically believed that Mrs Pankhurst was the leader who 'won the

⁸⁷ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 July 1954, LOU.LON 260. Miss Picton-Turbervill recalled she was at the Albert Hall when Mrs Pankhurst called the meeting to rebellion in 1912.

⁸⁸ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, LOU.LON 632. Dr Summerskill spoke of votes for women opening professions to women. Dame Irene Ward paid tribute to Suffragettes and Lady Astor 'gave a racy speech', which 'always delighted us'. Speakers were Excellency, Begum Ikramullah of Pakistan and Mrs Marais, who spoke of the Black Sash movement in South Africa.

⁸⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, LOU.LON 632. Her Excellency, Begum Ikramullah of Pakistan recalled how an Aunt of hers was called 'Mrs Pankhurst' and stated she believed that Indian women 'started where Britain left off' by achieving the vote in 1919. Suffragette Fellowship, *Anniversary of Mrs Pankhurst Birthday*, 14 July 1959. LSE 7ACP.

⁹⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1960, LOU.LON 533. Thatcher argued that, 'we should all agree that they should not concentrate on women's affairs but the community as a whole'. Stating that 'Women are as much affected by taxation for instance as men'.

⁹¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1960, LOU.LON 533. Stella Newsome used the occasion to pay a further tribute to founder Edith How-Martyn by noting her final generous act as benefactor to the Fellowship.

hearts of all' and recalled her 'special joy at working with Sylvia Pankhurst in the East End'. In 1966 Mary Leigh was photographed holding the flag belonging to Emily Wilding-Davison. Liddington argues that the ageing frail Suffragettes could be described as feeling 'increasingly like the last drying leaves on the Edwardian suffrage tree'.⁹² The 1967 commemoration service at Tower Gardens and Caxton Hall featured speakers Elsie Bowerman and Lt Col Margaret Marsh. Miss Bowerman spoke of her work with the WSPU and the 'great role' of Mrs Pankhurst in World War I.⁹³ In 1969 the Fellowship invited guests to 'March with the Suffragettes' from the House of Commons to the statue in Tower Gardens to honour the 'Leader of Women'. Guests also attended a tea party in the House of Commons with representatives of 'some 40 women's organisations, guests and invited press' and hosted by Dame Irene Ward, who, in addition to Baroness Summerskill and Mrs Joyce Butler, paid tribute to Mrs Pankhurst. The Fellowship described the spectacle of women marching with police as a 'colourful scene' which was filmed by the BBC and contrasted the scene with Suffragette days of 'the presence of uniformed women police on duty at the statue' that aroused public interest. *Calling all Women* believed that 'Emmeline would have enjoyed this gesture of recognition!'.⁹⁴ The following year the Fellowship invited three male politicians across all parties to speak at Caxton Hall –the Rt Hon J Boyd-Carpenter, Lord Sorensen and Lord Wade, who all paid tribute to Mrs Pankhurst.⁹⁵

It is clear that the one day in July focused solely on remembrance of Mrs Pankhurst was an intrinsic component of Fellowship-centred commemorative activities and was ably supported by the use of spectacle and with uptake by the media providing mass coverage. Though coverage of commemorations to her memory had triggered contestation of her leadership, Emmeline was remembered with great public affection

⁹² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 11 August 1961, LOU.LON 533. Suffragette Fellowship, *Notice of Anniversary of Mrs Pankhurst's Birthday Service*, 14 July 1961, The Women's Library LSE 7TBG FL 244. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1962, The Women's Library LSE 2JSA/G3. Speakers: Dr Patricia Elliot and the Begum Ikramulla. Liddington, *Rebel Girls: Their Fight for the Vote*, 2006, p.310. Suffragette Fellowship, *Mrs Pankhurst Birthday Invitation*, 14 July 1966, Women's Library LSE 7ACP. Front Cover, *International Women's News*, vol 61, Issue 9, 1966, p.73.

⁹³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Notice of Mrs Pankhurst's Birthday*, 14 July 1967, The Women's Library LSE 7MLB/G/01.

⁹⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969. 'March with the Suffragettes', Invitation to meet at Richard Coeur De Lion Statue by the Stephen's entrance House of Commons', 14 July 1969, Women's Library LSE 7MLB/G/01.

⁹⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970.

by living Suffragettes. Members and supporters from all classes of society ensured that Mrs Pankhurst would continue to remain a revered public icon. Supporters, born after her death, including women MPs and a future first female Prime Minister, diplomatically assisted the Fellowship in honouring its former leader.

Prisoner Day – Bravery and Sacrifice

The third dedicated day of obligation, Prisoner Day, was held annually on 13 October, or thereabouts, to commemorate the first imprisonment of Suffragettes Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst on 13 October 1905. The Fellowship posted a notice in *The Vote* in October 1932 advising readers that a 'Prisoners Rally' was to be held at the Women's Service House in Marsham Street. A carefully prepared press release was also issued to the media: 'fifty white-haired women, carrying banners of green, white and purple are meeting in London next Thursday. They are the veterans of the Votes for Women campaign, and the banners are those which they bore in their youthful days in battles with the police'. The release continued, 'all the women present will have memories of the hunger strikes, bruised and broken limbs gained in conflicts with the police, and countless indignities that they suffered in their fight for franchise'. Attendees were to include Flora Drummond, Charlotte Marsh, and Geraldine Lennox, 'who spent six months in prison in 1913 for sub-editing the official paper of the movement'. Mindful of the media's appetite for colourful images, the Fellowship also informed journalists that 'exhibits to be on display included a prison cap and uniform worn by Mrs Montefiore, who smuggled the garments out when released from prison'.⁹⁶ An extensive history of organised events, and associated supporters of Prisoners Day is provided in Chapter 6 *Prison and Prisoners*, highlighting a select list of speakers that included former prisoners and prison staff and current staff of the prison service, including female governors, and feminist groups concentrating on reforms to improve conditions for female inmates, including discussion on objects and relics made by prisoners and items relating to their imprisonment.

⁹⁶ 'Suffragette Fellowship Prisoner Rally', *The Vote*, 30 September 1932, p.7. 'Suffragettes Reunion', *Gloucestershire Echo*, 7 October 1932, p.4.

Regional Days of Obligation

The Fellowship also made efforts to commemorate suffrage history in areas outside London. The Fellowship understood members in regional and rural areas of England had difficulties with the cost and effort it took to venture to London three times a year. Members in Scotland and Manchester volunteered to host reunion events in their local communities. *Calling all Women* reported in 1969 that local press in Scotland covered a Fellowship commemorative luncheon where hundreds of women dined, surrounded by ornate decorations in the tricolours of the WSPU. Scottish Suffragette and poet Helen Cruickshank, wearing Suffragette regalia, received loud applause and was interviewed by the press. Also reported in 1969, the Edinburgh National Library held a suffrage exhibition of 'pictures, photographs and posters' that was visited by over six thousand people. In Glasgow, Kate Evans represented the Fellowship at a Golden Jubilee meeting where *March of the Women* was sung with gusto and a sketch – 'Women against Injustice' was performed, with Christabel Pankhurst as the central figure, played by Fiona Ross. Attendees also witnessed the sight of women parading in suffrage dress, carrying Suffragette slogans and banners.⁹⁷ No doubt, in addition to pre-notice issued by the Fellowship and generous reporting by the press, the regional reunion events provided an opportune occasion to swell the membership base and reconnect with old friends.

Conclusion

Days of Obligation were focused on the highest ideals of tradition, duty and remembrance, organised, and presented, as a highly ritualised group of events, filtered through a series of repetitive activities that included wearing 'the colours, conveying speeches, reliving songs, prayers to the departed and lively exchanges of lived memories via a ready network of people anchored together for life.

Suffrage 'politics', evoked by commemorations, threatened to subvert the commemorative efforts of the Fellowship, which endeavoured to present an

⁹⁷ Fellowship member Hannah Mitchell also organised a gathering in Manchester to commemorate Votes for Women Day and a Memorial Day to Mrs Pankhurst. Purvis notes that Hannah writing to Edith How-Martyn in the 1950's was an attempt to gather Suffragette mementoes for local museums in Manchester. J. Purvis, Mitchell, [nee Webster], Hannah Maria, (1872-1956), socialist and suffragette, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Accessed 29 May 2020. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969.

uncontested legacy of its leader by becoming the dominant and legitimate provider of the public history of the suffrage movement. Thus, the Fellowship endeavoured to take control of any commemorative voids that had the potential to be filled with a non-preferred version of events that omitted the contribution of militant Suffragettes, and potentially that of their leader, Mrs Pankhurst.

Days of Obligation were ably assisted by the passing of time, provided an ongoing empowering experience for Suffragettes to perpetuate Suffragette memories while also testing loyalties of obligated Fellowship members and supporters. Members and supporters were further encouraged by an interested media, who often reported favourably on events. The Fellowship members, by reliving their shared histories together in a collective space often centred on the statue of Mrs Pankhurst erected March 1930, were also claiming a moral victory that assisted in thwarting any public discussion on the legitimacy of their militant actions, or on the public legacy of their leaders. They were ably assisted by gatherings of allied supporters of all classes and professions and aided by high-ranking politicians, members of the clergy and high-profile feminists, including the future first female Prime Minister of Britain.

Tellingly, Edith How-Martyn's 1930 statement, 'Comradeship is the Essence of Remembrance' and the ongoing memory work of the Fellowship is highly reflective of a statement by Assmann: 'Remembering is a realisation of belonging, even a social obligation'.⁹⁸ Membership of the Fellowship gifted participants with a pre-prepared group identity that was also extended by the network of allies. Moreover, as Halbwach argues, 'if the group itself has ceased to exist, or if our connection with it has come to an end, our ability to recall things that we experienced as members of the group will be curtailed'.⁹⁹ It was thus imperative to the Fellowship to continue staging the commemorative events for as long as possible. Despite the disappearance in public history of Days of Obligation, there remains an archival trace, allowing researchers and historians to source media coverage of events, archival documents and images. This has also led to a cultural memory of suffrage history that preferences accounts of Suffragettes over suffragists.

⁹⁸ J. Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', in Erll and A. Nünning, eds, *Cultural Memory Studies*, Berlin, New York, 2008, pp.109-118.

⁹⁹ Halbwach, *On Collective Memory*, 1992. pp.278-9. Halbwach argues that 'in reality, we are never alone', Cited in Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, pp.162-163.

A Fellowship-organised Votes for Women Day disappeared post-1968. However, the Memorial Day to Mrs Pankhurst continued to operate into the 1980s.¹⁰⁰ By the late 1960s and into the 1970s the surviving Days of Obligation had largely fallen victim to the infirmity of old age and the passing of original Suffragettes. After Lilian Lenton and Grace Roe retired from public life, responsibility for organising commemorative events fell on President Enid Goulden-Bach. The rise of women's liberation and media focus on a new breed of radical feminists shifted public interest away from Edwardian Suffragette history, now firmly set in the past.¹⁰¹ In conclusion, the decades of memory work commemorating rank and file Suffragettes on Prisoners Day and Votes for Women day has not endured in public memory. However, the statue of Mrs Pankhurst continues to host feminist groups and often remains a focus of feminist campaigns.

Chapter 3, *Memorials and Monuments* examines Fellowship-supported campaigns to create a range of memorials and monuments to the memory of militant leaders and rank and file Suffragettes.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter 2 – *Days of Obligation*.

¹⁰¹ See Chapter 10 - *Pankhurst to the Pill*.

Chapter 3 Memorials and Monuments

Introduction

This chapter examines the contested nature inherent in the establishment of memorials to militant suffrage leaders, and the later addition of 'wing plinths' commemorating Christabel Pankhurst in 1959 that triggered public, and private, discourse that continued to test Suffragette loyalties.

Gough argues that whilst a memorial preserves the memory of the role of an individual, and is 'intimate, local and personal' in a public sphere, a monument is sizable, with 'longevity and visibility', a grandiose object to promote specific ideals and aspirations.¹ Memorials and monuments are infused with emotion, more so when erected in living memory, and Suffragettes continually utilised the statue of Mrs Pankhurst to re-enact the past, to give voice to the present and to bestow hopes for the future.

The statue of Mrs Pankhurst and the fact that the Prime Minister was the principal speaker at the dedication of the Pankhurst statue in 1930 demonstrated that the leader of the militant campaign and her dedicated followers were redeemed in the eyes of the public. Anti-militant accounts of the suffrage campaign, including by Dangerfield, claimed it was the war effort of the women and not their militancy that had won the vote and that later legitimised the legacy of former militants. Mayhall has also argued that the contribution of Emmeline Pankhurst to the war effort was the 'right kind of sacrifice'.²

The Politics of Commemoration

After its formal establishment July 1931, the Fellowship not only accepted responsibility for guardianship of the statue, its members also took on the role of 'memory specialists' of suffrage histories by offering an ongoing commemorative diet of repetition, spectacle and solemn remembrance, often anchored to created suffrage memorials and monuments. Memorials and monuments helped to anchor commemorations by drawing Suffragettes together to commemorate former leaders, effectively creating a fitting

¹ G. J. Ashworth, 'The Memorialization of Violence and Tragedy: Human Trauma as Heritage', in P. Howard and B. Graham., eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, Ashgate, Abingdon, 2012, p.217.

² L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, p.335.

'afterlife' for Emmeline Pankhurst and her comrades by controlling the location, imagery, pose and representation of Mrs Pankhurst as a heroic, fearless leader. The Pankhurst statue was created by followers as an expression of their devotion, loyalty and affection. It was established as a form of insurance against forgetting and provided a physical embodiment of public approval, aimed at contemporary and future generations, and helping to suppress dissent about the legacy of militant history. The Pankhurst statue thus created an impetus for ongoing commemorations and was also, in part, responsible for the genesis and longevity of the Fellowship.

Following Mrs Pankhurst's death in June 1928, the Fellowship and its supporters attempted to present her in a neat and tidy, not so radical, package as a worthy leader with an unquestioned legacy. This has often led to unfavourable reviews of Mrs Pankhurst in comparison to her daughter Sylvia, who is often labelled the 'good feminist'.³ Ken Inglis contends that monuments are 'bearers of collective memory' and a 'type of speech'.⁴ The Fellowship capitalised on the statue as a focal point (for some, a contentious location) to articulate the collective view of former militants and allies. The Fellowship offered up its fallen leader as a noble woman of history, represented by claiming ownership of the contested site in proximity to the seats of power in Westminster, and that was supported by regular ritual use which provided an ongoing legitimacy for the location of the statue as a badge of honour. However, the aim of memorialising is to safeguard the memory of individuals and events from their historic pasts by those left behind. The process of actively curating a cultural memory of the deceased is often a delicate balance of both remembering and forgetting. The Fellowship effectively utilised memorials and monuments to smooth over disagreements, to provide an opportunity to regroup allies, to network and instil a collective identity that was the most effective way to drown out any contemporary opposition to militant action. Over a lifetime of memory work, the Fellowship was tasked with not only safeguarding the continued existence of the memorial to Mrs Pankhurst but also faced another dilemma: how to accurately and fairly portray its leader, within members' living memory, without losing sight of her complexities or the contested nature of the Pankhurst family dynamics, suffrage politics and public claims that militancy hindered the timeliness and effectiveness of achieving votes for women. The Fellowship,

³ See Chapter 10 – *Pankhurst to the Pill*

⁴ K. S. Inglis, 'Introduction', in K. S. Inglis and J. Brazier, *Sacred Places : War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Miegunyah Press at Melbourne University Press, 1998, p.7.

therefore, chose to take the more accessible path to immortalise its leader, one that would tone down her more radical past in order to protect her public memory.

Emmeline Pankhurst was praised by many militant campaigners, suffrage activists, feminist writers and dignitaries, who penned obituaries and testimonials to the woman who had led scores of women, and inspired men to follow by example. Her memory became linked to certain qualities: a 'born leader', eloquent, visionary, courageous, inspirational, selfless, who possessed a 'greatness of spirit' were all terms used to describe Mrs Pankhurst posthumously.⁵ The memory of Emmeline, as leader, was effectively reactivated each July via commemorative rituals, also representing the shared pasts of many Suffragettes.⁶ Even in death, Mrs Pankhurst, under the careful management of the Fellowship, was to become even taller in stature and more strongly represented as the ultimate figurehead of the militant suffrage movement.

Commemorating the Women's War

Winter suggests that the path for a public figure to achieve an 'afterlife' via public memorialisation has three stages. The first phase is the 'creative period', followed by the 'transformative period'. The final phase, the most crucial, is the legacy phase which is, according to Winter, 'largely contingent on whether the second generation of mourners inherits the earlier meanings attached to the place or event and adds new meanings'. It was crucial for the Fellowship to firstly create the physical reminder of members' militant pasts, through the statue of Mrs Pankhurst, and secondly, to ensure that cultural memories of their shared past and former selves were impressed solidly upon younger generations, allies, future historians and the public.⁷

Suffragettes, in their day, wanted to create a legacy of shared experiences, marking sites of memory to commemorate their place in historic events, and memorialise fallen comrades. This included ceremonial tree plantings at Eagle House estate in Bath in suffrage days through to Fellowship activities in 1970 to commemorate the 'unknown and

⁵ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*, 2002, p.355. Purvis quoting writer Beatrice Harraden.

⁶ WFL. *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, LOU.LON 632. Miss Picton-Turberville noted that the statue commemorates 'the courage and endurance of all who worked with her'.

⁷ J. Winter, 'Rites of Remembrance', *BBC History*, November 2000, pp.22-25.

unhonoured' militant Suffragettes.⁸ Suffragettes in the fight drew strength and courage from sister Suffragettes, that was later encouraged by the Fellowship reminding members that they had a moral duty to remember the past and honour the fallen. However, the duty of remembering, according to Todorov, is not to 'establish the facts of the past as fully as possible' but rather to defend 'a particular selection from among these facts'. A selective memory of this sort allows the protagonist to maintain 'the roles of hero or victim'. It is a strategy to protect and preserve the role of achieving a moral victory as the oppressed over oppressors.⁹ Also, Cubitt argues that memorials and monuments act as a physical repository of the 'afterlife of things and events are 'objects of consciousness' after events and lives have been lived. ¹⁰ Chidgey also notes the process and practices of memorialisation that aim to legitimise sacrifice in order to find a higher meaning (in war). Mirroring the language employed at her funeral by clergy and media reportage, the Fellowship continued to portray Emmeline Pankhurst as a heroic leader of women by using rhetoric in her memorialising that was effective in also drowning out any opposition to militancy.¹¹ In essence, the statue was also established to bury any memories of opposition to the war. Thus, if former suffrage activists did not agree with the actions of militant Suffragettes during the suffrage movement, they were painted as unpatriotic and unsupportive of later efforts of the women during the war. Mayhall argues that 'the emphasis on the centrality of the war to the enfranchisement of women mirrored public discourse on women in the 1920s', a discourse that focused on the sacrifice and loss endured by women during the Great War. That was fully aided by the Suffragette Fellowship, who 'valorised and romanticised' Emmeline Pankhurst and her use of militancy as another form of political violence to women.¹² Thus, the Fellowship was able to activate memorials and monuments to capture and embody a sense of duty by offering a physical representation of members' shared pasts.

⁸ 'Suffragettes Museum', *Tweed Daily*, 15 November 1938, p.8. In November it was reported that Suffragettes were attempting to save a stand of trees planted by Suffragettes at Eagle House Bath in pre-war days.

⁹ Cubitt, *History and Memory*:2007, p.56. Cubitt argues, 'the conception of remembering as a moral duty is always, in other words, partial in its application, and geared to fixing not only what is to be remembered, but how it is to be remembered'.

¹⁰ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.10.

¹¹ Chidgey, 'Feminist Assemblages', 2013, p.368.

¹² L. Mayhall, 'Domesticating Emmeline: Representing the Suffragette 1930-1993', *NWSA Journal*, vol 11, no. 2,1999, pp.1-24.

Gendered Meaning in Form and Shape of the Figurative Figure in Statuary

Winter argues that the form, shape and pose of statues and monuments often take on a gendered form. Winter argues that the 'masculine' in war statuary is represented in uniform, with 'redemptive hope'.¹³ Abousnnouga argues that while men are idealised as classical figures, 'unaffected by grief or exertion', women always display 'concepts of innocence', with no evidence of the brutality of war. Similar to typical post-war memorialising, Mrs Pankhurst is stood upon a raised plinth, gazing outward and gesturing to all present to take heed, to act – Deeds not Words! The monument forces those present to look up to her for inspiration. The statue is draped in clothing presented in the style of the 1920s and not as a younger, hatted Edwardian woman. As outlined by Abousnnouga, war monuments are infused with the 'appearance of life', using clothing and material creating a form that is typified by 'naturalism and idealisation'. Reflecting this, sculptor Walker portrayed Emmeline within a naturalistic movement, posed as if she is about to step off the plinth and lead her followers into the nearby Houses of Parliament.¹⁴ The statue of Mrs Pankhurst depicts her as neither weak nor innocent, with no evidence of inflicted trauma, yet undoubtedly those who gazed upon her were reliving their traumas. Fred Pethick-Lawrence, in 1958, considered the monument of Mrs Pankhurst to be more worthy than nearby statutes of the Burghers of Calais or Boadicea. He saw it as the embodiment of womanhood, stating that Emmeline was 'elegant, gentle, fragile, feminine' with a 'passionate thirst for life' and 'unbelievable courage', but inflexible and 'ruthless determination'.¹⁵ She is portrayed with head held high, robust, confident and natural in her pose. Her supporters were keen to portray her intelligence and strength of character. It was a purposeful pose that reflected their belief in her as a leader and role model. Noticeably, the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst is traditional in form and shape yet not entirely representative of her gender, according to the conventions of that time. The statue was designed to display not only her achievements but to also mirror survivors intrinsic sense of purpose and hope for the future. However, to those who knew her, the monument of Mrs Pankhurst, as it stood in comparison to surrounding statues, represented (their) idealised version of womanhood.

¹³ J. Winter, 'The Geometry of Memory', *Monash University Arts*, 25 August 2016. Accessed 23 December 2018. <https://vimeo.com/180258623>

¹⁴ G. Abousnnouga, D. Machin, 'Visual Discourses of the Role of Women in War Commemoration: A Multimodal Analysis of British War Monuments', *Journal of Language & Politics*, 10.3, 2011, pp.322-346.

¹⁵ WFL. *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, LOU.LON 632. Lord Pethick-Lawrence argued, "I need not remind this audience that Mrs Pankhurst possessed all these qualities to a superlative degree".

Smoothing the Edge

The monument to Mrs Pankhurst is devoid of descriptive detail outlining acts committed by her, or her followers, of civil disobedience, or of imprisonments or forcible feedings. It includes no evidence of historic splits within suffrage groups or of opposition to her support of militant activities or to her later support of the government in recruiting young men to fight in World War I.¹⁶

Over time monuments often attract specific meanings, by a continually re-contextualised discussion of the past by differing groups who may be opposed to what the memorial or monument has either represented over time or within any given current political climate. Purvis notes that Emmeline is remembered today more for her radical leadership than any other aspect of her political life post-suffrage.¹⁷ Vera Brittain, author and feminist, when asked why a statue Mrs Pankhurst existed, but not one of Mrs Fawcett, surmised that as Mrs Pankhurst had 'so obviously possessed courage, imagination and a flair for publicity' this had made it easy to credit 'her with winning votes for women' and that this was also 'politically expedient' at that time. Historian Brian Harrison argued that Brittain believed that in interwar England there was a 'desire to bury old controversies' and that those who canonised the 'heretic' Mrs Pankhurst were able to 'close the door on the uncomfortable past'. Harrison believed it was also an easy 'shorthand' a way to explain the problematic past.¹⁸ Thus, former militant campaigners established a major monument to their leader as insurance against the failure of collective memory.

The afterlives of memorials are only guaranteed through continued visitations and when tied to events centred on markers of history. Winter argues that war memorials function 'only when the memory for which they stand is rehearsed' over and over and 'made meaningful by those who visit them'.¹⁹ Marilyn Lake also suggests that memorials, and in

¹⁶ See Chapter 10 – *Pankhurst to the Pill*, The wholehearted support provided by Mrs Pankhurst and Christabel to support government efforts, on the outbreak of the Great War, led to schisms within the militant campaigners and preferencing of Sylvia Pankhurst by later feminists as the 'good feminist'.

¹⁷ J. Purvis, 'Emmeline Pankhurst in the Aftermath of Suffrage', in Gottlieb, and Toye, eds, *Aftermath of Suffrage Women, Gender, and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945*, 2013, p.34.

¹⁸ Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.42.

¹⁹ C. Winter, 'Public Perceptions of War Memorials: A study in Ballarat', *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, vol.20, no.1, 2014, p.211.

particular memorials of war, exist to articulate social memory within a specified period.²⁰ Arguably, the Fellowship was utilising the Pankhurst statue as a de facto war memorial, using identifiable tropes such as branded colours, group singing, marching, flags, medals, spectacle and solemn speeches that repeatedly recalled private and public memories, to ensure that the militant suffrage history was not forgotten or lost to history. A single day of obligation, as discussed in Chapter 2, that focused on gatherings at the statue to Mrs Pankhurst remained a potent instrument of memory, an effective mechanism to keep all supporters 'on the same page' so as to create a viable legacy and a link to shared pasts. According to Cutcher, commemoration and the act of remembering links the past to the present with the hopes of influencing the future.²¹ Thus, the Fellowship instinctively knew that the key to shaping any future legacy was to retain control of who and what was to be commemorated, and how this should be done.

Site of Memory

Winter argues that the period after the First World War was the beginning of a global memory boom. Commemorative activities, specifically the erecting memorials and monuments, became commonplace across capital cities and in the regions. The physical sites of remembrance included locations directly related to past events, or replicated sites that worked as de facto sites, becoming more meaningful over time; thus, these physical sites were never situated on neutral ground. All sites were chosen with great care by select groups, or individuals, and were intended to convey the horrors and scale of past conflicts.²² Crozier-De Rosa similarly argues that statues, monuments and memorials operate within the public sphere, as a category of public memory within a physical space that offers up the potential to become a meaningful site of memory for individuals to self-reflect and for groups to gather and form a cohesive collective memory.²³ Accordingly, selection and curating the site of memorials and monuments is a highly political affair. Tensions between 'plinth and place' have a tradition steeped in history and often take

²⁰ M. Lake, *Memory, Monuments and Museums: The Past in the Present*, Melbourne, University Publishing, Carlton, 2006, pp.1-2. As argued by Lake, monuments serve to 'anchor collective remembering – a process dispersed, ever-changing and ultimately tangible'.

²¹ 'Introduction', in L. Cutcher, K. Dale, P. Hancock, M. Tyler, eds, 'Spaces and Places of Remembering and Commemoration', *Organization*, vol 23, no. 1, 2016, pp.5-6.

²² S. Sumartojo, J. Winter, 'National Identity and Commemorative Space: Connections to the Nation through Time and Site', *Landscape Review*, vol 15, no. 2, 2015, pp.7 – 18.

²³ Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, p.6.

centre stage in planning and realising monuments and statues in public places. Sites of memory are constantly in negotiation between competing individuals, official and unofficial groups, and communities with vested interests in protecting, or a desire to suppress, a public presence of contentious historical individuals in the physical landscape. Memorials, as structures, carry 'conscious and subconscious messages'; they also reflect competing interests and are a site of 'social construction'.²⁴ Rodrigo argues that memory and space are intertwined, that is, 'collective memory is grounded in social experience'.²⁵ Thus for Suffragettes the statue represented their aspirations and their shared beliefs, further cementing the bonds of sisterhood

The Death of Emmeline Pankhurst

Following the death of Emmeline Pankhurst 14 June 1928, colleagues described her courage as 'unbreakable', an 'enigmatic figure with remarkable intelligence and adored by all'. Mrs Pethick- Lawrence pointed out that 'not only all women in Britain but all women in the world owe a deep debt of gratitude and honour to Mrs Pankhurst. Without her genius and courage, they could not have attained for many, many years the position they hold today'. Tributes were also paid by Mr Lloyd George, who praised her 'genius and courage' and Mrs Lucy Baldwin, who believed that 'we women owe her a debt of gratitude for her work and self-sacrifice, the magnitude of which possibly may not be fully realised for another generation or so'.²⁶

In scenes reminiscent of a state funeral, on Sunday 17 June Mrs Pankhurst's coffin was placed on a purple catafalque surrounded by flowers in the tricolours, guarded overnight by four Suffragettes bearing flags of the WSPU and the Union Jack.²⁷ *The Vote* reported that the funeral held the next day was dignified and held within earshot of the Houses of Parliament, seen as a fitting location as the scene of 'so many suffrage battles led by the indomitable militant leader'. Suffragettes and suffragists alike came to pay a final tribute,

²⁴ P. Gough, 'Commemoration of War', in Howard and Graham, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, 2012, p.198.

²⁵ R. Rodrigo, 'Making Public Pasts: Cultural Dialogue and Negotiation in Public Space', *Landscape Review*, vol 15, no. 2, 2015, p.1.

²⁶ 'Votes for Women Pioneer', *Dundee Courier*, 15 June 1928, p.7. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.459. 'Mrs Pankhurst, Striking Tributes by Mr Lloyd George and Mrs Baldwin,' *Belfast Newsletter*, 16 June 1928, p.8.

²⁷ Pugh, *The Pankhurst's*, 2001, p.407. Reported by Pugh, unreferenced. Kitty Marshall, Rosamund Massy, Olive Walton and Dorothy Bowker.

wearing the purple, green and white sashes and brooches and badges.²⁸ Dr Cobb, one of several clergy in attendance, claimed Mrs Pankhurst was a heroic leader, who fought 'nobly, bravely and truly' and the suffrage campaign was a civil war, that was 'broken only by the outbreak of another war'.²⁹ People from all walks of life were present, including the jockey of the King's horse involved in the tragic death of Emily Wilding- Davison in 1913. On his simple wreath, he expressed magnanimously his wish 'to do honour to the memory of Mrs Pankhurst and Miss Emily Davison'.³⁰ *The Daily Mail* described Mrs Pankhurst as a dead general and mourners in the colours as a 'mourning army'. At Brompton Cemetery, more than 1,000 women marched in formation under the direction of (General) Flora Drummond who gave the order to 'Rally!'³¹ Papers highlighted the 'extraordinary scenes' as 'hundreds of women pushed and jostled to get near the graveside'. Wreaths carpeted the graveside including a touching bunch of pink carnations with a note on which was written, 'To the Liberator of Women' from Teddy, the Flower Seller.³² The account in the popular press, commenting on the unusual behaviour of women jostling to be near the grave of Mrs Pankhurst, differed from the account in *The Vote* that focused on the dignified and respectful behaviour of the women present in honouring their heroine. Writer Beatrice Harraden lamented, 'we are mourning for her today, but with grief which has in it the balm of pride and triumph: for we are consoled by the certain belief that time will give to her the honoured niche in history which is her due'.³³

²⁸ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.353. Suffragettes Barbara Wylie, Marion Wallace-Dunlop, Harriet Kerr, Ada Wright, Georgina and Marie Brackenbury, Rosamund Massey, Kitty Marshall, Marie Naylor and Mildred Mansell were Pallbearers.

²⁹ 'A Solemn Triumph', *The Vote*, 22 June 1928, p.194.

³⁰ Harrison, *Sylvia Pankhurst: A Crusading Life, 1882-1960*, 2003, p.221. Harrison described the funeral as a theatrical affair. 'Mrs Pankhurst', *The Vote*, 29 June 1928, p.202. The Women's Freedom League sent a wreath in the colours of the League stating, 'in memory of a gallant fighter for freedom'.

³¹ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.353.

³² 'Last Tributes to Women's Leader', *The Western Morning News*, 19 June 1928, p.7. 'A Suffragette Funeral', *Weekly Times Melbourne*, 23 June 1928, p.8. There were reported scenes of police controlling crowds to prevent mourners from being crushed at the graveside.

³³ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.355. quoting writer Beatrice Harraden.

A Statue to Mrs Pankhurst

Immediately after the funeral, Kitty Marshall announced to fellow pallbearers that she was determined to put up a statue in honour of Mrs Pankhurst and she set out about organising a fundraising committee that sought to raise £2,500 for a statue, a headstone at Brompton Cemetery, and a portrait of Mrs Pankhurst to be presented to the National Portrait Gallery. The Memorial Committee wrote that 'a statue is the recognised form of tribute paid to historical personalities, the highest and most lasting honour that humanity services to civilisation. As in ancient days, so now, men commemorate their heroes and liberators by erecting statues: shall not women claim equal honour for her who led them to victory'. Public donations were received from England, America and the Empire.³⁴ And so began what Winter describes as, the 'business of remembering' – that is, the act of memorialisation that is often the beginning of the action and 'not the end'. Statuary is a way to cement a 'very public legacy of an event, group or individual'.³⁵ However, the Memorial Committee members were about to discover that their efforts to gain approval to site the statue in their preferred location would be met with steely resistance from public servants determined to thwart their efforts to erect a statue within their chosen locale. All the targeted sites were viewed as part of the 'centre of power' in London, and the process was about to test the political nous of Suffragettes and the supporters of Mrs Pankhurst.

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Kitty Marshall took immediate charge to secure a meaningful space within the Westminster precinct in London, which, for Suffragettes, was the living embodiment of the imbalance of power between women and men pre-1918. All three of the preferred sites held memories of battles between militant campaigners, the government and police, including many exciting memories of deputations, scuffles with police and the Grille

³⁴ 'The fundraisers appealed directly to past friends, and comrades, stated, 'It is generally felt that the time has come to perpetuate the memory of Mrs Pankhurst, whose leadership and self-sacrificing courage inspired women to win their political enfranchisement'. *Memorial to Mrs Pankhurst, The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2, Group D, 50.082/1, p.137. Kitty recalled that despite dissent from three pallbearers who wanted other memorials to be considered a Memorial Fund Committee, determined to erect a statue in her memory. Kitty Marshall, 'The Statue to Mrs Pankhurst', *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, Z6080, 'Notes on Memorial'. Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*, 2002, p.355.

³⁵ J. Winter, 'The Geometry of Memory', *Monash University Arts*, 25 August 2016. Accessed 23 December 2018. <https://vimeo.com/180258623>.

³⁶ Q. Stevens, S. Sumartojo, 'Memorial Planning in London', *Journal of Urban Design*, vol 20, no. 5, 2015, pp.615-635. Sumartojo argues that in London there are two major centres of power, Westminster and the City, that is host to many memorials that reflect the history of control of the country.

Incident in 1908, as well as distressing memories of Black Friday in November 1910. For Suffragettes, the memory of Mrs Pankhurst, as their leader, was about to be preserved in effigy and embedded forever on the battlefields of the women's war. However, gaining approval for any preferred site, all located in the heart of Westminster, would prove to be a difficult task that would require a concerted and strategic effort by Suffragettes and their strategic allies.

Determined to secure their preferred site, Kitty Marshall contacted the Permanent Secretary of the Office of Works, Sir Lionel Earle. Kitty told him firmly that she was not seeking approval, but rather, advice about how to proceed to have a statue erected on land owned by her family, or suggested whether perhaps the government, 'could not give us a little land to put the statue on'. The Memorial Committee requested three separate locations: a space by the statue of Oliver Cromwell, a site at the top of Downing Street, or a site in Victoria Tower Gardens, as these sites were all in close proximity to the House of Lords with 'the Thames making a nice background'. Kitty recalled that the suggestion to site the statue so close to Oliver Cromwell and the Houses of Parliament, 'I am afraid, made him laugh'. Despite Earle's mirth, Kitty left the meeting satisfied that her request for a site would be granted.³⁷ However, it is possible that the first two suggestions were, in fact, an ambit claim on behalf of the memorial committee. Knowledge and experience gained during suffrage days, in addition to the advice of her husband, who was solicitor to the WSPU, would have also made her inclined to approach any negotiations with officials in a careful, tactical manner. Notably, Earle revealed in a memo that Kitty was also attempting to meet with the Prime Minister and that he (Earle) believed the statue might be more appropriate in Manchester. However, Kitty stood her ground and told him that Westminster as the 'principal battlefield of the Suffragettes' was the most appropriate location for the statue. Earle shot back, drawing on historical examples and arguing he was not aware of any other similar statue in London. Despite Earle's officious behaviour, it was ultimately a matter for Parliament to provide formal approval, and the Memorial Committee had also begun soliciting support from Members of Parliament.³⁸

³⁷ Kitty Marshall, 'The Statue to Mrs Pankhurst', *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, Z6080. Kitty believed he would accommodate her reasonable request without argument as the funding committee believed he was a friend and supporter of the movement and admirer of Mrs Pankhurst.

³⁸ *Memo* Lionel Earle, 12 November 1928, noted by ML. TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188. He mused that 'perhaps Howard, the prison reformer, at Bedford' may provide a suitable example. Kitty Marshall, 'The Statue to Mrs Pankhurst', *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, Z6080. Sir William Bull MP gave assurances to the Committee that he would be 'pleased to see the bill through the House'.

At the same time, Kitty advised Earle that a bust of Emmeline had been completed.³⁹ In response, and in an implied threat, Earle bluntly informed her that if she continued to insist on her preferred site that he had the power to make it more difficult to obtain site approval. Earle warned her, 'Your position will be made more difficult if it is completed and then a site demanded'.⁴⁰ Demonstrating his irritation at what he perceived to be the impertinence of Kitty, as the woman who would not give up, he called her 'tiresome' to a colleague; exasperated, he said he was no longer willing to provide a site on land under 'our jurisdiction' and near the Houses of Parliament or Downing Street. He pointed out in his letter to colleagues that his earlier suggestion to Kitty for a statue of Mrs Pankhurst to be erected in Manchester; however, he noted that her reply was, 'oh, but we are going to have a statue to her there as well'. He asserted to a colleague that the women were 'bent on' having the statue in their preferred location. Earle, now attempting to bury the matter altogether, suggested that his Commissioner sound out Cabinet colleagues on the 'propriety of a statue to that lady being placed anywhere in the neighbourhood of Westminster at all'. Earle further stated that he was 'inclined to postpone the matter for some time'. Earle was clearly at the end of his tether.⁴¹ At this stage, Kitty and her supporters, now realising the strength of opposition to granting a preferred site, released a model photo of the statue in August 1929 to gather additional attention and support for their cause.⁴²

Earle then received another memo advising him that Mrs Marshall was now claiming that she had received consent from the Office of Works to erect the statue on the grass plot adjoining number 10 Downing St. This latest missive appeared to prod civil servants to

³⁹ Kitty Marshall to Lionel Earle, 15 November 1928, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188.

⁴⁰ Kitty Marshall to Lionel Earle, 27 November 1928, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188.

⁴¹ Lionel Earle to First Commission, 27 November 1928, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188. Possible that Earle was referencing *Rules for Memorials Within the Palace of Westminster* No 4: states: 'No memorial shall be erected to any individual within ten years of his decease except in accordance with a resolution of both Houses of Parliament'. TNA, PWO 16/26, 30 April 1958. This notice, referring to an earlier Rule, was noted in 1958 when discussions were underway regarding the addition of a monument to Christabel Pankhurst.

⁴² 'First Image of Proposed Statue', *Yorkshire Post*, 28 Jan 1929, p.11. 'In Memory of Mrs Pankhurst', *Manchester Guardian and Sheffield Independent*, 28 August 1929. National Portrait Gallery Archives, *Emmeline Pankhurst Packet*, NPG/2360. Mrs Pankhurst wearing a mantle, or indoor coat over her dress, life-size, her right arm outstretched as if gesturing to crowds holding a pair of spectacles in her left hand. The Mantle was owned by Mrs Pankhurst, and provided to the artist by the Memorial Committee, noted by Kitty Marshall. 'Mrs Pankhurst', *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, Z6080.

conspire to delay granting a site indefinitely.⁴³ It is feasible that Kitty was embellishing her side of the story to force the bureaucrats to offer the intended targeted site in Tower Gardens. By late January 1929, in an attempt to force Earle into action, Kitty informed him that the Committee had obtained confirmation that the Prime Minister would be pleased to unveil the statue with the proviso that it would occur after the next General Election. Kitty also used a tried and true Suffragette tactic by threatening Earle that, 'we shall, of course, be able to influence women all over the country to vote as Mrs Pankhurst wishes us to for the next election'.⁴⁴ This tactic appeared to work, as the very next day, 25 January, Earle instructed Kitty that he had consulted the First Commissioner who was now prepared, with ministerial support, to allocate a site.⁴⁵

The media was then briefed that Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin had consented to unveil the statue at a still undisclosed location. One journalist reported on the irony of the Conservative Press, who had 'howled for her arrest and imprisonment', now being 'in loud praise of Mr Baldwin's action' in agreeing to unveil the statue.⁴⁶ The following month, potentially signalling a view that Mrs Pankhurst was not considered statesmanlike and thus was unworthy of being highlighted within the environment, the Fine Arts Commission suggested the statue be placed facing westwards, away from the Houses of Parliament, at the end of the central plantation, blended into the environment and surrounded by a low hedge.⁴⁷

Finally, on 24 April, Earle notified Kitty that a site shown to her on a previous visit could now be confirmed. The Memorial Committee promptly notified the press that the statue of Mrs Pankhurst was to be placed in Victoria Tower Gardens.⁴⁸ Following the press release,

⁴³ Memo, Mr Bradshaw to Lionel Earle, 10 January 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188. Letter Kitty Marshall to Lionel Earle, 24 January 1929. TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188, Earle noted that 'this is a lie', against the claim by Mrs Marshall that the Downing Street site would be approved. A Mr Bradshaw attempted to appease the Memorial committee, whilst attempting to find a way to indefinitely delay official works commencing on the site, suggested to Earle that it may "be advantageous to grant this (new) site as it was not going to be completed or would 'be proposed for a number of years.'"

⁴⁴ Letter Kitty Marshall to Lionel Earle, 24 January 1929. TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188.

⁴⁵ Lionel Earle to Kitty Marshall, 25 January 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188.

⁴⁶ 'Mrs Pankhurst's Memorial', *The Vote*, 8 Feb 1929, pp.7-8. 'House and Home', *The Daily Mail*, 31 January 1929, p.7. 'Late Mrs Pankhurst', *Sheffield Independent*, 26 January 1929, p.1. 'Mr Baldwin's Tribute', *Hull Daily Mail*, 29 January 1929, p.4. 'there is something almost comic in the news that Mr Baldwin, the figurehead of the Conservative Party, will unveil a statue to Mrs Pankhurst.'

⁴⁷ Fine Arts Commission to Lionel Earle, 21 March 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188.

⁴⁸ 'Mrs Pankhurst Memory', *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, 29 April 1929, p.2.

newspapers, the Home Office and the Board of Works received letters of protest. Reader Louise De Burgh announced that a petition had been prepared, 'on behalf of the law-abiding women citizens', 'setting forth our emphatic and strenuous appeal against the proposed public site for a memorial to Mrs Pankhurst'. In support of the protest, Helen Ford declared 'as a women suffragist of very many years, I should be glad to sign any petition against, it [the memorial] if I approved of the wording'.⁴⁹ George Rayner not only disapproved of a memorial to Mrs Pankhurst but also harboured resentment at women granted partial franchise in 1918. His indignant letter contended that 'the cold fact of the matter is the Parliamentary Enfranchisement of women was an ill-considered, rash action, a symptom of war hysteria which developed in certain politicians and was forced upon the country without ever being put before the electorate for reasoned consideration'.⁵⁰ Richard Holt of Liverpool argued he did not have 'sufficient regard for Mrs Pankhurst's political methods to desire to perpetuate her memory'. Maud Taylor commented that 'I just hate to think of the Pankhurst campaign and all its sensational epoch. I think it would have done untold harm to women and their work had not the war shown what they were really made of'.⁵¹ The Memorial Committee also requested that a seat be provided at the statue to provide visitors and elderly Suffragettes the opportunity for self-reflection.⁵²

Words and Deeds – Inscriptions Matter

Labels and inscriptions on memorials and monuments to people or events provide a varied amount of information offering historical context, including the subject's background, dates denoting era or period, professional status represented by clothing, held items, or the pose, gaze and imposed stance of historical figures.

The Memorial Committee held genuine concerns that future generations would glean no historical information or meaning from the memorial. Militant campaigners were keen to convey that the statue was known to be *the* Mrs Pankhurst, who led an army of women

⁴⁹ 'Mrs Pankhurst Memorial', *Yorkshire Post*, 20 May 1929. p.3.

⁵⁰ 'Mrs Pankhurst Memorial, The *Yorkshire Post*, 20 May 1929, p.3.

⁵¹ J. Robinson, *Hearts and Minds: The Untold Story of the Great Pilgrimage and How Women won The Vote*, Penguin Random House, 2018, pp.287-288.

⁵² Fine Art Commission to Lionel Earle, 23 July 1929, TNA, 20/188. Lionel Earle to Kitty Marshall, 23 July 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188. By July the Fine Art Commission had approved the pedestal and base. However, a request from the Memorial committee for a semi-circular seat at the statue was denied.

into battle. As survivors, her supporters believed they had a special duty to honour her memory and portray her style of leadership fairly and honestly. Supporters would not entertain the idea that their willingness to follow her into battle was a mindless act on their part. They were keen to portray Mrs Pankhurst as a fearless leader and, by association, to portray themselves as soldiers in the field who had overcome what they perceived as oppression due to their gender and who had emerged as victors. In 1930 there was no doubt as to the identity of the female figure in bronze in Tower Gardens. She was the one who had encouraged her followers to commit 'Deeds, not Words!' However, for memorials and monuments, the passing of time can be the greatest enemy of all. Accordingly, supporters of Mrs Pankhurst were very aware that over time her memory and legacy could be lost to future generations unless her presence in Tower Gardens was contextualised via a descriptive tablet or an inscription on the memorial.⁵³ Mindful of the Office of Works' request to keep any inscription as inoffensive as possible, Kitty Marshall requested permission that the words *Feminae Liberatrix*, translated as 'Liberator of Woman', be inscribed on the statue. However, Earle advice to her, in part, was that the use of adjectives was 'cheap and journalistic' and the use of Latin should be omitted.⁵⁴ Despite this Earle further advised Kitty that the phrase should be amended to 'Feminarum Liberatrix or Feminei Generis Liberatrix' as *feminae* meant one woman.⁵⁵ Earle also advised Kitty that the preferred phrase has 'become a cliché with a great deal less than its literal force', and requested that her Committee provide a simpler and more compact inscription. Though Kitty agreed with Sir Lionel's view that the use of adjectives would be indeed unsuitable for an ordinary person, however, she believed, 'this is a rather special case'.⁵⁶ However, despite these attempts by the Memorial Committee to grant Mrs Pankhurst the title of *Liberator of Women* the statue remained devoid of text, apart from

⁵³ C. Winter, 'Public Perceptions of War Memorials: A study in Ballarat', *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, vol.20, no.1, 2014, p.211.

⁵⁴ A M? to Lionel Earle, 15 August 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works 20/188. Office of Works, Internal Memo with note from Latinist Scholar, unknown, 6 November 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188, The Office of Works had also consulted with a scholar who responded that the proposed 'Feminae Liberatrix' is 'thoroughly bad Latin', as it suggests that she, Mrs Pankhurst, 'fixed one woman, on one occasion'.

⁵⁵ Earle to Marshall, 12 November 1929. TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188. Stating that, 'otherwise we shall all look fools and come in for a good deal of criticism'. Kitty Marshall letter to Private Secretary Minister of Works, approval given under Section 5 the Public Statues Act 1854, Mrs *Emmeline Pankhurst Victoria Tower Gardens*, TNA, Ministry of Works 20/188.

⁵⁶ Lionel Earle to Kitty Marshall, 24 August 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188. Kitty Marshall to Lionel Earle, September 1929, TNA, Ministry of Works, 20/188.

the name and years of birth and death, until another opportunity presented itself twenty-five years later.

Meanwhile, the Memorial Committee became busy organising an unveiling ceremony set for Thursday 6 March 1930.⁵⁷ In response to ongoing media coverage, the organising Committee received many ticket requests from former Suffragettes.⁵⁸ Before the statue left the studio, Kitty Marshall participated in a special ceremony on 18 February, placing an assortment of relics inside the statue, to be entombed within it.⁵⁹ This act signalled that relics, or objects attached to the memory of Suffragettes and to Mrs Pankhurst, as leader, were now considered as sacred. This effectively rendered the statue as a form of shrine to suffrage memories, providing her followers with a place of pilgrimage. News of this ceremony also triggered the wrath of Sylvia Pankhurst, who was incensed by a refusal of her offer to provide her medal, and by her exclusion from participating in a dinner in honour of her mother after the unveiling.⁶⁰ It is clear that Sylvia was ousted from any involvement in organising the unveiling of the statue and the offer of her medal possibly rejected in favour of Rosamund Massey's medal. Additionally, following the funeral, Sylvia suggested that readers of the *Yorkshire Post*, referencing her mother's early work with women and children, that a fitting memorial to her mother might take the form of a 'maternity endowment fund'.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Memorial Programme, *Invitation to Ceremonial Unveiling of Mrs Pankhurst Statue*, Women's Library 7MLB/G/03. Ticket to Ceremonial Unveiling of Mrs Pankhurst Statue, The Kenney Papers, UEA KP/AK2 Stanley Baldwin. To ensure the ceremony was provided with a certain gravitas, the Memorial committee requested eligible attendees wear Academic Dress.

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Gauld, letter to the Club, March 1930, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, (136).

⁵⁹ 'Pankhurst Relics', *The Daily Herald*, 19 Feb 1930, p.9. 'Women's Emancipation', *The Western Morning News and Mercury*, 19 Feb 1930, p.7. Mrs Marshall placed treasured relics inside the pedestal of the statue, including a parchment roll, a photograph of Mrs Pankhurst and Dr Pankhurst, Miss Christabel Pankhurst and a 'golden sovereign given by a working woman' and ex-prisoner and a badge in WSPU colours that had belonged to Mrs Pankhurst. As this statement was provided to the Club contemporaneously, there is no reason to doubt it.

⁶⁰ Edith Mansell-Moullin to Edith How-Martyn, 24 February 1930, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.468. Edith Mansell-Moullin revealed to Edith How-Martyn that Sylvia had sent her, 'irate sheets of explosion asking why her suggestion of a medal had not been taken up, and why she was not notified of the Suffragette Dinner after the unveiling of her mother's statue'.

⁶¹ 'Mrs Pankhurst Glowing Tribute Paid by Mrs Baldwin', *The Yorkshire Post*, 16 June 1928, p.13. To provide qualified midwifery nurses and home help post birth or fund a program to help children.

The Unveiling of the Statue

On 6 March a stream of people converged on Tower Gardens. Police blocked the embankment as thousands gathered at noon against the backdrop of the Houses of Parliament, including representatives from all parts of the British Isles, the Dominions and the United States. The ceremony and the speeches by Stanley Baldwin, Flora Drummond, Lady Rhondda and Fred Pethick-Lawrence were broadcast to the nation and transmitted via loudspeakers across Tower Gardens. Footage from the day reveals the statue draped in the colours of the WSPU and surrounded by comrades, public dignitaries and members of women's societies from across England. Flowers, including a wreath from the police, one from the flower seller Teddy (mentioned earlier), and one from Christabel, were piled high at the base of the statue.⁶² A sea of people surrounded the statue with select speakers under a canopy, including Australian Dr Mary Booth who placed a wreath on the statue on behalf of pioneer Australian Suffragettes.⁶³ Sylvia Pankhurst sat in the audience with her son.⁶⁴ Purvis noted that, adding to the tension, Sylvia had published testimony the day before the unveiling reminding readers that her father was prominent in the suffrage movement before her mother became involved in suffrage work. The caustic Sylvia pointed out that her mother, 'in an indefinable way, had the dynamic quality which gets things done, though she herself did not possess any great organising or executive ability'. She wrote that, in fact, the suffrage cause, 'gave full scope to her dramatic power, without demanding from her the difficult task of discovering precise solutions'. Sylvia went on to praise the contributions of Mr and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence as 'they supplied the very qualities her mother lacked'.⁶⁵ The media reported, ironically, that police were in attendance for crowd control, to make way for the middle-aged and elderly Suffragettes wearing militant medals.⁶⁶ *The Aberdeen Journal* remarked that the unveiling was a feminist affair, as all music played was composed by women and all the organisers were

⁶² 'Life's Work for Women Crowned', *Movie Tone News*, British Pathe 1930. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rgm0fNlp4fQ> 'Flower Sellers Wreath', *Lancashire Post*, 7 March 1930, p.6. A journalist noted that the aged and tattered flower seller Teddy proudly wore the colours of the Suffragettes was well known in Suffrage days.

⁶³ 'Mrs Pankhurst Statue unveiled. Mr Baldwin's tribute', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 March 1930, p.18.

⁶⁴ Harrison, *Sylvia Pankhurst: A Crusading Life, 1882-1960*, 2003, p.222.

⁶⁵ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*, 2002, p.357.

⁶⁶ 'Honour after 20 Years', *Daily Herald*, 7 March 1930, p.1.

women. Dame Ethyl Smyth led music from the Police Band in a rousing version of the *March of the Women*. *The Aberdeen Journal* described the scene as a 'visual spectacle'.⁶⁷



Figure 5. Unveiling of the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst
6 March 1930.⁶⁸

The media reported that Mrs Pankhurst's 'old lieutenants', hundreds of former comrades wearing badges, medals, sashes holding banners and flags aloft in the colours, gathered around the statue, and 'whose thoughts must have gone back to the time when only a few hundred yards away, the suffrage leader fought with policemen and was jostled and hurt in her struggle to get into the House of Commons'.⁶⁹ Flora Drummond reportedly said, looking around the crowds, that 'half the women here are gaol-birds!' and declared that the statue effectively stood in defiance of 'all who would withhold absolute equality to women'.⁷⁰ Stanley Baldwin credited suffragists Emily Davies and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson with the demand for emancipation that 'ran around the world like shot-fire'. He contended, however, that while 'Mrs Pankhurst did not claim to have been the creator of the women's movement' she had 'set the heather on fire, and, as was the way with all

⁶⁷ 'The Pankhurst Memorial', *The Aberdeen Journal and Press*, 8 March 1930, p.2. Attendees, who became prominent members of the Fellowship, included Ada Goulden-Bach, Flora Drummond, Rosamund Massy, Edith How-Martyn, Elsa Gye and Geraldine Lennox.

⁶⁸ Unveiling of the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst, 6 March 1930. The Women's Library LSE, 7JCC/0/02/156.

⁶⁹ Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.468. Mrs Pankhurst Followers, *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, 7 March 1930, p.2.

⁷⁰ Hawksley, *March, Women, March*, 2013, p.159. 'Votes for Women, The Battle won at cost of Lives', *The Evening News*, 6 March 1930, p.13. 'The Pankhurst Memorial', *The Aberdeen Journal and Press*, 8 March 1930, p.2. Flora stated 'those days' [the fight for Votes for women] was one of the great days in the history of women's emancipation'.

conflagrations, good and evil were consumed in it'.⁷¹ Fred Pethick-Lawrence was met with cheers as he spoke with a characteristic lack of bitterness, describing Mrs Pankhurst as 'one of those who had dared to stand alone, or with a friend or two, and face the weapons of ridicule unflinchingly and even of physical force'. *The Vote* exclaimed that the ceremony fulfilled a dual purpose, 'it did homage to an individual, it chronicled in bronze the triumph of an ideal'.⁷² Lady Rhondda recalled Mrs Pankhurst as an inspiring example who had stirred the public imagination, 'she was able to move the mind of a nation, and because she moved the mind of a nation this statue had been unveiled'.⁷³ The Bishop of Barking, J. T. Inskip – a well-known moral authority figure at that time – spoke of Mrs Pankhurst as a 'champion of the great campaign, and one who was leaving to others the fruits of her labours'.⁷⁴ Baldwin concluded with, 'I say with no fear of contradiction, that whatever view posterity may take, Mrs Pankhurst has won for herself a niche in the Temple of Fame which will last for all time'.⁷⁵ As the drapery was released the statue was revealed with a fanfare of trumpets.⁷⁶ *The Woman's Leader* declared that at that moment, 'those who knew Mrs Pankhurst felt a strange thrill as the well-known figure in a characteristic attitude, emerged from the purple, white and green draperies'.⁷⁷ Choirs from Westminster Abbey, St Pauls and Temple Church led the crowd in song with *Land of Hope and Glory* and *The Marseillaise*.⁷⁸ That evening many papers across England and later around the world provided reports of the spectacular occasion. One attendee recalled the surreal experience to an Australian newspaper.⁷⁹

⁷¹ 'Mrs Pankhurst Work, Message to Women by Mr Baldwin', *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 6 March 1930, p.7.

⁷² 'The Unveiling of Mrs Pankhurst's Statue', *The Vote*, 14 March 1930, p.82.

⁷³ 'The Pankhurst Memorial', *The Aberdeen Journal and Press*, 8 March 1930, p.2.

⁷⁴ 'Dedication of Mrs Pankhurst's Headstone', *The Vote*, 20 June 1930, p.195.

⁷⁵ 'Niche in History', Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.357.

⁷⁶ 'Memorial to Mrs Pankhurst', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 7 March 1930, p.12.

⁷⁷ 'The Unveiling Ceremony', *The Woman's Leader*, 14 March 1930, p.1.

⁷⁸ 'Ceremonial Unveiling of Mrs Pankhurst statue', Programme of Music, March 1930, The Women's Library, 7VJH.

⁷⁹ 'The Memorial to Mrs Pankhurst', *The Illustrated London News*, 15 March 1930, p.32. 'Fame of Mrs Pankhurst', *Birmingham Gazette*, 7 March 1930, p.4. 'Pankhurst Memorial', *Daily Herald*, 7 March 1930, p.1. 'Women in the Week's News', *The Sphere*, 15 March 1930, p.7. 'Famous Suffragette Honoured: A Statue at Westminster', *The Scotsman*, 7 March 1930, p.14. 'Unveiling of Memorial to Mrs Pankhurst' *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 7 March 1930, p.1. 'Unveiling of Mrs Pankhurst Statue, The Irony of It', *The Observer*, 4 September 1930, p.48. 'It brought to her mind vivid images of ex-Suffragettes recalling their fighting days, as if she were 'living in a riotous word of

The statue, now unveiled to the public, and created with love and affection, began to fulfil another specific purpose by providing a stable location as a focus for remembrance purposes. This immediately became, for some, a sincere cultural device embodying the attempts of Suffragettes to provide a physical site to house their created ideology of the 'Suffragette Spirit'. Moreover, it was also designed to reinforce that Votes for Women were awarded due to the hard work and efforts of militant Suffragettes. That is, to the victors come the spoils (of war).⁸⁰ Several authors also asserted that Mrs Pankhurst had now joined 'the immortals' and compared her to historic revolutionaries, such as Cromwell. Writer Henry Brailsford, who was also a member of the Men's Suffrage League, noting the symbolic location of the statue not far from Oliver Cromwell, Lion-Heart and Boadicea and within a stone's throw of Westminster Abbey, believed she was taking her rightful place alongside other heroic figures of history.⁸¹ For some supporters, the statue of Mrs Pankhurst also provided an opportunity for self-reflection.⁸²

After the unveiling, flowers were left continuously by supporters and pilgrims at the statue signalling that her memory lived on in those left behind and providing a visual reminder to the general public of the perceived importance of Mrs Pankhurst as a historical figure.⁸³ Though the statue was created in bronze and stone, it may as well have been made out of mirrors. For in that statue, Suffragettes spiritually aligned their own values and self-belief in a shared past with their leader, who they believed had led them to absolute victory. Finally, demonstrating the enormous time and effort that had been required to raise funds, obtain approvals and organise the successful unveiling of the memorial, the Committee presented Kitty with a statuette of Emmeline as thanks for her hard work.⁸⁴

window-breaking, prison breaking, stone-throwing and word-slinging feminine militancy, and last but not least the statue itself is next to the House of Commons'.

⁸⁰ Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, pp.65-66. Mayhall has argued that the dedication of this statue was, in part, staged to credit the WSPU with enfranchisement of women.

⁸¹ H. N, Brailsford., 'Mrs Pankhurst joins the Immortals', *The Daily Herald*, 5 March 1930, p.4.

⁸² 'Suffragette Days', *Evening News*, 13 June 1952, p.2. Suffragette Norah Balls, demonstrating her emotional link to the statue in 1952, recalled that the first meeting she ever addressed was when she took the chair for Mrs Pankhurst and later told of her pride whenever she sees the statue to her'.

⁸³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1938. The Fellowship thanked Mrs Buckley for raising funds to ensure that flowers are regularly placed at the statue.

⁸⁴ Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.468. Exact date is difficult to confirm, letters from Christabel to Edith How-Martyn suggests the presentation took place from April to October 1930. Christabel Pankhurst was invited to make the presentation of the replica to Kitty after her arrival back in England. Note: The little statuette is noted in the National Portrait Gallery Archives, noted as sold at auction 1977, Lot 46, NPG/2360 c1930 Mrs Pankhurst after George Walker,

Calling all Women! Mrs Pankhurst on the Move

The statue remained securely in position for over twenty-three years, overseeing all Fellowship commemorative events in July each year. In June 1953, noting concerns that the statue remained void of information, the Fellowship lodged a request with the Ministry of Works to install an inscribed tablet at the memorial. Stella Newsome believed that the upcoming Coronation would attract additional visitors to the site, who might benefit from the addition of an inscription on the statue. Noting the passing of time, Stella Newsome also suggested that 'as a new generation grows up, they, too, will need more information'.⁸⁵ However, the Fellowship was not aware that the previous year the Ministry of Works had proposed to redesign Victoria Tower Gardens and relocate the statue from the current site and further away from the Houses of Parliament.⁸⁶

After a lengthy delay, the Works Office denied the Fellowship's request by arguing the architect of the plinth would not have approved and that the tablet would not be aesthetically pleasing on the site. The civil servant advised Stella that, in fact, the stated intent of the original Memorial Committee in 1929 was 'to restrict the inscription to name and dates, and we do not feel we should be justified in departing from this'.⁸⁷ However, potentially the Ministry of Works was not willing to approve the tablet request as it had not yet released news of the plan to relocate the statue. No doubt this was to delay the expected wrath of the well-established Fellowship. The following year Mr Gilmore from the Ministry of Works, which had recommenced with plans to alter the layout of statuary in Tower Gardens, voiced his concerns of potential fallout from the Fellowship.⁸⁸

Emmeline Pankhurst Packet, National Portrait Gallery Archives, NPG also list two busts, one by G A Walker.

⁸⁵ Stella Newsome to Minister of Works, 9 April 1953. TNA, Ministry of Works 20 306.

⁸⁶ R A Barker, Memo, Ministry of Works, 22 April 1952, TNA, Ministry of Works 20 306. The Ministry of Works stated that the new redesign also included an estimated cost of 750 pounds to dismantle and re-erect the Pankhurst statue. TNA, Ministry of Works 22 April 1952. TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047. E Bedford Chief Architect, 27 May 1952, TNA, Ministry of Works 20 306. Lord Crawford stated that a better position for Mrs Pankhurst would be at 'the opposite end of the Gardens with her back to the sand-pit and facing the Rodin statue in its new position. Ministry of Works, 19 June 1952, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047, However, due to budget concerns, the redesign plan did not proceed or was made public, that year.

⁸⁷ Ministry of Works, name unclear, 5 May 1953, TNA, Ministry of Works 20-306.

⁸⁸ W J Gilmore, 4 January 1954, TNA, Ministry of Works AL 9047, 'here is a plan embodying Mr Bedford's latest idea for the layout of Victoria Tower Gardens. However, 'I do not feel happy about the new site for the statue of Mrs Pankhurst, however, in view of the ideology associated with her name. It seems rather odd to put her overlooking the river. Perhaps a more suitable site could be found outside Victoria Gardens altogether but in fairly proximity to the Houses of Parliament. I should imagine that some of the feminist associations may well have views on this point'.

Nevertheless, the Minister and the Fine Arts Commission pushed ahead with the redesign plan. However, they highlighted that before any public announcement it would be necessary to inform the Fellowship of the proposed redesign.⁸⁹

Subsequently, Fellowship members, including Charlie Marsh, now aware of the redesign of Tower Gardens, toured with the site with the Minister of Works.⁹⁰ She declared that the Fellowship was not entirely happy with the new site, however the Minister attempted to win over the Fellowship by promising that if the statue was relocated to the proposed site, then approvals could be granted for the requested inscription tablet. Hearing that an inscription was on offer, Suffragettes urged the Minister to give an undertaking that the statue would not be moved again. The Minister noted that during the meeting their mood grew more intransigent, as they sought to protest against relocating the statue at all. The Minister expressed his view that if it was moved it should be moved closer to the Houses of Parliament, 'as in their view it was part of the original conception of the memorial that it should be as close as possible to the House of Commons'.⁹¹ It is clear that the Suffragettes held legitimate concerns that Mrs Pankhurst was in danger of being further shoved further away from Westminster. In events mirroring the politics of erecting the statue in 1930, supporters found they were able to leverage any opposition to relocation of the statue in line with the timing of an upcoming General Election to obtain the best possible outcome for their cause.⁹² By June a Conservative MP, Nigel Birch, enlisted the assistance of Mrs Cazalet Keir MP, a supporter of the Fellowship, to help persuade the supporters to accept the proposed location. However, after receiving a less than positive response, Birch dug his heels in and resolved to proceed to relocate Mrs Pankhurst despite any 'opposition which the Suffragettes can muster'.⁹³ Another memo to the Prime Minister on June 21

⁸⁹ Ministry of Works, November 1954, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047. TNA, Ministry of Works, 19 April 1955, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047.

⁹⁰ Ministry of Works, 20 April 1955, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047.

⁹¹ Ministry of Works, 25 April 1955, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047 "They [the Fellowship] feared that the Royal Fine Art Commission or we would want the statue out of the way permanently and that having agreed to one move another would soon follow".

⁹² 'Suffragette Fellowship', Telegram to Nigel Birch MP, May 1956, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047, "repeat emphatic opposition to propose relocating Mrs Pankhurst statue. Precipitant action will offend women at home and overseas. Time needed to explain your artistic motives and guarantees offered. Present site given by conservative government 25 years ago when Burghers of Calais already in situ, signed Suffragette Fellowship".

⁹³ Note, 2 June 1955, TNA, PREM 11/1036. Noted in file, 'the scheme, however, involved moving the statue of Mrs Pankhurst, I have tried to obtain the agreement of the Suffragette Fellowship to this move but so far I have failed. I am writing to them once again, but I doubt whether I can persuade them. It is impossible to devise a worth-while plan for improving the gardens without moving the

now suggested that a site near shrubbery 'near the House' might be more suitable. A further memo acknowledged that the government wished to avoid a potential fallout that might affect the Prime Minister: 'I do not think they (Fellowship) have cut any ice with the general public, but there is no doubt that some of the old militants are on the warpath and they could be embarrassing'.⁹⁴ The Fellowship continued to work tirelessly to ensure that the storm was reported in media, both domestically and internationally.⁹⁵ By June the government was reporting the issue had now been resolved by the offer of a new, and improved, site further south in the gardens. However, Labour MP Mrs Jean Mann confirmed the matter was far from resolved, noting that with 'only two days ago, I had an objection from the women mentioned, and they are still dissatisfied. They do not like the idea of this noble lady being pushed around'.⁹⁶ The government spokesperson smugly suggested that the women could at least approve the relocation plan magnanimously as their objection was merely a 'metaphysical character based on the fact that Mrs Pankhurst's statue would be some yards further away from the House of Commons'. The spokesperson suggested, moreover, that 'they could afford to be generous in this matter'.⁹⁷

The occasion of the 1954 commemoration of Mrs Pankhurst was utilised to draw attention to issues about relocating the statue. Enid Goulden-Bach lamented that they 'were meeting in the shadow of the sad news that the Government proposed to move Mrs Pankhurst's statue, a proposal that women all over the world found heartbreaking'. Messages were received from Dame Christabel Pankhurst and Grace Roe in America,

Pankhurst statue, and my view is that we should go ahead despite any opposition which the Suffragettes can muster'. Nigel Birch, 14 June 1955, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047.

⁹⁴ Nigel Birch, 14 June 1955, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047, 14 June 1955. Note, 27 June 1955, TNA, Ministry of Works, AL 9047, internal note. The statue in its new position will stand on stone paving which will have an inscription commemorating Mrs Pankhurst, Dillon? DRG to PM, 21 June 1955, TNA, PREM 11/1036, 21 June c1955. Note to Prime Minister from DRG? The only point is moving Mrs Pankhurst further from the House of Parliament. It may be worthwhile offering the Suffragettes a site in the shrubbery near the House, though I gather there are difficulties over this' note in margins. Pencil. presume PM, letterhead is on 10 Downing St Whitehall. 'but she will still have a site? If so, we can face the storm!' Ministry of Works Memo to PM, June 1955, TNA, MOW AL 9047, 'They do not consider the proposed new site to be in itself unworthy; their main objections seem to be that the proposed site is further away from Parliament than the present one. I am fairly confident that would prefer the statue not to be moved at all, they would in fact acquiesce if the statue were moved nearer Parliament.'

⁹⁵ 'Statue of Mrs Pankhurst', *Belfast Newsletter*, 15 July 1955, p.4. Statues (Sites) HC Deb 28 June 1955 vol 543 cc170-1. Enid Goulden-Bach stated, 'the proposed removal of the statue had aroused a storm of protest both at home and overseas'.

⁹⁶ 'New Settings for Statues', *The Birmingham Post*, 29 June 1955, p.15.

⁹⁷ 'Rodin Group to be Moved, New Site for Mrs Pankhurst Statue', *The Times*, 29 June 1955, p.7.

both expressing their unease that moving the statue would slight the memory of Mrs Pankhurst who 'had done so much for the emancipation of world's womanhood'. There was general agreement that there were aesthetic benefits to redesigning the site but that they did not want the statue moved from its present position.⁹⁸ The proposal to relocate the statue also ignited robust debate in both Houses of Parliament.⁹⁹

Ultimately the government was so keen to avoid evoking the wrath of the Fellowship and other supporters that it offered up a site (the current site) in closer proximity to the Houses of Parliament. And so, to the delight of the Fellowship, the statue, now with an inscribed tablet placed at the foot of the plinth, was rededicated July 1956. The fixed tablet reads, 'This statue of Emmeline Pankhurst was erected as a tribute to her courageous leadership of the movement for the enfranchisement of women'.¹⁰⁰ Again, the papers reported that Mary Leigh was present and flying the flag that belonged to Emily Wilding-Davison.¹⁰¹ Apart from the reference in 1930 by Kitty Marshall that a casket was placed inside the plinth in 1929–1930, there is no evidence publicly available confirming if the casket, with a medal belonging to Mrs Massey, was re-entombed within the plinth in 1956 or retained by authorities for safekeeping.

⁹⁸ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1955, Enid Goulden-Bach outlined the history of the proposed redesign of Tower Gardens and the government actions to ensure, the new plan would proceed. She also noted the Government's refusal to acknowledge their concerns at relocating the Statue to what they considered to be an inferior location within the garden that would see the statue placed even further away from Houses of Parliament. Letters were exchanged between Sylvia and Christabel discussing the relocation of the statue; however, they were ultimately pleased with the new site. R. Pankhurst, 'Suffragette sisters in old age: Unpublished correspondence between Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst 1953-1957', *Women's History Review*, vol 10, no. 3, 2001, pp.483-538.

⁹⁹ Statues (Sites) HC Hansard Sessional Papers Vol 546 5th Series 15 November 1955. 'Victoria Tower Garden Monuments', HL Deb 15 November vol 194 cc495-7.

¹⁰⁰ Note, May 1956, TNA, PWO 11-146. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1957, The statue and inscription stone rededicated by the Dean of Westminster. WFL. *The Women's Bulletin*, 6 July 1956. WFL. *The Women's Bulletin*, 20 July 1956. LOU.LON 57. Guest speakers included Dame Vera Laughton-Mathews and Australian politician Dame Florence Cardell Oliver. Speeches and messages conveyed from Lady Churchill and Lord Pethick-Lawrence.

¹⁰¹ 'Women's Suffrage Leaders Reunion', *The Times*, 16 July 1956, p.6.

Contested Legacy of Christabel Pankhurst

Two years after relocating the statue of her mother, Christabel Pankhurst passed away in California.¹⁰² A service was held in her honour at St Martin in the Fields, attended by many supporters and Suffragettes, wearing their prison medals.¹⁰³ In July Lord Pethick-Lawrence announced that he intended to erect a monument to Christabel and invited those present to think about a suitable memorial.¹⁰⁴ In October Enid Goulden-Bach announced a Memorial Committee has proposed that Christabel be remembered in the form of an addition to the statue of her mother by adding two plinths on either side, joined by a low curved wall.¹⁰⁵ Enid explained that she considered it proper to incorporate the memorial to Christabel with the memorial to her mother as they 'had worked so closely together in life, so should they be commemorated together now'.¹⁰⁶ Presumably, the committee considered that the perceived permanent status of the statue, in addition to the lesser cost, would also give a sense of security for any further additions to the statue.¹⁰⁷

Following the appeal announcement, readers of *The Women's Bulletin* were swift to express their views for and against any additions to the statue. The first to disagree was Teresa Garnett, who believed that the addition of Christabel was 'very out of place'. She believed that the statue, as it stood, was an appreciation of Mrs Pankhurst and 'all women' fighting for the cause and to add Christabel to the memorial would make the statue a 'family affair'. She was scathing of Christabel's refusal to return to England until 1914, after the WSPU had 'closed down', and highlighted how Christabel never again worked for the vote and that after the war ended 'she went to America where she took up different work'. She concluded, 'if there is to be any further public acknowledgement, it should be

¹⁰² Suffragette Fellowship, *A Memorial Service for Miss Christabel Pankhurst*, The Women's Library LSE, 7 ELA/A Box 1.

¹⁰³ 'Dame Christabel Pankhurst', *The Daily Herald*, 15 March 1958, p.5.

¹⁰⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, The service officiated by Rev. Austin Williams. The lesson was read by Adeline Bourne of the Actress Franchise League.

¹⁰⁵ The Christabel Pankhurst Memorial fund Patron was Lady Astor, the committee included representatives from the Fellowship, Enid Goulden-Bach, Grace Roe, Charlie Marsh, and representative women MPs. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library Australia, MS 2004, Correspondence with British Suffrage Campaigners, Series 3, Obj: 395949087.

¹⁰⁶ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 October 1958.

¹⁰⁷ In the *Memorial to Christabel Pankhurst*. Booklet outlining the history of the suffrage movement in England and the work of Christabel, her strategy and ensuing results since granting of votes for women. The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JK/3, The appeal booklet featured Christabel in Academic Robes and a sketch of the proposed memorial.

ALL who fought and not to one family'.¹⁰⁸ Suffragettes Una Duval and Grace Roe spoke in defence of the proposed memorial and countered the criticism aimed at Christabel's decision to remain in Paris at the height of militancy, saying that it was necessary for 'someone' who 'had to be somewhere where the Government could not get at her'.¹⁰⁹ Teresa Garnett continued to protest that it would be more effective to spend the money on other forms of memorialisation. She highlighted a recent service in Westminster Abbey, honouring Mrs Fawcett, and suggested that 'such a memorial is worth a hundred statues'. Teresa Billington-Greig acknowledged Teresa Garnett's previous letter of protest but was supportive of the dual memorial, stating 'we cannot escape, even if we wish, the glorification of the Pankhurst name'. She believed she had a 'willing duty' to support the proposed memorial. Marian Buchanan was in support of Teresa Garnett's previous statement and believed the statue would be spoiled 'for all time if it is made into a "family affair", it would be unfair both to the Movement and to Mrs Pankhurst'. Louie Cullen responded from Australia in support of Teresa Garnett's stance.¹¹⁰ In November, Stella Newsome acknowledged the dissatisfaction expressed by Teresa Garnett but did not agree entirely with her arguments against the proposal.¹¹¹ An anonymous writer expressed her concern that if the proposed memorial went ahead 'are we not going to hand down to posterity the impression that the vote was won by just two women?' The letter writer continued, 'we the old Suffragettes still living, know of the hundreds of women, known and unknown, who worked and suffered to win the vote'.¹¹² Mary Phillips, appealing to her fellow veterans, 'without arguing whether or not the memorial is superfluous' suggested that those who feel most strongly could contribute to another fund to raise a memorial to those who have not yet been commemorated'.¹¹³

The public debate continued to ignite a slew of letters to the editor of *The Women's Bulletin*, setting off the age-old argument of the effectiveness of the militant campaign.

¹⁰⁸ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 5 December 1958, LOU.LON 632. Teresa Garnett believed that the first militant tactics introduced by Christabel 'were an enormous help to the cause of votes for women and made the subject talked of in every home. But when she decided on violence such as burning churches, public and private buildings, houses, letter boxes, slashing pictures in the galleries.' hundreds of us could no longer support her, and the public became irate.'

¹⁰⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, LOU.LON 632.

¹¹⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 Feb 1959, LOU.LON 185.

¹¹¹ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Executive Meeting Minutes*, 5 November 1958. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹¹² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 December 1958, LOU.LON 632.

¹¹³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 16 January 1959, LOU.LON 185.

Constitutional supporters appeared to agree that the softer militancy, designed to raise awareness, was an effective policy, but that the next turn to more violent acts targeting property could not be condoned or supported.¹¹⁴ Constance Cook recalled her support of the WSPU and militant policy and was in favour of a memorial to the militants. However, she believed that a memorial to Christabel was not deserving due to Christabel's 'instability' that 'resulted in the abandonment of the Women's movement'.¹¹⁵ Another who also came out in support of the proposal was President of the WFL Marian Reeves, who noted that she was an 'extreme militant' and as a follower of Mrs Pankhurst was in favour of the joint memorial, as it was also Christabel who led the WSPU. Noting the views of detractors, she highlighted the work of the Fellowship, and others, who saw to it that a statue had 'actually materialised'.¹¹⁶ Lord Pethick-Lawrence attempted to smooth over disagreements, recalling that as the main architect of militancy, even Mrs Fawcett was in favour of the Christabel-inspired catchcry, Deeds, Not Words! Fred, mindful of the potential harm to Suffragette legacies, pointed out, 'will future Historians hold the scales impartially? I regret to say that I see signs that they may not do so' and that, 'already I encounter a move to minimise contributions of the Suffragettes and represent them as a rabble of disorderly women. We militants must not play into the hands of this distortion of the facts by denigrating one another'. Fred was well aware of the vital need to maintain a united front and not contribute to the view of those who delighted in pointing out that militants were always at war with each other.¹¹⁷

Ultimately, those in favour of the memorial 'wings' won the day and on 13 July 1959 a crowd of people sat in front of a small marquee in Tower Gardens decorated with the historic prisoner-embroidered *Holloway Prisoners Banner* heard Lord Kilmuir's lengthy speech that concluded 'it must be a joy to everyone here that Dame Christabel and her mother emerged victoriously at the end of the tunnel where had so long seen the light. Today we can: You believed, you worked, you suffered, but the victory is not only yours but humanities. For that example, we thank you, and it is in that spirit that I unveil this memorial'.¹¹⁸ The left

¹¹⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 February 1959, LOU.LON 185.

¹¹⁵ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 February 1959, LOU.LON 185.

¹¹⁶ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 5 December 1958, LOU.LON 632.

¹¹⁷ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 January 1959, LOU.LON 185. Noting the inherent contradictions in voicing support for Christabel, Fred recalled Mrs Fawcett, was in support for 'Deeds not Words', by quoting her statement 'but for the militants, I am not at all sure that we should be standing where we are today'.

¹¹⁸ Holloway Prisoner Banner c1910, designed by Ann Macbeth, initially as a friendship quilt, was purchased by Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence for ten pounds at a WSPU Scottish Exhibition and Bazaar in Glasgow. Beverley Cook, Curator of the *Suffragette Fellowship Collection* at the

side plinth on the statue depicts a relief of Christabel, designed by Peter Hills, along with her name and dates, 1880–1958.¹¹⁹ Notably, the Fellowship gained approval not only for the plinth but for several inscriptions. These focus not only on her status as the first suffrage campaigner imprisoned for the cause but also make a point of informing those present that many other women also sacrificed their personal freedom for their cause. However, unlike in earlier decades at Days of Obligation events, the Fellowship chose not to acknowledge, or inscribe in stone, that men, too, were imprisoned.¹²⁰ One plinth is inscribed: ‘These Walls and Piers have been erected in Memory of Dame Christabel Pankhurst who jointly with her Mother Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst inspired and led the Militant suffrage campaign’. The other right-side plinth has a relief of a prison badge, inscribed on the side ‘Replica of Badge, a Broad Arrow on the Westminster Arms, given by the Women’s Social and Political Union to over 1,000 women who suffered, or endured, imprisonment for women’s enfranchisement’.¹²¹



Figure 6. Statue of Emmeline Pankhurst Tower Gardens November 2017

Figure 7. Inscription to Christabel Pankhurst, August 2018.

Museum of London Blog on Google Arts and Culture, <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/ggLC981UR9ErJg>. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, p.524. Guests on a raised covered Platform, 13 July 1959, LSE 7JCC/0/2/162. *Dame Christabel Pankhurst Memorial Program*, 13 July 1959, UEA KP/JK 3. The BBC was on hand to record speeches by Dame Vera Laughton Mathews, Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Lord Chancellor Lord Kilmuir. *Christabel Pankhurst Memorial Speech* by Lord Chancellor, 13 July 1959, LSE 7ELI/A Box 1.

¹¹⁹ D. Crone, D. Cummins, Existing and Proposed Memorials of Emmeline Pankhurst, Heritage Statement April 2018, The Christabel Pankhurst Memorial, Heritage Statements, May 2018. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.11. Christabel’s year of birth recorded as 1881.

¹²⁰ See Chapter 4 *Prison and Prisoners*.

¹²¹ Photograph, Pankhurst Memorial, Victoria Tower Gardens, November 2017.

A Memorial to the Rank and File

By the 1960s, acknowledging that the Fellowship was nearing the end of its natural life, the Fellowship had another memorial in mind, one to commemorate the 'rank and file' Suffragettes. A member survey was distributed seeking input as to how to best utilise the financial bequests of Edith How-Martyn and Nellie Crocker. The survey sought ideas and opinions to establish a fitting legacy 'to honour the "unknown and unhonoured"' of the militant suffrage movement.¹²² Unlike the first statue which represented only women and the WSPU this memorial was also inclusive of men and reflected the more diverse member base of the Fellowship, including male supporters and members of both the WFL and WSPU. This memorial endeavoured to portray all the individuals who were victorious in the fight for suffrage as heroic – though unnamed – foot soldiers of the movement. Though it could be considered somewhat abstract in design, the monument references the materiality of suffrage culture, depicted as a scroll, a Suffragette ribbon or sash and impressions of the prison badges of the WFL and the WSPU. The Fellowship memorial is thus a representative memorial created to acknowledge the movement's 'histories from below'. It was also a way for all militants to connect to their very own memorial, in their unique memory and likeness. At heart, the memorial to the rank and file was also in effect a counter-memorial, to amplify and represent the vast number of voteless women in pre-Edwardian England.

In March 1965, at a Fellowship meeting at Caxton Hall, Enid Goulden-Bach announced that Westminster City Council had unexpectedly offered a site in a public garden between Caxton Hall and Victoria Street. Fellowship Trustees believed that in view of the historical link of Suffragette history to Caxton Hall and the public exposure afforded by the location that it was imperative that an urgent decision should be made without delay. The proposed six-foot-high bronze and granite memorial was expected to cost no more than £3,000.¹²³ The Fellowship promptly distributed a subscriber notice outlining a plan to acknowledge the 'rank and file', campaigners with a permanent memorial. The flyer pointed out it was the site that the 'first London group of Prisoners left Caxton Hall and went along Victoria Street – what better place for a memorial?'. And that the memorial would symbolise 'all who

¹²² Edith How-Martyn died 1954 and Nellie Crocker died 1962. See Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, Suffragette Fellowship, notice Proposed Memorial to Rank and File, 4 May 1965, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP.

¹²³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Meeting of the Executive*, 23 March 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. Enid stated that it was at the initiative of Architect Paul Paget, who had approached the council with the idea of a suffrage memorial.

worked for women's emancipation' and that, as 1965 was the sixtieth anniversary of Prisoner's Day 'the Fellowship intends to make it a special occasion' by unveiling the memorial in October of that year.¹²⁴ Enid Goulden-Bach provided a breakdown of costs, including for the nine permanent seats to be situated at the memorial. Teresa Garnett responded by questioning the use of funds and suggested that the inscription to the rank and file should be added to the inscription-laden Pankhurst statue.¹²⁵ Marie Lawson proposed that a referendum be held on the matter.¹²⁶ The Fellowship, now appearing to be more democratic in nature, issued a questionnaire seeking to obtain a consensus from all members.¹²⁷ Subsequently, a consensus was obtained, and in June 1969 the City of Westminster formally approved the design of the proposed monument. Sculptors Lorne and Edwin Russell declared that they were honoured to work on the memorial for 'such a distinguished Society and with such fascinating members'.¹²⁸

The following year the Fellowship and its supporters and special guests chose the day usually set aside to commemorate Emmeline Pankhurst to incorporate the unveiling of the new memorial at Christchurch Gardens. Policewomen in uniform were in attendance, along with architect Paul Paget, sculptors Mr and Mrs Russell, families of the late Annie and Jessie Kenney and surviving Fellowship Suffragettes photographed wearing their militant medals. The accompanying Memorial program provided a brief background of the path to Votes for Women, beginning in 1832 'The Reform Act' to '1928 Votes for Women on equal terms with men' and noted the work 'honours those women and men who for so long fearlessly braved hostility and ridicule and later imprisonment and physical hardship for

¹²⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Notice Memorial to Rank and File Suffrage Workers*, 15 April 1965, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. Trustees Mari Hussey and Una Duval first proposed the memorial to the rank and file militants.

¹²⁵ At that time there was an internal dispute over the authority of the method of appointing Trustees and subsequent expenditure of bequest funds. *Meeting of the Executive*, 26 April 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹²⁶ See Chapter 9 *Friend or Foe?*

¹²⁷ The Suffragette Fellowship notice Proposed Memorial to Rank and File, 4 May 1965, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. The Fellowship chairperson advised members that there is 'divided opinion on the Executive Committee, some members objecting on the grounds of expense or because they feel such a memorial is unnecessary'. See Chapter 9 *Friend or Foe?*

¹²⁸ City of Westminster, *Minutes of Proceedings*, Town Planning Committee, 26 June 1969, Minute Book, p.395. Architect Paul Paget was on hand to answer questions about the proposed monument. In Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970 and Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1971.

women's right to vote'.¹²⁹ According to the Fellowship, the memorial to 'All Who Worked for Women's Suffrage' commemorated the 'courage and perseverance of countless women and men who for so long selflessly braved mockery, opposition and imprisonment and physical hardship in the cause of votes for women'.¹³⁰ The memorial incorporates the WSPU Holloway Badge and the prisoner badge of the WFL. A supporter also noted ironically that the memorial site was adjacent to the New Scotland Yard building.¹³¹



Figure 8. Unveiling of the Suffragette Memorial 1970.
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The primary inscription on the memorial reads:

*This tribute is erected by the Suffragette Fellowship to commemorate the courage and perseverance of all those men and women who in the long struggle for Votes for Women selflessly braved derision, opposition and ostracism, many whom endured physical violence and suffering. Nearby Caxton Hall was historically associated with Women's Suffrage meetings.*¹³³

¹²⁹ Black and White photograph, The Women's Library LSE, 7JCC/0/2/164. Notably the following years in the 1970s. The Fellowship continued to conduct commemorations at the statue of Mrs Pankhurst. Suffragette Fellowship, *Notice Commemorating Mrs Pankhurst Birthday*, 14 July 1971, The Women's Library, LSE 7ACP. *Invitation to Mrs Pankhurst Birthday*, 16 July 1977, The Women's Library LSE 7ACP. Suffragette Fellowship, *Invitation to Mrs Pankhurst Birthday to commemorate the 51st Anniversary of Equal Franchise*, 14 July 1979, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. Suffragette Fellowship, *Invitation, Memorial to all Who Worked for Women's Suffrage*, , The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JK/3. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1971. *Unveiling of Memorial to Rank and File*, Enid Bach, Chairman, Suffragette Fellowship. , The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JK/3.

¹³⁰ *Preliminary Announcement*, in. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970.

¹³¹ Francesca to Jessie Kenney, 19 May 1970, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JK/3.

¹³² Unveiling of the Suffragette Memorial, 'To all who worked for the Vote', *Calling all Women*, Suffragette Fellowship, 1970.

¹³³ I. Leith and P. Ward-Jackson, *Public Sculpture of Historic Westminster: Volume 1*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012, p.30.

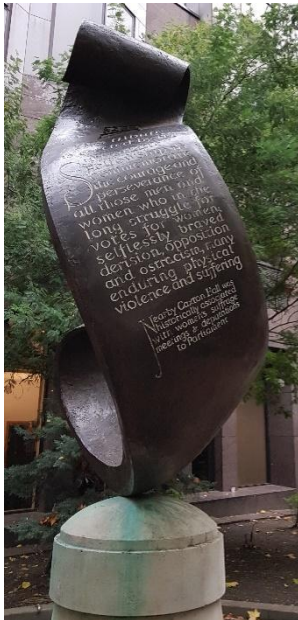


Figure 9. Inscription on the Suffragette Memorial November 2017.

The memorial inclusively commemorates militants of all levels, classes and genders, including, by association, the AFL, the WFL and the WSPU. However, despite the specific mentions of the Suffragette memorial of WFL and WSPU participation in Votes for Women, the general history of the WFL appears to have been somewhat subsumed by the work of the Fellowship in highlighting and gaining media attention for public commemorations focused on Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. In addition, although the Fellowship objective was for the memorial to commemorate, 'all who worked for women's Suffrage', the inclusion of badges awarded only to those (Suffragettes) who were imprisoned for the cause effectively excludes constitutional suffrage campaigners.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Lilian Lenton, Grace Roe, Unveiling of Bronze Scroll, memorial to Suffragettes Westminster, 14 July 1970, The Women's Library LSE 7JCC/0/02/164. Reported by Katie Ash, Hon Treasurer of The Suffragette Fellowship, clip in Suffragette Fellowship Press Clippings, Women's Library LSE 21AW/2/B/53 Box 29. Handwritten Note by J?, 31 May 1973, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JT/3. Over one hundred guests witnessed the unveiling including representatives from the Commonwealth Countries League, Metropolitan Police, Fawcett Society, Society of Women Writers and Journalists and Sculptors Mr and Mrs Russell. The rank and file memorial was damaged and rededicated in 1973.

Other Suffrage Memorials

Suffragist, and constitutional leader of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, Millicent Fawcett, was given a well-attended memorial service in 1929 and thereafter commemorated annually by her supporters.¹³⁵ Prior to its disbanding in 1961, the WFL routinely commemorated its founder Charlotte Despard.¹³⁶ The Pethick-Lawrences were continually held in high regard by all surviving suffrage campaigners.¹³⁷ In addition, acknowledging the unique history and close friendship between the two Emmeline's and Christabel, the Fellowship Executive had considered placing a replica of Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence on the opposite plinth to the memorial to Christabel on the statue in Tower Gardens.¹³⁸ Notably, if this proposal had been put into place, the monument would have become a uniquely all-female group monument and may well have fractured the Pankhurst monopoly on the site that became entrenched after the addition of the memorial to Christabel in 1959. This addition would have awarded Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence a more visible presence in the public memory of suffrage history.

In September 1960, with the loss of original Suffragette members and resultant personal animosities no longer notably present, committee member Lady Winstedt paid tribute to Sylvia Pankhurst, who had passed away in Ethiopia at the age of 78.¹³⁹ A Memorial

¹³⁵ Dame Millicent Fawcett', *The Scotsman*, 6 August 1929, p.6. 'Last Tributes to Dame Fawcett', *The Nottingham Evening Post*, 8 August 1929, p.5. The plaque was installed 12 March 1932. The Fawcett Society, NUWSS, 6 January 1955, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG FL240. Similar to the Fellowship February Day of obligation, suffragists and supporters gathered at the plaque annually on February 6th to commemorate partial granting of Votes for Women.

¹³⁶ WFL, NEC Minutes, 21 April 1952, The Women's Library LSE 7WFL FL55. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1960, LOU.LON 533. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 September 1961, LOU.LON 533. A street was renamed Charlotte Despard Avenue in Battersea and a plaque unveiled at Clements Inn in 1960.

¹³⁷ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 November 1961, LOU.LON 533. A portrait of Lord Pethick-Lawrence was presented to the Village Hall Peaslake and a plaque in Dorking. Memorial to Rt Hon Lord Pethick-Lawrence of Peaslake, Grace Roe, The Suffragette Fellowship, 7 July 1952, Women's Library LSE 7ELI/A Box 1. Pethick-Lawrence Memorial Committee, 'Memories of Fred and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence', 1963. 'Old Suffragettes', *The Birmingham Post*, 11 October 1960, p.6. A Memorial plaque, using funds left over from the memorial to Christabel, unveiled at the former London home of the Pethick-Lawrence's.

¹³⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, 'Minutes of the Executive Committee', 25 June 1963. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹³⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 28 October 1960, LOU.LON 533. Lady Winstedt, stated that Sylvia, 'was a woman of great talent', and her History of the Suffragette Movement is 'hardly likely to be superseded'. Mitchell, *The Fighting Pankhurst's: A Study in Tenacity*, 1967, p.275. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1961, Luscombe Collection. Sylvia buried with honours in Ethiopia and a memorial service held at Caxton Hall in London. A proposal was submitted to support a fund-raising project for the Addis Ababa Hospital, 'because that was Sylvia Pankhurst's last wish'.

Committee, led by members Princess Viazemsky and Lady Winstedt, met in January 1961 to discuss fundraising for Sylvia's 'magnificent work in Ethiopia'. Instead of proposing a statue in her name, it was pragmatically proposed that funds be raised for a maternity wing and Midwifery Training School at a total cost of £50,000.¹⁴⁰

Conclusion

It is apparent that after the death of Emmeline Pankhurst her supporters swung into action with great purpose, demanding the right to erect a statue in her honour and to select a site with considerable significance for their history. Arguably, it was a decidedly feminist act for the time, somewhat in defiance of established norms of memorialising. After Mrs Pankhurst's likeness in stone was securely in place, the Fellowship used the statue to diligently assemble fellow supporters, who together set out to smooth over elements of their own contested histories by controlling the usage and representation of their leader's memory. Thus, the use of the statue and the later memorial to the rank and file allowed the Fellowship to stamp its authority and ownership over suffrage histories. It created physical reminders within select landscapes, creating a virtual memory-scape that assisted in establishing a foundational legacy of suffrage histories.

Original followers, supporters and later allies all participated in the ongoing public commemoration and remembering of Mrs Pankhurst, relying heavily on a sense of duty to the past. Stevens notes that some memorials become unnoticed because of their familiarity. Others remain activated by ritual use.¹⁴¹ The Fellowship ensured that the memorial to Mrs Pankhurst remained active through ongoing usage, via marching, displaying the uniforms of war, such as medals and sashes, and carrying banners. These all enabled vivid recall of the past while creating scenes of spectacle that often-attracted media attention. The statue effectively acted as a 'shrine' to their dear leader, and to the memory of Christabel Pankhurst, by providing a physical reminder of the nature of 'sisterhood', with the women memorialised side by side, upholding a feminist legacy to a younger generation of feminists. The Fellowship employed emotive commemorative and ceremonial activities to stamp a specific claim to legitimacy, situating many of these events next to the very House that sought to exclude them simply due to their gender. To this

¹⁴⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 6 January 1961, LOU.LON 533. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 27 January 1961, LOU.LON 533.

¹⁴¹ Q. Stevens, S. Sumartojo, 'Memorial Planning in London', *Journal of Urban Design*, vol 20, no. 5, 2015, pp.615-635.

end, the statue provided a clarion call to all women to continue to resist, agitate and not capitulate. However, deciding who deserved to be commemorated, how and where, often triggered resistance from authorities, and caused ongoing debates among Fellowship members and members of the public. The statue of Mrs Pankhurst, within that select site, was designed to bring an end to questions over the effectiveness of militant action in suffrage history.

Hynes suggests that monuments are also created as a form of closure to an event or act. They can indicate an intention to be a 'terminal act' and to represent the 'completion of historical past', highlighting acts of heroics, glory and victory.¹⁴² Therefore, the awarding of the memorial of Mrs Pankhurst and ongoing responsibility of the Fellowship, to continue immortalising Mrs Pankhurst in the after-life, enabled her memory to be forever acknowledged the primary figure who led an army of women to achieve votes for women, and as a brave, heroic figure of admiration. And as pointed out by Cubitt, memorials provide a purposeful service to modify, over time, contentious aspects of figures of the past. Mrs Pankhurst, considered to be a profound, radical figure in her day, had forced the Fellowship to smooth over her contested legacy by utilising statues, portraits and other memorials to rank and file militants.¹⁴³ This feat was assisted by the prompt unveiling of the statue in 1930, providing a firm public reminder that in the minds of some, martyrdom, sacrifice and loss was also representative of a job well done. In effect, the Fellowship had ensured that the erection of the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst was to become a talisman for all women's efforts. These efforts were not only those made in gaining women's suffrage, but also the sacrifices and bravery of all women who serve their nation, not only in the Great War but in all wars that followed. The statue's embodiment of an inspiring leader made sacrifices for a cause, in all guises, entirely acceptable.¹⁴⁴ The statue of Mrs Pankhurst continues to act as a magnet for like-minded feminists hosting regular pilgrimages of admirers, supporters and tourists. These visitors often leave streamers, ribbons and flowers in the tricolours. The statue provides a salient lesson in longevity and survival by continuing to stand tall for well over eighty years. The end of living memories and the contested nature of suffrage history has caused the legacy of Christabel Pankhurst to be somewhat marginalised, however, in comparison to her mother.

¹⁴² P. Gough., 'Commemoration of War', in Howard and Graham, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, 2012, p.201.

¹⁴³ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, pp.210-211.

¹⁴⁴ L. Mayhall, 'Domesticating Emmeline: Representing the Suffragette 1930-1993', *NWSA Journal*, vol 11, no. 2,1999, pp.1-24. See also Chapter 2 – *Days of Obligation*.

Nevertheless, post-Fellowship, the statue did not cease to become less relevant; as Cubitt points out, events and personalities, having passed out of living memory, can become more symbolic over time.¹⁴⁵ The afterlife of Mrs Pankhurst has yet again taken on an ever-increasing role in public commemorations of suffrage, and other occasions linked to feminist causes. Her legacy has endured through her likeness in bronze, both in historical terms and as an occasional, contested feminist icon, that has provided a call to arms to remobilise local activists time and time again.

Additionally, in comparison to the statue of Mrs Pankhurst and the rank and file memorial erected by the Fellowship in 1970, other memorials, some initiated by the Fellowship, were intended to be more simple, private gestures of affection. In 1926, Dr Stanton Coit, Pastor of the Ethical Church Bayswater, had proposed that a memorial to her be installed in a stained-glass panel in his church. Dr Coit desired to install a 'suffrage window' alongside a 'slavery window', as he believed it was an obvious inclusion alongside established memorials in his church to Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Fry, Joan of Arc and Bernard Shaw. In 1951 Mary Blathwayt became aware that Eagle House was to be demolished, rescued small cuttings from trees planted by Lady Constance Lytton, Annie Kenney and Christabel and sent them to Annie for safekeeping.¹⁴⁶

Suffrage memorials and monuments, instrumental in the creation of an ongoing memory-scape of suffrage history originating in London in 1930, have now also become part of the cultural landscape outside London. In December 2018 Emmeline Pankhurst and Annie Kenney were memorialised in bronze, the former in Manchester the latter in Oldham.¹⁴⁷ Undoubtedly Kitty Marshall, who insisted in 1928 that Mrs Pankhurst should have two statues to her memory, would be very pleased. Lionel Earle, on the other hand, may well be turning over in his grave at the idea that the monument that so vexed him at that time

¹⁴⁵ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.212.

¹⁴⁶ 'Modern Saints. Will Mrs Pankhurst be Chosen for Stained Glass Window?' *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 July 1926, p.1. 'A Suffrage Pioneer', *The Vote*, 7 November 1930, p.362. In 1930, 'trees of remembrance' were planted near Maidstone as a tribute to supporter of women's suffrage, Sir John Cockburn. Kitty Marshall, 'The Statue to Mrs Pankhurst', *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, Z6080. In 1931 Kitty Marshall expended the remainder of donated funds on a set of engraved Choir Stalls in St. Martin's Church Ongar. Snow & Thompson, Ongar Millennium History Society, *Newsletter*, May 2012, The Ongar Millennium History Society states proudly that the Pankhurst memorial gives Ongar, 'a special and valuable link with one of the most influential events in British constitutional history'. WFL, *Women's Bulletin*, 27 January 1950, LOU.LON 470. WFL, *Women's Bulletin*, 22 June 1951, LOU.LON 217. In 1950 in tribute to the Brackenbury family, a large enamel plaque was created by Ernestine Mills. Inscribed 'Remember Hilda Brackenbury, Georgina Brackenbury, Marie Brackenbury' The plaque on public display in the Museum of London. Mary Blathwayt to Annie Kenney, 25 February 1951, Tree cuttings held at the University of East Anglia archives, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/2.

¹⁴⁷ In December 2018 both suffrage statues were unveiled on the same day.

continues to stand in Tower Gardens.

The public nature of memorials and memorialisation provides an ongoing mix of emotion, memory and politics that often attracts media attention triggered by special anniversaries or at public unveilings. Actors of the past are honoured and celebrated providing opportunities to debate the legitimacy of various forms of past activism within the dynamic changing political landscape of the 21st Century. Furthermore, expanding on Hynes, monuments can also be seen as a form of closure and a 'terminal act'. Thus, public monuments and statues of radical heroes and heroines, including Emmeline Pankhurst, though initially focused on rallying against the tyranny of one sex toward another, continue to ignite public debate on the purposeful nature of actions of the past.¹⁴⁸ It may be useful to compare the resolute statue of Mrs Pankhurst, that provides a physical reminder of a radical style of leadership, to contemporary campaigns including ongoing attempts by activists to remove or topple, select statues and monuments erected to honour individuals of the past. The 'Rhodes Must Fall' campaign and recent mass removal of select statues demonstrate the power of the people to rise against entrenched historical viewpoints. These campaigns have not only focused on gender equality but have now turned to issues focused on race, class and ethnicity. The historic memory work of the Fellowship has enabled the statue of Mrs Pankhurst to be now accepted as a legitimate symbol of resistance. The statue of Mrs Pankhurst is an active presence in the physical landscape that continues to challenge the notion of women as politically passive.

Additionally, despite attempts by the Fellowship to smooth over contested aspects of militant histories, the ongoing physical reminder of suffragette memory linked to radical activism continues to encourage robust discussion on the nature of her leadership and militant campaigning. Nevertheless, on occasion, some will question if militant suffrage campaigners conducted their activism as a form of terrorism.¹⁴⁹ Ignited by the 2018 Centenary of women gaining votes in England, campaigners, including the Fawcett society, successfully campaigned to erect a statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett in Parliament Square London. Significantly, this was the first statue of a female to be erected in Parliament

¹⁴⁸ P. Gough., 'Commemoration of War', in Howard and Graham, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, 2012, p.201.

¹⁴⁹ M Hogenboom, 'Were Extreme Suffragettes regarded as Terrorists?', *BBC News*, 11 February 2012. <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-16945901>

Square.¹⁵⁰ At the time select media sought to manufacture divisions among contemporary feminist campaigners. They sought to highlight the different styles of leadership of Mrs Fawcett and Mrs Pankhurst. In doing so they focused on the differing campaign strategies of the two figureheads in an attempt to pit feminists against feminists.”¹⁵¹

Chapter 4, *Prison and Prisoners* examines the afterlives of former prisoners and associated allies, who continued to commemorate their shared histories. The chapter focuses on experiences of imprisonment and the history and legacy of the material culture of artefacts associated directly with Suffragette prisoners.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Millicent Fawcett: Statue of suffragist unveiled’, *BBC News*, 24 April 2018.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-43868925#:~:text=A%20statue%20commemorating%20the%20life,of%20the%20past%20100%20years.>

¹⁵¹ Glosswitch, ‘Forget the battle of the statues – we can look up to more than one woman in 2017’, *New Statesman*, 29 August 2017.
<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/feminism/2017/08/forget-battle-statues-we-can-look-more-one-woman-2017>

Chapter 4 Prison and Prisoners

Introduction

This chapter examines the scope, breadth and diversity of the activities of the Fellowship on Prisoners Day. It reveals the inclusive and collective efforts of the Fellowship at organised commemorative events attended by old friends, and former foes, who came together to relive events surrounding militant activities that had led to arrests and imprisonment. Combining colour and spectacle, emotion and imagery, the events used speeches and displays of iconic historical images and objects to ensure maximum press coverage. *Calling all Women* acknowledged events in Manchester on 13 October 1905 as the first arrest and imprisonment ‘endured by any woman for a political cause in this country’ that made front pages of newspapers across the country and ‘effectively pierced the conspiracy of silence’ that had stifled ‘the pioneering women’s suffrage efforts’.¹

Mayhall has suggested that the WSPU had fetishised the experience of prisoners, and overly focused on forcible feedings, and that by choosing the experience of prison activities over others the Fellowship had later similarly fetishised former prisoners.² Mayhall suggests that, through this stance, the Fellowship sent a message that for militancy to be authentic, it must follow a clear path – that is, ‘from militant action to imprisonment, and eventually the hunger strike and forcible feeding’.³ However, all featured ‘star suffragettes’ recruited from within the Fellowship ranks to be spokespersons at select private reunion events and public gatherings in front of invited media retold unique stories, not always focused on trauma and forcible feeding.⁴

Prisoners Day was held annually in October to commemorate the rank and file of Suffragettes imprisoned for the cause. It was a unique Day of Obligation in that the focus was not solely on Emmeline Pankhurst, but on her daughter, Christabel, and

¹ ‘Suffragettes 1905-1960, A Plaque in Praise of Famous Women’, *The Guardian*, 20 May 1960, The Women’s Library LSE, 7TBG.

² L. Mayhall, ‘Defining Militancy: Radical Protest, the Constitutional Idiom, and Women’s Suffrage in Britain, 1908-1909’, *Journal of British Studies*, vol 39, no. 3, 2000, pp.340-71.

³ Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, 2003, p.4.

⁴ See Chapter 2 *Days of Obligation*

Annie Kenney, the first Suffragettes to be imprisoned for the cause. The friendship between the two women also served as a reminder of the robust emotional ties that developed, and endured, between fellow prisoners. Prisoners Day was also gender-inclusive, to acknowledge male prisoners and to give thanks for their support for the women's cause. Prisoners Day was an essential component of the Fellowship commemorative calendar. It was a day where the collective memory was celebrated with spectacle and banquets, mirroring events that took place after the release of prisoners from Holloway Prison. Prisoners Day typically involved speeches and the singing of Suffragette songs and culminated in 1977 at the demolition of the Suffragette Wing at Holloway Prison. However, ultimately it was a single day that was not sustainable as the emotion and memories, integral to the continued success of Prisoners Day, was evoked from lived experience that could only exist during the life of directly impacted participants.

Individuals recalling prison stories were often swept along with an enthusiastic zeal that often preferenced a narrative that led directly to prison. Kean has discussed the disassociation of Suffragettes from private lives that thrust them directly into a public sphere of activism and resistance – noting, Mary Richardson's memoir, *Laugh, a Defiance*, offering a standard conversion story in which she presented herself as a suffrage martyr, modelled on Suffragette patron saint Joan of Arc.⁵ Stowell has contended that the militancy and martyrdom of Joan of Arc became the 'touchstone of radical suffragism'. St Joan provided an aspirational role model of torture and resistance to authority for Suffragettes, providing powerful and emotive signifiers of belonging to a just cause.⁶ The militant organisations repeatedly drew attention to the treatment of women in prison by portraying Suffragettes as victims of oppression, physically tortured through deprivation of living conditions, hunger and forcible feeding by cruel and uncaring captors.⁷

⁵ H. Kean, 'Searching for the Past in Present Defeat: The Construction of Historical and Political Identity in British Feminism in the 1920s and 1930s', *Women's History Review* vol 3, no. 1, 1994, pp.479-481.

⁶ S. Stowell, 'Dame Joan, Saint Christabel', *Modern Drama*, vol 37, no. 3, 1994, pp.421-436.

⁷ 'As Long As Their Health Will Stand it', *The Suffragette*, WSPU, 26 June 1914, p.1.

The Fellowship offered up the experience of recalling prison experiences that was not only a source of trauma but as model Suffragettes with a core ethos of a 'spirit of resistance' to inspire and encourage other women to admire and follow. Members and supporters gathered on Prisoners Day to hear stories of trauma and pain, not only those the speakers themselves had directly experienced, but also the reliving of emotional scenes that involved hearing anguished cries from the cells of fellow Suffragettes. Prisoners Day was also an opportunity to acknowledge the sacrifice of Suffragettes and provided an opportunity for ageing militants and former allies to recall instances of emotional trauma in a safe and supportive environment. Early prison experiences also cemented, for some, a lifelong interest in campaigning for prison reforms for women prisoners. Militant Suffragette Annie Kenney demonstrated the compelling effect of the Suffragettes' imprisonment on their own awareness of the plight of all women prisoners, a raised awareness which they were then able to highlight effects of imprisonment to authorities. Annie recalled the facts of women prisoners, 'Oh you women, who are in your prison cells, shall I ever forget your faces? If I get weary of the toil of life, weary of man's inhumanity to man, your faces will come before me as a sign of the work which I have yet to do. If I live my three score years and ten your faces will never leave me'.⁸ Australian Muriel Matters toured her home country in 1910 and spoke explicitly about her prisoner experience in England. After an invited tour of Fremantle Prison in Perth, Muriel gave a withering account of the condition of women prisoners and noted that unlike male prisons there was no attempt to teach women a trade, or provide practical skills to female inmates.⁹ Further demonstrating the transformative effect of imprisonment on the women, Charlie Marsh in 1946 declared herself to be a more strident feminist, commenting that 'her prison experience helped in her work she is now doing, that gave her an understanding of the "bottom dog"'.¹⁰

The media took an active interest in all the Fellowship's organised reunion events over four decades. However, Prisoners Day provided the most interesting images and human-interest stories for consumers of newspapers, radio and TV. The tone of

⁸ Kenney, *Memories of a Militant*, 1924, p.85. F. Pethick-Lawrence, 'A Character Sketch of Annie Kenney', *The Women's Press*, 1905, p.9. see also W. Mayo, 'Prison Experiences of a Suffragette', *The Idler*, April 1908.

⁹ 'A Gruesome Gaol', *The Truth*, 4 June 1910, p.9.

¹⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1946.

reporting varied from unapologetic support of militant activities, complete with reporting on the spectacle of women wearing medals and sashes and recalling colourful tales of prison days, to comedic observation at the spectacle of older women marching in the streets again. Feminist journals, specifically *The Women's Bulletin*, continually voiced their support for the contribution of the militants. In 1931 the feminist newsletter *The Vote* editorialised a reunion event attended by prisoners and was unabashed to note that the victory of Votes for Women was due directly to the brave efforts of Suffragette prisoners that had 'forwarded the emancipation of the whole of womanhood'.¹¹ The WFL had declared itself to be against ultra-militant activities, bombings and arson, but later assisted the Fellowship, including shared memberships, with remembrance activities of all declared militants. Notably, Muriel Matters, a lifelong feminist activist, had remained in demand post-suffrage due to her appealing and captivating speaking style in demand at Fellowship and WFL commemorative events for over three decades.

Further demonstrating the unique lifelong relationship, between all Suffragettes, the WFL, until it disbanded in 1961, continued to work in partnership with the Fellowship, utilising a shared membership strengthened by the bonds of shared memories and the spectacle of reunion events to attract public and media attention. In 1960 the Fellowship organised an event in Manchester led by Charlotte Marsh, who carried a flag in the tricolours, accompanied by Jessie Kenney, Teresa Billington-Greig, Una Duval and Lilian Lenton. They marched from Manchester Station to the site of the first Suffragette arrests, the former Free Trade Hall. The marchers were met by Mary Leigh holding aloft the flags worn by Emily Wilding-Davison on the day of the accident that led to her death. Crowds gathered to witness the unveiling of a plaque commissioned to commemorate the events of 13 October 1905. *Calling all Women* quipped that Manchester was not the least bit perturbed at Suffragettes on the streets. The event was also attended by Mrs Higginson, custodian of the original Votes for Women banner which had been unfurled at the first imprisonment in Manchester on 13 October 1905.¹²

¹¹ 'Shadows of Coming Events', *The Vote*, 10 February 1928, p.5.

¹² Photo of plaque unveiling in The Women's Library LSE, 7JCC/0/2/167. Despite the banner placed into safekeeping with the Mayor of Manchester in 1960 the 'Votes for Women' banner is not known to be on public display.

A Memorial of Memories

The Fellowship chose to highlight prison experiences on a specific day not to impress on the public that militancy on its own had led directly to prison, but to also ensure that lesser-known actors were commemorated publicly. However, militancy and militant acts are fluid terms. Cowman has argued that 'militancy', when describing Suffragette militancy, does not refer solely to Suffragettes imprisoned for militant actions.¹³ Suffragette leaders often utilised imagery of the imprisonment of women as a tool to raise awareness for the cause; in particular, the practice of forcible feeding was depicted as an act of torture toward women.¹⁴ Frances has suggested there was also a need for Suffragettes to highlight their experienced trauma during imprisonment in order to be accepted as genuine Suffragettes. She argued that the Fellowship was later forced to over-rely on select individuals to retell their specific stories of suffering, as a method of raising awareness, and that the Fellowship was a more exclusive club than history has demonstrated. Furthermore, Frances further contended that the Fellowship was inclusive only of Suffragettes as a claim that the experience of imprisonment had led directly to women obtaining partial voting rights in 1918. Moreover, further escalation of militant action was justified by ongoing imprisonment and associated deprivations and trauma suffered at the hands of tormentors.¹⁵ Notably, over time, specific individuals became enduring personalities attached to the cultural memory of the Edwardian suffrage campaign. Apart from Mrs Pankhurst and her daughters, the other well-known Suffragette is Emily Wilding-Davison. Apart from brief profiles in the 1950s and 1960s, Emily was rarely mentioned publicly by the Fellowship. It is altogether feasible to suggest that Emily's sacrifice in 1913 was downplayed either due to a common belief by Suffragettes that her actions were considered foolhardy at that time, or because the Fellowship had an obligation to focus

¹³ Cowman, *Women in British Politics, C.1689-1979*, 2010, p.66. Cowman also noted, "Yet many Suffragettes who did not go to prison described themselves as militant".

¹⁴ *Torturing Women In Prison, Votes against the Government*, published by the WSPU, 4 Clements Inn, David Allen & Sons Ltd, c1913.
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK385295/figure/wt605839_ch2.F1/

¹⁵ H. Frances, 'Dare to be Free!': The Women's Freedom League and its legacy', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.22, p.197.

on other rank and file members, or perhaps in consideration of her good friend, and appointed custodian of her legacy, Mary Leigh.¹⁶

Prisoners Day provided the opportunity to highlight achievements of both women, and men, 'the unknowns and unhonoured' militant members, without undue focus on Mrs Pankhurst. The unknowns were represented not as victims of an authoritarian leader but as empowered individuals who were highlighting prison as a tool of oppression used by the government of the day. Prisoners Day was also used as a powerful vehicle to continue not only to educate the public about the history of militant action but as also a veiled warning to authorities that former suffrage campaigners would continue to take an active interest in the legal rights and welfare of women prisoners.

Suffragettes expressed a range of emotions recalling special friendships that developed in the thick of the fight both outside and within prison walls. Undeniably, former Suffragettes focused on the prison experience not only as a substantive experience that led to Votes for Women but as a crucial commemorative device to enhance and continue comradeship. The Fellowship believed, as did the WSPU, that events that transpired in October 1905 were the first 'radical' act of militancy that led to imprisonment, and which also raised public awareness for the cause and attracted vital media interest. The events were considered a critical turning point for suffrage history. That particular day was given high status on the Fellowship cultural commemorative calendar. The media subsequently gave generous newspaper columns to the musings of the elderly jailbirds, focusing on dramatic and exciting stories of women using subterfuge to escape and relying on their wits to evade police time and time again. Paxton has further argued that scenes involving prisoners, were reimagined as a 'lived experience': the militant organisations, assisted by other artistic-minded suffrage groups, provided imagined scenes of forcible feeding at public events as a form of propaganda.¹⁷ Thus, the Fellowship later mirrored earlier scenes, re-using the collection of images and objects to raise awareness; these were used to full effect at reunion events on Prisoners Day and displayed in the Suffragette Museum.¹⁸ Fellowship members commonly shared treasured keepsakes and mementos such as postcards and images of Suffragettes in mock prisoner clothing as

¹⁶ See Chapter 6 – *The Great Silence* .

¹⁷ N. Paxton., *Stage Rights, The Actress Franchise League, Activism and Politics 1908-1958*, Manchester University Press, 2018, pp.24-25.

¹⁸ See Chapter 5 *The Little Museum*

self-identified ‘jailbirds’ further providing a shared legacy of belonging to an exclusive club. This has also given some historians and writers the impression that the prison experience was offered up as the only valid expression of militancy in suffrage history.¹⁹

However, the Fellowship had a very particular legacy issue to contend with: how to continue its focus on prisoners and prison experiences while downplaying the dangers inherent in some ultra-militant activities that featured only in the latter years of the militant campaign, such as arson and bombing campaigns.²⁰ In contrast, the WFL, a sister group of the Fellowship, had been established with a non-militant credo that forbade the use of violence by members. It chose acts of civil disobedience as its focus, and consistently commemorated the act of defiance committed in the Ladies Gallery in the Houses of Parliament in October 1908 at notable anniversaries and on Prisoners Day.

In 1939 the WFL reflected that it had, ‘always between the devil and the deep blue sea – blamed by some of our friends for not being militant enough and censured by others because we were militant at all’.²¹ Subsequently the WFL, which would have been well known by the public at that time for its non-violent campaigners, chose to incorporate its commemorative events with the Fellowship’s from 1930 to 1961; this approach may not have been mutually beneficial unless the Fellowship had smoothed over select aspects of ultra-militant history. It is also likely that Edith How-Martyn, as a co-founder of the WFL in 1907 and as Fellowship founder, naturally chose to incorporate WFL commemorative activities into the Fellowship by expanding events to incorporate commemorative activities that would also firm up the legacy of the WFL. This was achieved by commemorating a range of WFL activities, including through performative experiences highlighting the spectacle and excitement of the Grille Incident in 1908 that led to the imprisonment of Muriel Matters and her co-conspirators.²² Indeed, the WFL members of the Fellowship considered the Grille

¹⁹ Edith How-Martyn sent Eileen Casey a postcard of her in prison dress. Self-described as a fellow jail bird, c1947. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. (Private Collection)

²⁰ See Chapter 6 *The Great Silence*. The term ‘militant’ in suffrage historiography covers a broad range of Suffragette activities from 1905. Militant is descriptive of ‘rushes’ on parliament, stone throwing, smashing windows, unlawful marching. This study prefers *ultra-militant* to define acts specifically referencing Arson and Bombs.

²¹ WFL, *The Women’s Bulletin*, 3 March 1939, LOU.LON 721.

²² Paxton, *Stage Rights*, 2018, argues Muriel’s act of defiance was full of symbolism, p.115.

Incident as the crowning achievement in their campaign as it had achieved maximum impact in raising public awareness. The event that was later mined to full effect by the WFL at joint commemorative events. Muriel Matters was a frequent special guest at Prisoners Day reunions and would regale the audience with memories of events leading up to the Grille Incident and her imprisonment. In 1954 Muriel exalted, 'Woman has not yet taken her true position on which she will ultimately hold. The emphasis today is being placed on the material aspect instead of on the value of the woman's contribution to the country. I am thinking more of the spiritual aspect of women's contribution.'²³ Importantly, Muriel, who was not forcibly fed and who was imprisoned on only one occasion, provided a valuable service to the WFL and the Fellowship by ensuring that a commemorative legacy was also afforded to the WFL. Her continued inclusion on a day dedicated to prisoners demonstrates that not all memory work by the Fellowship relied heavily on the currency of suffering. For the Fellowship, it was not about who had suffered the most, but who had contributed to the cause.²⁴ The comradeship and sisterhood forged during the cause generated strong feelings of empathy and belonging. Sister Suffragettes remained wedded to a cause that was seeded in shared experiences, underpinned for some with religious fervour. These feelings remained vivid and strong for the life of many Suffragettes, as demonstrated by Kitty Marion who signed off letters with 'Suffragettey love'.²⁵

Cubitt has suggested that social memory — that is, shared living memory — may also influence a later imposed meaning. Thus, potentially Suffragettes, particularly those who had suffered the trauma of forcible feeding or witnessed or heard distressing scenes in prison may have been unduly affected by the recall of those events. Cubitt argues that memory is heightened and can be less stable when recalling past traumatic events.²⁶ Militant Suffragettes, recovering their histories, though vilified by some at the time as mad, bad or sad women, took advantage of the opportunities

²³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 September 1954, LOU.LON 260.

²⁴ Muriel's Theatrical training and background positioned her as the perfect public representative for both Women's Freedom League and the Suffragette Fellowship.

²⁵ J. Purvis, 'The Prison Experiences of the Suffragettes in Edwardian Britain', *Women's History Review*, vol 4, no. 1, 1995, p.11. V. Gardner and D. Atkinson, *Kitty Marion: Actor and Activist*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2019. KM to AP, 9 December 1942, Women's Library LSE, TWL: 6.1 Box.

²⁶ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.212.

provided by the Fellowship to draw attention to their shared experiences as an opportunity to reclaim the moral high ground and to reaffirm that their sacrifices were not in vain. Age did not lessen the emotional impact of recall of the past. Purvis stated that Mary Richardson, in *Laugh a Defiance*, claimed in 1953 that 'as she grew older, her memory leant further and further backward into the past so that she vividly recalled those times'.²⁷

Bonds of Suffering, Power of Recall and Traumatic Memories

In 1913 Emmeline Pankhurst told her loyal followers that 'to be militant in some way or other is, however, a moral obligation'.²⁸ Emmeline was fully aware that the power of her words had direct emotional appeal to the earnest and eager supporters. Those who responded to her words were given personal agency to do whatever they believed was fitting for their circumstances. Women and men prepared to trade away personal freedoms for the cause were willingly led into battle. Emmeline strongly encouraged a 'spirit of resistance' among the women's army who, with gritted doggedness, were determined to fight to the bitter end. The spirit of resistance was fed and fuelled by bonds of suffering and was to become a feature of Fellowship reunion events in October each year. The importance of the sense of sisterhood for the Suffragettes was expressed with conviction, by Annie Kenney in 1924: 'no companionship can ever surpass the companionship of the militants during the childhood and youth of the suffrage fight'.²⁹ In 1968 Antonia Raeburn, friend and biographer of militants, interviewed Eleanor Higginson and Grace Roe on BBC *Woman's Hour*. The women recollected attending public protest gatherings where they prepared for the fight by shielding themselves against violent encounters by wearing cardboard corsets and protecting their breasts with cotton wool.³⁰ The memory of planning and preparation for what was to come a public battle on the streets remained a powerful memory.

²⁷ J. Purvis, 'Doing Feminist Women's History: Researching the Lives of Women in the Suffragette Movement in Edwardian England', in M. Maynard, and J Purvis, eds, *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective, Gender and Society*, London ; Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis, 1994, p.183. M. Richardson, *Laugh a Defiance*, London , Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1953 p x.

²⁸ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.207, p.215.

²⁹ Kenney, *Memories of a Militant*, 1924, Foreword, vii.

³⁰ *BBC Woman's Hour*, 1968. Suffragettes.
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive.Suffragettes/8311.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/Suffragettes/8311.shtml)

Suffragettes recalled personal and shared group experiences will mentally preparing for prison sentences. At Prisoners Day in 1948 in Melbourne, Suffragette Helen Archdale recalled 'we knew we were right' and reflected that 'such knowledge could sustain humanity through any trial: 'How cheerful we were. I can still hear the songs of prisoners as they were driven out of the yard of Newington Assize Court, in a prison van, on their way to Holloway ... Truly every phase of that glorious struggle shines a clear and pure memory, and, I add in all sincerity, an example for all time'.³¹ Suffragette prisoners often shared strong memories of solidarity and victimhood through shared adversity, mirroring experiences shared by soldiers of war. Ziino notes that in remembering the First World War the 'two narratives of heroism and suffering now co-existed in shared victimhood and made impossible a pacifist'.³² Pending or implied imprisonment became the emotional glue that bound Suffragettes to each other. Whether they were actually placed under lock or key did not matter in the end, it was the shared experience that deepened convictions and friendships.

The Fellowship-created speech and booklet, *The Suffragette Spirit* (1932), was a constructed manifesto that provided a blueprint, or template, of sacrifice for the cause.³³ It provided former Suffragettes with a packaged collective group identity that was also fuelled by belonging to the Fellowship. For member Geraldine Lennox this spirit is encapsulated by her statement that, 'it was not that they wanted to' or that they (the Suffragettes) liked militancy. Lennox provided the following justification: 'they knew that they would have to suffer, but they faced it and went through with it for the sake of womanhood and humanity'. Lennox described forcible feeding, the prison cells, the howling mobs and pangs of hunger suffered by the women in prison and exclaimed, women 'may sometimes wish that they could have lived in the Herald heroic days of stress and struggle and have shared with us the joy of battle the exaltation that comes of sacrifice'. Fellowship members believed that in 'that battle, they must conquer or perish'. Memories of lived trauma were a powerful tool for the

³¹ Helen Archdale, note in Suffragette Fellowship notebook, October 1948, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM Box 2.

³² A. Becker, 'Museums, Architects and Artists on the Western Front: New commemoration for a new history?', in B. Ziino, ed, *Remembering the First World War*, Routledge, New York, 2015, pp.94-95.

³³ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932. See Chapter 8 *Publications*.

Fellowship to convey the heightened emotions of living through a battle that demanded participants self-sacrifice for the common good of womankind.³⁴

It is notable that, as in suffrage days, the older Suffragettes focused on the violence directed at them, on their experiences of imprisonment and forcible feeding. This was, however, a partial, one-sided representation of history. In the first few decades of the Fellowship, there was no public discussion of the use of bombs and arson and no full disclosure of the extent of damage to properties caused by ultra-militant activities. The culture of silence around certain acts would have been noticeable as the elephant in the room at Prisoners Day events. Former militants potentially drew upon memories that were episodic, or on filtered memories that were potentially selective in the retelling of past events. Tumblety has noted that memory can be 'filtered as much as constructed'; that is, memory can potentially omit certain events due to persistent trauma.³⁵ It is also likely that some traumatic events were filtered out for fear of causing further trauma to some members of the Fellowship who chose to self-select their level of involvement in certain historic events for personal and professional reasons. The Fellowship set out from its inception to enforce and transmit the history of the militant campaign in the image of its membership. Focusing on memories of only certain events from individual and collective pasts in order to fit a political, or social, agenda in the present is always problematic.

Forcible Feeding and Memories of Trauma

A leading cause of prisoner trauma was the practice of forcible feeding whilst imprisoned, acknowledged by most as a form of torture and abuse that left physical and psychological scars on affected women, and men. In addition, secondary trauma was experienced by those who were forced to listen to the cries of their friends tortured in adjoining cells. Geddes suggests that despite authorities introducing forcible feeding as a health measure, some members of the medical profession who conducted forcible feeding were complicit by not only inflicting the procedure but also as members of a professional body that refused to condemn the practice. There were notable exceptions, including surgeons Victor Horsley and Charles Mansell-Moullin

³⁴ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932.

³⁵ J. Tumblety, *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, Routledge, London, 2013, p.4.

and 'many women doctors' who continued to object in the strongest of terms and called on authorities to cease the practice altogether.³⁶ Miller contends that authorities had considered forcible feeding not as an ideal solution to hunger striking, but as a reasonable way to force nourishment into a body via nasal or gastric tubing; in fact, a medical treatment. Authorities considered that any persons who refused food had lost their ability to think rationally and therefore were no longer able to make an informed choice. However, the authorities were forced to act due to a specific dilemma when faced with Suffragette hunger strikers, who demanded to be acknowledged as political prisoners and not as deranged women prisoners. Miller argued Suffragettes justified their bodily protest as a moral and political stance that 'valorised their capacity to withstand hunger as an indication of moral strength, not mental weakness'. The Fellowship later seized the opportunity to offer up member Suffragettes as living witnesses to the cruelties imposed upon them by authorities.³⁷



Figure 10. 'As long as their health will stand it! *The Suffragette*, 26 June 1914.³⁸

Through Fellowship events, survivors continued to relive traumatic experiences repeatedly through filtered memories of hunger striking, resistance to forcible feeding

and the subsequent excitement of being 'mice' on the run from tormenters. Arguably, trauma could either be dissipated through this process or continually reinforced through preferencing some memories over others. Suffragettes, including Lilian Lenton in 1968, continually recalled lived experiences of forcible feeding in graphic and vivid detail, and daily struggles to resist prison staff and the dreaded tube that

³⁶ J. F Geddes, 'Culpable Complicity: The Medical Profession and the Forcible Feeding of Suffragettes, 1909–1914', *Women's History Review*, vol 17, no. 1, 2008, p.80. Many Petitions were circulated urging the government to cease forcible feeding of Prisoners.

³⁷ I. Miller, *A History of Hunger Strikes, Prisons Force Feeding and Medical Ethics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp.40-42.

³⁸ 'As long as their health will stand it!' *The Suffragette*, 26 June 1914. Luscombe Collection

caused intense pain in her throat and chest.³⁹ The introduction of the 'Cat and Mouse Act' in 1913 had also been a crude measure to absolve authorities of any further political fallout from causing further physical harm to militants.⁴⁰ Suffragettes were further provided with a vehicle to counterbalance lived trauma, and reclaim power over past events by reliving the self-control of hunger-striking and reinforcing memories of self-empowerment at resisting authority figures and evading re-arrest under the provisions of the Cat and Mouse Act.

Relics and objects, such as medals and badges presented to released prisoners to acknowledge their loss of freedom and resistance to authorities, provided the material evidence of prison experiences. These included the Hunger Medal, known as the 'Victoria Cross of the Union'. Prisoner-related objects and relics continued to be prized possessions and were highly sought after by the Fellowship. Personalising medals with inscriptions gave Suffragettes a lifelong packaged identity as martyrs for the cause, giving women a platform to self-identify as heroines and feel akin to their patron saint Joan of Arc. Kathleen Kennedy sketched her Hunger Medal, which was inscribed 'For Valour' and dated May 21, 1914.⁴¹ Edith How-Martyn sketched her Holloway Prison Medal, with cell number F1/9, on the back of a postcard (sent to Eileen Casey in 1947) picturing Edith in 1906 in academic robes contrasted with another image of her in prison dress, wearing her cell identification tag. Edith noted 'how young we were'.⁴²

The spirit of resistance remained an essential symbol of belonging for Suffragettes. During World War II the Fellowship attempted to continue with scaled-down Prisoners Day events. It notified subscribers via *Calling all Women* that several members in London had lost their homes in bombing raids and declared that these women were nobly in possession of the Suffragette Spirit. Remarking that despite five suffragettes losing homes to enemy bombs, 'these five have all taken it with the real Suffragette

³⁹ 'Suffragettes Recall the Battle', *The Listener*, 8 February 1968, vol 79, no 2028, pp.174-177.

⁴⁰ J. Purvis, 'The Suffragette and Women's History', *Women's History Review*, vol 14, no. 3-4, 2005, p.357.

⁴¹ Kathleen Kennedy c1931 to Suffragette Fellowship, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1. Ref no 'Presented to Kathleen Kennedy. In recognition of a gallant action. Whereby through endurance to the last extremity of hunger and hardship. A great principle of political justice was vindicated'.

⁴² Postcard Edith How-Martyn to Eileen Casey 1947. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

spirit. The destruction of their homes, tragic as it is, is their further sacrifices in the winning of this great fight for freedom'. War Time comrades memorialised included Alison Neilans, Mrs Jarvis, wife of Inspector Jarvis, Louise Chapman, Florence Bright, Mildred Mansell, Edith Blake, Elizabeth Freedman, Nina Boyle and Julia East.⁴³ Following the war's end, former militants were thrilled to welcome a special guest to a Prisoners Day event: Odette Sansom, a French-British spy who had survived torture and starvation by the Gestapo.⁴⁴ Guests proudly heard Odette link her fighting spirit to the sacrifice and bravery of suffrage fighters, noting 'that she herself would not have been in a position to do what she had done in the second world war, but for the example of the women's fight for freedom more than 30 years ago, and the position women had won as a result of it'. Teresa Garnett, noting her admiration, told of the 'magnificent work' of Odette in the resistance movement in France and of her surviving torture in a concentration camp. Marian Reeves remarked it was a truly memorable afternoon. 'We shall not forget it'.⁴⁵



Figure 11. Hunger Strike Medal awarded to Myra Sadd-Brown, c1909. Museum Victoria.



Figure 12. Holloway Badge by Sylvia Pankhurst. WSPU Enamel Badge c1908.⁴⁶

⁴³ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1939 -1940. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG.

⁴⁴ 'Odette Marie Celine Hallows 1912-1995'. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/58213>.

⁴⁵ Teresa Garnett, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1951, Odette (1912-1995) was a highly decorated spy in WW2 who was starved and tortured by Gestapo. WFL, The *Women's Bulletin*, 20 October 1950, LOU.LON 470.

⁴⁶ Luscombe Collection

Reunions and Recall

The Fellowship was very aware of the pulling power of prison stories and was keen to provide media access to collections and to select Suffragettes to ensure continued awareness of their unique history. Prisoners Day events organised by Edith How-Martyn in Australia were held in Sydney, where former prisoners would meet and reminisce about prisoner experiences. The media in Australia was also a keen observer and conducted interviews with Fellowship-friendly spokespersons. In Sydney, former prisoners, including Mrs Colville-Reeves and Mrs Louie Cullen, recalled being held down by twelve prison wardresses and a doctor and forcibly fed. *The Sydney Daily Telegraph* reported that the women wore the Holloway Badge with bars and clusters to demonstrate women who were imprisoned and endured forcible feeding. Selected guest speakers, 'though happy to be acknowledged, expressed a humble appreciation at being in such esteemed company'. Guest speaker Dame Mary Gilmore remarked that 'she thought it rather presumptuous of herself to speak because she had never been chained to grille, imprisoned or forcibly fed'.⁴⁷ Press coverage was consistent from 1928 through to the early 1970s. Journalists would often contrast the vision of the ageing women proudly wearing prison medals and sashes in the colours with descriptive accounts of women in the past as radical militant campaigners. The press was also noticeably keen to acknowledge the presence of male prisoners.⁴⁸ Fellowship members often appeared at feminist events. In 1956 Winifred Mayo attended an International Women's Day event and described her discomfort at how she had been forced to bathe in grimy water after two or three other prisoners. Letitia Withall (Leslie Hall) recalled her three prison sentences; she described herself as one of 'thousands' and talked of her experience of being straitjacketed due to her resistance to wearing prison clothing.⁴⁹ Prisoners Day regular Bayard Simmons, suffrage prisoner, introduced himself to attendees, whom he called, the 'unfair sex' and noted that he was but a 'mere man'. Bayard recalled

⁴⁷ 'Suffragettes swap jail yarns over cup of tea', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 July 1945, p.6.

⁴⁸ 'Ex- Prisoners Dine', *Daily Herald*, 13 October 1933, p.9. 'Suffragette to Celebrate', *Gloucester Journal*, 11 October 1933, p.8. The press reported that many women prisoners will be present to 'commemorate activities including obstructing police, damaging property by smashing windows, firing letterboxes'. 'Suffragette Anniversary', *Daily Telegraph*, 14 October 1933, LSE TWL 21.1. Mrs Pethick-Lawrence raised a glass to fallen comrades. The only male present was the first man to be imprisoned for the cause Mr Bayard Simmonds.

⁴⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 October 1956, LOU.LON 403.

his arrest outside St Stephens Hall where some women tried to help him: 'it was a very rough passage' police pulling one way and rescuers pulling in the other'. He also commented that he was the male who was ejected from the gallery during the Grille Incident in October 1908 as he continued to cry out 'Votes for Women'.

There were also exceptions to memories of inflicted trauma, with some choosing to focus on positive experiences associated with imprisonment. In London on Prisoners Day 1957 Leonora Tyson recited a poem *A Day in Holloway* and outlined her prison experience, which she recalled was enjoyable and not at all like other experiences. American Suffragette Mrs Hunkins-Hallinan recalled her days as a student in London, becoming involved in the cause and imprisoned several times. She noted that she was so inspired by the deeds of the militants that on her return to America she became the leader of the National Women's Party. She recalled being hoisted over railings of the White House lawns where she lit a bonfire and of climbing to the top of a statue opposite the White House. Their motivation was to 'hit the headlines' in 'which they succeeded'. She told of her imprisonment in America with other Suffragettes and conditions inside the prison. Una Duval told of her exploits in Scotland, and Charlie Marsh 'spoke of the time when she and Mary Phillips and Vera Wentworth (Jessie Spinks) were in Holloway together'. Continuing to demonstrate the bonds formed in prison, Muriel Matters recalled she had formed a close friendship with her wardress during her time in Holloway. Muriel noted the empathetic nature of suffrage campaigning and highlighted her prison experience and friendships forged with wardresses, recalling that when she had served her sentence, she and matron had 'parted in tears'.⁵⁰ Mary Leigh also recalled the first hunger striker, Marian Wallace-Dunlop, and remembered handcuffed Suffragettes being forcibly fed by Matrons 'in tears'.⁵¹

⁵⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 28 October 1955, LOU.LON 57. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 15 November 1957, LOU.LON 194. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 October 1957, LOU.LON 194. Muriel also interviewed by the BBC, aired in a documentary 14 May 1957. Scrapbook for 1909, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p042rgy6>.

⁵¹ Speeches at the International Women's Day event focused on the Disarmament and the Peace Movement, notably 'The invisible dust of death' and 'Shadow of the Atomic War'. Recordings held by NSW State Archives. William Morrow-recordings of addresses given by Jessie Street and interviews with Jessie Street, 1953-1960, *Interviews by Jessie Street with Suffragettes, including Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Eileen Casey and Mary Leigh*. NSW State Archives, CY MLOH52/8 & MLOH52/9.

Calling all Women noted with justification in 1965 that early memories are often the 'sharpest in the memories of the Prisoners present'. Noting that 'it was a truly remarkable experience to be in this illustrious company, to hear all their stories and to sense the richness having lived dangerously and courageously, but most of all to some purpose'.⁵² Other member Suffragettes of the Fellowship – Mary Phillips, Lilian Lenton, Eileen Casey, Mary Leigh and Eleanor Higginson – were willing interviewees, often recalling prison experiences. In an interview in *The Sunday Times* it is apparent that the women came alive as they recalled in vivid detail the colourful exploits of their shared pasts. The women spoke with ease of prison experiences, window-smashing raids and of forcible feeding. In an unusual exception at that time, Eileen Casey acknowledged committing acts of arson, recalling she was in prison six times for 'window-smashing and arson'; she chuckled when she noted that at the time 'lunatics, criminals, paupers and women' could not vote. The women's recall was sharp as a tack, noting the smallest of details, but perhaps a bit hazy on actual dates.⁵³ Eileen Casey also recalled her multiple acts of forcible feeding in prison: 'a wardress used to lie across my knees to keep me down not knowing that as a young girl I had rheumatic fever'; this caused pain throughout her life.⁵⁴ Eileen, and other ultra-militants like Lilian Lenton, were unrepentant in disclosing particular acts of militancy. They felt strongly about their cause and believed their activities were justified. Membership of the Fellowship gave these women a public platform to voice their justification and to dispel any historical notion that Suffragettes were a bunch of hysterical and unstable women.

Demonstrating the continued appeal of the aged Suffragettes, in 1964 the Fellowship aired an interview with several elderly Suffragettes broadcast on New Zealand Radio. Prisoners Day 1968 was hosted by the Royal Commonwealth League, where Australian Contralto Joan Milford opened proceedings with *March of the Women*.

⁵² Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1966.

⁵³ J. Gale., 'Fifty Years Later, The Suffragettes Remember', Sunday Observer, 7 February 1968, p.9.

⁵⁴ Prisoners Eileen Casey, Bertha Clare, Una Duval, Lilian Lenton, Olive Llewellyn and Gwen O'Brien aired at the invitation of New Zealand Broadcasting on the anniversary of Christabel's birthday in September that year. Suffragette Fellowship, *Prisoners Day notice*, 17 October 1964, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. Eileen Casey, best described as an ultra-militant, was convicted of possession of explosive devices intended to cause damage and disruption during a public speech attended by many dignitaries. In S. Laughton, *The Woman with the Suitcase*, Unpublished MS, 2015.

Leonora Cohen, billed as the oldest active Suffragette recalled how she was arrested and transported to Bow St, where the crowd was so great a 'station billiard room had to be used to accommodate them all'.⁵⁵ Dramatic tales of civil disobedience and arrests continued unabated and enthralled the public for decades while organised Prisoners Day events remained a firm fixture on the commemorative calendar each October. And despite the loss of Suffragettes to ageing and illness, survivors continued with a desire, and sense of duty, to inspire and support younger feminists. The elderly Leonora Cohen in 1969 conveyed a message of hope that the 'young would be inspired by the ideals of past prisoners and pioneers'.⁵⁶

Prison Reform – The New Common Cause

Undoubtedly, early exposure to the conditions of women in the prison system stirred Suffragettes' interest in conditions of women in prison, and this remained a vivid memory for Suffragettes. As late as 1960 Lilian Lenton recalled how she, and other Suffragettes, took an active interest in other women prisoners. Recalling how they met a flower seller from Piccadilly, imprisoned for drunkenness, Lilian noted they took the opportunity to talk with her, and other women like her, as often as possible.⁵⁷

The Fellowship was keen to highlight a diverse range of speakers on Prisoners Days, including former and current prison staff, prison chaplains and ex-police inspectors, some drawn directly from suffrage days. Brown has referred to the divide between women as prisoners and female prison staff offered as a contrast between good and evil highlighted that the 'wedge' between prison staff and Suffragettes that was created and fostered by a rigid prison system. Suffragettes and militant leaders remained implacably united in their resolve to fight the system by continuing to resist man-made rules imposed on female prisoners. According to Brown, female prison staff who had power over inmates and participated in forcible feeding of Suffragettes often shared common issues of exploitation and lack of agency, due to their sex, and

⁵⁵ *Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence Centenary*, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968.

⁵⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969.

⁵⁷ William Morrow – Recordings of Addresses given by Jessie Street, and interviews with Jessie Street 1953-1960, NSW State Archives, CY MLOH52/8 & MLOH52/9.

had a particularly problematic role to enforce.⁵⁸ Furthermore, despite the best efforts of the authorities to break the women's spirit, the 'us versus them' attitude fostered by prison conditions also led to a tightening of the sisterhood.⁵⁹ Despite stormy headlines caused by the implementation of forcible feeding, and the authoritative role of prison staff in militant suffrage days, former foes were readily welcomed into the Fellowship fold and became strategic allies. The passing of time, the gift of hindsight, the memory of comradeship and belief in the cause, and the later formation of the Fellowship had encouraged former jailers and prisoners to regroup for a common cause. Indeed, from inception, the Fellowship's reunion meetings were well received and attended by associates of the prison system. Reliving shared histories and memories, despite the differing roles played, and the recall of past adventures, some centred on the trauma of imprisonment on both staff and prisoners, had encouraged and fostered a shared agenda post-suffrage of highlighting prison reforms for women. Assisted by the passage of time, Kansteiner believes there is often a natural delay between traumatic events and meaningful public debate, as in the case of the Vietnam War, often caused by problematic pasts that were a direct result of government policies.⁶⁰ The Fellowship and the annual Prisoners Day provided a conventional means and a platform for interested parties to voice collective concerns of political and public issues focused on law and order involving women. While the Fellowship relied on contemporary actors to continue to keep members' unique history alive, there was a mutual approach by all parties to improve the lives of women in prison. Noticeably, in 1952 the Fellowship highlighted the difficulties of older suffragettes in prison and paid a 'special tribute' to the men who were imprisoned for the cause.⁶¹

The Fellowship also capitalised on public attention on special commemorative days when, in 1935, the Fellowship organised a unique Votes for Women Jubilee Dinner. Guests listened to speakers Lilian Barker Governor of Aylesbury Prison, and Alice

⁵⁸ A. Brown, 'Conflicting Objectives: Suffragette Prisoners and Female Prison Staff in Edwardian England'. *Women's Studies* vol 31, no. 5, 2002, p. 627.

⁵⁹ J. Purvis, 'The Prison Experiences of the Suffragettes in Edwardian Britain', *Women's History Review*, vol 4, no. 1, 1995, p.162. Purvis noted the combined effect of authoritarian treatment towards Prisoners had caused a deepening of comradeship between the women.

⁶⁰ W. Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2002, p.188.

⁶¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 February 1952, LOU.LON 504. 'Suffragettes return to scenes of early days', *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 4 February 1952, p.5.

Gilliatt, WSPU prisoner and current Mayor of Fulham. Tellingly, the Fellowship had made a special effort to invite a woman prison governor to share the platform with a former prisoner. A witness believed it was one of the most interesting experiences of her life, stating that 'many militant Suffragettes of the pre-war era met for the first time in many years – some of them now tranquil, elderly women and among them those who were sent to prison for the cause'. Lilian Barker spoke of reforms for women prisoners that came about as a direct result of Suffragette activities. *The Women's Bulletin* also reported that former prison chaplain and visitor to Holloway Prison in suffrage days, Reverend Hankinson, gave an impassioned speech at the home of writer and Suffragette supporter, Mr Nevinson.⁶² Later that year, Edith How-Martyn in *Calling all Women* noted that a recent series of lectures titled *Freedom* were all delivered by men. Edith, highlighted an obvious gap in history, expressed the view that 'one of the distinguishing characteristics of this century (was) the fight of women for freedom'.⁶³ In 1936 a large crowd of 150 included Lady Balfour, Mr Hankinson, artist Dame Laura Knight and ex-Police Inspector Jarvis, aged 74, who was touched to be specially invited by the Fellowship. Jarvis quipped he had at one time or another arrested most of his fellow diners. Stating 'they were noisy girls when I first knew them-but although they have quietened down a lot now, it seems to me they still fight when necessary'. Flora Drummond 'confessed that he had a very pleasant way of arresting them.' A reporter had noted that it was a message of reconciliation, a 'very commendable thing'.⁶⁴ It is noticeable that reporters commented on the phenomenon of old friends coming together with old foes, conveying messages of forgiveness. Notably, newspapers chose photographs of Inspector Jarvis with Flora Drummond and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence to publish the following day. To the delight of Edith, this reunion was filmed and screened in movie theatres across the country. Edith also noted the positive and negative aspects that often accompanied their activities in the public spotlight. That is, reunion events focused on prisoners had attracted a level of public scrutiny that could also trigger debates about the contested public nature of

⁶² Notices, Women's Freedom League, *Women's Bulletin*, 25 Jan 1935, LOU.LON 692.

⁶³ WFL, *Women's Bulletin*, 18 October 1935, LOU.LON 692. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, September 1935. The Women's Library LSE PC/06/390 .

⁶⁴ 'Suffragette Days Recalled', *The Evening News Rockhampton*, 29 December 1936, p.2. 'Forgiven by the Suffragettes', *Leeds Mercury*, 1 October 1936, p.6. 'Suffragettes Dine with Man who Arrested Them', *Leeds Mercury*, 14 October 1936, p.5. 'Suffragette Prisoner Dinner in London', *Mercury Hobart*, 5 November 1936, p.5.

suffrage history. Edith had commented that articles 'often need correction and lead to a good deal of correspondence'.⁶⁵

Agnes Resbury, a former warder at Holloway, also fondly recalled the era of the Suffragettes. Agnes noted she was in general agreement with their activism as they were out to do good for women, despite 'some of their bad methods'. Agnes believed the Suffragettes should not waste the hard-fought-for vote. She recalled their behaviour in prison and the extent of militant methods that led to their imprisonments. She was not in favour of letter bombs and arson. She was more inclined to support the softer militancy of the WFL and recalled the Grille Incident and the more than forty women under her charge in prison. Notably, Agnes did not recall her involvement in forcible feeding but was at pains to portray the women as active resisters who sang in prison when in cells and while exercising.⁶⁶ Through the 1940s and 1950s, former and present prison staff attended several Prisoners Day events, including the Commissioner of Prisoners Dame Barker and Dr Charity Taylor in 1946.⁶⁷ In 1958 the Fellowship, concerned at contemporary reforms that would impact on women prisoners, welcomed Miss Granger who presented several case histories of young women forced by circumstances of neglect and desperation to commit crimes and were placed into conditions that were less than satisfactory. She noted the lack of care and support women received upon release that led to desperation and further acts that resulted in the women being sent promptly back to prison. The following year the Fellowship joined the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene to protest the proposed 1959 Street Offences Bill.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ 'Suffragette Prisoner Dinner', *Illustrated London News*, 11 February 1928, p.226. Ada Schofield photographed Edith How-Martyn, Inspector Jarvis and Flora Drummond at Suffragette Dinner, October 13, 1936. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 14, Photographs from the Suffragette Fellowship Collection, No Ref. *Calling all Women*, December 1936.

⁶⁶ J. Dodge, S. Forward, 'Miss Agnes Resbury (1858–1943): The Memoirs of a Warder at Holloway', *Women's History Review*, vol 15, no. 5, 2006, pp.783-804.

⁶⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1946. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 October 1947, LOU.LON 609. Staff and Associates of Holloway Prison were regular guest speakers on Prisoners Day, including Mrs Brophy, Chair of Prison Visitors at Holloway Prison. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 September 1954, LOU.LON 260.

⁶⁸ 'Women put Vice Bill views to Mr Butler', *The Birmingham Post and Gazette*, 27 January 1959, p.4.

The Fellowship strategically invited former old foes to Prisoners Day events to gain maximum media coverage. It was a logical choice for the media, as stories retold at events and special guests made for interesting and colourful copy. Former Inspector Jarvis was also a regular attendee and pleased to be seen at public events. However again, the elephant in the room – arson and bombings – appeared to receive no attention by those present. The media, aided by the Fellowship, presented a group of old friends, happy in each other's company and discussing old times. Despite the past contested nature of militant activities, it appears that over time the earlier divisions and splits that had previously been played out in public had now been consigned to history.

Roll of Honour, Suffragette Prisoners 1905-1914

The Fellowship published a booklet, the Prisoner *Roll of Honour*, in the 1950s however the initial idea for this was outlined in 1930 by Edith How-Martyn when she chaired the third Suffragette Lecture, 'Woman Pioneers, Unknown and Unhonoured'.⁶⁹ Though the *Roll of Honour* was an attempt to produce a complete list of Suffragette prisoners, the booklet contains only a rough estimate of prisoners and does not outline who was forcibly fed, or not; though inclusive of male and female prisoners, it does not state whether prisoners were members of the WSPU or WFL. Due to its delayed release in the 1960s, the *Roll of Honour* was in effect a memorial booklet to fallen militant prisoners. Compiling the roll and ensuring its authenticity was complicated by police raids of WSPU records in 1913, causing Fellowship administrators to call out to fellow militants to self-nominate or provide testimony of fallen comrades to ensure that no Suffragettes were forgotten. Florence Knight from the Suffragette Club issued a circular on 5 November 1930 requesting that club members contribute their reminiscences of prison experiences. The responses to the issued survey provided substantive histories of the suffrage movement, heavily utilised by researchers, has caused an over-reliance on prisoner-only recall.⁷⁰ Additionally, despite the assertion

⁶⁹ 'Prisoner Roll of Honour 1905-1914', The Suffragette Fellowship, c1955. 'Woman Pioneers, Unknown and Unhonoured', *The Woman's Leader*, 19 December 1930, p.347. Edith How-Martyn conducted her Birth Control Work out of offices at 9 Parliament Mansions and hosted weekly 'feminist' lunches where friends and supporters gathered to discuss news of the day and exchange ideas and information.

⁷⁰ Florence Knight, *The Suffragette Club* to Mr Franklin, 5 November 1929. The Women's Library HFD/A/4/07/01-37.

of Mayhall that only former prisoners were included in the Fellowship, a follow up second survey was not overly focused on prison experiences.⁷¹ Chapter 8, *Calling all Women*, explores in more detail the reasoning and methodology of the Fellowship in compiling the *Roll of Honour*.

Holloway Prison as a Site of Memory

In 1969 *Calling all Women* notified subscribers that, in 'pleasing news', the Holloway Suffragette Wing was to be demolished and replaced with the 'first purpose-built women's prison'. Finally, on 12 May 1977 Enid Goulden-Bach, Sybil Morrison and Baroness Vickers were at the site to lay flowers in the colours and to witness the demolition of the 'Suffragette Wing'. *Calling all Women* described the evocative scene that occurred on a highly symbolic site of memory for Suffragettes, in great detail, with before and after photographs of the event. It was further noted that 'all present appreciated the irony that the chair of the Suffragette Fellowship was to begin demolition of the Suffragette Wing of Holloway Prison. Also, perhaps some were stunned at the almost insolent ease with which this Bastille of the women's movement was now finally punched into rubble'. At some point 'a halt was called, and in memory of former WSPU prisoners, Baroness Vickers laid flowers in the Suffragette colours, in the rubble'. Afterwards, at a press conference, Lady Vickers paid tribute 'to the Suffragettes as pioneers in a worldwide movement for the equality of women'. Dr Percival recounted the 'scarifying' description of prison life by Lady Pethick-Lawrence and pointed out how 'Suffragette revelations and protests had resulted in reforms for prisoners in general'. *Calling all Women* provided a descriptive editorial of the occasion for subscribers.⁷² For all present, but specifically, the surviving prisoners,

⁷¹ The second survey requested respondents provide personal histories during the Great War and provide photos, images and materials relating to personal involvement in the suffrage campaign. Response from Alice Beamish to Edith How-Martyn, Reel 1, 7/116/68, p.5. Response from Mary Gawthorpe, c1930-1931, Reel 1, 7/116, pp.94-100.

⁷² Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969, *Holloway Prison comes Down* by E.H.H, reprint of *The Guardian*, Mrs Sybil Morrison, 13 May 1977, Series of photos 12 May 1977, Women's Library LSE 7ACP. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1977, The Women's Library LSE, 7VLI. 'The two-ton demolition ball hanging from the jib draped in flounces of purple, white and green, which stood triumphant in the sudden sunshine, Enid Goulden-Bach was already at the controls, and her initial blow delivered with elegant relish landed on one of the cell windows.' And 'The doorless, white-walled empty cells seemed to have lost all power to evoke the horrors and heroism of the past.'

Holloway Prison, though once an active site of contested history, was now afforded an iconic place in Suffragette history, forever linking women from various backgrounds, politics and professions. Holloway, though not the only prison that housed Suffragettes, had become a leading cultural symbol linking the past to the present, which has endured and became a part of cultural memory. In addition to highlighting a positive image of strong, empowered women at the helm, authorities welcomed the colourful and symbolic addition of the Suffragettes, who provided context on the day of the transitional nature of prison reform by the action of demolishing an aged and antiquated prison wing. The Fellowship and feminist supporters demonstrated at the demolition that Suffragettes had enduring historical ties to Holloway Prison that also amplified the power of sacrifice for a cause. The physical nature of Suffragette prisoners may no longer be visible in the landscape, however the imagery of prison cells, arrests, and forcible feedings tied to a collective of women prisoners has endured via the work of the Fellowship.

Conclusion

Public memories of imprisoned Suffragettes were kept informed by the active and considered memory work of the Fellowship, diligently seeking to attract media attention in the human-interest element of prisoner experiences. The Fellowship was able to convey a unified and cohesive message to the public, assisted by special guests, including former foes who were now allies. These new allies appeared to endorse the militant methods that had led to achieving Votes for Women, thus helping to gain the respect of the general public. It is apparent from the Fellowship's inception that its leaders, as an acknowledgement to the future, were keen to welcome daughters of Suffragettes into their fold. Pioneering granddaughters of the movement, drawn to Prisoners Day events that offered prisoners as models of resistance and bravery, included Miss Betty Archdale, organiser of the Six Point Group and Betty Archdale, daughter of Suffragette Helen Archdale. In 1947 Margaret Munro Ashman, daughter of Suffragette Anna Munro, stated at a reunion event, 'we children have many reasons to be proud of their parents. We daughters have a special and unusual one. We are very proud of our mothers being jailbirds. The work that you did had very wide repercussions. In many ways, it opened the door for your daughters. We have

tried not to let you down'.⁷³ Additionally, the trauma narrative, delivered via images, speeches and shared memories expressed at Prisoners Day gatherings, was twinned with the nature of the bonding experiences endured in prison, ensuring that the militant prison legacy would carry through the decades. This was, however, for many years, at the expense of acknowledging the non-militant suffrage contribution to the cause through peaceful, non-violent means. The recall of traumatic events on Prisoners Day, seeded by the sacrifice of militants, became a potent pool of memories that provided interesting content to newspapers of the day. The Fellowship's canny utilisation of the media ensured that focusing on critical moments in suffrage history attracted journalists and sent an enticing message to guest speakers who were keen to share a platform with Suffragettes in order to publicise their unique interests. The suffrage memories relived at Prisoners Day events were deliberately and actively collected, curated and preserved via newspaper reports of the day. The Fellowship relied on key 'star Suffragettes' to retell their personal suffrage histories, arousing sympathy and respect and also attracting reporters, readers and other interested parties.⁷⁴ Fellowship allies – other feminist organisations with interests in prison reform for female prisoners – were keen to embrace the older senior Suffragettes as historical 'experts' in how conditions were for them. Their memories also served as a reminder not to inflict past horrors on current women prisoners.

Other heroines of the day, including Odette Sansom, proved a fascination for the surviving Suffragettes, were very pleased when speakers of such magnitude provided recognition of their own trailblazing efforts. Joan of Arc, Odette and other heroines before and after the Edwardian militants were modelled as women to be admired for their bravery and sacrifice for the greater good of womanhood, in direct defiance of

⁷³ 'Suffragette Fellowship', *The Vote*, 6 October 1933, p.6. Grosvenor Gardens, October 13, billed as the *Anniversary of the first Imprisonment* (1905). 'Suffragette to Celebrate', *Gloucester Journal*, 11 October 1933, p.8. Edith How-Martyn to Annie Kenney, 15 October 1933, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK2. 'The Suffragette Fellowship Anniversary of the First Imprisonment (1905)', *The Vote*, 6 October 1933, p.6. 'Prisoner's Dinner', *The Vote*, 22 September 1933, p.7. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 October 1947, LOU.LON 609.

⁷⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 October 1953, LOU.LON. 99. Prisoners Day October 13 at Crosby Hall. In addition to print media Suffragettes would appear on Radio and Television broadcasts. Muriel Matters appeared on Television in 1953 to speak about her spectacular act in the House of Commons October 1908. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 October 1953, LOU.LON 99.

oppressors.⁷⁵ Singing songs, performing plays, reciting poems and wearing medals acted as memory joggers, and provided the spectacle of the expressed emotions of ageing Suffragettes to an interested public; this assisted in enforcing a well-known trope highlighting sacrifice and enduring bravery directly linked to the subsequent granting of votes for women as well as to their prison experiences.⁷⁶

However, it is crucial to recognise that the Fellowship did not reduce militancy, as argued by Mayhall, to one 'single narrative' of breaching the law, arrest, imprisonment, hunger striking and forcible feeding, that elevated 'certain forms of resistance and neglecting others'.⁷⁷ That is, each member had unique stories that not only focused on conditions in prison; some prisoners retold events that occurred before, and after, imprisonment. The first imprisonment in 1905 predated hunger striking, forcible feeding and implementation of the Cat and Mouse Act in 1913. The scope and breadth of Fellowship activities and events included a range of militant acts, covering a range of protests involving 'Suffragents' and members from the WFL and WSPU from 1905 until 1914.

It is clear that Suffragette members of the WFL, while also involved in Fellowship Prisoners Day activities, ultimately had no ongoing way of ensuring that WFL militant acts, such as the Grille Incident and mass rioting involving WFL members, also became part of the general cultural memory of the suffrage movement. The existence and operations of the WFL were merged with the history of the WSPU. Paxton has also highlighted that activities of the AFL have similarly been lost to history in favour of the WSPU militant histories.⁷⁸

However, later authors and researchers have not always acknowledged the role of empathetic prison wardresses or the role of male prisoners in popular narratives of

⁷⁵ C Sykes., 'Proposed Suffrage Martyrs Memorial', *The Bystander*, 20 March 1912, p.7. 'The Modern Suffragettes', *New Society*, 17 December 1964, p.1. The writer in 1964 referred to second-wave feminists as 'the modern Suffragettes'.

⁷⁶ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 July 1952, LOU.LON 504. In July 1952 the commemorative day to Mrs Pankhurst concluded with a poem by Emily Wilding-Davison, *Holloway Jingles*. Rev. Hankinson recalled witnessing forcible feedings and was an eye-witness to 'Emily Wilding-Davison's heroic and tragic act'. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1953.

⁷⁷ L. Mayhall, 'Defining Militancy: Radical Protest, the Constitutional Idiom, and Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1908-1909', *Journal of British Studies*, vol 39, no. 3, 2000, pp.340-71.

⁷⁸ Paxton, *Stage Rights! The Actress Franchise League, Activism and Politics 1908-1958*, 2018, p.110.

suffrage histories, having been more often concerned with conveying narratives of resistance and effects of forcible feeding on women prisoners. What the Fellowship created, and the activities undertaken between the feminist waves, became somewhat one dimensional in scope after the recovery work began; a strand of radical feminism that appeared in the 1960s has rendered the broader memory work the Fellowship partially invisible. Though the Fellowship had managed a busy commemorative calendar, including Prisoners Day with its focus on the unknown Suffragettes after living memory passed it was left to others to self-select their Suffragette heroines, and this has included the re-emergence of Emily Wilding-Davison and a renewed focus on the life of Sylvia Pankhurst.⁷⁹

Furthermore, public memory of Prisoners Day and other Days of Obligation is now lost to history. The iconic images of Edwardian militant suffrage histories, including images of women in prison clothes and being forcibly fed, and images of police arresting women and court proceedings of women sentenced to prison, now replace the living memory first re-enacted via Days of Obligation. The meaning and spirit of Suffragette resistance to authorities remain as relevant today as they were in suffrage days. Demonstrating the power of 'things', a very special artefact was the 1905 Votes for Women Banner held aloft by Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst at Manchester Free Trade Hall. Custodian of the banner for many years, Mrs Higginson would escort the precious relic, a potent historic symbol of resistance, to London on many occasions to act as a centrepiece on Prisoners Day activities.⁸⁰ The Fellowship was also able to effectively retain 'ownership' of representations of its sacred event that occurred in October 1905 by policing proposed recreations. In 1955 Fellowship subscribers were alerted that the BBC intended to replicate events that transpired at Manchester Free Trade Hall on 13 October 1905. Stella Newsome assured members that the script had been submitted to the Fellowship for its approval and had 'been guaranteed correct'.⁸¹

⁷⁹ See Chapter 10 *Pankhurst to the Pill*

⁸⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 28 October 1955, LOU.LON 57. Prisoners Day 1955 was celebrated at Crosby Hall. Mrs Higginson attended with the original 1905 Votes for Women Prisoner Banner.

⁸¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 28 October 1955, LOU.LON 57. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 October 1957, LOU.LON 57.

Ultimately the core responsibility entrusted to Suffragettes on Prisoners Day, and other Days of Obligation was to commemorate their shared pasts and reinterpret their unique history in such a way that would ultimately cement their preferred legacy as victors long after the days of the Fellowship came to an end. Suffragette prisoners believed they were 'right in the fight', that they were justified in committing violent acts, despite the ultra-violent acts they committed appearing to have been silenced by the media. Prisoners were offered to the public as role models in fighting oppression, to be admired and emulated, and to inspire others to take up a cause and to act on their beliefs. They were offered as examples of empowered females demonstrating persistence and a reminder to others to continue to fight against oppression, no matter the opposition. However, while the aim of Prisoners Day was to revisit the experiences of Suffragette prisoners, it is worth noting that the other two Days of Obligation also had equal standing on the Fellowship commemorative calendar. Nevertheless, it is the cultural legacy of Suffragette prisoners that has endured over time.

Chapter 5, *The Little Museum and the Memory of Things*, examines the memory work of the Fellowship to collect and curate the material evidence of Suffragette histories to create an enduring archive known as the Suffragette Fellowship Collection.

Chapter 5 The Little Museum and the Memory of Things

Introduction

*The Suffragette Fellowship is concerned to add to its collection of records and mementoes of persons and events connected with the movement, with a view to form a museum and to establish an Endowment fund for that purpose.*¹

The term 'memory of things' in the title of this chapter refers to my examination of the enduring memory work of the Fellowship to collect and curate the material evidence of the many relics, artefacts and items associated with the militant suffrage campaigns, gathered and collected from the 1930s to the 1960s. It also explores the nature of memory and emotion inherent in a range of ephemera, from the craftwork created in prison to the miscellaneous everyday items associated with imprisonment as well as suffrage-related merchandise.

This chapter explores the three decades of the Fellowship's pioneering memory work of establishing a series of Suffragette museums capitalising on living memories to garner goodwill among Suffragettes and supporters. This ultimately created a diverse collection of materials donated to the London Museum, as it was known in 1951. The Fellowship specifically repurposed relics and artefacts by evoking potent memories latent in all 'things'. Giorgio Riello states that, despite the misgivings of historians, artefacts are dusted off and repurposed as historical props to provide a 'direct way for people to relate to the past'.² Fellowship-curated relics and artefacts, as cultural objects, were repurposed to convey a specialised and contextualised narrative for museum visitors. As argued by Lake, museums traditionally operate as a vehicle for transmitting cultural values.³ For the Fellowship, operating a museum focused on Suffragette history was a political act that placed Suffragette objects in the public sphere to specifically venerate militant suffrage leaders as well as rank

¹ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Record Room Fund*, c1946. The Women's Library, 10/54/101.

² G. Riello, *Things That Shape History: Material Culture and Historical Narratives*, Routledge, London, 2001, p.26.

³ Lake, *Memory, Monuments and Museums: The Past in the Present*, 2006, p.138.

and file supporters. Furthermore, operating as amateurs within the field of museology, members had an inherent bias to collect and display their memory-laden collection to as broad an audience as possible unfettered by institutional rules of audience engagement. The Fellowship chose to curate acutely personal objects and operate its museums out of concern that its unique stories would be misrepresented, hidden or sensationalised in a derogatory way that would cause generational harm to the Fellowship's historical legacy.

The year after its formal establishment the Fellowship announced the installation of a Record Room intended to become a permanent storage facility, public library and museum of 'relics and objects' of the militant campaign. Custodians, nominated by the Fellowship, were entrusted to care for 'Suffragette papers, letters, press cuttings, manuscripts, books, banners and any other interesting matter'.⁴ Elsa Gye, articulating the rationale for establishing the Suffragette archive, determined in 1937 that the 'women's fight for freedom shall not be forgotten' and that it was up to Suffragettes to collect and retain records for safekeeping. The Fellowship asserted that its prime motivation for creating a complete record of suffrage histories was to alert women of the future to 'see what it cost other women to win for you your freedom; it is for you to guard and keep this freedom for all time!'⁵ Kean has previously highlighted how Edith How-Martyn, in the 1920s, was compelled to begin commemorating shared histories, which quickly became a quest to encompass histories beyond individual accounts. Edith had stated, 'it is well worthwhile to rescue as many records, photographs, trophies, and mementoes as possible before it is too late. Not only shall we preserve "deeds and names" but the records will be an encouragement and inspiration to the younger generations in their march toward full equal status'.⁶

The Fellowship subsequently reactivated objects from suffrage history that were inherently 'feminist things' by mirroring practices of past suffrage campaigners who

⁴ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932, p.16.

⁵ Elsa Gye, Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1938. The following year the Fellowship announced a larger Record Room now open at 6 Great Smith St Westminster.

⁶ H. Kean, 'Public Histories of Australian and British Women's Suffrage'. *Public History Review*, vol 14, 2007, pp.1-24.

highlighted heroines, such as Joan of Arc, to inspire others. Suffragette stars, including rank and file members Muriel Matters, Lilian Lenton, Leonora Cohen and Charlotte Marsh, were reintroduced to contemporary audiences from the 1930s until well into the 1960s as new heroines to inspire younger generations.⁷ Suffragette objects originally created to raise funds and foster an emotional connection for consumers created a suite of suffrage collectables destined to retain desirable status and which had sentimentality built-in at point of purchase.⁸ Accordingly, the Fellowship reactivated stored memories in products created by the WSPU and WFL. Thus, in line with the aims and objectives of the Fellowship, objects, relics and artefacts attached to the Suffragette era were heavily utilised to support a 'foundational history' of the suffrage movement in England, ably assisted by supportive allies. All objects, whether identifiable as domestic objects associated with female pursuits, fashion, or objects for the home or militant in nature, such as posters and objects associated with campaigning and prison, provided a visceral connection to a feminist history of resistance and empowerment to create a vibrant and rich collective feminist archive.

Historically state-sanctioned museums have presented carefully selected displays of curated objects within exhibition spaces mediated by discerning curators. In 1753 the British Museum represented a past depicting a masculine-laden sense of history as unquestionably progressive and without fault. Atkinson argues that discerning visitors gazed upon displays that offered up objects, relics and artefacts as representative of a mirrored elite, with unquestionable histories, displays designed to educate and enlighten the public.⁹ In contrast, curated exhibitions outside state museums were often viewed as 'unofficial knowledge', led by amateur historians and not taken seriously. Raphael Samuel notes that early biographers and oral histories were not to be trusted and were thought to be regarded as 'dubious' history, full of

⁷ See A. Bartlett, M. Henderson, 'Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction'. *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol 40, no. 2, 2016, p.136. Bartlett argues that 'feminist things' are objects created in the spirit of activism.

⁸ B. Green, 'Feminist Things: Votes for Women and the Circulation of Emotion Feminist Periodicals and Daily Life: Women and Modernity in British Culture', Springer International Publishing, 2017, p.1. Green has argued that suffrage relics including ceramics, jewellery and other items were designed with sentiment in mind.

⁹ D. Atkinson, 'The Heritage of Mundane Places', in Howard and Graham, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, 2012, p.364.

bias and inaccuracies.¹⁰ Additionally, Andrew Whitmarsh states the role of museums, in general, is to 'reinforce images of national unity and shared experiences'.¹¹ Lake also argues that 'museums are monuments to cultural values'.¹² Amy Levin has illustrated that Emmeline Pankhurst, who targeted museums and galleries for militant acts, was correct in her assertion that these institutions held power and influence by controlling the depicted imagery.¹³ As a comparison, the Suffragette Fellowship was intent on establishing its museum as a feminist act, to convey the Suffragettes' specific story, bypassing authoritative conveyors of history by highlighting histories 'from below' and offering an anti-establishment narrative richly illustrated by Suffragette objects, relics and artefacts.

Historically, curators have marginalised female representation, often depicting women in the domestic sphere.¹⁴ In contrast to the Fellowship-collected feminist archive, containing radical objects, Ginzberg argues that any museums described as having a feminist agenda in the nineteenth century were not in fact feminist in nature, as they exhibited relics that were merely feminine objects displaying virtues of 'self-denial, humility and benevolence'.¹⁵ Bart Ziino also highlights that, in Western societies, commemorative spaces such as war museums, cemeteries and memorials began to appear in earnest in the 1920s and 1930s, established primarily by non-traditional historians – earnest amateurs – aided by memories of former soldiers and soldier allies.¹⁶ The Suffragette Fellowship collection and museum offered a rare opportunity for female 'unknown and unhonoured' soldier Suffragettes to be similarly afforded due recognition fully supported by Suffragette objects, some

¹⁰ R. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, Verso, London, New York, 2012, p.441.

¹¹ A. Whitmarsh, 'We Will Remember Them: Memory and Commemoration in War Museums', *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, 7, 2001, pp.11–15. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/jcms.7013>.

¹² Lake, *Memory, Monuments and Museums: The Past in the Present*, 2006, p.138.

¹³ A. K. Levin, *Gender, Sexuality and Museums*, Routledge, London, 2010, p.5.

¹⁴ L. Dale, 'Museums and Feminist History, A symbiosis', *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal*, No 6, 1989, p.100.

¹⁵ L. Ginzberg, 'Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality and Politics in the North-eastern United States, 1820-1885', PhD thesis, Yale University, 1985, p.2.

¹⁶ A. Becker, 'Museums, Architects and Artists on the Western Front: New commemoration for a new history?', in Ziino, ed, *Remembering the First World War*, 2015, p.97.

focused on sacrifice and violence to women, and placed within the Suffragette Museum replicated as a site of struggle.¹⁷

The Fellowship used the created collection by staging objects to create a spectacle, recreating experiences of the 'women's war' and signifying their roles as victors. The material evidence of the movement demonstrated the chronological evolution of militant campaigning from 1905 to 1914. Posters and notices demonstrated women's methods of resistance, from rallies and marches through to open calls to resist authorities. Suffragette objects, relics and artefacts offered the public a new way of seeing the role of women in historical terms, as empowered women of the Edwardian era. The Suffragette Fellowship collection was used to reconnect, to raise funds, to mobilise, to mourn comrades, to celebrate success and transmit a message of empowerment to successive generations of women. Thus, the Suffragette collection formed a fully mediated archive, while also having been created on a foundation of subjective bias by individuals identifiable as heroic victors fighting for a just cause had created a foundational myth of suffrage history.

Control and Ownership

As argued by Kean, the Fellowship was made up of 'protagonists who sought to define their own history' and who adopted a traditional form of remembrance when displaying objects in the Suffragette museums.¹⁸ However, Suffragettes until that point had no expertise managing a museum, but as self-proclaimed experts in their unique history they sought to collect, curate and contextualise a volume of historical materials. Despite this lack of experience, in 1926 Edith How-Martyn set out to 'perhaps eventually have a home for the flags, banners, records, photographs of the movement and to keep in mind for future generations of women the history, the achievements, the heroism's'.¹⁹ This was also the year of the establishment of the

¹⁷ In Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936. Teresa Billington-Greig, keen to ensure her historic legacy was preserved, presented a banner embroidered with her name in gold thread on a green background, reported to have been found at the Caledonian markets to the Fellowship collection.

¹⁸ H. Kean, 'Personal and Public Histories: Issues in the Presentation of the Past', in Howard and Graham, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, 2012, p.46.

¹⁹ R. Pankhurst, 'Collection Development and Women's Heritage: The Case of the Fawcett Library', *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol 10, no. 3, 1987, pp.225-39. It is apparent that the bulk of the Fellowship documents, letters, correspondence, day to day registers,

Women's Service Library, later known as the Fawcett Library, and now the Women's Library. A reliable network of women and men, assisted by media coverage, began to donate personal items in response to Edith's proposal. In 1930 Hugh Franklin responded with an offer to donate his record of militant activities and the prison diary of his late wife, Elsie.²⁰

However, as the Fellowship focused on establishing the collection, it also reopened a window to recent history considered by some to be an uncomfortable truth, and a door best left closed. Despite overall public support for displaying a collection of Suffragette objects, there was initial resistance from authorities to provide content for the museum. In 1935 the Home Office refused a request from Elsa Gye to provide a sample 'steel gag' (the instrument used to forcibly feed Suffragettes in prison), materials confiscated from the WSPU office in 1913 by Inspector Jarvis, materials belonging to the WFL, and Suffragette banners confiscated by authorities at public melees.²¹ James Guy MP, acting as intermediary, unsuccessfully appealed to Sir John Simon, Secretary State of Home Affairs. He attempted to sweeten the request by advising Sir John, 'I have met one or two of the Fellowship, and if necessary, they are the type who might be very useful in connection with air raid defence schemes. A few souvenirs from Holloway would keep them more friendly'.²² It is difficult to know what is meant by the mention of an air raid defence scheme in 1935. However, the suggestion was a clear sign that mere mention of the word Suffragette continued to arouse interest among politicians.²³ In 1936 Elsa discovered that authorities had destroyed the banners.²⁴ However, not all objects were destroyed, as there is

minutes, notices were donated to the Women's Library. The artefacts, relics and objects were donated to the Museum of London. *Memoranda, Suffragette Club, undated and unsigned*, Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Reel 2, 'notes on the Suffragette Club', Z6082, pp.78-79.

²⁰ Hugh modestly believed that Elsie's prison diaries may be superfluous to the needs of the Club. Hugh Franklin to Edith How-Martyn, 4 February 1930, Franklin Correspondence, The Women's Library LSE, 7HFD/A/4/07. Letter from Miss McPhun, letter to the Fellowship, 1932. Miss McPhun offered her 'treasures' to the Fellowship. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.116/57.(112)

²¹ Elsa Gye to James CM Guy MP, 31 July 1935, HO 45/24665. James CM Guy, on behalf of Elsa Gye to Commissioner of Police, Scotland Yard, Ref:300/UNC/760 SB, 25 March 1935.

²² James CM Guy to Sir John Simon, 6 August 1935, HO 45/24665.

²³ Sir John Simon to James CM Guy MP, 21 August 1935. Internal memos suggested that as prison rules had changed since suffrage days, it would be of no benefit to provide relics of that era. A request to provide forcible feeding equipment was refused. HO/24665.

²⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936. The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG.

evidence to suggest that re-surfaced items survived as a result of souveniring. In 1933 the *Yorkshire Post* exhibited Suffragette objects that were described as 'personal trophies of the fight', linking relics directly to scenes of the battle.²⁵ The Fellowship sought to reappropriate objects to provide material evidence of participation in battles. The collection created a suite of propaganda, images, uniforms, medals, posters and publications, relics of the women's war retained post-suffrage as treasured keepsakes. However, it is arguable that the variety of Suffragette objects, once viewed as subversive objects, might now have appeared to contemporary generations as little more than intriguing relics with an interesting link to the past.

Visual Site of Struggle

The Little Museum, or Record Room, was established with a specific aim to not only depict Suffragette history but to preserve and protect the objects and artefacts within a holistic site of memories. Custodians in 1932 called for donations of Suffragette papers, letters, press cuttings, manuscripts, books, banners and any other interesting matter'.²⁶ Voicing additional concerns in 1934 the Fellowship stated, "much valuable historical material has already been lost, and all friends having records are earnestly asked to arrange to give them to the Fellowship." Elsa Inkster appealed to fellow suffragettes, "Those of us who were in the militant movement will never forget the suffrage spirit, of which these records are the symbol, and although we have won the vote, we must keep up enthusiasm for that for which we fought." Accordingly, the first Record Room at the Minerva Club, was established to secure a space to meet with old friends and to provide a 'dramatic, unique uprising of voteless women in the militant suffrage campaign some permanent remembrance'.²⁷ The Fellowship believed their museum was unique and housed 'priceless relics of human heroism' that were deserving of a dedicated and permanent space. The Fellowship invited the public to visit the Record Room, 'to view

²⁵ 'A Suffragette Museum', *The Yorkshire Post*, 30 October 1933, p.8.

²⁶ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932, p.16.

²⁷ Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, p.663. As confirmed in Booklet, V. Brittain, 'The Married Women in the Modern World', The Suffragette Fellowship, 1934. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A.

the records and mementos of the Militant Suffrage Movement 1905-1914,' one afternoon per week, to 'show them the exhibits and to indulge in tea and talk'.²⁸

However, due to the generosity of material donors, the Fellowship promptly outgrew the Minerva Record Room and in 1937 Rose Lamartine-Yates secured a house in Smith Square, Westminster. Edith How-Martyn, appealing for funds, expressed her belief that the 'militant suffrage movement made history; its leader Emmeline Pankhurst became a world leader. To preserve the records of that piece of history in a worthy way, is a task which we owe, not only to the women who made history but to the pioneer women of future generations who will carry on the fight for full equality'. Edith qualified the unique nature of a dedicated Suffragette Museum, contending that 'there are many specialist museums – the Ellen Terry Museum and Carlyle House – and I venture to think that a permanent Suffragette Museum would be of surpassing interest'.²⁹ *The Newsletter* reported in 1937 the museum was at full capacity and additional exhibition space was required and appealed to loyal supporters, including Inspector Jarvis and Suffragette prisoner Bayard Simmons, who provided supporting funds to the Fellowship.³⁰



Figure 13. Women's Record House. ³¹

²⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, Parliament Mansions, *Newsletter*, September 1935. The Women's Library LSE PC/06/390. Record Room Museum invitation, The Women's Library LSE, 7MER. The Women's Record House sign is held at the Women's Library LSE Ref: 7EWD/D/M/01. LSE Library Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lselibrary/22530432089>. Inspector Jarvis to Edith How-Martyn, 3 November 1937, The Women's Library LSE, TWL 6.1 Box 2.

²⁹ Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936.

³⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936, Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A. Additional contributors were Miss Billingham, Mrs Lamartine-Yates and Helen Atkinson.

³¹ 'Women's Record House, Notice, metal sign c1926', (date incorrect?) Black with white enamel lettering; 'Women's Record House'. According to the Women's Library it was made for the Suffragette Fellowship and fixed to the door of the 'Women's Record House', The Women's Library LSE, 7EWD/M/01.

During the Second World War, the collection was relocated and on display for a brief time at the home of WFL member Mrs Sparrow and then placed into safe storage for the duration of the war.³² In 1947 the Fellowship secured its 'Little Museum' on the third floor at 41 Cromwell Road, South Kensington and placed an advertisement, appealing to homemakers, in the *Evening Telegraph*: 'Votes for Women. What is claimed to be the smallest museum is to be opened this week – the Suffragette Museum at Kensington. There will be shown prison relics, banners and other reminders of women's fight for the vote over 30 years ago. Today woman have the vote, but they still have a dour fight to prepare family meals and keep the larder replenished. By making it as easy and as pleasant as possible to get groceries and provisions, *Johnston's stores* are on their side in this fight'. Select patrons included Viscountess Astor, Flora Drummond, Cicely Hamilton, Lady Megan Lloyd George, Dame Christabel Pankhurst and Lady Pethick-Lawrence. The day before the opening, another advertisement appeared in the local media.³³

The new Record Room and Museum was officially opened on 6 February 1947, the 29th anniversary of Votes for Women. Captured images reveal women, including Lilian Lenton, surrounded by banners, framed photographs of Suffragettes in various dresses and costumes, images of prison cells and newspaper headlines. Glass cases held smaller items: crockery in the colours, a padlock and chain, prison identification tag, a metal knife, plates and cups from prison, Suffragette jewellery, badges, brooches and assorted ephemera. Books, newspapers and journals lined the walls.³⁴ At the opening ceremony, Marian Lawson read messages of goodwill from many Suffragettes and women MPs. Lady Astor paid tribute by acknowledging

³² Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG. In July 1942 another Record Room was sourced for a brief period. The room at 43 Black Lion Lane, Hammersmith was owned by Mrs Sparrow, a member of the WFL, was described as 'bright and cheerful', but often closed due to blackouts. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1944, Papers and objects of Bessie Rischbieth, 1900-1967 [manuscript] National Library Australia, Object : 433180222. Following the sale of that building the records were relocated back to the Minerva Club. It was at this time that Helen Archdale catalogued and inventoried the records over summer 1944.

³³ Suffragette Fellowship *Newsletter*, 1946. Patrons also included, Lady Rhys Williams, Dr Edith Summerskill, Mrs Mavis Tate, Rebecca West. 'Votes for Women, Johnston's Stores', *Forfar Dispatch*, 3 February 1947, p.1.

³⁴ Sophia Goulden-Bach to Annie Kenney, 17 January 1947, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/2. Banners of the Northern Men Federation for Women's Suffrage and the Wimbledon WSPU Banner, 19 Feb 1947. www.alamy.com ETA2GE,ET730T, ET7FPW.

that she owed Suffragettes 'much in her fight as the lone woman MP'. Lady Pethick-Lawrence remarked that 'the struggle for women's suffrage must go down to history as a revolution, accomplished by enthusiasm and persistence'. Guests were led theatrically to a locked door where Mrs Goulden-Bach gave an 'inspiring speech before the door opened to reveal the museum'. The Fellowship provided a press release and was rewarded with substantial media coverage. Reporters noted that pieces of bread smuggled out of prison by Mrs Pankhurst and a tennis ball made by Charlie Marsh were featured exhibits in the 'smallest museum'.³⁵ The official opening was described as a great success and patronised by local and international visitors as well as journalists and scriptwriters from the BBC.³⁶ Audiences viewed a broad range of eclectic objects and items, ranging from the mundane loaf of bread smuggled out of Holloway Prison to a WSPU flag worn by Emily Wilding-Davison on the day of her death. Each object was inherently precious and loaded with meaning. Fellowship members notified readers in *Calling all Women* that 'years of loving, painstaking labour are now rewarded by the knowledge that the Suffragette's museum is henceforth a national treasure'. Kean states that the collection of materials was described by the organisers as 'the only authentic and unique collection of records and relics of the women's militant suffrage movement'.³⁷

Nostalgia was carefully mediated via the objects and creatively utilised to draw people together, to inform, educate and entertain all ages. A relationship was now formed by linking objects together to inform new audiences who immediately identified objects with Suffragette histories. The ideology of the Suffragette Spirit ingrained within objects now infused as the Suffragette archive with select objects

³⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1948. Dame Christabel Pankhurst, Lady Astor, Edith How-Martyn, Lord Pethick-Lawrence and all women members of Parliament. *The Women's Bulletin*, 21 February 1947, LOU.LON 609. 'Votes for Women Campaign Relics', *Hull Daily Mail*, 30 January 1947, p.5. 'Suffragette Souvenirs for Museum', *Citizen Gloucester*, 31 January 1947, p.5. 'Suffragette Souvenirs', *The Nottingham Evening Post*, 30 January 1947, p.3. 'Suffragette Souvenirs', *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, 30 January 1947, p.5.

³⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1948. Donor Patrons of the Record Room included, Marston Acres, Janet Barrowman, Mrs Cole, Mrs Dixon, Una Duval, R Dykes, Eleanor Fitzgerald, Ada Flatman, Mary Grant, Frank Halls, Lady Kisch, Miss C D Lamb, Dame Vera Laughton-Mathews, Mrs Marshall, Kitty Willoughby-Marshall, Mrs Mitchell, Winifred Myers, Dorothy Pethick, Muriel Matters-Porter, Mrs Russell and Isabel Seymour.

³⁷ H. Kean, 'Public Histories of Australian and British Women's Suffrage'. *Public History Review*, vol 14, 2007, p.46. H. Kean, 'Public history and popular memory: issues in the commemoration of the British militant suffrage campaign', *Women's History Review*, 14 (3-4), 2005, pp.581-602.

representing the 'spirit' at key public events. An example was the display of the Holloway Prisoners Banner, hung as a backdrop on the speaker's stage at the unveiling ceremony for the memorial to Christabel Pankhurst in 1959.³⁸



Figure 14. Suffragette Museum 19 February 1947. ³⁹

However, after the initial opening, the Record Room, given its reliance on volunteer labour, opened only two days a week or via special appointment. It was often visited by interested journalists who received permission to take photographs.⁴⁰ A review by an unnamed visitor was proudly reproduced in *Calling all Women*; the reviewer believed the 'smallest museum in London' was very moving, describing images of brutal treatment of women by police and in awe at the opportunity to handle a rough prison uniform. The artefacts gave her 'some idea of the intensity of conviction and courage that was needed to drive women, hitherto sheltered, into the rough and tumble of one of the most strenuous fights for Civil Liberty which has ever been fought'. The reviewer concluded 'for me, the museum is a link to the past. For many people, it will revive memories of the struggle in which they themselves took part. Above all, the museum will be of value because of its abiding historical importance.'⁴¹ However, due to post-war hardship,

³⁸ See *Chapter 3 Memorials and Monuments*. Beverley Cook argues that this banner 'symbolises the spirit of comradeship that gave Suffragette Prisoner the strength and courage to endure hunger striking and force-feeding and "face death without flinching". <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/ggLC981UR9ErJg>

³⁹ Suffragette museum at South Kensington, London. Women holding a Suffragette banner, 19 February 1947. ET8DGD www.alamy.com/

⁴⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 June 1949, LOU.LON 646. The space also provided an opportunity for assorted social get-togethers, and one occasion the Museum hosted a recital of Indian Music by Madame Freany on June 20th in connection with the WFL Summer Sale. *Calling all Women* 1949 reported Visitor numbers ranged from 10 to 30 people. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279.

⁴¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, Newsletter, 1946.

in 1949 Trustees elected not to renew the Cromwell Road lease and notified subscribers of the decision to hand custodianship of the collection to the London Museum. In preparation for handover, the Fellowship retained duplicate copies of regalia, books, and banners earmarked for Suffragette exhibitions.⁴² Despite the official handover of objects, it was apparent that the Fellowship was not willing to yield complete control of the curated Suffragette collection to the Museum of London.⁴³



Figure 15. Mari Hussey offering chains to a young visitor at the Suffragette Museum. ⁴⁴

Radical Objects

As a physical embodiment of the Suffragette Spirit, the objects signified a reflective nostalgia operating as a visual reminder of inflicted trauma. Objects created initially to raise awareness now provided material evidence of victory over adversity. Kean has also argued that the cause of Suffragettes was political and that objects created were inherently political objects and designed to leave memory traces.⁴⁵ Some

⁴² Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1951.

⁴³ Clemence Housman to Stella Newsome, February 19 & 27 1952, The Women's Library LSE, TWL 6.1. In February 1952 writer Clemence Housman, concerned at his advancing age, requested that Stella Newsome take care of a Tax Resistance banner created by him in white satin, prior to placement at the London Museum.

⁴⁴ 'Custodian Mari Hussey showing padlock and chain used by a Suffragette to an interested young visitor', The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

⁴⁵ H. Kean, 'Public history and popular memory: issues in the commemoration of the British militant suffrage campaign', *Women's History Review*, 14 (3-4), 2005, pp.585-586.

objects, characterised as unfeminine, were directly associated with marches and demonstrations; police hats and pieces of clothing which had been trophied during battles between police and Suffragettes were staged carefully in glass cases that allowed visitors to pay tribute to the foot soldiers, and leaders, of the women's war. Holton also highlights that suffragette histories, post suffrage, also helped to emphasise a new type of heroine.⁴⁶ Women represented as brave heroines or as soldiers in the field were depicted in the museum in prison dress with medals on display, backed up by photographs and implements from prison, including diaries. This assisted in offering up a holistic narrative of suffrage history. To add to the military styling, a series of portraits of women leaders were offered as generals of the women's war, hung on the walls of the museum above cases of photographs of rank and file soldier Suffragettes. The Fellowship declared 'it had already collected a large number of mementoes of the fighting days, including prison uniforms, a certain police inspector's walking stick, captured in a scrimmage and documents'. Another report noted that a policeman's helmet, and 'all manner of other more or less thrilling relics of battles long ago will figure in the collection'.⁴⁷ Bartlett has highlighted that women commemorated within military museums became attached to the violence that accompanies war, and that, in his view, is at odds with feminist values.⁴⁸ However, the Little Museum offered up women not as the oppressed but as glorious, brave feminist victors. Signifying the 'fallen' soldiers, Una Duvall, of the Fellowship, was solemnly presented with a membership card and shilling in the name of comrade Jane Wharton (Lady Constance Lytton), and a manuscript by Lady Constance, *Prison and Prisoners*.⁴⁹ Not unlike other military museums using government recruitment posters for previous conflicts, posters were repurposed later as historic visual propaganda. The Fellowship had no hesitation in portraying uncomfortable images of women depicted in prison and of violence toward women. Images of Suffragettes accosted by police, of being lifted off the ground, reports of

⁴⁶ Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.19.

⁴⁷ 'Suffragettes Reunion', *Gloucestershire Echo*, 7 October 1932, p.4. 'Suffragette Souvenirs', *Portsmouth Evening News*, 17 October 1933, p.4.

⁴⁸ A. Bartlett, M. Henderson, 'Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction'. *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol 40, no. 2, 2016, p.131.

⁴⁹ 'Old Prisoner His Hostesses', *Evening News Rockhampton*, 29 December 1936, p.3. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936.

events at Black Friday 1910, slingshots, stones and hatchets were on full, unabashed display in the museum.⁵⁰

Mayhall has argued that objects and documents that related directly to the prison experiences of Suffragettes were the overriding defining policy of inclusion in the Fellowship Museum. She has also argued that a subsequent narrative evolved after the Suffragette era which focused solely on prison experiences and that the sheer number of documents focusing on this aspect demonstrates how important it was to the Fellowship to provide credentialing of suffering, sacrifice, bravery and victory in the fight.⁵¹ However, this is a reductive view that does not take into account the number of highlighted objects, relics and treasures collected that were not related directly to prison, such as ceramics, jewellery, banners, posters of female heroines of the past, suffrage newspapers and posed photographs of women in domestic settings, and that were demonstratively non-militant, and not prison-related. Also, Kean has suggested that the Fellowship, by presenting the violence as usual, may have instead anaesthetised the public, thus rendering the violent acts by women and towards women as 'normal and acceptable'.⁵² That is, any intended shock value expressed by living Suffragettes may not have had any impact and that over time the objects may have held more value as titillation and entertainment. In a nod to the more radical items on display, one media report in 1935, highlighting the contrasts in the curious and surprising nature of the museum content, suggested in a disparaging tone that the museum on the outside appeared to be 'a ladies club in a quiet London square'.⁵³ Certainly, the Fellowship presented objects depicting images of women and police doing battle on the streets, medals, posters and other objects holding great human interest, and which could have been interpreted as entertainment. However, for the Fellowship, those objects were symbolic of violence to women, and were offered as lessons to be learnt, as symbols of resistance and of victory to women: they operated as props, witness to an abnormal time in women's

⁵⁰ 'Suffragettes Reunion', *Gloucestershire Echo*, 7 October 1932, p.4.

⁵¹ L. Mayhall in A. M. Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, 2005, p.244.

⁵² H. Kean, 'Personal and Public Histories: Issues in the Presentation of the Past', in Howard and Graham, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, 2012, p.224.

⁵³ 'Coats Ripped from Policemen's Backs', *The Evening Telegraph*, 3 May 1935, p.5.

history. Audiences, and museum visitors, did not appear to take the history attached to objects for granted, nor did they discount the level of trauma inflicted on women by authorities.



Figure 16. Hunger Strike Medal Awarded to Elsie Duval.⁵⁴

Memory and Emotion in Things

Unlike conventional museums, the Fellowship's museum did not present objects in chronological order but in a haphazard fashion. Photographs depicting women in domestic scenes, making jam, and bathing babies, and domestic objects like cups and saucers, were placed next to chains, propaganda posters of women being forcibly fed and staged photos of women prisoners. The museum displayed a dizzying array of objects designed to make a substantial claim of moral victory by the women. Depictions of violence, torture and objects originating in prison were a public declaration that to sacrifice one's freedom and health, with resulting long-term effects, was worth it in the end. In this sense, the museum offered a mediated and legitimised engaging visitor experience. The message of sacrifice was further enhanced with immediate access to real-life Suffragettes, as living artefacts, on duty to greet visitors, answer questions and provide personal and intimate access to objects and relics. The items were not one-dimensional objects in a glass case, with meaningless labels; visitors were offered an authentic experience viewing an exhibit filled with colour and brought to vivid life by the original owners. Items were ready-made relics that attempted to claim a single historic truth, fully assisted by suffrage propaganda, including the Suffragette newspaper, *Votes for Women*, that was, according to Sylvia Pankhurst, 'the most effective propaganda organ ever circulated'. It was repurposed to provide a rich source of archival 'history' of the militant movement.⁵⁵ Green has contended that 'suffrage periodical culture' was

⁵⁴ Hunger Strike Medal awarded to Elsie Duval. The Women's Library LSE, 7HFD/D/19. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lselibrary/22770641572/in/photolist-AGauqu-zLtwB2-zYzepd-docwPu-6jtGVR-6jtGVB-29Zw3QK-JZi5tK-25Tcc13-28DfQ9M-27ghwXn-25TctMj-2dg8Nib>

⁵⁵ J. Mercer, 'Media and Militancy: Propaganda in the Women's Social and Political Union's Campaign', *Women's History Review*, vol 14, no. 3-4, 2005, pp.473-476.

used to significant effect to 'stitch women, readers, more intimately to an abstract idea, that of the cause', by conveying emotion that assisted in creating a closer connection to (women) readers.⁵⁶ Suffrage journals also created consumer feminism that linked women with 'things' and 'emotion'. The object becomes infused with emotion according to the source, the intent of the creator, and the context attached by others; that is, the memory of 'things' allows an instant emotional attachment and reconnection to objects. The Fellowship successfully capitalised and exploited items created to convey a set meaning frozen in time and later recontextualised for the specific purpose of drawing supporters together and educating the public; these items were destined to be subjectified again and again. Audiences were drawn to Suffragette exhibitions as an immersive experience with minimal effort and help of a network of supporters that was vital for the ongoing survival of the archive.

An emotional relationship to objects provides an opportunity to relive the past and may also produce a heightened sense of reverence toward the relics that, for some, is equal to a religious experience. Importantly, a Suffragette relic did not need to have a visible link to militant, or prison, history to provide a personal emotional connection. Staged photographs, old pieces of bread, metal tins and utensils, cups, saucers and plates, created initially as merchandise for domestic use, became effectively wedded to suffrage history. However, no matter the original intent or level of emotional investment involved in the production of objects, the entire collection held most value when presented as a collective whole. The Fellowship continued to stage ceremonial events marking handovers of donated artefacts. For some Suffragettes and their families, however, some items were considered too special to hand over for public display. Others considered that some items should not be given to a museum in London but retained and donated to regional museums. In 1950, after news circulated that the collection was to be donated to the London Museum, Jessie Kenney expressed concern at the depiction of a statuette of her sister Annie in a shawl as 'stunt value' requested that the statuette be returned to the family for placement in the local museum at Letchworth.⁵⁷ Mary Leigh, self-appointed custodian of the legacy of Emily Wilding- Davison, did not relinquish one of the

⁵⁶ B. Green, 'Feminist Things: Votes for Women and the Circulation of Emotion Feminist Periodicals and Daily Life: Women and Modernity in British Culture', Springer International Publishing, 2017, pp.41-42.

⁵⁷ Jessie Kenney to Warwick Taylor, April 1950, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5.

WSPU flags found on the body of Emily after the incident at Epsom racecourse in 1913. Mary believed that the flag was left to her by Emily before her death and that it was her sacred duty to take responsibility for the artefact. The other flag found on Emily's body after the incident is now in possession of the Women's Library.⁵⁸

Additionally, objects outside the control of the Fellowship have also become infused in Suffragette folklore and are now seamlessly woven into the cultural fabric of Suffragette history. For example, in 1931 the Assistant Serjeant at Arms at the Houses of Parliament acknowledged that a pair of 'Porters Easy' bolt clippers obtained in 1909, a year after the Grille Incident at the House of Commons, were now kept in the office of the Assistant Serjeant at Arms as a memento of events on 28 October 1908.⁵⁹ This is a clear demonstration that all parties linked to Suffragette activities were keenly aware of their part in making history. Similarly, two years later, it was not only suffrage campaigners who continued to demonstrate the symbolic nature of that incident: authorities affixed the removed Grille as a permanent window frame in the Commons Central Lobby and commemorated the event with a brass plate.⁶⁰

Media and Allies

The Museum was not merely a self-indulgent exercise; it was primarily established to educate the public about a lived experience in history. Despite the overall low number of visitors, media visits provided a valuable service for the Fellowship by publicising the existence of the collection, and associated history to a broader

⁵⁸ Women's Library LSE, 'One of two flags found on Emily Wilding-Davison's body when she stopped the Kings Horse while running the Derby Race 4th June 1913. Presented by Rose Lamartine-Yates'. Hand-written label sewn to flag.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/flag-label/TgHH3eMmbwMdwg?childAssetId=VwHITsFxOMsHgA>

⁵⁹ Assistant Serjeant at Arms, House of Commons, 10 July 1931 & 24 November 1932. Parliamentary Archives. HC/SA/SJ/10/12/67.

⁶⁰ 'The Common's Grille', *The Lancaster Evening Post*, 26 October 1933, p.4. *The Lancaster Post* believed that 'as a historic relic its chief value arises from the part it played in Suffragette agitation'.

public.⁶¹ Reporters and photographers attended gatherings to interview custodians, record personal experiences, retell colourful stories and photograph objects, assisting the Fellowship to further legitimise militant history.

Individuals searched cupboards, attics and drawers, retrieving relics as prized possessions, pre-loaded with sentimentality and alive with memories. In 1936 special guest former Police Inspector Jarvis, aware of his starring role in historic events, delighted readers of the *Leeds Mercury* when he disclosed he was a Suffragette 'collector' and admitted to souveniring a chain from the railings of 10 Downing Street.⁶² Arguably, the media and new audiences by being presented with new heroes and heroines due to the number of 'new' objects seeing the light of day again, also ensured that the Fellowship was not a Pankhurst-centric commemorative organisation. In 1935 *The Yorkshire Post* reported that the Suffragette Fellowship boasted of a museum filled with an assortment of relics, including a piece of umbrella handle that was believed to have 'cracked many a dour head'. Newspapers also reported that members had collected fragments of a Suffragette platform smashed by a hostile crowd and re-used as photographic frames. A place of honour was given to a small stone thrown by a Suffragette that was returned to her by a friendly policeman. A Fellowship member, no doubt triggered by memories surrounded by objects of her youth, was interviewed and provided a wistful insight, looking back to her younger days, 'it was rather a great time to live through'. When asked if she had any regrets, one Suffragette wryly responded that with age, the chains no longer fitted around her waist.⁶³

At the Record Room opening in 1939, *The Examiner* expressed its view that 'Suffragettes ran their agitation in a way that no movement has been organised before, or since'.⁶⁴ A journalist also proclaimed with irony that the Little Museum at 41 Cromwell

⁶¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women* 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279. Museum volunteers reported that numbers ranged from 10 to 30 people.

⁶² 'Forgiven by the Suffragettes', *Leeds Mercury*, 1 October 1936, p.6.

⁶³ 'Suffragette Souvenirs', *The Yorkshire Post*, 16 March 1935, p.12. 'Yesterday's struggles remembered', *The World News Sydney*, 2 December 1936, p.4. An Australian newspaper featured relics, including a race card belonging to Emily Wilding-Davison and chains used by Edith New outside Number 10 Downing St.

⁶⁴ *The Examiner*, 7 April 1939, p1. Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship, June 1939. Women's Library LSE 7TBG B401.

Road was a former home of 'one of their greatest opponents', Winston Churchill, who spent time there during the Great War, had commented that 'several grey-haired women who took part in the militant movement were present' and commented that Suffragettes had treasured the objects for at least fifty years.⁶⁵ In a striking image, Teresa Garnett was photographed wearing her sash and holding the whip that struck Winston Churchill in 1909 at Bristol Temple Meads.⁶⁶ In 1949 journalist Charles Bode recorded a visit to the Little Museum, describing artefacts as trophies 'of the old battles'. Bode highlighted cabinets containing 'slogan-stencilled rubber balls' thrown into Government offices and West End clubs and iron chains, old 'faded photographs, yellowed newspapers, prison records, circular letters, banners in violet, white and green' and noted a rare copy of the Daily Mirror November 19 1910, with a front-page picture of a Suffragette struggling on the pavement under the grip of a policeman as, 'a situation hitherto unseen in England'. Bode linked the success of the Suffragettes to the gains of women in public life at that time, when he contrasted the Little Museum to the Victoria and Albert museums on the opposite side of the road, where 'you may find bigger treasures, more valuable period pieces, yet these relics here still hold a pretty close connection with our present times; thanks to the pioneer women who ate their prison soup from these tin plates, women today can become ministers, mayors, union leaders and they certainly do'.⁶⁷ For Bode, the social history and nostalgia offered by the items provided an interesting story that held special interest for his readers. Despite images of burnt-out churches and public buildings, and countless media reporting of incidents during suffrage campaigning, as well as later evidence of objects hinting at violence by the women, including stones and slingshots, there appears to be little surviving material evidence of ultra-militant acts highlighting the use of bombs and arson featured in the museum through the 1930s and 1940s.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ 'Suffragette Museum Once Churchill Home', *The Gazette Montreal Quebec*, 8 February 1947, p5. 'Suffragette Museum', *The Advertiser Adelaide*, 14 May 1947, p.11. Noting the eclectic range of exhibits included catapults, hammers, chain padlocks, crude metal plates and cutlery smuggled out of prison, personal relics, including the medal awarded to Mrs Pankhurst.

⁶⁶ 'Whipped Winnie', *Mirror Perth*, 22 February 1947, p.7. Edith How-Martyn, *Calling all Women*, February 1948.

⁶⁷ C. Bode., 'Granny's Revolution', *Britannia & Eve*, July 1949, p.25, p.58.

⁶⁸ See Chapter 6 *The Great Silence*

Objects and relics also provided on loan or created as replicas providing ready props for media outlets, including film, TV and radio, to further aid the Fellowship in shaping the cultural history of suffrage campaigns. In 1937 the Fellowship provided materials to producers of the film *Fame is the Spur* to assist filming the 1913 Derby.⁶⁹ Chidgey notes over the lifetime of the Fellowship, England's national broadcaster, the BBC, produced many hours of airtime via radio, and later television, primarily using content from the Suffragettes' own archives.⁷⁰ Reporters were utilised to introduce new audiences to a select group of women and militant history that may well have been forgotten within decades if the Record Rooms and Fellowship museums had not existed in the 1930s and 1940s. Fellowship-provided Imagery published in newspapers and journals across England advertised exhibits outside London and overseas, triggering nostalgic memories for some and introducing previously unknown Suffragette heroines to readers.

Museum of London

The London Museum is a notable social history museum showcasing everyday objects relating to the history of the City of London and was keen to secure the Suffragette Fellowship Collection for safekeeping. However, for the Fellowship, handover signalled a loss of control over the collection but also provided relief from the burden of financing, storing and safekeeping of artefacts and relics.

In 1947 the Fellowship was acknowledging it was in the best interests of the collection if the objects were available to a broader audience. Winifred Mayo, on behalf of Edith How-Martyn in Australia, contacted the Director of the London Museum, as it was then known, to offer the collection. She placed two conditions on the transfer: that the collection remain intact and be housed within a dedicated and permanent space. However, although the museum did not agree to commit to these demands, Una Duval, as a compromise, requested the collection be labelled as follows: 'This exhibit, part of the only authentic and unique collection of records and relics of the Women's Militant Suffrage movement 1905–1914 presented to the

⁶⁹ Suffragette Fellowship Newsletter, 1946, Patrons also included, Lady Rhys Williams, Dr Edith Summerskill, Mrs Mavis Tate, Rebecca West.

⁷⁰ Chidgey, 'Feminist Assemblages', 2013, p.107.

London Museum in 1950 by their Trustees', followed by the list of Trustee names.⁷¹ Una further suggested that a 'smaller exhibit' be kept on as a permanent exhibition to accommodate the occasional Fellowship event, including Mrs Pankhurst's birthday on 14 July. Ultimately the Museum Trustees did agree to keep the collection intact, with some concessions, and after the Fellowship conducted a full inventory and retained duplicate copies of items, the collection was placed into storage awaiting handover to the museum.⁷²

After the exhibition opened at London Museum at Kensington Palace in 1951, Jessie Kenney, viewed the collection and noted with admiration that posters depicting the Cat and Mouse Act and 'women brooding over Parliament' and images depicting forcible feeding were highlighted in the display; she was of the opinion that the cases were well done but was concerned that labels were not inclusive of donor names and not all of the collection was on display.⁷³ In October that year Prisoners Day was held at the Museum. Stella Newsome acknowledged the work of the curators in setting out the displays of the Fellowship's 'precious relics', and commented on the addition of the display of the Grille from the Ladies Gallery, which she described as 'the symbol of our former apartheid'.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Winifred Mayo to Director of the London museum, Lancaster House, 22 November 1947. Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549. London Museum, Meeting Minutes, 26 November 1947, Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549.

⁷² Winifred Mayo to Mr Grimes, Museum of London, 3 May 1948, Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549. Una also requested a written undertaking from the Museum covering the 'acceptance, maintenance and display of these exhibits in accordance with our Trust Deed'. Mr Grimes to Winifred Mayo, 6 May 1948, Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549. Mr Grimes responded by stating that he understood their alarm and he believed that his Trustees would agree to maintain the collection in 'its complete form' at hand over. Stella Newsome to Teresa Billington Greig, 8 August 1949, 7TBG FL401. Stella Newsome responded to a request from Teresa Billington-Greig that an archivist be employed to create a 'blueprint of our records'. Stella also sent copies to Bessie Rischbieth in Australia. See Chapter 7 *Shoulder to Shoulder Redux*.

⁷³ Jessie Kenney to Annie Kenney, 31 August 1951, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK2.

⁷⁴ *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 November 1951, LOU.LON 217. Una Duval to Mr Sheppard at the London Museum, 17 July 1951. Objects Relating to the Suffragette movement, 50.82/1-1549, Museum of London Archives. History of the Ladies Gallery. Letter on the grille from Sir Guy Laking (Keepers of the London Museum) to Sir Lionel Earle (Office of Works) TNA, WORKS 11/227. <https://www.parliament.uk/grille>
In 1917 one panel was permanently loaned to the Museum of London.
<https://ukvote100.org/2017/08/23/the-ladies-gallery-grilles/>

It is evident that the Fellowship viewed the objects, no longer under their direct control or responsibility, as 'their collection' and continued to keep a watchful eye on the collection at the museum.⁷⁵ The Fellowship also became aware in 1954 that some items with links to regions outside London were to be rehoused within their respective locales of origin.⁷⁶ The Fellowship welcomed the initiative and highlighted placement of duplicate materials in Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow. The Fawcett Society similarly reported that the Fellowship had also donated a large amount of historical material to their library and archive.⁷⁷ Stella Newsome viewed the collection as the Fellowship's 'pride and joy' representing a 'story of courage, faith and comradeship' now proudly available to a broader audience. It was, however, a bittersweet moment for founder Edith How-Martyn, who lamented in 1955 it was a 'great disappointment' to have to hand over the collection as she did not trust the Government to retain the archive as a whole and confided to Teresa Billington-Greig she believed the collection was in danger of being shunted into storage due to future pressure on exhibition space and into 'oblivion it will go'. Edith believed the collection was too radical for the Museum, too honest and expressed doubts the museum would continue to 'exhibit any Government in an unfavourable light' that would 'take much explaining'.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, the Suffragette Fellowship Collection now stood on its own, without mediation provided by former Suffragettes. The collection, now accessible at the

⁷⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1951, the Brackenbury Plaque, the Smyth baton, chains, toffee hammer, photographs and poster of *The Haunted House*. The Suffragette Fellowship, Executive Meeting Minutes, 5 November 1958. Assistant Keeper to Stella Newsome, 11 Feb 1954, Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549. Stella Newsome to Assistant Keeper, 26 October 1955. Stella offered a banner of the Edinburgh Branch of the Northern Men's League for Women's Suffrage, in February 1954. The Curator suggested that the banner be given to the Museum of Scotland. Banners of the Women's Tax Resistance League and Hammersmith WSPU were donated in 1955.

⁷⁶ The Assistant Keeper advised the Fellowship that due to restrictions on space and display that materials could be dispersed to other museums rather than remain 'dormant' in storage. Letter from Assistant Keeper to Stella Newsome, 2 Feb 1954. Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549.

⁷⁷ Report on the work of the Women's Service Library, Annual Report of the Fawcett Society, 1954, pp.16-22, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106 2LSW.

⁷⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1951. Edith How-Martyn to Teresa Billington-Greig, National Library Australia, Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand, 27 February 1952, Obj 806787261.

discretion of curators, attracted interest from museums, authors, researchers and historians.⁷⁹ In 1954 author Roger Fulford was given complete access to books, news cuttings, pamphlets, leaflets, albums, minutes, reports and photographs. Fulford later published a text that caused significant dissent within the Fellowship. Demonstrating the ongoing appeal of select objects, in 1957 Miss Nourse, a private researcher specifically requested loans of objects with a direct historical link to prison was refused access to the collection.⁸⁰

On Prisoners Day in 1966 Assistant Curator Susan Davis assured Fellowship members that interest in the collection remained robust and that students had shown a great interest in obtaining information on suffrage history. Miss Davis advised the Fellowship that the collection would soon gain a larger space in the 'constitutional history' gallery in the new Museum at the Barbican. The Fellowship also noted the ironic statement by Miss Davis that 'the London Museum is the ideal place for the Suffragette records' as the ties go back to 1912 when the opening of the museum was delayed 'to the activities of the militant Suffragettes!'. And was pleased to notify Fellowship members in 1971 that the collection would be placed in a more prominent section that would afford the collection a 'proper place in the Museum'.⁸¹

External Exhibitions

Although the collection, despite its various moves, was always centrally located, the Fellowship had never viewed itself as London-centric and throughout the life of the collection had often released items for external exhibitions. The collection was also

⁷⁹ Unknown to J Ogden, Corporation Museum, Victoria Park, Keighley, Yorks, 11 Feb 1954, Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549.

⁸⁰ Assistant Keeper to Roger Fulford, 22 December 1954. Miss Nourse to Mr Hayes, 25 Feb 1957, Mr Hayes to Miss Nourse, 5 March 1957, Museum of London, *Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549.

⁸¹ *Invitation Suffragette Fellowship Prisoners Day*, 15 October 1966, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. The original plaster model by Alice Wright given to National Woman's Party Washington. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1967. In 1970 the newly appointed Director of the London Museum, John Hayes, stated he 'would like to turn it into a more of a historical museum' by revitalising public galleries by presenting various exhibits in terms of the developing history of London rather than a lot of static objects in glass cases. Hayes noted that the museum 'badly lacks a collection of historic photographs – they have none apart from a few of the Suffragette movement'. 'Museums are all about life', *The Illustrated London News*, 8 August 1970, p.22. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1971.

utilised to provide authenticity to historical productions, such as plays and films, and to volunteer groups interested in suffrage histories for external exhibitions. The Fellowship put the items and objects to good use following donations by members by promptly hosting a series of suffrage-themed historical displays. The Six Point Group hosted a three-day event in 1930 featuring items focused on prison, including cutlery, an egg cup, a Cat and Mouse Act Poster, summons papers, a piece of glass smuggled out of prison by Helen Archdale in 1911, a tennis ball made by Charlotte Marsh out of wool, prison clothes and diaries, a small pack of cards made in jail by Kitty Marshall and a piece of mauve ribbon torn from Christabel Pankhurst's hat. *The Telegraph* described the exhibition as display of 'war relics', noting the displayed chain affixed to the grille by Muriel Matters, labelled as the 'precious property' of the Women's Freedom League was also on display, Mrs Drummonds 'gold epaulettes and photographs'.⁸² In 1946 the Suffragette Museum hosted a special exhibition of objects with historic links to the WFL, featuring documents and images of WFL founder Charlotte Despard.⁸³

Demonstrating a lack of gravitas with which others considered Suffragette objects, in June 1932 the Tiverton Division Unionists hosted a 'good old days' fete at Bradfield featuring a scolding chair fitted with a heavy chain and leather belt reported to have belonged to a Suffragette who had chained herself to the grille in the Ladies Gallery in the House of Commons. The Unionists proclaimed the belt was a drawcard for 'visitors attracted to a legend'. Ownership of that belt is unclear, but it most likely came from a Union sympathiser or government representative, as it is doubtful that the Fellowship would have allowed such a precious relic to be used as entertainment in such a frivolous context.⁸⁴ The Fellowship and the WFL also monitored public mentions of any associated artefacts. In 1958 the WFL reported that a belt belonging to Muriel Matters was for sale in the *Daily Telegraph*. Muriel was doubtful that it was

⁸² 'Suffrage Exhibition', *The Vote*, 7 November 1930, p.3. 'Suffragette Relics', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 8 November 1930, p.3. 'Suffragette Exhibition Relics of Women's Fight for Vote', *Telegraph Brisbane*, 27 December 1930, p.2.

⁸³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 20 September 1946, LOU.LON 119. Suffragette Fellowship Record Room, Suffragette Fellowship, 1946, The Women's Library LSE, GB/106/EWD/E1/2.

⁸⁴ Inscribed with 'If you have a wife who scolds, life is indeed bitter, so in this chair, you had better sit her; then go out and take your pleasure, come back, release her at your leisure. And after all, too light a measure'. 'The Good Old Days recalled at Bradfield Fete', *The Western Times*, 3 June 1932, p.12.

her belt as her previous request to Scotland Yard to return the belt to her was refused; she believed it might have been a reserve belt given to Helen Fox.⁸⁵ In 1940, in support of British armed forces, a Suffragette banner was featured at a fashion pageant displaying a 'tableau of the ages'.⁸⁶ And in 1951 the Record Room recorded several loans of regalia, clothing and banners for staged productions of 'Women through the Ages and Dress of the Suffragette Period'.⁸⁷ Also in that year photographs of women leaders – Mrs Pankhurst, Mrs Despard and Lady Pethick-Lawrence – were loaned for an exhibition, *Women of the Century*, organised by the women's societies of Twickenham.⁸⁸ Following the closure of the Suffragette Museum, *Calling all Women* reported that Suffragette mementoes were now located in museums across England and deposited by Suffragettes in America and Australia.⁸⁹ In 1961 the British Museum featured a display of items from the militant and constitutional suffrage societies.⁹⁰ Four years later the Fellowship provided objects on loan for an exhibition at Abbey House and gratefully acknowledged the contribution of member Leonora Cohen who had permanently gifted her suffrage mementoes to Leeds City Council.⁹¹

⁸⁵ The Belt was donated to Museum of London in 1970 by the Office of Works. *Calling all Women*, 1970. Muriel also believed that Helen Fox was a 'police stooge' as she had vanished after the Grille Event in October 1908. I have been unable to confirm if Helen was a plant. WFL, Executive Committee, 23 February 1958, The Women's Library LSE 7WFL 2/1/15.

⁸⁶ The 1940 Tableaux also featured the Princess Royal's wedding dress, Victorian Scenes and Edwardian Scenes. 'Princess Royal's Wedding Dress', *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 27 June 1940, p.4.

⁸⁷ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 June 1951, LOU.LON 217.

⁸⁸ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 6 July 1951, LOU.LON 217.

⁸⁹ Mrs Mitchell placed items in Manchester, Mary Hackey in Liverpool, Janet Barrowman in Glasgow, Genie Shepherd in Sevenoaks. Mary Richardson has placed photographs, books at Smith College Massachusetts in their section, 'history of the women's movement'. Stella Newsome gave duplicate items to Bessie Rischbieth, for 'her small museum', in Australia. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1953. See Chapter 7 *Shoulder to Shoulder Redux*.

⁹⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 11 August 1961, LOU.LON 553.

⁹¹ In 1966 an exhibit of objects from the Cohen collection was on display at Abbey House Museum appealing to a broad audience. Additional suffragette objects were provided on loan, included the Christabel statuette by Wheeler on loan from Manchester, the large WSPU embroidered banner, a china plate in the colours given to Leonora by Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, a medallion and a WSPU tea set on loan from Grace Roe and the Prisoner *Roll of Honour* and chains used by Muriel Matters in 1908. Suffragette Fellowship, 'Meeting of the Executive', 23 March 1965. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1966 Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1967. The Women's Library, 7JCC/0/02/166.



Figure 17. Louie Cullen and WSPU Illuminated Address, c1958.⁹²

Additionally, in 1966 the Fellowship organised a regional 'travelling exhibition' of Suffragette material. The Fawcett Society also hosted a three-week 'Centenary Exhibition', displaying objects, relics and artefacts from all suffrage societies: books, pamphlets, photographs, posters, badges and games. Sixty banners, including a police poster with two 'wanted' Suffragettes described as 'dangerous criminals capable of doing any damage', were on loan from the Fellowship.⁹³ The Fawcett Society also acknowledged the cooperation in suffrage campaigning between the militant and constitutional societies. The Society noted 'although many law-abiding suffragists deplored their (militant) activities, and considered they retarded the vote, it was impossible not to admire their courage and their willingness'. It was 'thanks to the militants; the question could no longer be ignored. It was news, and the papers were full of it. They had brought the subject from stagnation to the burning question of the hour'.⁹⁴

Conclusion

By gathering relics and artefacts the Little Museum reminded the public of the Suffragettes' place in history and helped establish a legacy that is without parallel in feminist history. Suffragette museums created a space for Suffragettes to regroup and reflect on their direct involvement in what they believed had been a just moral

⁹² Suffragette 'Louie' Cullen emigrated to Australia and donated her WSPU collection to Bessie Rischbieth. Papers and objects of Bessie Rischbieth MS 2004/3/312, National Library of Australia. National Library Australia, Series 3, Obj-250831564.

⁹³ The Fawcett Society, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Great Britain 1866-1928*, The Women's Library LSE 7ACP. In addition to handing over a quantity of objects to the London museum, the Fellowship also assisted to donate several personal diaries, documents, journals, minutes, personal archives and other ephemera to the Women's Library. Minutes Suffragette Fellowship, 29 April 1966. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

⁹⁴ The Fawcett Society, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Great Britain 1866-1928*, The Women's Library LSE 7ACP.

cause. Chidgey, referring to present day Feminist campaigns, has argued that the Suffragette objects and associated iconography act within a contemporary setting in the 2000s as 'anchor points', representing public discourse about 'national progress'.⁹⁵ The Fellowship Collection, in its day, was also constantly utilised by the Fellowship to provide 'anchor points' within organised commemorative events, and the items in the collection were re-acted as feminist objects within the owners' lifetimes. The material objects of the past presented as a collective feminist archive further entwined bonds among ageing Suffragettes and was used to cement relationships between the Fellowship and feminist allies by contributing to a legacy that helped to legitimise militant actions. Given the primary role of the Fellowships' Suffragette members in the events memorialised in the collection, the Fellowship understandably demonstrated a distinct bias to contextualise the Suffragette archive in ways that omitted any contradictions inherent in propaganda-created objects. That is, there was no attempt to convey the government's point of view when it was faced with militant campaigners, and indeed no attempt to assess whether militant acts did in fact cause or hasten the granting of votes to women.

The Fellowship, as pioneer feminist curators in the 1920s and 1930s, curated a vast collection of objects mediated via the Little Museum and presented within a mediated space. As highlighted by Gunn and Ward, museums often present as a 'live site of struggle'. The Little Museum also operated outside of sanctioned sites of memory but also operated within a familiar framework of contemporary museum display practices.⁹⁶ The Fellowship was fully aware of the invisibility of women in history, and in historical displays, publications, libraries, galleries, museums and archives. It drew on available material to depict Suffragette 'history from below', focusing on sites of struggle and including images of violence to women and artefacts used to inflict violence. Curators did not shy away from depicting uncomfortable truths –objects were allowed to tell a history that also evoked an emotional response from the public.

⁹⁵ Chidgey, *Feminist Afterlives: Assemblage Memory in Activist Times*, 2018, p.67.

⁹⁶ D. Gunn and V. Ward, 'Fieldnotes from a Challenging History', in J. Kidd, S. Cairns, A. Drago, A. Ryall, & M. Stearn, eds, *Challenging History in the Museum: International Perspectives*, Taylor and Francis, London, 2014, p.131. A. Bartlett and M. Henderson, 'Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction'. *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol 40, no. 2, 2016, pp.129-39.

Objects housed within the Fellowship museum were treated with reverence and operated within a sacred space housing objects considered sacred to Suffragette memory. Artefacts did not need to consistently display 'the colours' post-suffrage to be identifiable as Suffragette treasures. The collection, now termed a collective archive, comprised of a diverse range of objects, some labelled radical, others domestic and banal, now linked together as a complete signifier of Suffragette history. Some objects, including postcards, sold initially to uphold the feminine nature of women, created celebrities of the day. Other relics recognisable as objects of violence or associated with prison held an abundance of sentiment. These all became a fully formed collective feminist archive by grouping objects together to create a collection within living memory to shape a unique cultural memory, now assumed to represent an entire social movement.

The collection established a pictorial agenda featuring the scope and breadth of militant Suffragette history. Records, ephemera, diaries, journals and newspapers were now relied upon as a primary source of Suffragette histories. Postcards of women in domestic scenes, baking and taking care of children, were produced but did not attract media attention, unlike scenes focused on prison and prisoners. Gift stores in museums and archives have now successfully monetised select items from their collections by replicating well-known Suffragette designs, often in 'the colours', providing an opportunity for visitors and customers to own a piece of Suffragette history. Authentic objects, when offered at auction, continue to be in demand by museums and private collectors, who often place an emotional attachment on the items. Commemorative anniversaries of Votes for Women often spike demand for original objects, and this has contributed to a steady increase in prices paid for authentic suffrage items.⁹⁷

Curiously, apart from a few select pieces of jewellery made for Suffrage leaders in the colours, there is little jewellery made in the colours during the Suffragette era featured in the collection. Despite this, any items of jewellery made in the era that

⁹⁷ H. Kean, 'Public history and popular memory: issues in the commemoration of the British militant suffrage campaign', *Women's History Review*, 14 (3-4), 2005, p.76. The hunger strike medal belonging to Mary Richardson was the subject of a bidding war in 2003, fetched 19,000 pounds at auction. L. Chester, 'Demand surges for suffragette memorabilia as 100th anniversary of women getting the vote is celebrated', *Antiques Trade Gazette*, 6 February 2018. <https://www.antiquetrade gazette.com/news/2018/demand-surges-for-Suffragette-memorabilia-as-100th-anniversary-of-women-getting-the-vote-is-celebrated/> February 2018

happen to feature the colours are often associated directly with the Suffragette era and given an immediate emotional connection by owners, whether or not the provenance is able to be established.

A masterstroke of the Fellowship was gifting the collection to the Museum of London, a location strategically selected due to the expertise and space available there, which would provide the opportunity to keep the collection on view and as intact as possible. The museum became an accomplice of the Fellowship in protecting and highlighting the Suffragettes' unique history and providing an enduring legacy of the rank and file Suffragettes. The museum, by offering the collection intact, displays cups and saucers next to jewellery and slingshots, continuing to this day to present an engaging and immersive display of Suffragette items. The impact of the objects is not lost but strengthened when surrounded by a diverse array of sister objects. In effect, the Museum of London still carries on the work of the Fellowship by providing access to the collection by a broader audience. Historians and enthusiastic researchers have produced countless history texts, and biographies and exhibition booklets often feature objects from the curated collection, all helping to cement militant suffrage history. However, the collection in its entirety is representative of all forms of militancy, including the passive resistance of the WFL, demonstrations in the streets, and tax avoidance; it does not focus entirely on items relating to imprisonment, but rather on resistance and sacrifice.

The inclusion of the Fellowship curated collection in the Museum of London has given the collection implicit authority over militant actions and potentially, by association, over ultra-militant acts. Sympathies are garnered by Suffragette 'things', which are presented as feminist and feminine objects. These objects offer up what appears to be a complete history, unquestionably accepted as gospel by a public willing to engage with objects that appear to be timeless. In 2018, a centenary year of partial Votes for Women, the Museum of London displayed a special exhibit, 'Shades of Militancy', featuring Charlotte Marsh and the belt worn by Muriel

Matters.⁹⁸ After thirty years at the Barbican, the Suffragette Fellowship Collection is to be relocated to the former site of the Smithfield Market.⁹⁹

Chapter Six *The Great Silence* examines how the Fellowship addressed the elephant in the room – events focused on bombs and arson as part of militant history – by employing a process of forgetting as an act of Suffragette solidarity.

⁹⁸ Curator Beverley Cook, *Shades of Militancy*, also featured objects related to Flora Drummond, Kitty Marion and Ada Flatman, <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/shades-militancy-forgotten-Suffragettes>.

⁹⁹ After 30 years at the Barbican, in 2015 the Museum of London announced plans to relocate to the former site of the Smithfield Market by 2021. It is not yet clear if the display dedicated to the Suffragette Fellowship Collection will be expanded or reduced in size and scope. An artist's view of a proposed exhibition space features the banner of the Hammersmith WSPU. <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/news-room/press-releases/museum-london-submits-plans> <https://museum.london/our-supporters/> DITTO.

Chapter 6 The Great Silence

Introduction

After its establishment, the Fellowship was prompt to respond to public discussions about bombs and arson, and associated historical links with Suffragette activities, forcing public commentators, authors and writers to retract or redact claims that particular ultra-militant activities were the responsibility of members of the WSPU. From the beginning, the Fellowship regularly monitored books, speeches and articles that referenced the militant suffrage campaigns, and demanded corrections to Suffragette history mentions in the media and in published texts. This was an enormous responsibility that lessened from the 1950s and was completely absent by the 1970s. The Fellowship was faced at the same time with the onerous task of ensuring its stories were kept alive in public memory, thus reversing the general trend of invisibility of women in history, while attempting to control the tone of the legacy.

In 1936 Edith How-Martyn articulated that the mission statement of the Fellowship was to:

Correct all false or damaging stories which may be circulated, not only about the militant movement but of the women who took part in the militant campaign. In this way, the Fellowship hopes to hand down to posterity a true and accurate account of the Militant movement and its leaders'.

Additionally, the Fellowship acknowledged that constant vigilance was required to correct, in its words, 'damaging Suffragette stories' which have appeared in various 'memoirs' in order to 'perpetuate the memory of the pioneers and outstanding events'.¹

The politics of memory around Suffragette commemorations encouraged a culture of selective forgetfulness that created partial silence around official histories. Cubitt argues that 'forgetting' also carries a 'powerful emotional

¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936.

charge'.² As suggested by Bain Attwood, forgetting is 'a crucial factor in the creation of a nation'.³ Cubitt, referring to Holocaust histories, suggests that historical narratives that focus on marginalised histories, including women's history, must consider that often there are some things 'retained' and 'other things repressed'. The very nature of repressing will marginalise some facts, or individuals, while others are kept at the centre. That is, by 'promoting one kind of memory, it obstructs other ways of remembering'.⁴ The Fellowship believed it was entrusted with a duty and responsibility to forget select aspects of lived pasts. It thus considered itself justified in practising a form of consciously 'forgetting' select aspects of lived histories, normalising this as a noble sacrifice for the greater good of the Suffragette legacy. In this way, it created a 'comforting myth' by focusing public commemorations on a partial truth that was, in effect and at least for some, a balance of remembering and forgetting. Thus, remembrance for the Fellowship often incorporated a measured response, between the duty to forget and to remember.⁵

Mayhall pointed out, referring in part to the Fellowship, that due to the political climate in the 1920s and 1930s individuals and Suffragettes who spotlighted past militant acts at this time 'would not have made 'good politics'.⁶ However, Mayhall was referring to the militant acts as an entire body of work, rather than examining the differences inherent in the militant work of Suffragettes at that time. The memory work of the Fellowship was particularly vigilant in the decades of the 1930s and 1940s: in choosing to monitor public accounts of their histories members were proactively attempting to propagate a preferred history that in part centred on prison, but were not willing to highlight every act that sent women to prison. This constant policing invariably caused public 'history wars' played out in the media that drove

² Inglis and Brazier, *Sacred Places : War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, 1998, p.63. Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 2007, p.54.

³ B. Attwood, 'Denial in a settler society: The Australian Case', *History Workshop Journal*, Issue 84, July 2017.

⁴ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 2007, pp.52-53.

⁵ Inglis and Brazier, *Sacred Places : War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, 1998, p.63.

⁶ Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, 2003, pp.141-142.

Suffragettes to contact newspapers to 'correct' historical accounts alluding to bombs and arson. This task was made smoother by assistance from authorities and public figures who, when faced with threats by Suffragettes, agreed to redact or alter public material that did not sit well with Fellowship members. In this, it was further assisted by the media, willing to buy into the premise that a carryover discussion of past ultra-militant acts was not always in the best interests of either Suffragettes or authorities at that time.

Notably Vera Brittain stated in 1930 that the statue of Mrs Pankhurst, and not Mrs Fawcett, was erected in response to the 'British Desire to bury old controversies. Brittain stated 'by canonising the heretic' (Pankhurst) it is possible to 'close the door on the uncomfortable past'. Cubitt has argued that when memory entails unresolved tension, it is often easier to allow for a 'reinterpretation of the past' often led by the desire to bury the past.⁷ Thus, a focus on softer militant acts and omitting references to bombs and arson was viewed as a legitimate act to smooth over one aspect of a shared past. The Fellowship believed that this was a legitimate measure to smooth over uncomfortable history, focused on half-truths, to ensure only a positive legacy of militant campaigns. Fellowship leaders actively monitored public discussion of suffrage histories and worked to suppress any mention of all but a small sample of ultra-militant activities, except for window-smashing. Though the Fellowship's aim, and its role, was to champion the Suffragette Spirit, any objectivity was clouded by a desire to protect the Suffragette legacy. Violence to women, and not particular acts of violence (arson and bombings) committed by women, became the desired focus of commemorations, memorialising and public reporting on reunion events.

Thus, this chapter focuses on the 'silences' in the archive caused by concerns that events involving ultra-militant acts during suffrage campaigning could disrupt and derail the desired outcomes laid out in the Fellowship's aims and objectives. However, it is important to define 'militancy' in the activism of Suffragettes. As suggested by Purvis, Suffragette militancy occurred over a broad period from 1905 until 1914. However, I contend that the acts occurring during that period that involved arson and

⁷ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, p.202. Brittain cited in Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.42.

explosive materials were acts of 'ultra-militancy', and separated in terms of intensity from other militant acts such as window-smashing, public demonstrations, attempts to infiltrate the Houses of Parliament, and interruptions at political meetings.⁸

On the day of Emmeline Pankhurst's death in June 1928 the media was already primed, and published an unashamed account of the militant campaign focused on specific events, including the whipping of Cabinet Ministers, the destruction of letterboxes, the smashed windows and burning of buildings that appeared commonplace in the final years of the long struggle for votes for women.⁹ Noticeably, the media delighted in the sensational nature of the militant campaigns, however this was an apparent clash with the Fellowship's preferred unwritten policy to highlight forms of resistance by women that left out references to arson and bombs. Thus, 'the great silence' began to be propagated by the Fellowship, which sought to publicise a history of the heroics of women that focused on women chaining themselves to public buildings, breaking windows, resisting forcible feeding, interrupting public meetings, speaking in public and marching, and which highlighted the violence perpetrated on women.

Outstanding Matters

After militant activities ended swiftly in 1914 on the outbreak of World War I and after the negotiated release of imprisoned Suffragettes, there was no time or energy left for an adequate debrief for Suffragettes and supporters. Thus, any legacies regarding discussions over the effectiveness of militant acts were left on hold for the duration of the war, included loose ends surrounding the legal status of 'mice on the run'. However, the negotiated truce and the pardon of Suffragette prisoners on the outbreak of the war applied only to prisoners behind bars and was not inclusive of 'mice on the run' under the Cat and Mouse Act; the pardon was, in fact, a mere remission

⁸ J. Purvis, 'Did Militancy Help or Hinder the Granting of Women's Suffrage in Britain?', *Women's History Review*, vol 28, no. 7, 2019, pp.1200-1230.

⁹ 'The Militant Campaign', *Gloucester Citizen*, 14 June 1928, p.11.

of sentences.¹⁰ There is evidence to suggest that following the cessation of the war some Suffragettes – the mice on the run – held genuine concerns about their current legal status. In 1931 Mary Richardson contacted the Home Office, seeking the wording of the King's Pardon granted in August 1914. Mary's query triggered a Home Office investigation which suggested that other Suffragettes also had outstanding warrants. Although the Home Office had provided a copy of the exact wording to Mary on 5 August, permission to publish the pardon publicly was rescinded on 18 August. Two decades later, in August 1957, Mary Richardson continued to seek clarification regarding pardons granted to Suffragettes in 1914.¹¹



Figure 18. *The Suffragette* 26 June 1914.¹²

¹⁰ The Fellowship newsletter noted in 1936 that only 'mice' in prison were granted remission of sentences, effectively excluding remissions for mice outside the prison system. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936.

¹¹ The Home Office stated a 'search of the Warrant Book shows no record of remission of sentence to any Suffragette other than those named in the draft in 253249/19 at any later date. Nor is there any record of remission to Mary Richardson in the surviving submissions in her file (235,545). Memo referencing Mary Richardson, noting she was granted a Kings Pardon in 1914, later minutes 23 August 1957, HO45/24663. The Home Office file of the Suffragette Index also confirmed during the earlier contact by Mary stated 'what was granted was not a Free Pardon but a remission of sentence. Immediate release to those in prison under sentence'. The Home Office stated they had very serious objections to the public screening of a copy, or extract, from a warrant signed by His Majesty the King. Stating that, 'it is a document of State and could not be reproduced without the King's approval, and permission from my Department'. Mary Richardson to Mr Clyne, *Home Office Whitehall*, 21 July 1931, HO45/24665. E Blackwell to CR, 31 July 1931, HO45/24665.

¹² *The Suffragette*, 26 June 1914, p.182.



Figure 19. 'The Burnt Out Stands at Hurst Park' 13 June 1913.¹³

Anti-Militant Sentiment

Key to understanding the deep motivation of the Fellowship to control the public representation of shared histories is an awareness of the extent, and scope, of anti-militant sentiment directed at Suffragettes during suffrage campaigning. One example can be found in the 'masculinist' point of view that suffrage campaigners were subjected to, both from the 'man on the street' and public authorities, during suffrage campaigning. Post-suffrage authors were prompt to express their views about the effectiveness of militant campaigners. In particular, the work of George Dangerfield in 1935 is considered to express anti-militant views. Holton has argued that Dangerfield's masculinist point of view provided a type of narrow discourse that viewed women active in the public sphere as, by definition, 'deviant, marginal and even dangerous'. The Fellowship was also singled out by Dangerfield – he suggested that they offered up 'false heroic and hence the comic dimensions of the suffrage campaign'. Furthermore, Dangerfield was suggesting that former militants, through their support of militancy and continued memorialising of Mrs Pankhurst, were contributing to a lack of respect for democracy itself. He suggested that any form of militant action was a 'symptom of neurosis'. Dangerfield also believed that due to militant campaigning scores of women had become more like men and therefore had

¹³ 'The Burnt Out Stands at Hurst Park', *The Suffragette*, 13 June 1913, p.575.

become more attracted to women in the process.¹⁴ Mayhall has also argued that the Pankhurst leaders emerged from Dangerfield's text as irrational heroines who were 'unworthy of emulation, but historical forces and agents unto themselves'. However, Mayhall also argued that Dangerfield's text had caused militancy to be viewed as acceptable post-World War I, as the women had called a truce to militant campaigning to support the government.¹⁵ Hence, it is arguable that later action to suppress uncomfortable truths was made easier and more palatable due to militant support of government efforts during World War I. Inherently, obtaining the partial franchise in 1918 was a public endorsement of the idea that women were considered worthy of voting rights.

Edith How-Martyn, in establishing a series of reunion dinners in 1926, was keen to ensure that women voters were afforded full consideration as newly enfranchised citizens and worked diligently to ensure there was no room to contest the legacy of militant activities. Mayhall argues that in the late 1920s anti-suffrage sentiment continued, with the idea that women could be too 'irrational to vote responsibly' still in evidence.¹⁶ Additionally, addressing public discontent over militant acts was not made easier by statements from some former allies and Suffragettes; for example, Sylvia Pankhurst had just published her personal view that she was not in favour of the secretive society called the Young Hot Bloods, who practised 'secret militancy'.¹⁷ Holton contends that author Dangerfield in 1935 believed Suffragettes were led blindly by WSPU leaders, and militant campaigns were acted out as a 'brutal comedy' involving irrational demented women who were 'uncontrolled and undisciplined in nature'. Dangerfield also labelled Emily Wilding-Davison as a very 'unbalanced girl...so impulsive, so capricious and so

¹⁴ S. Holton, 'The making of Suffrage history', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, pp.22-23. Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England 1910-1914*, 1935, pp.132-133,139-140,145-146,155-158.

¹⁵ L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, p.67.

¹⁶ Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, 2003, p.142.

¹⁷ Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.401.

hysterical'. Militant leaders were portrayed as opportunistic puppet masters.¹⁸ Furthermore, Crozier-De Rosa also claims that 'shame', as a constructed argument against militant campaigners, was heavily focused on the unwomanly behaviour of the 'un-sexed' militant women asserting their rights whilst making noise and creating spectacle, in contradiction to responses when men were prompted to assert their 'right to free speech'. Crozier-De Rosa also argues that anti-suffragists viewed strident women (but not men) who attacked property as acting without honour and against the laws of nature and who had "degraded womanhood".¹⁹ Notably, in 1936, the year after the release of Dangerfield's text, the British Government made Christabel Pankhurst a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her work in 'public and social services'. The Fellowship, linking the honour bestowed on Christabel with a recognition that militant tactics were justified, also noted with irony and pride that as Christabel was considered to be the engineer of militant campaigning, 'the highest honour is now bestowed on (all) women who were so publicly maligned by critics and authorities'.²⁰ Little wonder that the Fellowship was prompt to take control of the public memory of militant histories in an attempt to establish a trouble-free legacy on behalf of members, using a long-term approach by taking swift action to disrupt the established negative public perception of past militant activities.

There is also solid evidence to suggest that Fellowship leaders feared that the events leading to the death of Emily Wilding-Davison in 1913 could reflect poorly on any subsequent legacy of the WSPU. Emily was not profiled in full by the Fellowship until 1971, when *Calling all Women* recalled her determination to 'petition the King, in a way which could not be ignored'. A perusal of other Fellowship publications reveals very little mention of the memory of Emily and even less of events surrounding the spectacle of her

¹⁸ S. Holton, 'The making of Suffrage History', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.22. Quoting, Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England 1910-1914*, 1935. Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*, 2002, p.75.

¹⁹ S. Crozier-De Rosa, *Shame and the Anti-Feminist Backlash: Britain, Ireland and Australia, 1890-1920*, Routledge New York, 2018, pp.201, 206, 221. In *The Anti-Suffrage Review*, No 2, January 1909, p.1.

²⁰ Pugh, *The Pankhurst's*, 2001, p.442. Christabel Pankhurst to Sadd-Brown, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106 ALC/3545. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936.

funeral, organised with great speed by the WSPU in 1913. Lilian Lenton, though acknowledging her memory, was also careful to assert ‘whenever this (Epsom Derby 1913) event is mentioned it is advisable to draw attention to the fact that what Emily Davison did, she did entirely “on her own” without the backing of the WSPU’. She noted that while ‘no statue has been raised to her [Davison’s] memory, nevertheless, she has not been forgotten’.²¹

There are several possible reasons for the limited inclusion of memorialising for Emily. Fellowship leaders may have believed that Emily, who had acted alone, was unbalanced and irrational in her actions on that day, and sought to quash her public memory; or it could be that her good friend, Mary Leigh, sought to retain ownership of Emily’s legacy.²² Myall claimed that Mary Leigh was ‘cold-shouldered’ by the Fellowship due to her disagreement with the inclusion of non-Suffragette, Enid Goulden-Bach, on the Fellowship Executive Committee and that she was refused access to Fellowship survey results.²³ In a sign that Mary was keen to ensure the memory of Emily was acknowledged, and despite the apparent differences between Mary and Fellowship management, Mary often appeared at reunion events carrying Emily’s Suffragette flag, found on her person after the accident.²⁴ Further evidence of this tendency to play down the Epsom Derby event is provided by a quantitative survey conducted by Kay and Mendes, which suggested that from her death and into the 1960s there were negligible mentions of Emily in the mainstream press at a period when the Fellowship not only

²¹ It is notable that the Fellowship rarely mentioned Emily Wilding-Davison. *Calling all Women* had noted that the Emily Davison Club was situated over the offices of the WFL. Lilian also paid tribute to the good friend of Emily, Mary Leigh, noting her devotion at tending the grave and stone book. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1971.

²² Although Mary Leigh was privately at odds with the Fellowship, she was a regular guest at Fellowship events would carry the flag, belonging to Emily Wilding-Davison, in the colours. See Chapter 10 *Pankhurst to the Pill* for further discussion on post death representation of Emily Wilding-Davison.

²³ M. Myall, ‘The Militancy of Mary Leigh, a working-class Suffragette’, in M. Joannou, and J. Purvis, eds, *The Women’s Suffrage Movement : New Feminist Perspectives*, Manchester University Press, England, 1998, p.184.

²⁴ See Chapter 2 *Days of Obligation* and Chapter 3 *Memorials and Monuments*. ‘We are Proud, and we are Grateful’, *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 21 January 1936, p.8.

controlled commemorations of Suffragette histories but also actively monitored press reports.

As shown in Figure 20, (Table 1) Kay and Mendes survey of articles referencing Emily Wilding-Davison in four media publications from 1913 to 2013 demonstrated that, in line with the active period of the Fellowship, after a peak of articles that appeared after her death from 1913 to 1923 all mentions of Emily almost entirely disappeared. Apart from an average of three articles per decade in the *Daily Mail*, there were either no articles or one article per year in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Articles about Emily reappeared with the emergence of feminist historians in the 1960s and 1970s.²⁵

TABLE 1
Number of articles per newspaper, 1913–2013

Decade	<i>Daily Mail</i>	<i>Daily Mirror</i>	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Times</i>
1913–1923	18	13	27	6
1924–1933	5	1	1	1
1934–1943	6	3	1	0
1944–1953	3	0	0	1
1954–1963	3	1	0	1
1964–1973	3	0	0	0
1974–1983	3	2	2	0
1984–1993	6	0	6	4
1994–2003	7	1	12	5
2004–2013	20	12	2	25
Total articles	74	33	51	43

Figure 20. Media Mentions of Emily Wilding-Davison 1913–2013. ²⁶

Autonomy, Secrecy, Loyalty and Anxiety about the Past

The Fellowship's aims and objectives were no doubt established knowing that members, including some members who were Suffragettes, had committed ultra-militant acts of their own volition and without prior knowledge

²⁵ See Figure 20: 'Table 1', Number of Articles per newspaper, 1913–2013, pp.6–7,8–12. In addition, and rightly so, the authors contend that despite her name appearing with some frequency since her death it 'cannot be understood straightforwardly as an indicator of the worth ascribed to women's history within our culture'. J. B. Kay, and K. Mendes 'Gender, Media and Protest', *Media History*, vol 26, no. 2, 2018, pp.6–12.

²⁶ Figure 20: 'Table 1' J. B. Kay, and K. Mendes 'Gender, Media and Protest', *Media History*, vol 26, no. 2, 2018, p.6.

of militant leaders.²⁷ As such, there is potential to consider that if the use of bombs and arson was not an official policy of the WSPU there was no official responsibility for the Fellowship to commemorate those acts involving arson and bombs.

Furthermore, as Rowbotham has argued, the cascading effect of militancy – that is, each event led to a further escalation of militancy – was not the long term strategy or the sole responsibility of the leadership, but rather of individual Suffragettes who chose to commit militant acts, including bombings.²⁸ Suffragettes were given full autonomy in carrying out militant duties, that twinned with secrecy represented success or failure of ultra-militant activities, also depended on the utmost loyalty between the parties involved at the times the acts were committed. Charlie Marsh, a member of the secretive Young Hot Bloods, remarked in 1954 ‘once a YHB, always a YHB’, suggesting that secrets were taken to the grave.²⁹ Suffragettes also had a policy of not criticising other Suffragettes, no matter the level of crime committed, out of respect for all prisoners.³⁰ This is evidenced by Suffragette Letitia Withall, who acknowledged in 1960 that she used the name of Leslie Hall to avoid embarrassment for her family.³¹ Discretion was also applied to protect the livelihoods of friends, and comrades, further encouraged by ties fostered within the Fellowship. As late as 1953 Lilian Lenton reminded subscribers that Suffragettes had acted on their own free will; she noted the 1912 declaration of Mrs Pankhurst, who had announced that the truce was

²⁷ J. Purvis, 'Gendering the Historiography of the Suffragette Movement in Edwardian Britain: Some Reflections', *Women's History Review*, vol 22, no. 4, 2013, p.584. Purvis claims that Suffragette committed acts of militancy with autonomy.

²⁸ Cited in P. Monaghan, 'Votes for Women': An Analysis of the Militant Campaign', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol 9, no. 2, 1997, p.71.

²⁹ *Votes for Women Day* commemoration at Caxton Hall. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 14 January 1954, LOU.LON 260.

³⁰ M. Joannou, 'My Part in a Changing World: Women's Struggle for the Vote and the Autobiographical Subject', *Women's Writing*, vol 25, no. 3, 2018, pp.294-313.

³¹ Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Letitia Withall to Bessie Rischbieth, 20 September 1960, Obj: 395966355. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Letitia Withall to Bessie Rischbieth, 11 November 1961, Obj: 3395967030. Noting that she was born in South Australia in 1881, her father was an architect, and the family had returned to England when she was a child.

at an end and advised her followers to do what they liked, as long as no harm was done to others.³²

Thus, the challenge and responsibility faced by the Fellowship was to defend ultra-militant activities, based on the notion that these activities represented the autonomous choice of individuals; this was a complex legacy to defend. Fellowship leaders, from the Fellowship's inception until the 1950s at least, chose to meet that challenge by selectively highlighting certain aspects of their militant past and by downplaying or omitting other activities. It was not until 1957 that Mary Phillips published a Fellowship booklet outlining the furtive and dangerous work of the ultra-militants in attacking properties using bombs and arson, and who avoided arrest by working under cover of darkness. Mary confirmed that the secretive nature of the work meant that the most ardent militants avoided detection, and some avoided prison. This further suggested that pacts made in the name of the sisterhood ensured that for those who took part in ultra-secretive and dangerous activities, lifelong privacy and secrecy was assured.³³

Historian Fern Riddell has also argued that any history involving bombs and arsons was sanitised, at the urging of Edith How-Martyn, and that this was, in part, one of the reasons why Kitty Marion did not publish her memoir in her lifetime.³⁴ According to her biographers, Kitty had also received little interest from commercial publishers. Additionally, as Riddell has also highlighted, in 1931 Mrs Mansell-Moullin, preparing a testimonial of Emily Wilding-Davison, contacted Edith How-Martyn to ask her about a bomb planted in Westminster Abbey. In doing so, she asked, 'if you think it would be wise, as I do, to leave out the bombs? Although one did actually blow a piece off the Coronation

³² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 18 July 1952, LOU.LON 504. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1953.

³³ M. Phillips, 'The Militant Suffrage Campaign in Perspective', The Suffragette Fellowship, London, 1957.

³⁴ Riddell, F., 'Sanitising the Suffragettes', *History Today*, January 2018. At the time Kitty was living in America and had deposited copies of her memoir with several archives in England and America. <https://www.historytoday.com/fern-riddell/sanitising-Suffragettes>.

Chair!!'.³⁵ Viv Gardner, in a biography of Kitty Marion, noted that in 1936 Edith How-Martyn, in a letter to Kitty Marion, declared 'as far as I am concerned the Suffragette Fellowship records will be kept for posterity and nothing eliminated but anything published while people are alive may have to be notified'. Gardner has suggested this is evidence the Fellowship were judiciously managing public references to arson and bombs. She also notes that publishers in the 1920s and 1930s were over-supplied with suffrage memoirs and that this had contributed to Kitty Marion's memoir languishing in several archives since the 1930s.³⁶ My research offers additional explanations for Edith's actions by demonstrating how the Fellowship continued to support and acknowledge members' right to privacy and anonymity through the simple format – name only, nil content – of the *Prisoner Roll of Honour* in the 1950s, despite concerted efforts from the 1930s to create a complete biographical index of Suffragette history.³⁷ The aim to protect privacy is further demonstrated in Suffragette correspondence; for example, following the death of Annie Kenney in 1953 her comrade and good friend Christabel Pankhurst contacted her sister Jessie and reaffirmed that former suffrage sisters, 'should stand together loyally'. Christabel, writing her memoirs, also offered Jessie the opportunity to omit any information about her sister, as she saw fit.³⁸

As well as Mary Richardson's earlier query and the subsequent admission of the Home Office that other Suffragettes also shared concerns about their legal status, there is evidence to suggest that there were also other issues causing lingering tensions about the past. Historic reportage accusing

³⁵ Rose Lamartine-Yates to Edith How-Martyn, 25 January 1928, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.113/12,(21). Edith Mansell-Moullin to Edith How-Martyn, 18 March 1930, *Suffragette Fellowship, The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.116/76 (58)

³⁶ Gardner and Atkinson, *Kitty Marion: Actor and Activist*, 2019, p.3, pp.5-6. Edith How-Martyn [presumably to Kitty Marion], 29 January 1936, KMP: 11/1.

³⁷ 'Prisoner Roll of Honour 1905-1914', The Suffragette Fellowship, c1955. Women's Library, LSE, 7LAC/2. See Chapter 8 *Calling all Women*, further discussion on methodology and compilation of the *Roll of Honour*.

³⁸ Jessie Kenney to Christabel Pankhurst, 17 October 1935, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JK/3. Christabel Pankhurst to Jessie Kenney, 15 October 1953, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/JK/3.

militant campaigners of anti-social and irrational behaviour and framing this as justification for denying women the vote no doubt continued to resonate with Fellowship members. Cubitt has argued that the past is always ‘forged in tension’ and that ‘collective pasts are fluid imaginative constructions’.³⁹ Thus, any tensions caused by past representations, real or imagined, drove the Fellowship to construct a collective past to fit its perceived self-identity beyond suffrage histories. As an example, Liddington argues that the WSPU in 1913 and 1914 was in peril due to lack of both leadership and funds.⁴⁰ The Fellowship may have felt compelled to reinforce the belief that the WSPU leadership was acting in a deliberate and focused fashion, and did this by focusing only on the earlier scope of militancy rather than the final years of the WSPU, as those final years were potentially linked to reports of uncontrolled chaos and dysfunction.

Voluntary Fellowship surveys were distributed in 1930–1931, urging Suffragettes to disclose personal histories and contribute photographs and records of imprisonments to create a short biography of prisoners.⁴¹ A small number of respondents were comfortable confessing to ultra-militant acts. Florence Down recalled she was thrown onto the pavement by police after being turned out of offices and conveyed to the police station. Florence recalled shouting out ‘Votes for Women’ and believed at that moment she was ‘possessed of the Suffragette Spirit’. Florence also cryptically remarked in her response, ‘I have a tale to tell, but it is a confidential one’. Respondent Olive Beamish, converted to the militant cause in 1912, divulged she had smashed windows, committed arson and bombed buildings and had been ‘found in possession of paraffin and other incendiary materials’. Olive also admitted to setting fire to Lady White’s property, Egham, in March 1913 and was charged under the name of Phyllis Brady.⁴² Others commented that

³⁹ Cubitt, *History and Memory*: 2007, pp.200-203.

⁴⁰ J. Liddington, ‘Era of commemoration: Celebrating the suffrage centenary’, *History Workshop Journal*, Issue 59, Spring, 2005.

⁴¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Circular*, July 1931, The resultant responses are readily available to researchers. The Women’s Library LSE, 7HFD/A/5/01-68.

⁴² *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1. Letters in response to Fellowship survey, Florence Down to Edith How-Martyn, 8 October 1931, Reel 1, 57.116/61/62, p.44. Florence Down to Helen Atkinson, 27 &

public exposure of past activities was still problematic in the early 1930s; Rose Lamartine-Yates, for example, stated though she was delighted to provide a full account of her activities she requested that her husband's involvement be muted for fear that his business would suffer if his name was in the press. Helen Atkinson also provided a full account of her activities but was concerned in case her financial security suffered and requested that her past remain private stating, 'these details are not of any outside interest today and certainly wouldn't help me to get or keep a job'.⁴³ There is also evidence to suggest that some had committed to a lifetime of denial. Victoria Liddiard, when reviewing the interview *Sweat Shop Suffragette* with Hannah Mitchell in the 1960s, noted text stating that Suffragettes had targeted churches in arson campaigns. An annotated note, presumably by Victoria Liddiard, curiously read, 'Suffragettes never burnt down churches'.⁴⁴

Control

Edith How-Martyn may also have been motivated to gather people together to heal over old wounds because of her memory of the very public splits that had occurred in 1907 and 1912 and the desire to live by her motto, 'remembrance is the essence of comradeship'. Part of this approach may have been avoiding references to arson and bombs because these could lead to potential public discourse on the usefulness of ultra-militant acts, and thus trigger past hurts.

30 Jan 1931, 9 and 12 August 1931, Reel 1, 57.116/59/60, pp.39-41. Response from Alice Beamish to Edith How-Martyn, 2 Feb 1931, Reel 1, 7/116/68, p.5. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1:50. According to Home Office Archives, Phyllis Brady (Olive Beamish) was arrested at Croydon April 1913, January 1914 and Surrey February 1914. Suffragettes Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested 1906-1914 British National Archives. HO45/24665.

⁴³ Helen Atkinson to Edith How-Martyn, 3 February 1928, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1.57.70/15, p.3. Edith Mansell-Moullin to Edith How-Martyn, 18 March 1930, Suffragette Fellowship, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1. 57.116/76, p.58.

⁴⁴ Noted by Victoria Liddiard, *Sweat Shop Suffragette* by Stella Rodway, February 1968, The Women's Library LSE, 7 VLI FL 637.

In 1935 the Fellowship was alerted to a film in production that was to include a segment on the Edwardian suffrage campaign. Elsa Gye, Winifred Mayo and Mary Phillips proactively worked with producers to ensure historical accuracy. Noticeably, despite the film's remit covering the period from 1910 to 1935, the WFL, also keen to ensure its highly prized event of October 1908 featured in the film, provided original material from the Women's Record House to ensure the script was accurately rendered. British Pathe provided a special screening to Fellowship members prior to release, to ensure the film accurately portrayed suffrage history in a dignified and fitting manner. A journalist, noting the close attention Suffragettes were giving to the production, mused that the Suffragettes had threatened to create a national boycott of the film, encompassing over three million women, if the film portrayed any scenes that offended 'their sense of what is due and proper, or hurts feminists susceptibilities'. The writer intimated that the Fellowship was overreacting in its efforts to police the final production, noting 'I have not heard how the film people are taking this threat, but does it not rather suggest that the Fellowship has reminiscent twinges of conscience? Nobody else seems to be in the least afraid of what the film may recall'.⁴⁵ In addition to a recreation of the Grille Incident, the final production depicted groups of women chained at 10 Downing Street, the accident at Epsom Derby in 1913, an arrest of the Suffragette Christabel Pankhurst alighting from a car and the swearing-in of Lady Nancy Astor.⁴⁶

Following the erection of the statue of Mrs Pankhurst in 1930, policing and monitoring of public mentions of bombs and arson remained a priority of the Fellowship. This suggests that in the 1930s and 1940s survivors might potentially have believed that 'loose lips' could have also endangered the hard work of supporters to infuse respectability into the public memory of Mrs Pankhurst. In 1936 the Fellowship responded to an article by historian Arthur Bryant, who had quoted from Sylvia Pankhurst's 1931 text that militant

⁴⁵ 'Echoes from Town', *Nottingham Evening Post*, 13 March 1935, p.6.

⁴⁶ 'Votes for Women' segment, *Royal Cavalcade 1910-1935*, 'Commemorating the momentous event of the Silver Jubilee of His Majesty King George V'. Produced by Walter C Mycroft, David Horne, Roy Goddard, British International Pictures, London, 1935. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8rIStx_I_Y. Lady Nancy Astor was the first women MP to take a seat in the House of Commons.

Suffragettes 'placed bombs in public places'.⁴⁷ Una Duval was the first to respond by denying that Suffragettes placed bombs in public places: 'may I enquire on what authority Bryant makes this statement? There is no mention of the placing bombs in public places in the diary of events recorded by *Votes for Women* published from beginning to end of the fight'. Una, taking a swipe at Sylvia, suggested the very act of authorities in erecting the statue to Mrs Pankhurst six years earlier and the honours recently awarded to Christabel Pankhurst were evidence that Bryant was relying on falsified history.⁴⁸ Fellowship Secretary Elsa Gye took a different approach in attacking Bryant's article, by acknowledging publicly that a bomb had exploded in Westminster Abbey. Elsa, possibly prompted by Edith How-Martyn, further stated that Bryant's assertion was 'absolutely wrong', and articulated that the militants acted under 'an unwritten law which was strictly adhered to, and that was never to take or endanger human life'. She claimed that the bomb was timed to explode after crowds had left and the Abbey had closed for the day.⁴⁹ It is clear from this admission that the Fellowship, when forced, were willing to acknowledge that bombs were planted, supposedly by Suffragettes, but mitigated the potential dangers by stating Suffragettes did not harm any lives. The Fellowship also firmly believed that there were copycat arsonists, capitalising on the WSPU campaigns, bombing and burning public buildings to make this appear to be the work of Suffragettes. Elsa stated that despite denials by leaders of particular acts of arson and bombings, the press continued to blame Suffragettes for acts they did not commit. Elsa continued to defend the use of militant tactics to achieve the Suffragettes' aims as, in her view, these acts were a reaction to the government of the day. Elsa also clarified that 'the militant campaign was not a wild and irresponsible movement but was carefully planned like a game of chess' and each time the Liberal government made a move, the Suffragettes were forced to 'checkmate' the government. Elsa also suggested the need for 'those who

⁴⁷ 'We are Proud, and we are Grateful', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 21 January 1936, p.8. The article by Arthur Bryant is not referenced in the *Yorkshire Post*.

⁴⁸ 'Suffragettes Bombs in Public Places', *The Yorkshire Post*, 25 January 1936, p.8.

⁴⁹ 'A Small Bomb, An Unwritten Law in the Suffragette Movement', *The Yorkshire Post*, 31 January 1936, p.6.

wish to write about that historic struggle to read carefully and to understand both the policy and the inner history of the whole women's movement before they rush into print with inaccurate and irresponsible statements'.⁵⁰

There is adequate evidence that the Fellowship held considerable power in the 1930s by demanding, and successfully winning, retractions of some material in publications post-suffrage. The Fellowship also argued that as most letters to the press were anonymous and unable to be fact-checked, it was disingenuous to place blame on Suffragettes. One particular story, published in 1936 by the Bishop of London, caused a ruckus when the author asserted that a bomb found under the 'bishops' throne in St Pauls Cathedral' very nearly caused 'serious injury or death' to people nearby and that 'only the timely discovery of it had saved the Bishop and the congregation'. The Fellowship assumed the story was meant to imply that bomb had been planted by Suffragettes, and asserted it was 'an absolutely false story and something had to be done'.⁵¹ The Fellowship appeared to take decisive action, given that in July 1935, when the Bishop conducted the annual commemoration to Mrs Pankhurst, he was reported to have apologised to those present and had the offending passage retracted.⁵² The media, no doubt invited especially by the Fellowship, reported that the Bishop of London had conducted the service in front of over 700 people, including women members of Parliament and representatives from women's societies from across the country, and also that he had verbally retracted a contentious statement that Suffragettes were responsible for the bomb at St Paul's.⁵³ However, at the same time media reports about the historic incident, May 1913, claimed that the bomb at St Paul's was discovered wrapped in an issue of *The Suffragette*, thus placing blame directly on Suffragettes.⁵⁴ It is apparent that although the Fellowship did not deny that a small explosive

⁵⁰ Gye, E., 'A Small Bomb', *The Yorkshire Post*, 31 January 1936, p.6.

⁵¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936.

⁵² Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936.

⁵³ 'Mrs Pankhurst Memorial', *The Scotsman*, 20 July 1936, p.16. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936.

⁵⁴ 'Bomb in St Paul's. Sensational Plot Frustrated. Timely Discovery', *The Globe*, 7 May 1913, p.14.

planted in Westminster Abbey was presumably the work of Suffragettes, it was emphatic that the bomb at St Paul's was not caused by Suffragettes. It could be that the St Paul's device was a copycat crime and blame has now been wrongly attributed to Suffragettes for that event, or alternatively a culture of denial around that event was permitted and assisted by the Bishop of London's full support. The following year, in 1937, a Suffragette reviewed a memoir by former nemesis Herbert Asquith, *Moments of Memory*, and claimed that the text contained a 'very damaging story of supposed Suffragette activities'.⁵⁵ Reportedly, the legal counsel of the author omitted the damaging material prior to publication. The Fellowship later noted that after the offending piece was removed 'the chapter dealing with the militant movement is very fair'.⁵⁶

However, in 1944, at the height of World War II, at a commemorative service to Mrs Pankhurst, despite having shown considerable clout in altering some publications the Fellowship was unable to prevent the press from publishing an inferred joke. *The Evening News* noted that 'many of them (Suffragettes) had suffered from the results of flying bombs, but they didn't talk about "my bomb"'. Instead, they 'went back a quarter of a century and talked about "my term in prison" and the "policeman's helmet I knocked off"'.⁵⁷ A knowing reader would understand that the article's tongue-in-cheek mention of 'my bomb' acknowledged that aspects of ultra-militancy involving 'bombs' had occurred, but also that post-campaigning Suffragettes still preferred not to dwell on some aspects of their histories.

Material Evidence

There is adequate printed material in the public domain evidencing the use of bombs, including in the WSPU paper *The Suffragette*, which wrote about arson and bomb attacks as a warning to authorities. Nevertheless, the Fellowship did not highlight ultra-militant activities at reunion events or in

⁵⁵ Herbert Asquith, *Moments of Memory*, C Scribner's Sons Great Britain, 1937.

⁵⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A.

⁵⁷ 'Suffragettes Meet', *The Evening News*, 20 July 1944, p.3.

Fellowship publications. Mayhall has also suggested that Fellowship archives demonstrate a lack of evidence that Suffragettes had physically threatened authorities.⁵⁸ However, on the contrary, Suffragette archives do contain images and postcards of burnt-out buildings and original copies of Suffragette papers that feature clippings of many 'outrages', but the Fellowship simply chose not to feature references to these acts at public events.⁵⁹

Though the majority of the Suffragette Fellowship Collection focusing on Suffragette history does not contain physical evidence of bombs and arson, most likely due to the fleeting and dangerous nature of these items, there are some rare exceptions; these include the Museum of London's exhibit of 'little washers', used as shrapnel in bombs. Crucially, the City of London Police Museum exhibits a rare surviving example of such an item, and the cause of Fellowship discussion in the 1930s – the crudely constructed bomb made from a mustard tin safely removed from St Paul's Cathedral in 1913.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Laura Mayhall in A. M. Burton., *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, 2005, p.250.

⁵⁹ Example is the scrapbook of Olive Wharry (c1911-1914) held in the British Library depicting images of burnt out churches depicting Suffragette 'outrages'. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/olive-wharrys-scrapbook?mobile=on>. Early Fellowship publications, particularly the early *Newsletter*, *Calling all Women* and *The Suffragette Spirit* in 1932, are notable for the lack of references to bombing and arson campaigns, despite ample material evidence in the Fellowship collection including published accounts in the WSPU paper *The Suffragette* and general newspapers, including contemporary Edwardian postcards depicting burnt out churches and private properties damaged by arson. TNA UK – *Campaign in photographs*, 'Extract from the Illustration London News, From pavement-chalking to arson, window-breaking and bombing: the progress of Militant Suffragism, 24 May 1913'. Ref.: ZPER,4/142,13. <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/suffragettes-on-file/campaign-in-photographs/>

⁶⁰ Beverley Cook Curator at the Museum of London noted that the Museum of London Collection holds 'little' washers' used in production of bombs. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/nov/09/museum-of-london-exhibition-will-mark-Suffragettes-victory>
The two Suffragette bombs in the City of London Police Museum Collection
<https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/about-us/history/museum/Pages/photo-gallery.aspx?page=all>

Open Secrets

Further demonstrating that a lifetime of discretion was paramount, Christabel Pankhurst also requested that her book [*Unshackled*] not be published until after her death.⁶¹ Curiously, a review of *Unshackled* in 1959 suggested that the book's editor, and admirer of Christabel, Fred Pethick-Lawrence had done a 'little editing'.⁶² However, without a perusal of the original manuscript, it is challenging to ascertain what type of material from the original text was omitted. In her text, Christabel labelled the ultra-militant acts as 'guerrilla militancy' and signalled to her readers that, with no harm to individuals, 'the damage to property was more spectacular than serious', and further claimed that damages to property amounted to well over 'half a million pounds'.⁶³ However, by the early 1950s ultra-militant disclosures had begun to appear in *Calling all Women* and *The Women's Bulletin*. Lilian Lenton in tribute to disabled campaigner May Billinghamurst, who was widely known for her fearless courage and persistence, who would not allow her disability to get in the way of her desire to take part in the 'serious militancy'.⁶⁴ Well into the 1950s and 1960s, several ageing Suffragettes opened the floodgates of memory by enthusiastically participating in oral interviews, recalled personal acts of arson but also being mindful of keeping the secrets of former comrades. In an act signalling their feminist credentials to a new wave of feminists, first-wave feminists equipped with the freedom of mind that ageing often provides wore their ultra-militant histories as a badge of honour.⁶⁵ In 1960 at an International Women's Day function hosted by the National Assembly of Women at the White House in London, Australian feminist Jessie Street recorded an interview with Fellowship members and known Young Hot

⁶¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 October 1958, LOU.LON 185.

⁶² 'The Chief of Fleet Street', *The Sphere*, 15 August 1959, p.38.

⁶³ Pankhurst, *Unshackled The Story of How We Won the Vote*, reprint 1987, pp.238-240, p.262.

⁶⁴ An account of the militant activities of the 'crippled Suffragette' May Billinghamurst. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969. *The Women's Bulletin*, 4 September 1953, LOU.LON 99. See Chapter 3 *Memorials and Monuments*. WFL.

⁶⁵ See Chapter 10 *Pankhurst to the Pill*.

Bloods members Eileen Casey, Charlotte Marsh, Lilian Lenton and Mary Leigh.⁶⁶ Lilian Lenton, demonstrating the casual and informal banter between the women, told, to mirth, that she targeted two properties a week to burn down and that when she stated her objective in court, it caused quite a sensation in the press.⁶⁷ *Calling all Women* in 1968 also published autobiographical accounts from Eileen Casey, Cicely Hale and Nellie Hall Humpherson. Nellie recalled her lengthy and active Suffragette career, and participation in window-smashing raids, bombings, arson and associated prison experiences.⁶⁸

Lilian Lenton told *The Listener* in 1968 of her satisfaction in a job well done: 'To say I enjoyed making fires sounds rather awful. But it really was lovely to find that you'd been successful; that the things really had burnt down and that you hadn't got caught'. She explained that first, they would set fire directly and use the light of the fires to make their escape; later they used dark police lanterns and 'directed a trail of cotton wool soaked in paraffin to the lantern, wrapping it around the bottom of a candle and went away. When the candle had burnt down to the cotton wool it presumably – we didn't stop to see – ran along the cotton wool and set fire to the thing. By then we would very likely be miles away'.⁶⁹ It was a reasonable assumption on their part that as so much time had passed, no further ramifications were possible and ageing provides a willingness to talk freely about the past. Additionally, Suffragettes, often depicted in the press at this time as prim, respectable grey-haired old women, may have rather enjoyed shocking the younger

⁶⁶ International Women's Day hosted by the National Assembly of Women at the White House London. Recordings held by NSW State Archives. William Morrow-recordings of addresses given by Jessie Street and interviews with Jessie Street, 1953-1960, *Interviews by Jessie Street with Suffragettes including Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Eileen Casey and Mary Leigh*. NSW State Archives, CY MLOH52/8 & MLOH52/9.

⁶⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1965. Laughton, *The Woman with the Suitcase*, 2015, p.67. Sarah Laughton describes her ancestor, Eileen Casey, as a 'freedom fighter' who had lived a 'busy and fulfilling life who had 'fought for an important cause and (had) suffered in the process'. Noting that Eileen's recall at age 83, may not have been 'quite accurate'. Eileen was sentenced to 3 years in jail and hunger struck in jail.

⁶⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968.

⁶⁹ 'Suffragettes Recall the Battle', *The Listener*, 8 February 1968, vol 79, no 2028, pp.174-177.

generation by retelling their Edwardian escapades and adventures as ‘mice’, stealth-like in the night, setting fire to buildings, demonstrating they possessed bravery in spades and managed to successfully evade the law.

In 1973 Raeburn released *The Militant Suffragettes*, with full support of the Suffragettes, chronicling the WSPU militant campaign and featuring graphic accounts and images of public buildings damaged by arson committed by those who Raeburn labelled ‘super militants’. However, author Andrew Rosen believed that ‘the blanks’ (in the narrative) were deliberately filled with images of damaged buildings as an attempt to spice up the text at the expense of context.⁷⁰ Presumably, Rosen was unable to grasp the contextual contribution that explicit images depicting damages to buildings made to text outlining the chronological cause and effect of the actions of authorities and the subsequent response of Suffragette leaders. Inclusion of the explicit, historical images by Raeburn also came after decades of the Fellowship leaders downplaying the same events. Rosen was not to know that those same images were about to be heavily utilised for television, in a six-episode series that did not shy away from depicting ‘outrages’.⁷¹ The series, *Shoulder to Shoulder*, implied that in sisterhood there was strength, and with the full support of surviving Suffragettes it relied heavily on the archival collection originally collated by the Fellowship. Series creator Midge Mackenzie acknowledged that, after meeting with the survivors – Grace Roe, Lilian Lenton, Una Duval and Alice Paul – and listening to ‘their stories of this great struggle’, she ‘resolved to make my own attempt to redress the balance’. The book *Shoulder to Shoulder*, published to coincide with the series launch, included images of property damaged or destroyed by fire and highlighted events of 1912, including the ‘split’ of the Pethick-Lawrences from the WSPU. One chapter of this accompanying text to the series took the same heading as Christabel used in *Unshackled*; titled ‘Guerrilla Militancy’, it noted a laundry list of damage to grandstands, works of art, the Tower of London, churches, railway carriages, railway stations, refreshment pavilions, post boxes, golf greens and fuse boxes, as well as recording window-smashing

⁷⁰ Raeburn, *The Militant Suffragettes*, 1973, p.235. Rosen, *Rise up, Women! : 1903-1914*, 1974, pxvi.

⁷¹ ‘BBC Drama to Move Away from history and the classics’, *Television Today*, 22 November 1974, p.11.

raids, broken street lamps, keyholes sabotaged by lead pellets and reports of old women applying for gun licences in a bid to shock authorities. Liddington suggested that scenes of forcible feeding were compelling and *Shoulder to Shoulder* had ignited new interest in suffrage histories.⁷²

It is evident that, by the 1970s, the few living Suffragettes who were willing to fully disclose acts of arson and bombing, were potentially considered as ‘entertainment’ for an appreciative public who now welcomed historical recreations of ultra-militant acts. Previous concerns of public exposure had receded into the deep past, and the final survivors had no qualms at amplifying what was once considered, by some, to be an undesirable legacy of suffrage history.

Conclusion

In its early decades the Fellowship provided a supportive, and safe, commemorative environment for Suffragettes to express lived memories, fully supported by other actors of the era including the clergy, Police Inspector Jarvis, prison staff and politicians. Ongoing ritualised and regularly staged events, such as the Days of Obligation, reinforced the familiar image of the militants as ‘righteous’ and victorious. Fellowship Trustees and committee members were inherently political beings and knew full well how to manage and manipulate the media. No doubt bombs and arson provided excellent copy in the latter stages of the militant campaigns; however, for the Fellowship in the early stage, they did not fit into their preferred, or desired, narrative. Instead, the Fellowship chose in the first few decades post-suffrage to attempt to control historical reports by offering opportunities to interview select Suffragettes and view relics and objects in a mediated, staged and planned environment within a manageable context that it controlled. The Fellowship justified consciously ‘forgetting’ by normalising acts of militancy as a noble sacrifice and by ongoing ritualised activities enacted at Days of Obligation highlighting softer militant acts; in this way, the rough edges of militant history were smoothed over and this focus helped to

⁷² Mackenzie, *Shoulder to Shoulder*, 1975. Liddington, *Rebel Girls : Their Fight for the Vote*, 2006.

create what Inglis has also described as a 'comforting myth'.⁷³ The language of sacrifice also tempered discussions of the past in negotiations surrounding the Pankhurst statue in 1929–1930. Stevens states that memorials, in part, employ the 'motif of sacrifice' by erasing the 'horrors of war' for those left behind, by masking trauma and further sanctifying the nation, 'reassuring the grief-stricken that wartime deaths have not been needless'.⁷⁴ Thus, the government, despite some opposition from suffragist supporters, appeared to collude with the Fellowship in the silencing of ultra-militant activities by granting approval of the statue of Mrs Pankhurst in a timely fashion.

The legacy of negative press toward Suffragettes later forced the Fellowship to downplay, smooth over and replace the lived histories of arson and bombs with more palatable tropes by continually plugging Suffragette history with images of heroic women that focused on chains, window-breaking, resistance to forcible feeding and interruptions of public meetings, and on public speaking, marching and violence towards women. Thus, the Fellowship endeavoured to create a suffrage history that not only highlighted select aspects of the militant history but also chose to 'park' aspects of suffrage history discreetly away until a suitable time had passed. Accordingly, the Fellowship chose to discuss ultra-militant acts only when forced to defend its leader or other individual actions. Additionally, former Suffragettes respected individuals' right to privacy, evidenced by the publication of the *Prisoner Roll of Honour* in the 1950s, containing only a list of names devoid of biographical details; this assisted in maintaining secrets during Suffragette lifetimes.⁷⁵ The coming of old age did not lessen the solidarity inherent within the Suffragette community nor did it impact on the survivors' stories, but rather appeared to further cement the sisterhood of women wedded for lives to their self-adopted Suffragette identities. However, beyond the 1950s, some ageing Suffragettes welcomed the opportunity to talk about 'their bombs' and their arson attacks on public and private

⁷³ Inglis and Brazier, *Sacred Places : War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, 1998, p.63.

⁷⁴ Q. Stevens, S. Sumartojo, 'Guest Editorial - Introduction: Commemoration and Public Space', *Landscape Review*, vol 15, Issue 2, 2015, p.4.

⁷⁵ 'Prisoner Roll of Honour 1905-1914', The Suffragette Fellowship, c1955. Women's Library, LSE, 7LAC/2

property. Others, including Victoria Liddiard, held lifelong anxiety about public reminders of Suffragette incidents involving arson and bombs.⁷⁶ In contrast to Victoria, ultra-militant Eileen Casey, who was arrested for carrying explosives, did not appear to leave a memoir or journal on her death in 1972, and did not participate in the surveys of 1930 and 1931, was frank with her admissions of guilt when interviewed in the 1960s.⁷⁷

Chapter 7, *Shoulder to Shoulder Redux*, examines the feminist work of the Fellowship by exploring the networking activities employed by leaders in England and the activities of Edith How-Martyn to establish a commemorative branch of the Fellowship in Australia.

⁷⁶ Phillips, 'The Militant Suffrage Campaign in Perspective', 1957. Noted by Victoria Liddiard, *Sweat Shop Suffragette* by Stella Rodway, February 1968, The Women's Library LSE, 7 VLI FL 637.

⁷⁷ See Chapter 10 *Pankhurst to the Pill*, Media and Oral interviews.

Chapter 7 Shoulder to Shoulder Redux

Introduction

The Fellowship's second stated objective was:

*To secure women's political, civil, economic, educational and social status on the basis of equality of the sexes and to co-operate from time to time with other organisations working to the same end.*¹

Shoulder to Shoulder Redux examines the overlooked feminist activities of members who actively worked with like-minded organisations to draw attention to feminist issues of the day, both at home and abroad, to amplify feminist gains; they sought to inspire and encourage other women by offering collective memories of past struggles. The chapter also provides an outline of the establishment of a branch of the Fellowship in Australia and highlights the ongoing memory work of Edith How-Martyn and her web of friendships with Australian feminists.

Though feminist groups were active internationally prior to the *Representation of the People Act* (1928), the Equal Franchise in England had provided a burst of feminist energy that continued throughout the 1930s; at this time feminists from the UK, Australia, New Zealand and other nations mobilised and reached out to each other.² Hannam and Lake have noted that campaigning focused on women as 'sisters in a common cause' led to 'a heightened sense of solidarity with other women', who saw themselves as 'world citizens', deserving a 'place on world councils'.³ However, despite the optimistic outlook

¹ *Aims and Objects*, Suffragette Fellowship, Reprinted in T. Keir-Cazalet, 'I Knew Mrs Pankhurst', Suffragette Fellowship, 1945. Luscombe Collection.

² J. Gottlieb, and R. Toye, 'Introduction', in Gottlieb and Toye, eds, *Aftermath of Suffrage Women, Gender, and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945*, 2013, p.8, p.12. I. M. Sharp and M. Stibbe, 'Women's International Activism During the Inter-War Period, 1919-1939', *Women's History Review*, vol 26, no. 2, 2017, pp.163-72. Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 1st ed, Harlow, Pearson/Longman, England; New York, 2007, p.75.

³ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.75. M. Lake, 'Personality, Individuality, Nationality: Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship 1902-1940', *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol 9, no. 19, 1994, p.29.

for women, Hannam highlights that the era was somewhat ‘fractured’ due to differences of opinion on how best to serve the unique needs of women.⁴ Within the feminist mix of the era, the Fellowship rose to become a central ally among like-minded feminist groups. In 1965 the Fellowship loosely described the aim of the Fellowship as being to ‘give to those who followed Mrs Pankhurst’s inspiring leadership opportunities for applying the Suffragette Spirit to new problems’.⁵ Thus, post-suffrage, women of the Fellowship believed it was their duty to contribute to feminist causes by offering their lived history as a model of resistance and persistence, to motivate and inspire others.

However, Pugh has claimed that after the fight for suffrage was won former militants ‘ceased to be active campaigners’.⁶ Harrison also asserts that post-1918 British Suffragettes, and specifically the WSPU, disbanded because they ‘felt their work was done’ and that Suffragettes’ ‘second career as chroniclers in the 1920s had no immediate bearing on British feminist efforts after 1918’.⁷ However, contrary to Pugh and Harrison’s claims, former militant campaigners’ regrouping as a collective feminist identity was lifelong and repeatedly revived via a comprehensive network of allied feminist groups, including the Six Point Group and the Open Door Council; these groups lasted an organisational lifetime. Support was provided by staging commemorative events to draw media and public attention to feminist causes.⁸ Post-suffrage campaigners reintroduced the Suffragette Spirit to new sisters and re-used tried and true tactics like petitions, pestering politicians and using spectacle aided by Suffragette artefacts and relics, to garner public attention and sympathy.

⁴ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.102.

⁵ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Memorandum: Aims and Objects*, 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

⁶ Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain since 1914-1959*, 3rd edition, 2015, p.36.

⁷ Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.69.

⁸ Cowman, *Women in British Politics, C.1689-1979*, 2010, pp.153-154. According to Cowman, Six Point Group and Open-Door Council were key feminist groups operated for decades from the 1920s focused on equality feminism, targeting welfare and rights for women and children.

It was in this era of an active global network of feminist groups that Edith How-Martyn departed England on a world tour that terminated in Australia, where she immediately began to regroup old and new Suffragette sisters together to form the sole Fellowship branch outside England. In addition to networking with old friends in Australia, Edith became active in the feminist political sphere to focus on assisting women political candidates in Australia.

Sisterhood

Hannam highlights that although feminism was somewhat fractured, for various reasons, in the interwar years, feminists had made concerted efforts to work together at home and internationally in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.⁹ This is evidenced by the memory work of former Suffragettes to regroup old friends in order to provide crucial support for the erection of memorials and monuments to leaders and rank and file comrades. Vera Brittain, demonstrating the power of female friendships, has observed, 'the emotional availability of one woman to another is not a visible element in our social arrangements, yet it is often reciprocal, and as such, mutually enhancing and immensely rewarding'. However, when referencing ideals of male mateship, Brittain highlighted the existence of double standards: 'the friendships of men have enjoyed glory and acclamation, but the friendships of women have usually been not merely unsung, but mocked, belittled and falsely interpreted'.¹⁰ Demonstrating the power of female friendships, the WFL not only shared like-minded subscribers with the Fellowship, but the two groups shared resources, personnel, news and information in their respective newsletters, *Calling all Women* and *The Women's Bulletin*. Eustance has also acknowledged that the WFL was highly active in its efforts to join, to 'celebrate, and enshrine in memory the great suffrage struggle'.¹¹ The WFL, and the

⁹ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.102.

¹⁰ D. Spender, *Women of Ideas and What Men Have Done to Them : From Aphra Behn to Adrienne Rich*. London ; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, p.2. Quoting from V. Brittain, *Testament of Friendship*, 1940 Macmillan London, reprinted Virago, London, 1980.

¹¹ C. Eustance, 'Daring To Be Free: The Evolution of women's political identities in the Women's Freedom League 1907-1930', 1993, p.349.

suffrage group AFL, contributed funds and recreated historic events to actively support the memory work of the Fellowship.

The Fellowship courted, and relied upon, the support of conservative women MPs, including Mrs Corbett-Ashby, Margaret Thatcher and friend Nancy Astor MP; the latter stated powerfully that the memory of the Suffragettes had encouraged and sustained her in her political life.¹² Arguably, the relationship between conservative women and the Fellowship was reciprocal: women MPs, in seeking militant endorsements, were potentially seeking 'Votes from Women'. Similarly, the Fellowship gained public support through these relationships; they were represented as feminist trailblazers, and offered themselves as feminist role models, aligning with the aspirations of contemporary women. A desire to help female (conservative) MPs to gain office may have also potentially spurred the Fellowship in its early decades to tone down, or silence, uncomfortable truths about ultra-militant activities.

Hannam has argued that the fight for suffrage had ignited the 'possibility of universal sisterhood'. Accordingly, sister Suffragettes, who were later viewed as the vanguard of critical feminism, were given a solemn responsibility and a level of feminist authority to be role models for women on a global scale, historically glued together and who continued to fight for a 'common cause'.¹³ The Fellowship's most important feminist ally was sister group, the WFL, fully assisted by a group of Suffragette objects, instantly recognisable and highly symbolic, provoking sympathy and empathy, and speaking directly to the hearts and minds of feminist supporters in England and Australia.¹⁴ Hannam acknowledges that the English suffrage movement 'caught women's imagination throughout the world,' and that it was to Britain that other women

¹² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 February 1952, LOU.LON 504. Demonstrating the power of sisterhood, Lady Astor acknowledged her support of the Fellowship, and like-minded women, by stating that she 'carried on [despite being frozen out by men in Parliament] sustained by the knowledge that the women were behind her'. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1960, LOU.LON 533. Margaret Thatcher attended a commemorative event honouring Mrs Pankhurst in 1960. See Chapter 5 *The Little Museum*, 6 *The Great Silence*. For more on Thatcher and Representation see Chapter 8 *Calling all Women*.

¹³ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.49.

¹⁴ Notably, Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932.

looked at that time for 'leadership and inspiration'.¹⁵ However, Clare Wright has argued that it was the women in Britain who had first looked to Australian women, who had earlier gained the vote, as inspiration during their struggle for female suffrage.¹⁶ Therefore, as Wright's analysis suggests, there was in effect a reciprocal suffrage sisterhood paying it forward from Australia to England, and I contend that this was later adopted by the Fellowship as a continuum of inter-generational feminists supporting and encouraging each other. The Fellowship effectively utilised the dynamics of collective memory to regularly invoke the spirit of Emmeline Pankhurst as a feminist talisman, to inspire and goad others into collective action. Gleadle and Thomas have demonstrated that women in China looked to Suffragette campaigns when conducting feminist campaigns of their own by smashing windows.¹⁷ As representatives of Suffragette memories, feminist campaigners from South Africa and India were welcomed at Fellowship events. In 1958 the Indian High Commissioner, Mrs Pandit, spoke of conditions for women in India and recalled her husband walking in suffrage processions with Fred Pethick-Lawrence. Gleadle also notes the work of Mukherjee in scrutinising links between Indian and global campaigners.¹⁸

¹⁵ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.63.

¹⁶ C. Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom*, Text Publishing, Melbourne Australia, 2018, p.456.

¹⁷ K. Gleadle, and Z. Thomas, 'Global Feminisms, C. 1870–1930: Vocabularies and Concepts—a Comparative Approach', *Women's History Review*, 2017, pp.1-16.

¹⁸ A commemorative event honouring Mrs Pankhurst, speakers were Her Excellency, Begum Ikramullah of Pakistan and Mrs Marais, who spoke of the Black Sash movement in South Africa. Votes for Women Day 1958 speaker was Indian High Commissioner Mrs Pandit. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 July 1958, LOU.LON 632.

Sisters of Empire

Global sisterhood had solid historical roots in suffrage campaigning. The Coronation Procession of 1911 through central London contained sizeable contingents of women, not only from Ireland, Scotland and Wales but also from North America, Australia, New Zealand and other parts of the British Empire.¹⁹ Demonstrating a clear link between Australian and English suffrage campaigners, in June 1911 Australian women participated in the Women's Coronation Procession accompanied by the immense *Trust the Women* Banner created by Dora Meeson-Coates and a smaller banner depicting the Australian Coat of Arms.²⁰ Australian suffragist Vida Goldstein, as a pacifist, is not thought of as being directly involved in British feminist politics post-1914 and she was not supportive of the stance of Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst in supporting government efforts during the Great War. Caine has argued that it was conservative feminist Bessie Rischbieth who continued to support the Suffragettes in their war efforts.²¹ My research demonstrates that Vida remained socially in contact with Suffragettes, a relationship further strengthened via the arrival of Edith How-Martyn in Australia in the late 1930s which helped to maintain a long-standing friendship first forged in suffrage campaigning in England. Vida, through the Fellowship, not only became a memory activist but also worked with Edith How-Martyn and was a guest speaker at events supporting female political candidates in the 1940s and encouraged the commemoration of female pioneers in Australia.²²

¹⁹ 'Introduction, Joannou, and Purvis, eds, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : New Feminist Perspectives*, 1998, pp.5-6.

²⁰ George Rose Stereograph Co, 'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London', 11 June 1911. Luscombe Collection. For further discussion on suffrage relics and meaning see, Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, p.45. A giant banner painted by Dora Meeson-Coates carried on several Suffrage marches proclaimed, 'Trust the women Mother as I have done'.

²¹ B. Caine, 'Australian Feminism and the British Militant Suffragettes', Papers on Parliament No. 41, June 2004, Paper presented as a lecture in the Department of the Senate Occasional Lecture Series at Parliament House on 31 October 2003.

²² For an extensive history of Australian suffrage sister activities in the UK see Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom*, 2018. Profiling activities of Muriel Matters, Dora Montefiore, Nellie Martels and Dora Meeson-Coates. And B. Caine, 'Australian Feminism and the British Militant Suffragettes', Papers on Parliament No. 41, June 2004.



Figure 21. 'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London' 17 June 1911. Mrs Fisher, wife of Australian Prime Minister, Mrs McGowan Wife of NSW Premier and Vida Goldstein'.²³



Figure 22. 'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London' 17 June 1911.²⁴

Australian feminists, who had achieved Equal Franchise on a national scale by 1908, still considered England respectfully as the Mother Country, but a mother whose attitude at withholding franchise rights from women, and the associated effect on welfare, they viewed as backward and archaic. Another Australian feminist campaigner, Jessie Street, had direct personal links to Suffragettes and was in support of militant campaigning.²⁵ Jessie, who volunteered to sell the militant newspapers on the streets of London, recalled the WSPU as operating like 'an army during active service'. Members 'pledged themselves to carry out any instructions they received. They were in the category of guerrilla fighters'.²⁶ Millar notes that Australian Bessie Rischbieth had developed an interest in suffrage campaigning on a visit to England; though she was not in agreement with militant actions, she became enthralled with the plight of the Suffragettes and fell under a spell at the magnetism of

²³ 'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London, 17 June 1911, Australian section forming up on the Thames embankment'. George Rose Stereo view, 11,950. Mrs Fisher, wife of Australian Prime Minister, Mrs McGowan Wife of Premier of NSW and Vida Goldstein. Luscombe Collection.

²⁴ 'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London, 17 June 1911, Australian section forming up on the Thames embankment'. George Rose Stereo view, 11,954. Luscombe Collection.

²⁵ Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, p.393. According to Crawford, (Winifred Mayo – stage name) Alice Monck-Mason 1870-1967. Was cousin of Australian Jessie Street, Suffragette, member of the AFL and later President of the Suffragette Fellowship.

²⁶ C. Millar, 'The Making of a Feminist: Bessie Rischbieth Encounters the English Suffragettes', *Lilith A Feminist History Journal*, no 12, 2003, p.34.

Mrs Pankhurst. Miller stated Bessie's attraction to the Suffragettes was caused by the substantial element of drama, theatre and voyeurism. Though Bessie had no direct contact with Suffragettes in England, she made efforts post-suffrage to connect with militants via the network of Fellowship members in Australia and the UK. Post-suffrage, Bessie's quest was to collect, curate and establish a dedicated Suffragette Fellowship Collection of objects from the English suffrage campaign described as 'one of the richest collections of suffrage and Suffragette miscellanea in Australia'.²⁷

The United Kingdom

Alberti has argued that in the decade after partial enfranchisement in 1918 some feminists feared that the vote 'might lose its significance', as the vote did not immediately guarantee equal rights in all spheres of life, in particular the right to equal pay.²⁸ Howarth has suggested that British feminists were also questioning the new role of women in an era that was brimming with possibilities for their sex.²⁹ Women, previously faced with a door slammed shut to opportunities, were now pondering the possibility of new openings; this also signalled the beginning of a competition for feminist priorities that threatened to fracture old loyalties and fuelled the Fellowship's commitment to working with like-minded organisations for feminists causes.

Cheryl Law has highlighted that feminists in the 1920s became 'more sophisticated' and a stream of 'new' feminism or 'welfare' feminism emerged in response to questions about the unique needs of women. This became as Workman has suggested, complex, contradictory and multifaceted.³⁰

²⁷ C. Millar, 'The Making of a Feminist: Bessie Rischbieth Encounters the English Suffragettes', *Lilith A Feminist History Journal*, no 12, 2003, p.34.

²⁸ J. Alberti, 'A symbol and a key: the suffrage movement in Britain 1918-1928', in Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, pp.286-287. Feminists from all backgrounds, political parties, former suffragists and Suffragettes, including Lady Rhondda, Dame Millicent Fawcett, Emmeline Pankhurst continued to lobby Government for full equality at the ballot box.

²⁹ J H. Howarth, *Women in Britain: Voices and Perspective from Twentieth-Century History*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 2019, p.xxxix.

³⁰ C. Law, *Suffrage and Power the Women's Movement, 1918-1928*, I. B. Taurus Publishers, London, New York, 1997, p.161. J. Workman, 'Wading through the Mire: An Historiographical Study of the British Women's Movement between the

Furthermore, as noted by Hannam, despite the goal of working together, feminism in the interwar years was beset by old loyalties, including class, religion and cultural differences.³¹ Though the Fellowship sought to be inclusive of feminist causes, leaders who were firmly committed to working with 'like-minded' organisations became entangled in the camp of 'old' feminism. Post-suffrage, the question of equality (for women) marked the distinction between the old and new feminist groups. Hannam, quoting Eleanor Rathbone, believed that equality was not possible for women unless 'their special needs as mothers were addressed'. For 'new' feminists, economic dependence on men required a focus on additional financial support for women, to improve their status 'within the home'. For old feminists, equal rights, on the same basis as men, remained the priority. Old feminists were concerned that a continued focus on motherhood, for instance, would 'make it difficult for women to escape the traditional roles'.³² Law has argued that new feminists believed that old feminists were split along 'class and gender lines', indicating that some middle-class feminists' obsession with 'ideological purity' meant they were blind to the lived experience of working-class women.³³ This cemented the opinion of 'new' feminists that old feminists were therefore not diverse enough to hold a contemporary world view of feminism. However although it might be thought to represent 'old' feminists, the Fellowship's membership in the 1930s, 1940s and beyond reflected the diverse social strata of women in the old WSPU, as well as both genders; the contemporary WFL member base also included differing social and professional classes campaigning for equal pay and issues concerning the welfare of women prisoners.

Workman has suggested that a reduction in numbers of the Six Point Group in the interwar period was indicative of a loss of interest in the group's focus on

Wars'. *University of Sussex, Journal of Contemporary History*, Issue 2, April 2001, p.10.

³¹ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.102.

³² Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.121.

³³ Law, *Suffrage and Power the Women's Movement*, 1997, p.176.

equality feminism, as it was thought too challenging to achieve.³⁴ It is feasible that the Fellowship's second aim – to work with like-minded groups – was formed in response to the perceived slowdown of equal, or old, feminism and the aim immediately drew the Fellowship to offering shared histories as a feminist drawcard. Cross-memberships of groups also enabled shared feminist causes to be amplified across various mediums such as the national print newspapers and broadcasters. The Fellowship's brand of storytelling, colour and spectacle, using objects and relics, worked to lure the media into covering reunion and feminist events, drawing attention to feminist campaigns at that time. For old feminist groups, a close association with the Fellowship and its associated memory work also provided strength in numbers, cultivated initially by strong links to shared ideals via achieved gains.

The 1930s

Hannam and Pugh have argued that feminism in the 1930s was in decline. Hannam notes that suffrage groups, who had earlier 'encouraged a sense of solidarity' and developed a 'feminist consciousness' were left behind by women who later failed to 'retain their confidence and a sense of autonomy'.³⁵ According to Bingham, the 'women's movement had struggled against being stereotyped as "old news"' and found it challenging to re-capture the public imagination.³⁶ Thus, within that era, the message conveyed by the emerging Fellowship was also viewed as old news, equating to old feminism, in a contemporary world. Founding leaders of the Fellowship were reacting to a perceived loss of relevance emerging in the early 1930s by regrouping women together for a common cause, drawing on a ready-made supporter base. The Fellowship was swift to recognise that it possessed the unique ability to not only disseminate a shared history but also to bridge a generational and

³⁴ J. Workman, 'Wading through the Mire: An Historiographical Study of the British Women's Movement between the Wars'. *University of Sussex, Journal of Contemporary History*, Issue 2, April 2001, p.2. Law, *Suffrage and Power the Women's Movement, 1918-1928*, 1997, p.6.

³⁵ Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007, p.115. Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain since 1914-1959*, 3rd edition, 2015, p.194.

³⁶ A. Bingham, 'Enfranchisement, Feminism and the Modern Woman: Debates in the British Popular Press, 1918-1939', in Gottlieb, and Toye, eds, *Aftermath of Suffrage Women, Gender, and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945*, 2013, p.100.

ideological gap between feminists. As discussed in Chapter 4, in 1932 Fellowship member Geraldine Lennox presented a short piece of writing, *The Suffragette Spirit*, at an event hosted by an allied group, the St Joan's and Political Alliance.³⁷ *The Spirit* was offered to feminists, old and new, as a feminist blueprint, employed to bridge the generational and ideological gap between old and new feminists.

In the same year as *The Spirit* was launched, the Fellowship, in conjunction with sister group the WFL, provided Suffragette banners from the growing Suffragette Fellowship Collection at a mass meeting at Westminster to inaugurate a national movement regarding equal rights to equal pay. The banners provided colour and spectacle, representing Suffragette pasts.³⁸ At the same time Edith How-Martyn, as Director of the Birth Control International Information Centre in London, was corresponding with feminists across the globe, including suffrage supporter and feminist campaigner Jessie Street in Australia.³⁹ Two years after the launch of *The Spirit*, the Fellowship, the WFL and twenty-nine women's organisations co-sponsored the annual meeting of the global Equal Rights International organisation in Geneva, which sought to have equal rights embedded in international agreements. The meeting was chaired by Fellowship member Helen Archdale and Australian Jessie Street.⁴⁰ In 1936 Fellowship members Nina Boyle, Mary Phillips, Helen Atkinson and Elsa Gye, and Australian feminist Mrs Littlejohn, on behalf of the Australian Federation of Women Voters and the British Commonwealth League, met at BBC headquarters in London to protest the lack of female representation by

³⁷ 'St Joan's Social and Political Alliance,' *The Vote*, 4 March 1932, p.7. See Chapter 8 *Calling all Women* for discussion on the 'Suffragette Spirit'.

³⁸ 'Our Green, White and Gold Fair', *The Vote*, 4 November 1932, p.3. Una Duval established a stall at a WFL Green, White and Gold Fair, other feminist groups in attendance were Six Point Group, St Joan's and Political Alliance. 'Women's Right to Earn', *Western Argus Kalgoorlie*, 21 November 1933, p.18.

³⁹ Edith How-Martyn to Jessie Street, *BCIIC*, 26 September 1932. Papers of Jessie Street, National Library of Australia, MS 2683, Series 3, Obj: 385364352. Jessie Street to Edith How-Martyn, Birth Control International Information Centre, 9 July 1931, Papers of Jessie Street, National Library of Australia, MS 2683, Series 3, Obj: 385364931. Edith How-Martyn to Jessie Street, 22 August 1934, Papers of Jessie Street, National Library of Australia, MS 2683, Series 3, Obj:385366169.

⁴⁰ A. T. Nillson, 'Equal Rights International Holds Annual Meeting', *Equal Rights*, vol 19, Issue 52, 1934, p.405.

the public broadcaster.⁴¹ In July 1937 members supported the delivery of a petition in the House of Commons, calling for eligibility for the old-age pension for women to be lowered to 55 years of age. In recognition of the Fellowship's ageing membership, a reporter suggested that Suffragettes who had spent part of their youth in jail had found the next cause worth fighting for by demanding equal rights for women at the upcoming general election.⁴² The commemoration service for Mrs Pankhurst that year was to be Edith How-Martyn's final service to the WSPU leader in England. as she departed in November to embark on a 'world tour', lecturing on birth control.⁴³ In 1938 the Fellowship was a delegate on the Women's Guild of Empire, Six Point Group and the British Commonwealth League, demanding that London County Council call for an end to the marriage bar imposed on women employed at the Council.⁴⁴ Jessie Street, in London to attend events linked to the British Commonwealth League, was also a special guest at that year's WFL conference dinner.⁴⁵ Though the end of the 1930s witnessed the outbreak of the Second World War, which caused an end to transnational catch-ups in Britain, the arrival of the 1940s remained a busy period for feminist campaigners, who turned their attention to specific conditions affecting women during wartime.⁴⁶

⁴¹ '500 Women tell BBC What They Want', *The Daily Herald*, 25 April 1936, p.9. 'Mrs Pankhurst Memorial', *The Scotsman*, 20 July 1936, p.16. In 1936 representatives from women's societies, and members of Parliament, from across England attended a Fellowship's memorial service to Mrs Pankhurst in 1936. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936. 'Mrs Pankhurst Memorial', *The Scotsman*, 20 July 1936, p.16.

⁴² 'Pensions First – Then Equal Rights', *Daily Herald*, 28 July 1937, p.6.

⁴³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936 reported that President Edith How-Martyn had closed her office in London to embark on a world tour lecturing on Birth Control taking in India and the Pacific region, including Australia and New Zealand.

⁴⁴ 'The Marriage Bar', *West Australian*, 30 September 1938, p.7.

⁴⁵ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 13 May 1938, LOU.LON 717.

⁴⁶ J. B. Thurlow, 'Continuity and Change in British Feminism, C. 1940 – 1960', PhD Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 2006, p.113. Cowman, *Women in British Politics, C.1689-1979*, 2010, p.56. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG. Several events in 1942 included the Equal Compensation for War Injuries for Men and Women and took part in a deputation with Madame Heisser and the Nationality of Married Women and was also on the Advisory Committee for Equal Compensation and on the Women's Suffrage Silver Jubilee Committee.

The 1940s

Throughout the 1940s the Fellowship remained heavily involved with kindred societies, focused on campaigns highlighting equal pay and equal citizenship for women and working with many women's organisations including the Open Door Council, WFL, Six Point Group, Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, Fawcett Society, Married Women's Association, St Joan's International Alliance, Status of Women Committee, Women for Westminster, National Union of Society for Equal Citizenship and the Women's Publicity Planning Association.⁴⁷ In 1944 the Fellowship was a representative on the Joint Standing Parliamentary Committee of Women's Organisations, founded during the war to establish 'equality of status, pay and opportunity between women and men'. The joint committee was convened by the WFL to promote 'co-partnership of women citizens in the new (post-war) community'.⁴⁸ The Fellowship was also represented on the Dorothy Evans Memorial Committee, the Status of Women Campaign Committee and the Nina Boyle Memorial Committee.⁴⁹ In addition, the Little Museum hosted many feminist groups who met to discuss women's issues surrounded by a heady mix of Suffragette banners, objects and posters.⁵⁰ In 1947 the Fellowship stepped in to assist Mrs

⁴⁷ Cowman, *Women in British Politics, C.1689-1979*, 2010, p.151. Namely, the Open-Door Council, WFL, Six Point Group, Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, Fawcett Society, Married Women's Association, St Joan and Political Alliance, Status of Women's Committee, Women for Westminster. National Union of Society for Equal Citizenship and Women's Publicity and Planning Association.

⁴⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1944, Papers and objects of Bessie Rischbieth, 1900-1967 [manuscript] National Library Australia, Object : 433180222. Records on the Status of Women Committee, Women's Library, LSE 7AMP. Chaired by Fellowship supporter and author of *I Knew Mrs Pankhurst 1945*, Thelma Cazalet-Keir. . Although it ceased activities during the War, the Status of Women Committee, chaired by friend of the Fellowship Thelma Cazalet-Keir, had resumed in 1945 acted as a national body to co-ordinate the work of organisations campaigning for women's rights.

⁴⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1946.

⁵⁰ In 1947 the Fellowship hosted a joint meeting of representatives from women's organisations to discuss the formation of a Joint Parliamentary Committee focused on equal status of women, including equal pay and opportunities 'between men and women'. Attendees included the WFL, National Council for Equal Citizenship, National Union of Women Teachers, National Association of Women Civil Services and the Open-Door Council. Agenda, Joint Parliamentary Committee, 19 April 1947, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401.

White, who had begun her own militant campaign demanding that the Labour Party introduce an equal policy for women at the Labour Party conference. The Fellowship, right behind her, swung into action, demanding Prime Minister Clement Atlee receive a deputation of Suffragette prisoners to hear the claims of Mrs White. In a letter drafted after a Fellowship meeting held on 20 November, Marian Lawson declared to the Prime Minister that 'the Government's refusal to implement this policy is alienating a large section of women. We feel that those women who fought for freedom so many years ago have the right to be heard, and we very much hope that you will reconsider your decision'.⁵¹ The following year, Edith How-Martyn, then in Australia, refused to concede that Suffragettes were irrelevant, or old news, and published a stirring rallying cry to members in *Calling all Women*: 'When women unite again as they did forty years ago, they can bring about the fall of any Government that refuses to grant them economic justice, equality – now'.⁵²

Marian Lawson continued to attempt to rouse interest from Parliament, and declared to the Prime Minister that 'our members, so many of whom suffered imprisonment for their convictions, are gravely concerned at the continued inaction of the Government with regard to these important matters, believing as they do that the fulfilment of these measures is an essential factor in the National Reconstruction Programme'.⁵³ A further request to receive a deputation of Suffragettes was also dismissed by the Prime Minister.⁵⁴ Refusing to abandon their demands, Teresa Billington-Greig and Marian Lawson prepared another response to the Prime Minister.⁵⁵ Marian Lawson,

⁵¹ Marian Lawson to Teresa Billington-Greig, Suffragette Fellowship, 5 November 1947, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401. Marian Lawson, Suffragette Fellowship, approx. November 1947, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401.

⁵² Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279.

⁵³ Marian Lawson to Clement Atlee PM, 19 February 1948, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401.

⁵⁴ 'Francis Graham-Hamilton to Honorary Organiser Suffragette Fellowship, 25 February 1948. The Women's Library, LSE 7TBG.

⁵⁵ Teresa Billington-Greig (Draft B) to Clement Atlee PM, Undated – presume before June 1948, The Women's Library, LSE 7TBG Box 402, Sir, In this house of grave emergency, the Suffragette Fellowship, a body of women who have suffered

keen to press the Suffragette legacy, and the perceived clout of Suffragettes, reminded Atlee that Suffragettes had a 'great tenacity of purpose', and referred to their refusal to give up, demonstrated by hunger striking and their endurance of forcible feeding, and by carrying on in the face of the ongoing rejection of their demands. The 'same women who helped to carry on the incessant and sometimes tumultuous propaganda for Votes for Women', were now fighting on behalf of a younger generation equally determined to achieve 'equal pay and equal citizenship under the United Nations Charter'. Marian continued that 'women will persevere with their demands and experience has taught the Suffragettes that patience and faith in the Government resulted in militant actions of Suffragettes'. Marian urged the Government, 'Therefore, we submit, in the best interests of all concerned for the present Government to deal with the Women's questions now'.⁵⁶ Marian further pointed out that the Fellowship would not be fobbed off and intended to take Suffragettes, in person, to meet with the Government at Number 10 Downing Street.⁵⁷ However, despite persevering, all attempts by Suffragettes to organise rampages, the government remained unswayed by implied threats, and repeated the previous refusals of 25 February and 30 April.⁵⁸ Member Charlotte Marsh also contended that equal pay campaigns were a continuation of suffrage 'claims' and was miffed at what she considered to be ill-feeling from some feminist quarters. 'We Suffragettes do not expect the women of today to appreciate how many of the advantages they now take for granted have come about as a

imprisonment for their convictions, requests a hearing from you. We are deeply concerned that your Government should continue to ignore the pledges given in the United Nations Charter in which full equality is promised to women'. Teresa appealed that women workers given the rights as male workers including equal pay and equal employment rights. WFL, Minutes of N.E.C Meeting, 31 May 1948, The Women's Library, LSE 7WFL FL55. Marian Reeves to Teresa Billington-Greig, 16 March 1948, The Women's Library, LSE 7TBG Box 401.

⁵⁶ Signatories to the letter were Helen Atkinson, Teresa Billington-Greig, Una Duval, Teresa Garnett, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Muriel Matters-Porter, Winifred Mayo, Anna Munro, Mary Phillips, Sime Seruya and Dorothy Pethick. Marian Lawson, Suffragette Fellowship to Clement Atlee PM, 10 June 1948, The Women's Library, LSE 7TBG Box 401.

⁵⁷ Marian Lawson, Suffragette Fellowship to Clement Atlee PM, June 1948, The Women's Library, LSE 7TBG Box 401.

⁵⁸ Francis Graham-Hamilton to Hon Organiser Suffragette Fellowship, 10 June 1948, The Women's Library, LSE 7TBG Box 401.

result of our struggles. But we may be forgiven for being a little shocked by the superficial way in which the Suffragette movement is sometimes treated nowadays, or even dismissed, as a women MP put it recently, as ‘feminist nonsense’.⁵⁹

In the final year of the 1940s, in a demonstration of the power of memory, and of sisterhood, the AFL staged a suffrage play, first performed in 1908, on Prisoners Day 1949. Paxton has argued that from its inception the AFL had staged ‘performative propaganda’ to raise awareness of political issues of the day. Prisoners Day, held in the evening, was hosted by Winifred Mayo, who introduced the performance to an audience of twenty Suffragettes, all wearing prisoner medals of *How the Vote Was Won*. The play was performed by the Pioneer Players, and the program also featured historic monologues by members of the Pioneer Players, portraying Elizabeth Fry and Florence Nightingale. *The Bulletin* reported that many in the audience ‘could recall the days when women were taunted with the epithets heard in the play’.⁶⁰

Despite winning no concessions in their efforts to influence government actions in the 1940s, surviving Suffragettes, having lived through two world wars, remained active as feminist campaigners and memory makers, continuing to cement their status as figureheads of womanly resistance.

The 1950s

In the early 1950s, Suffragettes now relieved of the burden of safeguarding the Suffragette Fellowship Collection, continued to dedicate hours of volunteer time to a broad range of feminist causes. In February 1951 the Fellowship was one of sixteen representative groups listed on the Manifesto of the Status of Women Committee, which was issued to all Parliamentary candidates and set out demands of the rights of women regarding equal pay, equality for peeresses, prostitution, income tax, national insurance, the domicile of married

⁵⁹ ‘Report on the Pankhurst Memorial Meeting’, WFL, *The Women’s Bulletin*, 28 July 1949, LOU.LON 646.

⁶⁰ The play created by Cicely Hamilton and Christopher St John, produced by Inez Bensusan, performed by the Pioneer Players. WFL, *The Women’s Bulletin*, 21 October 1949, LOU.LON 646.

women, women priests and civil rights.⁶¹ The following year Suffragettes, evoking the power of spectacle and including friend Mrs White, were featured carrying banners and flags at an equal pay rally while marching through London streets. Mrs White was reportedly knocked down by a bus but carried on regardless. The Fellowship exclaimed that Mrs White had the 'suffragette spirit'.⁶² In October the media reported ironically on a 'battle of wits between police and propagandists' and chortled to readers that Suffragette Charlotte Marsh, wearing a sandwich board while marching through the precinct of the Houses of Parliament, was sighted by Winston Churchill.⁶³ Also that year, the Fellowship, representing the global sisterhood of Suffragettes, and the WFL were affiliates of Great Britain at the International Alliance of Women conference in Denmark, which also included Bessie Rischbieth representing Australia.⁶⁴ The following year Jessie Street, old friends of militants and a friend of Edith How-Martyn in Australia, attended several feminist conferences in Europe and was a special guest of the Fellowship and the WFL in April at the Minerva Club, where she offered news of global feminist gains.⁶⁵

In 1954, to the delight of the Fellowship, the statue of Mrs Pankhurst took centre stage when campaigners for equal pay were joined by Suffragettes who took to the streets in London. Newspapers reported that hundreds of supporters gathered to watch the marchers, armed with petitions, process past

⁶¹ The Manifesto, co-signed by National Union of Women Teachers, St Joan's Social and Political Alliance, WFL, Association of Moral and Social Hygiene, British Commonwealth League and others, was focused on Equal Pay, Moral Standards, Marital Rights and Civil Rights. 'Manifesto Status of Women's Committee, 1951'. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 February 1951, LOU.LON 217. <http://www.unionhistory.info/britainatwork/emuweb/objects/nofdigi/tuc/imagedisplay.php?irn=1335>

⁶² Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1952.

⁶³ 'Charlotte Wins Again', *Northern Daily Mail*, 22 October 1952, p.2.

⁶⁴ Carrie Chapman Catt Papers: Subject File, 1848-1950. Manuscript/Mixed Material. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss154040506>. *International Alliance of Women*, British Centre 7 Kensington Park Gardens, September 1952. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1953, Delegates were also from Egypt, Iceland, Brazil, Israel, Haiti, Finland, including Marian Reeves of the WFL.

⁶⁵ Mrs Street, Feminism and The United Nations, WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 April 1953, Jessie spoke of the work of the Status of Women Commission, global feminism, human rights violations and of the General Assembly to be held in 1954. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 6 March 1953, LOU.LON 99.

the statue of Mrs Pankhurst.⁶⁶ Another reporter provided a vivid description of the spectacle: 'old Suffragettes, wearing their best clothes and tea party hats, smiled gossiped and enjoyed themselves while two open horse-drawn carriages and a hansom cab paraded down Whitehall to the Houses of Parliament trailing streamers and wearing rosettes in the WSPU tricolours' and noted the Suffragettes had made a promise to police they would not make a "fuss".⁶⁷ It is clear at this juncture that feminist campaigners were utilising surviving Suffragettes by recreating the spectacle and colour of Suffragette pasts to awaken and attract interest in feminist causes for women in England. However, despite the efforts of members to contribute their particular brand of Suffragette magic, by 1957 *Calling all Women* was highlighting the contemporary state of apathy of women and reprinted an article from the *Manchester Guardian*, 'Where are the Angry Young Women?'. It highlighted global issues, including the H-bomb and the plight of refugees. In recognition, the Fellowship suggested to subscribers that 'perhaps we need a few more angry women, collectively angry like the Suffragettes – and angry at some of the things that really matter'.⁶⁸ One constant issue that remained of concern to Suffragettes, post-suffrage, was the plight of women prisoners.⁶⁹ In 1959, in the wake of a proposal by authorities to crack down on sex workers protested the proposed *Street Offences Bill*, by opposing the use of the description 'common prostitute' and the resultant harsh impacts on women if prison terms of sex workers were increased as a result of the implementation of the proposed Bill.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ The Daily Telegraph reported that Declarations calling for Equal Pay were 'read at the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst'. 6000 at Equal Pay Rally', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 March 1954, p.1.

⁶⁷ Campaign will reach its climax today', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 9 March 1954, p.1.

⁶⁸ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1958, Casey Papers, Laughton Collection.

⁶⁹ See Chapter 4 *Prison and Prisoners*

⁷⁰ The Fellowship noted the Wolfenden report had highlighted the rise of street prostitution, that led to a forced crackdown on women. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1958, Casey Papers, Laughton Collection. *Report of the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution*, 29 October 1957, Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/10/11/579/1527. Howarth, *Women in Britain: Voices and Perspective from Twentieth-Century History*, 2019, p.155.

As the 1940s, and resultant baby boom, and the decade of the 1950s came to an end a new wave of feminist campaigners were waiting in the wings and about to make their entrance onto the global feminist stage.

The 1960s

In the 1960s ageing Suffragettes continued to be viewed with interest by a curious public who remained keen to engage with the history attached to Fellowship members. In 1961 Grace Roe and Sybil Goulden-Bach represented the Fellowship at the International Alliance of Women in Dublin. A reporter questioned Grace, who was then known to be open about committing acts of ultra-militancy if she regretted her Suffragette past. Grace replied, 'I would do it all over again. It was a bloodless revolution, and we won'.⁷¹ Sadly, by September that year the Fellowship's closest ally, the WFL notified subscribers that due to ongoing costs it proposed to disband the League at that year's conference.⁷² Following the disbanding in November 1961 the Fellowship, complete with members of the ex-WFL, continued to be fully committed to its remaining allies: the Six Point Group, the Status of Women Committee, St Joan's Alliance and the National Women's Citizens Association.⁷³ Furthermore, in common with allied feminist groups, the Fellowship was taking an active interest in disarmament issues. Member Teresa Garnett, representing the Fellowship, was invited to attend a meeting on disarmament hosted by the National Assembly of Women that welcomed women from Canada and the United States to England on behalf of Women's Peace Groups.⁷⁴

<https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives/relationships/collections1/sexual-offences-act-1967/wolfenden-report/>.

⁷¹ 'Suffragette at Women's Congress', *The Birmingham Post*, 22 August 1961, p.5.

⁷² The League's records held at the Women's Library, LSE (7WFL) and banner, *Dare to Be Free*, held at the Women's Library within the London School of Economics. The WFL records were given to Miss Douie at the Women's Service Library, 'where they will be available to future students and others interested in the women's movement'. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 September 1961, LOU.LON 533.

⁷³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1963.

⁷⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Minutes of the Executive Committee*, 25 June 1963, Casey Papers. Suffragette Fellowship, *Invitation on behalf of National Assembly of Women*, 12 June 1963, Women's Service Library. The Women's Library LSE, 7MLB/G/01.

Fellowship supporter Baroness Edith Summerskill was a regular guest speaker at commemorative events. In the lead-up to a General Election in March, the Fellowship was a co-signatory on a manifesto issued by the Status of Women Committee that called for equal pay, equal employment opportunities and equality under the National Insurance Scheme.⁷⁵ Again in 1967 on Votes for Women Day the Fellowship was supported by the National Women's Citizen's Association, St Joan's Alliance and the Six Point Group.⁷⁶ In April the Fellowship, one of four British delegates, hosted a raffle stall decorated in Suffragette colours at the International Alliance of Women's Fair at Caxton Hall. The tricolours, first introduced in 1908 by Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence as the colours of the militant WSPU, were now readily adopted by new radical feminist campaigners as the official colours of feminism.⁷⁷ The Fellowship was also presented with a pair of gilt goblets by organisers of the Alliance of Women.⁷⁸ In addition to membership of the International Alliance of Women, the Fellowship listed affiliation payments to feminist societies, the Fawcett Library and Society, the Status of Women Committee and the Women's Advisory Council.⁷⁹ The following year members again welcomed the industrious Australian campaigner Jessie Street, now seventy-nine years old, at a tribute to Fred and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence.⁸⁰ The following year at a special sixtieth anniversary of Votes for Women Day, surviving Suffragettes

⁷⁵ 'Women put out own Manifesto', *Sunday Times*, 27 March 1966, p.8.

⁷⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Notice of Votes for Women Day*, 6 February 1967, The Women's Library LSE 7ACP.

⁷⁷ The Fawcett Society, *Annual Report, April 1, 1967 – March 31, 1968*, pp.5-13, Records of the Fawcett Society and its Predecessors, 1871-1967, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106 2LSW.

⁷⁸ Grace Roe to Members, 10 March 1967, *The Women's Library LSE*, 7ACP. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence Centenary, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968. Whereabouts of the Goblets are unknown.

⁷⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, Income and Expenditure Account Year Ended December 1967, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. The Fawcett Society, *Annual Report, April 1, 1967 – March 31, 1968*, pp.5-13, Records of the Fawcett Society and its Predecessors, 1871-1967, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106 2LSW.

⁸⁰ Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence Centenary, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968.

heard the feminist fruits of their struggles, when speaker Dame Joan Vickers MP spoke of the 'progress of women since the vote was won'.⁸¹

In England, pairing with like-minded feminist groups in the UK and abroad, Suffragettes associated with the Fellowship remained lifelong feminists, and focused for over forty years on women-centric campaigns including prison reform, equal pay and programs to encourage women to enter political life.

Australia

Though the Fellowship was heavily involved with aligned feminist groups in England, in Australia Edith How-Martyn established a Fellowship branch on arrival in Melbourne that operated primarily as a reunion and commemorative group. The branch hosted special guests lecturing on feminist issues of the day and met on select Days of Obligation until illness forced Edith to withdraw from public life in the early 1950s, signalling the end of the Australian branch. However, Edith's memory work in Australia, supporting and encouraging other women to curate and collect suffrage memorabilia, left a rich archival legacy of objects, relics and artefacts in Australian collections.

The 1930s

In 1933 Australian feminist Bessie Rischbieth held an exhibition of her unique collection of suffrage memorabilia, featuring photographs, papers and biographical material of the 'leaders in the women's movements and their activities from early suffrage days'.⁸² Bessie and her exhibition toured in all states, except Tasmania, and had earlier called out to women to donate items with a rallying cry appealing to women: 'She that would know what shall be, must consider what has been'.⁸³ In August the exhibits were on display in

⁸¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Invitation Votes for Women Day*, 6 February 1969, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970.

⁸² See, C. Millar, 'The Making of a Feminist: Bessie Rischbieth Encounters the English Suffragettes', *Lilith A Feminist History Journal*, no 12, 2003. and B. Caine, 'Australian Feminism and the British Militant Suffragettes', *Papers on Parliament* No. 41, June 2004. 'Woman's World', *Western Mail Perth*, 23 Feb 1933, p.4.

⁸³ Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 403917041. Bessie's modest collection of mementoes continued to expand in the

South Australia at a meeting of the Australian Federation of Women Voters, and the Women's Non-Party League attendees sang Suffragette songs to the tune of *Three Blind Mice*. The exhibits, accompanied by speeches from Bessie who spoke of pioneer feminists from Australia, England and America, was a pictorial display. To onlookers, it was a mix of women sparring with police and running amok in London streets, scenes of police and crowds roughly handling Suffragettes were depicted, as well as images of chalking parties and of the 1910 Suffrage Procession.⁸⁴ The exhibit also accompanied rallies in Melbourne, auspiced by the Australian Federation of Woman Voters and the Victorian Women's Citizen's Movement, at the rooms of the Housewives Association. These were attended by well-known feminists Vida Goldstein and Alice Henry.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, Edith How-Martyn continuing her world tour, flew the Suffragette flag by representing the Fellowship at the opening of the headquarters of the World Woman's Party in Geneva. *Calling all Women* reported that many representatives of women's societies worldwide were present, including English and American Suffragette Alice Paul.⁸⁶

The 1940s

In February 1941 Edith How-Martyn sent a postcard from New Zealand to fellow birth control campaigner and Suffragette sister Kitty Marion in America, seeking news of Australian Suffragettes and stated she kept the 'flag of equality flying' in New Zealand. .⁸⁷ In November Edith had arrived in Australia and was

1930s. Suffragette Mary Law, suffering ill health believed she had no further use for the items and stated she, 'wanted to settle my belongings with those who will appreciate them. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Mary Law to Bessie Rischbeith, 4 April 1939, Obj: 395948178. It is unclear who Mary Law is as her name does not appear on Suffragette registers in the UK.

⁸⁴ 'Suffragette Heroines Epic Struggle Recalled', *Sun Sydney* NSW, 24 September 1933, p.28. Including Mrs Caroline Chisholm, Rose Scott, Elizabeth Macarthur, Mrs Corbett-Ashby, Mrs Cowan, Vida Goldstein, Helen Spence, Emmeline Pankhurst and Mrs Chapman Catt. 'The Mirror of Society', *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 23 September 1933, p.27.

⁸⁵ 'A Women's Rally', *The Age*, 28 November 1933, p.6.

⁸⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1939-1940.

⁸⁷ Edith How-Martyn to Kitty Marion, Wellcome Collection, PP/EPR/A.1/3 Box 1, 6 February 1941.

met warmly by many old friends; this no doubt encouraged her to establish a Fellowship branch outside England. The special glue that held the women together was a firm belief in the sisterhood and a recognition that, as feminists, they stood on the shoulders of others who had come before. Reconnecting Suffragettes via word of mouth was assisted by the distribution of *Calling all Women* in Australia, and resulted in the regrouping of militant Suffragettes Jennie Baines, Adela Pankhurst, Australian-born Eileen Casey and Louie Cullen, all of whom had emigrated to Australia during and after the suffrage era.⁸⁸ The profile, and member base, of the Fellowship, was also lifted in Edith's new domicile thanks in part to Australian feminists, Vida Goldstein and Jessie Street, who had assisted their sisters in England. The Fellowship not only gave Adela Pankhurst an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, but no doubt provided her with a sense of an extended family in Australia.

Almost immediately, Australian journalists were keen to interview an English Suffragette on their shores. Papers reported that Edith, 'associate of Mrs Pankhurst, Suffragette and hunger striker', had arrived in Sydney. Edith, whom I suspect had issued a press release before her arrival, was never one to pass up an opportunity to incorporate contemporary issues into historic feminist events. She was quoted as saying, 'it is interesting to recall that it was the last war that really gave women their rights as citizens, and how in this war they are again proving their worth to the nation'.⁸⁹ Edith immediately established a Fellowship branch in Melbourne by networking with old friends Vida Goldstein and Jessie Street. Though she continued to be in contact with Margaret Sanger and other birth control colleagues in England, she was cautious not to publicly discuss any aspect of her birth control work while in

⁸⁸ Adela Pankhurst described as the 'forgotten Pankhurst' arrived in Australia in 1914 and was a regular guest at Fellowship reunion events in Australia. For more information on Adela see, G. Fela, 'A Different Adela: The Forgotten Radical?' *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal*, no. 23, 2017, p.80. And Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst, the Wayward Suffragette 1885-1961*, 1996, p.172. Coleman suggested that former comrades in the Fellowship had whole heartedly accepted Adela as one of their own.

⁸⁹ 'Suffrage Pioneer', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 November 1941, p.5.

Australia.⁹⁰ Edith's arrival in Australia had coincided with a busy time for women, who were now active in 'war work' at home while men were serving overseas. Lake asserts that in 1939 women in Australia were presented with opportunities for work outside the home that also led to increased interest in equal pay for women.⁹¹ Zora Simic argues that Australian feminists during World War II were eager and keen to do their bit to prove themselves as fit for any task. Mrs Warburst had declared on behalf of women, 'let us prove ourselves; we have what it takes'. For Simic, this indicated that women were signalling 'the coming of age of Australian feminism that would fit within an idealised outlook for a "new world order"'.⁹² Courtesy of media coverage announcing her arrival, and her established feminist friendships, Australian feminists believed that Edith had the prerequisite feminist skill set to contribute to local causes. Edith was invited to be on a panel of women speakers and to join the editorial sub-committee of the Women and War Work Council.⁹³

However, Simic notes that feminism in Australia during World War II, shared a similar experience with the UK. Opportunities for women were short-lived and became marred by feminist arguments focused on the role of a 'new age' of women post-war; and became just a fleeting moment that passed before women were aware of what had happened and feminist arguments at that time were ultimately unproductive. Australian feminist Jessie Street attributed these differences to the apathy and differing aims of various feminist groups, believing that there was a division between those who did philanthropic work

⁹⁰ Correspondence from Edith How-Martyn 1949-1950 is held at the State Library of Victoria. Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand (M2291-2314), (19) (Microform)
Australian Joint Copying Project & National Library of Australia. 1950. Records M2565 (Microform).

⁹¹ M. Lake, *Getting Equal : The History of Australian Feminism*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1999, p.184.

⁹² Z. Simic, 'A New Age? Australian Feminism and the 1940s', *Hecate*, vol 32, no. 1, 2006, pp.152-72.

⁹³ President was Mrs K Fitzpatrick. Vice Presidents Miss M James, Mrs Julia Rapke JP. Hon Secretary Mrs E G Coppel. Bulletin Council for Women in War Work, Annual Report, December 1942 – June 1943, SLV EHM, Kathleen Fitzpatrick was a noted academic at the University of Melbourne. Marjorie Coppel to Edith How-Martyn, 15 June 1943, Australian Joint Copying Project, National Library of Australia & Fawcett Library, 1950. Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand, M2291-2314 Edith How-Martyn 1892-1951.

and those who focused on the 'social conditions' of women.⁹⁴ It was apparent that her friend, Edith How-Martyn, was also annoyed at what she perceived as the apathy of Australian women and their level of participation in public life.⁹⁵ According to Simic, Jessie had also attracted antagonism as the alternative leader of Australian feminism and that divisions came to a head in October 1945 at the International Alliance of Women Congress in Paris. Simic notes that this was poorly timed, due to post-war shifting political ideologies that had caused further splits between feminists Jessie Street and Bessie Rischbeith.⁹⁶ There is also the issue of ageing and changing social mores to consider. Simic states that the ageing Australian feminists were now contending with views of younger women, considered by the older women as a showing a loosening of morals and she argues that these older women also 'viewed sex as degrading'.⁹⁷ However, I would argue that this is a rather broad statement to apply to all women of a certain age in the 1940s. Certainly, Edith and Jessie Street, who had taken an interest in Edith's birth control work in England, and her associated work at the birth control centre, were perhaps more open-minded than most women of their age. Despite the feminist divisions, Edith's memory work was unaffected, and she continued to support Stella Newsome in London by giving approvals to send Suffragette replica materials to Bessie for her museum in Australia. Fellowship members in Australia often met socially. In 1941 Edith How-Martyn was photographed, looking jolly, celebrating Christmas lunch on a warm Sydney day with friend Jessie Street.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Z. Simic, 'A New Age? Australian Feminism and the 1940s', *Hecate*, vol 32, no. 1, 2006, pp.152-72.

⁹⁵ EHM Notebook, 1943, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM/09.

⁹⁶ Z. Simic, 'A New Age? Australian Feminism and the 1940s', *Hecate*, vol 32, no. 1, 2006, pp.152-72.

⁹⁷ Z. Simic, 'A New Age? Australian Feminism and the 1940s', *Hecate*, vol 32, no. 1, 2006, pp.152-72.

⁹⁸ Photograph, Edith How-Martyn & Jessie Street, . *Christmas 1941 Mrs Jessie Street*, Dec 1941, The Women's Library LSE, TWL 2004.44.



Figure 23. Jessie Street and Edith How-Martyn, 1941. Xmas lunch Sydney.⁹⁹

Following her arrival in Australia Edith was kept busy with an appearance on radio and was a special guest at the League of Women Electors, lecturing on the history of the militant campaigns. She also exchanged posies, in the colours of the WSPU and WFL, with Jennie Baines and Eileen Casey at a remembrance day for Mrs Pankhurst.¹⁰⁰

Edith had also observed, after only a year in Australia, that local women might benefit from her years of experience and contacted Jessie to suggest how she could be of use to feminist groups in Australia. She proposed that she could be given an annual budget of £1,000 to hold a women's conference and establish a centre in Canberra to monitor proceedings in Federal Parliament as they related to women's issues, and to disseminate information to women's organisations across Australia and New Zealand.¹⁰¹ In 1942, noting frustration at the apparent apathy of women in Australia on the issue of Parliamentary representation, Edith stated to a reporter, 'the longer I stay in Australia, the more need I feel of keeping "fighting fit" as a feminist' and highlighted plans of her and feminist colleagues to establish a National group supporting Australian women candidates.¹⁰² Under the auspices of the League of Women Electors, Edith and colleagues including Vida Goldstein, provided her personal experiences, suggested policies for women to follow

⁹⁹ Edith How-Martyn & Jessie Street, . *Christmas 1941 Mrs Jessie Street*, Dec 1941. The Women's Library LSE, TWL 2004.44.

¹⁰⁰ Women in Civic Life, reprinted in *Equal Rights*, vol 28, Issue 7, 1942, pp.52-53. Edith appeared on Station 2 GB to lecture on women in Civic life. Edith described as 'a warm suffragist' by a reporter in *The Standard*. 'Pioneer's Memory Honoured', *The Age*, 15 July 1942, p.3. 'Women and the Vote', *The Age*, 3 September 1942, p.3.

¹⁰¹ Edith How-Martyn to Jessie Street, 11 October 1942, Papers of Jessie Street, National Library of Australia, MS 2683, Series 3. Obj:386011522.

¹⁰² 'Women for Parliament', *The Age*, 30 November 1942, p.2. How-Martyn, E., 'Letters to the Editor', *The Age*, 30 November 1942, p.2.

when campaigning.¹⁰³ Attending candidates Lady Brookes, Helen Maxwell and Miss Bennett also agreed to adopt a suggestion by Edith to establish a 'Women in Canberra' group to support female Parliamentary candidates. Edith had also provided a logo design copied directly from the 'Women for Westminster' group in England.¹⁰⁴ However, despite the best efforts of feminist campaigners, only Enid Lyons and Dorothy Tangney were elected.¹⁰⁵

Edith proudly recorded in her diary that she had become part of the provisional committee to assist women candidates in Australia and highlighted that women had come from all over Australia to attend the meeting. Pioneer Vida Goldstein paid tribute to the English women who fought for the vote and particularly acknowledged the contribution of the militant campaigners, including Edith How-Martyn and attendee Eileen Casey.¹⁰⁶ Edith retained a clipping from the pamphlet that proclaimed, 'this is a clarion call to all women who desire to see a less lopsided world, to press for consideration of women as Parliamentary candidates'.¹⁰⁷ Her notes at this time also indicate that she intended to depart Australia to renew her feminist work in England. Notably, Edith's feminist work was not limited to causes in Australia. In 1943 Edith was charged with collecting local signatures on behalf of American Alice Paul, who was organising a petition calling for the United Nations to include equality for women in official manifestos.¹⁰⁸ Local feminists demonstrated their admiration

¹⁰³ 'Women for Canberra', noted by Edith How-Martyn, copy sent to Dr Evans for International Women's News, 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM 07.

¹⁰⁴ A leaflet in this 1943 notebook is same design as *Women for Westminster* leaflet, replaced with a silhouette of Old Parliament House Canberra. Edith How-Martyn notebook, 19 December 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM. 'Women for Canberra', Edith How-Martyn notebook, 12 January 1943, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM.

¹⁰⁵ Lake, *Getting Equal : The History of Australian Feminism*, 1999, p.189.

¹⁰⁶ Women for Canberra, noted by Edith How-Martyn, copy sent to Dr Evans for 'International Women's News' 1942, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM 07.

¹⁰⁷ Edith How-Martyn, notebook, January 1943, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM 07.

¹⁰⁸ Alice Paul to Edith How-Martyn, National Women's Party, 10 January 1943, Australian Joint Copying Project, National Library of Australia and Fawcett Library, 1950. Collections held by Fawcett Library Relating to Australia and New Zealand (M2291-2314) Microform. Edith How-Martyn 1872-1951. Alice noted 'these are the first signatures that have come from Australia'.

of Edith by inviting her to be a guest speaker on International Women's Day at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne, where convenor, feminist and historian Kathleen Fitzpatrick, highlighted the war work of sisters in England.¹⁰⁹ Edith's speech also focused on the work of global feminists in their 'Fight for Freedom' in Great Britain, America, India, Russia, and China and highlighted the heroics of women fighting against fascism in occupied countries. Edith quoted old foe, Winston Churchill, by stating that British women have 'risen to the level of events' to accept their full share of the 'blood, tears, toil and sweat necessary to win this fight for freedom'.¹¹⁰ Edith also continued her work supporting women candidates, including the candidate for the Melbourne seat of Balaclava, Helen Maxwell.¹¹¹ However, she continued to be mystified by the ongoing apathy of women voters in Australia. In 1943 Edith stated, 'I made many enquiries to find the reason for the backward conditions of affairs but have not yet found any satisfactory explanation.'¹¹² Furthermore, she did not stop urging others to do what they could to support women in obtaining seats in Parliament.¹¹³

However, despite her plans to return to England, Edith was forced to remain in Australia, and on occasion was so ill and infirm with arthritis and asthma that she began to decline speaking invitations.¹¹⁴ While laid up, Edith, who was

¹⁰⁹ 'International Women's Day', *The Argus*, 1 March 1943, p.6. Programme, *International Women's Day*, 7 March 1943, 'Material Relating to Suffrage Movement, Wellcome Collection, PP/EPR/A.6 BOX 1. Mrs Lee spoke of Chinese women in war, a choir from MacRobertson Girls High School sang. *I love a sunburnt country*.

¹¹⁰ 'War Effort Praised', *The Age*, 8 March 1943, p.2. State Library Victoria - Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand (M2291-2314), Edith How-Martyn Speech, c1943.

¹¹¹ 'An English Woman urges support for women candidates', *The Woman's Cause*, July 1943, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS 2004, Obj: 392575551.

¹¹² 'EHM Notebook', 1943, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM/09.

¹¹³ Attendees included Jennie Baines, Eileen Casey, Carrie Knox Chapman, Beatrice Nelson (*The Age*), Edith retained a list of attendee signatures in her notebook 1943 and was presented with a book about the Red Cross. 'Women and the Vote', *The Age*, 29 October 1943, p.3. Edith How-Martyn notebook, 28 October 1943, The Women's Library LSE 7EHM 1943-44.

¹¹⁴ Edith residing in Sydney and kept in touch via correspondence with her many friends and family in Australia and across the globe. Edith declined an invitation December 1943 from Jessie Street to speak on her birth control work in India. 'EHM Notebook', 22 December 1943, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM.

always busy writing to friends, and always mindful of Suffragette legacies, inquired, to no avail, if her friend Vida would consider writing her memoir. Janette Bomford has highlighted the special friendship between these two women. In 1944 Edith confided to Vida, 'I told you once that I know no one here, no women I mean, with whom I can discuss the questions in which you and I are interested'. Edith, who lived and breathed her Suffragette past, asked Vida, 'What is going to rouse the women of Australia, indeed the women of the world, to such devotion to and sacrifice for freedom, as inspired by the Suffragettes'.¹¹⁵

By 1946, with her to return to England no longer a possibility, Edith and her husband, who were now resident in Sydney, re-established a calendar of reunion events attended by several ex-prisoners, including Mrs Colville-Reeves (Arabella Scott), now a teacher. *The Newsletter* was satisfied to note that Mrs Colville-Reeves was proud of her Suffragette roots and that she 'encouraged Suffragette principles among her girl students'.¹¹⁶ The following year Vida, a committed pacifist, who had always supported the activities of Suffragettes, mentioned she often enjoyed the company of ultra-militant arsonist Suffragette Eileen Casey in Melbourne, and hearing about other news of Fellowship members. While exchanging news with Edith she had expressed her concerns at the suffering of populations in war-ravaged Europe and expressed grave concerns about the looming threat of the atomic bomb. Vida was particularly concerned at the silence of churches, and the 'apparent total silence of the women of the world'. Pacifist Vida commented that the women of Europe should invoke the 'spirit of the Suffragettes' and campaign against weapons of mass destruction.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ J. Bomford, *That Dangerous and Persuasive Woman: Vida Goldstein*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, Vic, 1993, p.212.

¹¹⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1946, Comrades included Louie Cullen, and Suffragette Mrs Colville-Reeves (Arabella Scott) *The Newsletter* noted that the event gained good press coverage.

¹¹⁷ Correspondence from Australian Suffrage and Women's Rights Leaders Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj:443724129. Vida Goldstein to Edith How-Martyn, 11 November 1945.

Due to Edith's enforced residence in Sydney, and her sociable nature, Edith had managed to increase membership of the Australian branch to around 100 members, including Vida Goldstein and 13 Suffragette prisoners. The Suffragette Fellowship Collection and Museum also benefited from Edith's residency in Australia, after the Museum in London welcomed donations of funds from Australian members and 'precious mementoes' from Mrs Wilkinson in Perth from her imprisonment at Aylesbury Jail.¹¹⁸ Throughout the 1940s Australian newspapers remained interested in women with connections to Suffragette history. In May 1946 *The Mail Adelaide* featured Jessie Street, who declared her formative heroines were Mrs Pankhurst, Mrs Pethick-Lawrence and the Suffragettes, and detailed her lifelong dedication as a feminist campaigner. Jessie said she 'admired Mrs Pankhurst tremendously for her courage in going to jail again and again' and that this resulted in votes for women in England.¹¹⁹ *The Sydney Sun* interviewed Suffragette Katherine Gatty, on a feminist speaking tour, noting she was one of the first to be jailed for the cause.¹²⁰

It is also apparent that the reason why the Goldstein material was sent to London after her death and did not remain in Australia was due to the relationship between Edith How-Martyn and the Fawcett Library in London.¹²¹ Vida, who wrote to Edith in December 1946, had mentioned that Vera Douie (librarian at the Fawcett Library) had requested that Vida donate her diary to the Women's Library. Vida, who did not leave a memoir, had considered that her diary would suffice, mentioning that 'it contains records of some very

¹¹⁸ CAW Suffragette Fellowship *Newsletter*, 1946. Louie Cullen, Mrs Colville-Reeves (Arabella Scott), Eileen Casey and Jennie Baines.

¹¹⁹ 'She's battled for women's rights all her life', *The Mail Adelaide*, 31 May 1947, p.11.

¹²⁰ 'Political Apathy Shocked Her', *Sun Sydney*, 3 May 1947, p.3. 'Fighter for Women Dies', *Brisbane Telegraph*, 1 May 1952, p.8.

¹²¹ The Fawcett society noted the volume of press cuttings received from Vida Goldstein, was of 'great historic interest'. Report on the Work of the Women's Service Library, April 1943-1945. 'Annual Report of the Fawcett Society'. The Gerritsen collection of Aletta H. Jacobs. Goldstein, V. (1943) 'Press Cuttings Books Presented to Edith How-Martyn 1943'. (Manuscript) Papers of Vida Goldstein 1869-1949 (1943) The Women's Library LSE. 7VDG.

interesting and important happenings that I wish to recall at times'.¹²² Notably, after Vida died in 1949, her sister Aileen Goldstein entrusted Edith How-Martyn with organising safe archival of Vida's records. Fellowship member Eileen Casey in Melbourne was entrusted to courier the Vida Goldstein papers to Edith How-Martyn in Sydney, who then sent the material to Vera Douie at the Fawcett Library in London.¹²³ Caine argues that the Goldstein archive, deposited in London, and not Australia, was a 'particular attempt by Goldstein to situate her own past in a collective history, which would have been at that time more sympathetic'.¹²⁴ It was undoubtedly also Edith's work, as leader of the Fellowship and friend and supporter of the Fawcett Library, to facilitate a safe passage of Vida's archive to London; this action was also led by her belief that the library, which also housed materials from the Suffragette Fellowship Collection, was a fitting feminist repository for Vida's archival material.

The following year, in November 1947, Edith, always keen for media coverage, invited journalists to a Prisoners Day commemoration. The journalists sought out Suffragette Mrs Cullen, highlighting she was arrested three times in London and served jail time for creating a ruse involving a van crammed with fifty women who managed to get close to Houses of Parliament and were able to 'rush' the doors before being arrested.¹²⁵ Adela Pankhurst had also expressed her delight to Helen Archdale at the opportunity to meet old friends

¹²² Correspondence from Australian Suffrage and Women's Rights Leaders, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Vida Goldstein to Edith How-Martyn, 23 December 1946. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 443724691. Australian Joint Copying Project, National Library of Australia and Fawcett Library. (1950) Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand (M2291-2314) (19-) (Microfilm) Edith How-Martyn 1872-1951. Noticeably Edith How-Martyn was a life member of the Fawcett Library. See Kathleen Moore to Edith How-Martyn, 17 August 1947, and Bomford, *That Dangerous and Persuasive Woman: Vida Goldstein*, 1993, p.227. Edith How-Martyn, report to Fawcett Library, c1947. The Women's Library, LSE 7EHM 07.

¹²³ Aileen Goldstein to Edith How-Martyn, 28 August 1949. Correspondence from Australian Suffrage and Women's Rights Leaders, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj:443731966.

¹²⁴ H. Kean, 'Public Histories of Australian and British Women's Suffrage'. *Public History Review*, vol 14, 2007, p.85.

¹²⁵ 'Veterans of a Vote War', *Sunday Times Perth*, 9 November 1947, p.18. Including Edith How-Martyn, Mrs Alting, Mrs Boulton, Mrs Louie Cullen, Adela Pankhurst and Helen Archdale.

bound together in the 'spirit of friendship', giving her further 'hopes for humanity which inspired us in our fight'.¹²⁶ Edith remained fully informed of global feminist news and was busy writing articles of interest, some featuring Australian women in public life, published in the *International Women's News*.¹²⁷ Interestingly, Edith disclosed magnanimously that her favourite Day of Obligation was Votes for Women Day in February, 'as it was 'on this anniversary every woman can rejoice on the victory after 96 years of struggle came to militants, constitutionalists, anti-suffragists and the great mass of indifferent women.'¹²⁸ Demonstrating that the passing of time had not dulled personal memories, attendees recalled that Emmeline Pankhurst had possessed 'an extraordinary mixture of head and heart, with a passion for freedom' and declared with emotion, 'there was an extraordinary exaltation in those days'. Helen Archdale reminisced about recently fallen comrades, Ethel Smyth and Kitty Marshall and spoke of Constance Lytton; she recalled her first glimpse of Mrs Pankhurst 'was between two burly policemen'. Demonstrating the emotional pull of the personal memories of Mrs Pankhurst, she fondly recalled her feeling that 'if a woman's face could look like that in such circumstances, she has something worthwhile and "I must help her"'. From the moment I knew her, I felt inspired, and it was not long before I entered prison gates'.¹²⁹ Australian members welcomed Adela Pankhurst and her daughter on Prisoners Day in 1948, where concerns were raised about attempts they believed the Minister for Immigration, Arthur Calwell, was making to deny some

¹²⁶ Adela Pankhurst Walsh to Helen Archdale, 16 September 1947, The Women's Library, LSE 7EHM, Box 2. Suffragette Items from Louisa C Cullen. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 421336723. Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship notebook, 6 February 1948, LSE 7EHM Box2. Edith How-Martyn, 1 January 1948, *Calling all Women*, February 1948, Edith notified members that the Australian branch continued to hold all three Days of Obligation in 1947 and noted that one event was broadcast on radio and reported in newspapers.

¹²⁷ Edith How-Martyn, Letters to the Editor, *International Women's News*, vol 41, Issue 9, 1947.

¹²⁸ Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship notebook, 6 February 1948, Women's Library LSE, 7EHM Box 2.

¹²⁹ Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship notebook, July 1948, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM Box 2. Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst, the Wayward Suffragette 1885-1961*, 1996, p.172. Edith How-Martyn, *notebook* Suffragette Fellowship, 14 July 1948, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM Box 2.

Australian girls their citizenship rights.¹³⁰ The following year Edith noted to members in the UK that, despite advancing age, Australian Suffragettes were doing their best to meet regularly and encouraged visits from Suffragettes in England, signing off with, 'may the Suffragette Spirit flourish around the world'.¹³¹ In a clear sign that Suffragettes, on arrival in Australia were eager to make acquaintances with old friends, they often made a beeline for the Australian branch of the Fellowship.¹³² In 1949, at Votes for Women Day, members welcomed another new arrival and heard Edith highlighting feminist gains across the globe, citing several English 'women firsts' including Professor Lilian Penson's appointment as Vice-Chancellor of London University.¹³³

In June 1949, at an Edith Cowan Memorial Committee meeting in Perth, attendees listened to a letter from Edith How-Martyn, who had suggested approaching the Australian Government to issue a stamp in her honour.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Helen Archdale gave a talk at Prisoners Day Eileen Casey, Louie Cullen, Mrs Archdale, Mrs Gatty and Mrs Evans gave apologies. Helen Archdale, note in Suffragette Fellowship notebook, October 1948, The Women's Library, LSE, 7EHM Box 2. Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship notebook, The Women's Library LSE 7EHM Box 2. Vida Goldstein to Edith How-Martyn, 19 October 1948, Correspondence from Australian Suffrage and Women's Rights Leaders, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj:443726548.

¹³¹ Edith How-Martyn, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279.

¹³² Mrs Twelvetreets, age 91, described as 'a wonderful example of the Suffragette Spirit' was warmly received in 1949. Recent arrival Suffragette Mrs Mackenzie, and other regular attendees included Edith and Lilian Hall. 'Suffragette Fellowship Victory Celebration', 7 February 1949, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM Box 2.

¹³³ From women councillors, Mayors, pilots, Senators, Directors, Judiciary, Coroners, War Work, Cabinet Ministers, War Artists, Physician, across Australia, Europe and America. Edith also collected two pages of 'feminist stamps', with a woman's head on them, real or imaginary'. Edith How-Martyn, Australian Joint Copying Project, National Library of Australia and Fawcett Library. (1950) Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand (M2291-2314) (19--)(Microfilm) Edith How-Martyn 1872-1951.

¹³⁴ Edith Cowan Memorial', *The West Australian*, 9 June 1949, p.23. 'Death of Edith Cowan', *The Vote*, 1 July 1932, p.210. Mrs Edith D Cowan, OBE, JP, *The Vote*, 30 September 1932, in Edith Cowan Memorial, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3. Bessie Rischbieth, March 13, 1933, Obj:399274459. Edith Cowan, the first Australian woman MP, died age 71 in 1932. *The Vote* in England reproduced a tribute to her that had originally appeared in the Australian feminist periodical *The Dawn* describing Mrs Cowan as a 'champion of the women's cause'. A later memorial, erected in her memory, was in the form of a tall clock tower. 'Edith Cowan Memorial,' *The West Australian*, 9 June 1949, p.23.

Not long after the meeting in Perth, Edith and other Fellowship members and feminists were mourning the death of Vida Goldstein, who had passed away on 15 August. Edith paid a heartfelt tribute to her great friend, and many accolades were published in Vida's honour. Edith outlined her long life dedicated to feminist causes and to public service. Edith believed that Australia 'has lost one of its most distinguished pioneers.' One newspaper published a letter from a reader who suggested a plaque in honour of Vida be placed in the Women's Pioneer Memorial Garden in the Botanic Gardens in Melbourne, or 'at least a tree planted in memory of this brave, brilliant, and capable leader of women'.¹³⁵

The 1950s

The Australian branch remained active in the early 1950s, with members meeting regularly. Edith was continually occupied corresponding with friends across Australia and the globe and making personal contact with various politicians in Australia and New Zealand, including Dame Enid Lyons and General Douglas MacArthur in America. Edith's correspondence, what she called her 'special letters', was all carefully recorded in her notebook.¹³⁶ In 1951 Stella Newsome, no doubt with the support of Edith, who remained Fellowship President, continued to liaise with Bessie Rischbieth to send relics and mementoes to Australia.¹³⁷ The Australian branch had farewelled member Eileen Casey, who had returned to England, and this prompted Edith to note in resignation that her own hopes of returning to England were now dashed but she would not entertain the idea of giving up her memory work via the

¹³⁵ 'Tribute to a Pioneer', *The Argus*, 22 August 1949, p.6. Edith How-Martyn, Vida Goldstein, *International Women's News*, Vol 44, Issue 3, 1950.

¹³⁶ Edith's archive consisted of 'special letters' records letters sent to women politicians in Australia and New Zealand, including Dame Enid Lyons, Mrs Ross Cabinet Minister in New Zealand and General MacArthur in America. Edith How-Martyn note 1950, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. 'Special Letters 1950', Edith How-Martyn, The Women's Library LSE, 7EHM Box 3.

¹³⁷ Dr Taylor to Stella Newsome, 2 August 1951. The Women's Library LSE TWL 6.1 Box 2. Correspondence with British Suffrage Campaigners, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395949774. Stella Newsome to Bessie Rischbieth, Suffragette Fellowship, 1 November 1951.

Fellowship.¹³⁸ Ultra-militant Jennie Baines also died that year and was remembered in *The Bulletin* for her practical public speaking skills and her imprisonment for arson in suffrage days.¹³⁹ The following year Edith, who had remained Fellowship President in England and in Australia, acknowledged the deep affection of her friends in England, who had continued to refuse her resignation as Fellowship President. She reported on feminist gains in Japan and Greece and continued to voice her disappointment at the disproportionately small number of women who had successfully gained a seat in Parliament.¹⁴⁰ However, by 1953, her friends in England and America had become quite concerned at her depressing circumstances in Sydney and were attempting to help ease her burden by helping with funds and parcels. Her American friend and colleague, Margaret Sanger, had revealed in a letter that a contact had recently visited the bedridden Edith How-Martyn, who was cared for by her husband Herbert in a small flat in Sydney. Sanger noted the couple were reportedly distressed and anxious at being alone in Sydney without family.¹⁴¹

In March 1953 Bessie Rischbieth continued to correspond with Stella Newsome and accepted her generous offer of duplicate copies of items from the collection. Bessie believed that her unique collection deserved to be housed in the Australian capital, Canberra, and she hoped it would be acknowledged for 'historical value'.¹⁴² Bessie, in contact with Edith, had gratefully accepted the offer of additional suffrage artefacts, handpicked by

¹³⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1951.

¹³⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 9 March 1951. LOU.LON 217.

¹⁴⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1952. Parliamentary candidates, of a total of 77 women candidates only 17 were successfully elected to Parliament.

¹⁴¹ Vera Houghton to Margaret Sanger, 21 February 1953, Wellcome Collection, Eileen Palmer Archival Matters, PP/EPR/E.7: Box 5. Margaret Sanger to Eileen Palmer, 4 March 1952, Wellcome Collection, Edith How-Martyn correspondence with Margaret Sanger and related papers 1952, PP/EPR/H/1/30. Louie Cullen to Edith How-Martyn, 9 October 1952, The Women's Library LSE, TWL 6.1 Box 2.

¹⁴² Bessie Rischbieth to Stella Newsome, Correspondence with British Suffrage Campaigners, 7 April 1953, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395953848. In February 1954 the media reported that the Collection would be housed in the new 'Archivists Library' in Canberra. 'Suffragette Exhibits for Archives in Canberra', *Courier Mail*, 12 February 1954, p.7.

Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence in England.¹⁴³ Bessie was mounting an exhibition entitled 'Hall of Fame', honouring women, which was to be situated in the National Museum in Canberra.¹⁴⁴ She was met with Fellowship approvals to provide pictures of the 'famous hammer and chains and copies of *Calling all Women*' but was explicitly refused access to the baton belonging to Ethel Smyth, used to conduct *March of the Women*. At an exhibition in Western Australia, Bessie told reporters she hoped that 'someday there will be room in a national centre for the collection to record the struggle women have made for the recognition of human rights'.¹⁴⁵ In conjunction with the exhibit, Louie Cullen, in her eighties, was interviewed for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Louie recalled she was arrested three times and sentenced to six weeks in Holloway for 'obstructing the police'. The *Herald* noted that Mrs Cullen treasured her prison badge and was in touch with former Suffragettes in Australia and overseas. In response to a question about her husband's support, she replied, 'he was with me all the way'.¹⁴⁶ Though there is no evidence surviving, or available, of correspondence between Stella Newsome and Edith How-Martyn at this time, there is no doubt that Edith How-Martyn as Fellowship President was overseeing and advising Stella Newsome on the handover of items from the collection to be donated to Bessie in Australia.

After Edith died in Sydney on 2 February 1954 many friends attended her memorial service. Her friends and comrades in England contributed their personal memories of Edith. A memorial booklet published by the Fellowship acknowledged that Edith had 'devoted her life to raising the status of women' and had lived through, and contributed to, what the Fellowship believed to be 'the greatest revolution in human history'.¹⁴⁷ After Edith's death, complete

¹⁴³ Bessie Rischbieth to Stella Newsome, 3 March 1952, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395949902. Stella Newsome to Bessie Rischbieth, June 1952, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395950707

¹⁴⁴ Bessie Rischbieth to Stella Newsome, 21 September 1952. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395951097.

¹⁴⁵ 'Collection Tells Story of Women's Suffrage', *Western Australian*, 4 September 1953, p.13.

¹⁴⁶ 'Struggle for the Vote', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 December 1953, p.11.

¹⁴⁷ 'Edith How-Martyn Memorial Booklet', February 1954, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj:433179185.

responsibility for the management of the Fellowship was handed back to England, where Marian Reeves, acknowledging the end of the Australian Fellowship branch, also notified readers of *The Women's Bulletin* of the passing of Edith's husband Herbert. She testified not only to the care and devotion shown to his wife during her final years but also acknowledged the unsung support he had given to the suffrage campaigns by disclosing that it was Herbert who had provided the padlock and chains to Muriel Matters and Helen Fox on the evening of the Grille Incident in 1908.¹⁴⁸ From her arrival in Australia in 1941 until her passing in 1954, Edith had also amassed a large volume of news clippings highlighting achievements of women's 'firsts' in public life, outlining the backgrounds and public careers of woman councillors, mayors, pilots, senators, directors, judiciary, coroners, war workers, Cabinet Ministers, war artists and physicians across Australia, Europe and America. Edith had also collected two pages of what she called 'feminist stamps, with a woman's head on them, real or imaginary'.¹⁴⁹

In Australia, Suffragettes continued to give relics and artefacts to Bessie. Demonstrating the power of memory to bind friendships, Letitia Withall, from the UK, contacted Bessie in 1960 and divulged that she kept in touch with Suffragettes and received *Calling all Women* every year. Letitia also noted that her Suffragette name was 'Leslie Hall' and that she had received the news via *Calling all Women* that Bessie was establishing a small museum in Australia and that she wanted to offer her prison medal. Letitia acknowledged she was force-fed many times and detailed her enormous pride at her involvement in the 'great movement' despite the 'pain and trauma involved'. Interestingly, Letitia, who was born in South Australia, asserted her 'links to Australia are

¹⁴⁸ Herbert How-Martyn died 28 September 1954, two weeks after Edith's probate published on September 15. Marian also noted that the little group in Australia no longer meet due to illness of Mrs Cullen. WFL *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 October 1954, LOU.LON 260. Report on the work of the Women's Service Library, *Annual Report of the Fawcett Society, 1956*, pp13-19. Report on the work of the Women's Service Library, *Annual Report of the Fawcett Society, 1958*, pp7-18. Gerritsen Collection of Aletta H. Jacobs, ProQuest. After Edith's death, Herbert bequeathed 200 pounds to the Women's Service Library later expended by the library on binding and books.

¹⁴⁹ Australian Joint Copying Project, National Library of Australia & Fawcett Library, 1950. Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand, M2291-2314 Edith How-Martyn 1892-1951. Edith's collected news clippings donated to the Women's Library are available to researchers on microfilm.

very strong' and poignantly wished that her precious objects should find their way 'home'. She enquired whether Bessie agreed that 'her connection is strong enough to justify my medal having a place in your museum', and that she would 'feel very pleased'. Noting her advancing age, she declared, 'Here I am on the eve of turning eighty, sending my very little bit of history to the place I was born in'.¹⁵⁰

In the UK, *The Bulletin* noted the passing of Louie Cullen in Australia aged 84, stating she was an early fighter for the cause and was one of the last 'of the little group' of Fellowship members who met in Australia.¹⁵¹ In May 1961 Mary Murphy offered items to a grateful Bessie Rischbieth from the estate of Miss Basil McFellan. Mary, concerned at keeping the Suffragette objects safe, offered badges, letters, papers and one 'WSPU plate' for safekeeping in the Australian collection of suffrage items.¹⁵² It is noticeable that Bessie's collection had appeared to expand rapidly over the decades, as more Suffragettes and their families continued to donate items to the collection.¹⁵³ Also, in May 1961 *The Women's Bulletin* reported on Suffragette news from Australia that Adela Pankhurst had died, and published a brief memorial to her.¹⁵⁴ Helen Moyes paid tribute and described Adela as 'in some ways the most original and individual of the three' Pankhurst sisters. Helen highlighted

¹⁵⁰ Letitia Withall to Bessie Rischbieth, 20 September 1960, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395966355. Letitia Withall to Bessie Rischbieth, 11 November 1961, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 3395967030.

¹⁵¹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 23 September 1960, LOU.LON 533. Louie Cullen left her home in Sydney to the Children's Library and Craft Movement.

¹⁵² Mary Murphy to Bessie Rischbieth, 29 May 1961, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395967485. Basil McFellan resided in England during the fight for women's enfranchisement and died 1942 in NSW. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 395968002, Mary explained that Basil 'did her share' selling WSPU literature, pasting posters and handing out pamphlets on the street. Mary Howard to Bessie Rischbieth, March 1963. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj:395969176. The plate and other material were sent to Bessie in 1963.

¹⁵³ Bessie Rischbieth to Mary Howard, Correspondence with British Suffrage Campaigners, Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj:395968395/395968704. Suffrage material in the Bessie Rischbieth collection now housed permanently at the National Library Australia.

¹⁵⁴ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 2 June 1961, LOU.LON 533.

Adela's complete devotion to her mother in the early years, 'her untiring willingness to do anything, from chalking pavements, delivering bills' and 'speaking with force and fire and going to prison'. She told of helping Adela in Aberdeen and of conducting their tireless work and how they later reminisced over old times in Australia. Helen highlighted Adela's sense of humour and her charming and unpredictable nature and believed that she was more detached and shrewder politically than her sister Christabel. Helen also considered that Adela was 'not the least of the four Pankhursts'.¹⁵⁵

Demonstrating the enduring interest in Suffragette history, in 1969, eight years after the death of the adopted Australian Suffragette Adela, Fellowship President Enid Goulden-Bach was contacted by an Australian visitor, a political scientist from the Australian National University, Dr Thelma Hunter, and Enid invited her to attend Mrs Pankhurst's birthday commemoration the following month at Caxton Hall.¹⁵⁶

A decade later a collection of suffrage memorabilia was on display at Murdoch University in Western Australia, the exhibit billed specifically as the 'Pankhurst Collection', and featuring the Cat and Mouse Poster, books and postcards that were 'colourful examples of the typically vicious humour of the day lampooning both Suffragettes and British politicians'. The exhibition article noted that the material adequately 'depicts the agonies of women who were force-fed in prison' and the cruelty of the Cat and Mouse Act. Demonstrating the ongoing fascination with, and curiosity about, Suffragette histories, author Jenni Hewett has noted that the collection was the largest outside of the United Kingdom to focus on the militant suffrage campaigns; housed in the university library's 'feminist section' and is explicitly used by students in 'Murdoch's course on women in society'.¹⁵⁷ Though the author acknowledged that the 'Pankhurst Collection' was the largest collection of militant suffrage materials outside of England, public knowledge of the memory work undertaken in Australia by Edith and fellow Suffragettes has all but been forgotten. Suffragettes, born in

¹⁵⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1961, Luscombe Collection. Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst, the Wayward Suffragette 1885-1961*, 1996, p.175.

¹⁵⁶ Enid Goulden-Bach to Dr Thelma Hunter, 9 June 1969, Papers of Thelma Hunter 1950-2000, National Library Australia, MS 9353.

¹⁵⁷ 'When Women went to Jail to get the Vote', *Australian Women's Weekly*, 28 November 1979, p.11.

Australia, though on the other side of the world, remained keen to link their history of suffragette campaigning in England back to their place of birth. For Australian Suffragettes, memories embedded in personally owned objects, relics and artefacts bridged the physical link between the United Kingdom and Australia.

Feminist Friends

By inviting old friends from historic suffrage groups to participate in commemorative and reunion events from the 1930s to the 1950s, the Fellowship, with its multiple cross-memberships between suffrage sister groups, was able to offer old friends the opportunity, and resources to re-enact shared histories. With its partners, the WFL and the AFL, it helped to contribute to the commemorative suffrage sphere, using allies to inspire and assist contemporary feminist causes. Additionally, coalescing together, the Fellowship partnering of WSPU members and WFL and AFL associates helped them to act as joint memory activists, supporting each other to protect their particular legacies. Thus, they formed a unique partnership from the early 1930s, until age and the ill-health of members forced withdrawal from public life. The Fellowship, in partnership with the WFL, also relied heavily on the performative aspects of the suffrage activities of Muriel Matters, by heavily exploiting her successful efforts in 1908 that led to the permanent removal of the Ladies Grille. Paxton also notes that the Grille Incident was referenced in a play, *Pot and Kettle*, performed in 1909 by the AFL, and depicting the incident as an act of defiance.¹⁵⁸ The Grille Incident, as an act of defiance, resonated over decades, thanks to the efforts of the Fellowship and the WFL, and through the ongoing participation of Muriel Matters, who offered her superb speaking skills to inspire contemporary feminists. Other allies included librarians, police, clergy and feminist supporters. Further discussion about Fellowship friends and allies is provided in Chapter 9, *Friend or Foe*. This chapter outlines the special relationship between the Fellowship and researcher Antonia Raeburn,

¹⁵⁸ Paxton, *Stage Rights! The Actress Franchise League, Activism and Politics 1908-1958*, 2018, p.115.

who was welcomed into the Suffragette Fellowship to become the official Suffragette biographer.¹⁵⁹

Conclusion

The Fellowship successfully harnessed the power of sisterhood between the feminist waves by standing not only shoulder to shoulder with others, but by standing on the shoulders of pioneering feminists of the past. The Fellowship offered up past feminist leaders, and members themselves, as inspiration for all to do their feminist duty.

As demonstrated by the second stated aim of the Fellowship, to draw feminists and feminist-minded groups together, feminist activity in England did not cease upon gaining votes for women. This research has addressed a held belief that feminist activities had ceased, or was minimal, from the end of the First World War until the 1950s, between the so-called 'feminist waves'.

Despite feminist divisions, the Fellowship successfully utilised a particular brand of memory activism, by harking back to a 'golden age' of feminism and providing an opportunity for like-minded colleagues to operate within an echo chamber of supportive personalities. Moreover, despite some noted divisions between old and new feminists, the public memory of the Suffragettes was able to amplify a range of 'common causes' between the feminist waves, acting as a type of bridging group between feminists in the UK and Australia. That is, feminists in Australia and the UK drew the former militants into their circles by supporting celebrations of past achievements of women and turning to the 'old' feminists for inspiration. Fittingly, the Fellowship became an essential tool in the feminist arsenal for marketing and attention-seeking purposes in a demonstration of respect and admiration. This process cut across generations, in recognising the bravery of women who had dared to transgress established gender lines to endure hunger striking, forcible feeding, and loss of liberty with subsequent traumas endured to body and mind. Suffragette leaders were offered as heroines to admire and inspire and as a reminder to contemporary

¹⁵⁹ See Chapter 9 – *Friend or Foe?* & Chapter 10 – *Pankhurst to the Pill*. Raeburn published two books in the 1970s. Raeburn, *The Suffragette View*, 1976. Raeburn, *The Militant Suffragettes*, 1973.

women to not waste their vote. The Fellowship was in a prime position to highlight the positives of the strength of sisterhood developed during suffrage campaigns and to build on new relationships with feminist groups on a global scale. Activist women were networking on the shared platform of transcultural experiences, seeing their own experiences as women replicated in other nations that fostered a shared global sisterhood. Suffragettes viewed themselves as supporting and providing a bridge for their global sisters to reconnect and refresh ties born during suffrage campaigning. The time was ripe for the Fellowship at the time of its establishment, both as a reaction against women's position after the Great War, and because of the desire for former Suffragettes to be involved again in feminist politics. This might have potentially been a pushback to a move toward a more conservative view of women in society. Sharp has also argued there was a 'highly conservative reaction against both feminist and internationalist goals that complicated the situation for (those) female activists with aspirations to re-join the international women's organisations'.¹⁶⁰

The Fellowship offered a lived experience of 'Suffragette magic' via close personal access to idealised feminist pioneers who provided colourful stories, backed up by imagery and material evidence. This provided proof positive that women were capable of organising very successful campaigns and at winning public support, despite attempts of authorities to suppress political activism. Other feminist groups welcomed the opportunity to revisit well-established Suffragette narratives to solidify and extend their contemporary supporter base and also to validate their ongoing feminist activism. Unquestionably the Fellowship was not able to mobilise government action with the same success as in suffrage days, and indeed authorities in England did not appear to yield any immediate gains to women when threatened with Suffragette agitation. However, the Fellowship remained committed to ideals of supporting like-minded feminist organisations by investing heavily in the transmission of the Suffragettes' unique history. That aim created a solid origin story focused on a single narrative of resistance, persistence, courage, martyrdom and adversity

¹⁶⁰ I. Sharp, M. Stibbe, 'Women's International Activism During the Inter-War Period, 1919–1939', *Women's History Review*, vol 26, no. 2, 2017, pp.163-172.

leading to a triumphant moral victory against all the odds; this is a narrative that is overwhelmingly appealing to feminists, then and now.

The activities of the Fellowship were similar in each country; however, in Australia, the focus remained heavily on commemorative events. The relatively low number of former militants in Australia would also account for the low engagement of the Fellowship in the political sphere. Despite the small number of recorded militants in Australia, member subscribers, at their height in 1949, numbered over 130 individuals. In addition to former Suffragettes, supporters included feminist organisations, women MP's, and women in professional life.¹⁶¹ In Australia, as in England, the old girls' reunions ensured reliable media coverage extending beyond the major cities and attracted the attention of old Suffragettes and family members, who were encouraged to donate items to the Suffragette Fellowship Collection. The sharing of relics and objects from England to Australia demonstrates a legacy not often highlighted in discussions on the Suffragette Fellowship Collection in Canberra. Indeed Crozier-De Rosa has argued that Rischbieth believed that her collection was a 'bridge over the British and Australia demand for the vote', and that it also provided material evidence, for her, of the early involvement of women in England and Australia'.¹⁶² Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie highlight that Bessie collected suffrage items with enthusiasm, as for her, the associated objects had substituted as a reminder and pseudo collection in Australia. Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie have noted that a fascination with Suffragette history and associated objects is still going strong, with no real indication that objects are seen as 'old fashioned', irrelevant and without interest.¹⁶³ Indeed, the curated

¹⁶¹ For complete subscriber and supporter lists, see Appendix 1 – The Suffragette Fellowship Trustees and Committee. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279.

¹⁶² Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, pp.45-46. To commemorate the Centenary of UK women achieving partial franchise in February 2018, the National Library of Australia opened 'Deeds Not Words : Women's Suffrage in Britain' exhibition displaying the Bessie Rischbieth collection of British and Australian suffrage memorabilia.

¹⁶³ Crozier-De Rosa and Mackie, *Remembering Women's Activism*, 2018, p.45, p.62. Libby Stewart, Curator of the Australian National Museum, argues that the Australian ephemera provided original inspiration for the English campaigners. Suffragette objects on display at the 'Women, Leadership and Democracy in Australia' conference held in December 2011.

objects continue to be seen as radical for the era and a constant reminder of what the Suffragettes achieved for women in England.

Edith, who had successfully orchestrated many gatherings, also encouraged others to contribute to the memory-scape of suffrage histories. Her contribution to cementing militant histories in Australia and the UK is not often acknowledged in the same way as Bessie's. There is also scope to consider that Edith, who found herself walking a delicate path in Australia, chose to separate feminist politics from commemorative activities as a way to ensure that Suffragette history and leaders might become representative of female activism, across party lines and personal politics. Safe to say that Edith had arrived in Australia at an interesting, but frustrating, time in feminist politics and had viewed her public self as leading the way for her Australian sisters by providing a living example of what women could achieve with help from each other. This mirrored the attitude of Australian feminists in Edwardian England, who had viewed themselves as leading the way for their English sisters.

In the UK the archives of Edith How-Martyn and Vida Goldstein, placed in London and not in Australia due to the legacy work of Edith and librarian Vera Douie, provide a valuable resource for researchers, historians and educators. Edith's notes, carefully recorded in multiple notebooks outlining personal correspondence, Fellowship minutes, special guests, speeches and feminist activities in Australia, provide a treasure trove of material for researchers and historians.¹⁶⁴

Chapter 8, *Calling all Women*, examines the aims and purpose of the Fellowship publications *Calling all Women*, *The Suffragette Spirit*, Memoriam booklets and allied author publications that were all used with significant effect to inform, mobilise and recruit members and supporters.

¹⁶⁴ Edith How-Martyn, Australia and New Zealand Archive: digitised via TROVE Australia. National Library Australia. How-Martyn Papers, Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand (as filmed by the AJCP) Microform (M2291-2314) 1858-1967 Fonds (Box 385). Papers of Edith How-Martyn Women's Library LSE 7EHM. Edith's birth control notes are archived at the Wellcome Collection in London.

Chapter 8 Calling all Women

Introduction

This chapter critically examines the role, purpose and legacy of a Fellowship-created suite of publications, including *Calling all Women*, the *Suffragette Spirit* and the *Prisoner Roll of Honour*, that gave a voice to suffrage protagonists determined to carry a message of hope for future generations until silenced by illness, age and death.

Publications presented a united, and fixed, narrative of suffrage histories by highlighting historic acts and stories of resistance, bravery and victory. These publications served multiple purposes: to regroup and reunite Suffragettes, cultivate supporters, raise funds and highlight feminist causes to a broader readership. Allied publications assisted with publicising events, including highlighting news of reunion events focused on guest speakers. The Fellowship used publications to eulogise fallen comrades who were presented as authoritative spokespersons representing the *Suffragette Spirit* and repackaged for new audiences to admire and emulate. Publications also flagged, and published, critical reviews of unauthorised suffrage histories by writers and historians.

Published works assisted with Suffragette mythmaking, the creation of heroines, and the introduction of the concept of the *Suffragette Spirit* (adopted as a self and group identity), creating what Mayhall suggests was a 'cultural production' of memories.¹ Publication cover pages were reserved for Suffragette heroines, and one Suffragent, as figureheads of the militant campaigns. Internal images advertised museum visitor hours and photographs of reunion events, conveyed news concerning perceived threats to hard-fought-for rights, and notified readers of feminist gains in England, Australia and abroad. The Fellowship's newsletter also conveyed news of donated objects, notable women 'firsts', and subscriber lists. Fellowship newsletters and speeches were modelled on former suffrage journals and operated outside mainstream women's magazines and other press aimed at

¹ L. Mayhall, 'Domesticating Emmeline: Representing the Suffragette 1930-1993', *NWSA Journal*, vol 11, no. 2, 1999, p.9.

women readers. *Calling all Women* did not contain advertisements aimed at women as consumers or portrayed the ideal woman as wife or mother. It was a feminist publication through and through. Delap also argues that historic suffrage presses mediated culture from a feminist perspective.²

The Fellowship wanted to leave behind a select cultural legacy of memories created via the production of surveys and the curation of a list of Suffragette prisoners. Fellowship publications profiled the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst, offered as unrivalled figurehead of suffrage history and eclipsing the public memory of other suffrage leaders Millicent Fawcett and Charlotte Despard. Publications also provided a vital function to not only distribute Fellowship ideology in order to help cement and shape suffrage militant history but to also impart to subscribers the success of the Fellowship in meeting its stated aims and objectives. In 1948 Edith How-Martyn highlighted the work of a close network of friends, including Elsa Gye and Winifred Mayo, who, as she saw it, worked effectively to shape the public memory of Suffragettes from 'hooligans to heroines'. This change in image was attributed by Edith to the 'steady work of the Suffragette Fellowship' that had contributed to the 'lively interest' in the history of the movement.³ Accordingly, this chapter outlines the 'steady work' of the Fellowship to produce the publications that were claimed to have made a contribution to the shifting sands of public opinion.



Figure 24. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1958.⁴

² L. Delap, L. Ryan, and M. DiCenzo, M, *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and the Public Sphere*, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011, p.69.

³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1948.

⁴ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1958, Casey Papers, Laughton Collection.

Calling all Women

In common with other Feminist journals, newsletters and pamphlets, from their inception, the *Newsletter* (1935–1946) and *Calling all Women* (1947–c1970–1980s) featured achievements of ‘women firsts’ in public life. Ensuring that women ‘firsts’ and women of note continued to be acknowledged and remembered through the years. *Calling all Women*, though retrospective in nature due to an annual publication schedule, was distributed to Suffragettes internationally, and remained useful as a vehicle to not only reconnect lost friends but also continued to engage first-wave activists in feminist causes. *Calling all Women* also reported on public and private activities of members, including media work and public appearances, and eulogised deceased Suffragettes by featuring profiles written by surviving comrades.⁵

The first edition of the Fellowship *Newsletter*, produced in 1935, was written and edited by Edith How-Martyn, who stated that the birth of *Calling all Women* was ‘given wings’ due to ‘the interest shown in the victories gained by the women’s movement during King George V’s reign’.⁶ First-wave feminists and militant Suffragettes were also acutely aware of the threat of being unheard by the mainstream press, and no doubt sought to create their publications to overcome public invisibility. In 1935 Helena Swanwick noted the role of the mainstream media, which often gave negative press to militant campaigners, and argued, ‘it will be impossible for any future Historian to write an adequate account of the Suffrage movement by reference only to the public Press. The censorship was extreme and grotesque’.⁷ As the official Fellowship mouthpiece, the *Newsletter* and *Calling all Women* were issued in either

⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1962, The Women’s Library LSE 2JSA/G3. Lady Pethick-Lawrence, Eileen Casey, Teresa Garnett, Marian Lawson, Lilian Lenton, Margaret Wright and Jessie Stephenson. *Calling all Women*, 1966. Nellie Hall, Mrs Lester Jones of the Actress Franchise League, Lilian Lenton spoke to all male students at Twickenham, ‘at the invitation of the history teacher’. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970. Grace Roe was ‘Women of Today’ speaker on behalf of the Fellowship. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1971. Interviewees were Bertha Ryland, Leonora Cohen, Lilian Lenton, Grace Roe and Kate Evans.

⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, Parliament Mansions, *Newsletter*, September 1935. The Women’s Library LSE, PC/06/390.

⁷ H. M. Swanwick, *I have been Young*, Gollancz, London, 1935, p.221.

February or July each year. *Calling all Women* focused on 'Suffragette news', reporting on networks of feminist women; it provided a subscriber list and reproduced the original aims and 'objects' of the Fellowship. The subscriber list provided a visible tally of feminist supporters and militant sympathisers, assisting a network of individuals to remain in touch, and gave news of donations of material objects and updates on fundraising for the Little Museum. The subscriber list, as published in Newsletters, remained constant from the 1930s, peaking at over 300, including six life members, in 1969 until publication ceased sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s.⁸ The four-page *Newsletter* initially published twice a year from the mid-1930s, provided details of Fellowship activities, news of previous and upcoming commemorative events, the extent of media coverage of the militant suffrage campaign and news of Suffragettes overseas; it also reported on a touring Australian suffrage exhibit in 1933. The *Newsletter* listed a roll call of comrades across the globe who remained in touch with the Fellowship and provided a platform for founder Edith How-Martyn to remain directly in touch with members for over three decades. Edith reminded subscribers that the Fellowship had enabled 'us to get together again and, in many ways, to help one another. I firmly believe that we shall be able, as a Fellowship, very much better (sic) than we can as individuals, to withstand attacks which, in insidious ways, are constantly being made on the freedom of women'.⁹

⁸ 'Suffragette Souvenirs', *The Yorkshire Post*, 16 March 1935, p.12. (report of member base in excess of 300)

⁹ Elsa Gye reported she has regular contact with Adela Pankhurst Walsh and Mary Gawthorpe in New York. Edith noted that she was in regular contact with Kitty Marion in New York, Naomi Jacob from Italy and Margaret Cousins in India. Suffragette Fellowship, Parliament Mansions, *Newsletter*, September 1935. Women's Library LSE. PC/06/390.

Front Page

In a sign of everlasting devotion, the Fellowship chose to feature the image of Emmeline Pankhurst on every cover page from 1946 until 1961.¹⁰ In 1962 the only male to grace the cover was Fred Pethick-Lawrence. In 1963 the statuette of Christabel Pankhurst featured on the cover. The following year a portrait of Mrs Charlotte Despard, former leader of the WFL, was placed on the cover. Other featured individuals were Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst, women who typified the ideal Suffragette, embodying the Suffragette Spirit. Jenkins highlights that Annie Kenney was feted by militants not only for her working-class roots but for transcending her class to become a highly effective campaigner and worker for the cause, who 'personified courage and commitment'.¹¹ Thus, the Fellowship would later effectively re-use images of key individuals produced in the suffrage campaign to typify and embody the Suffragette Spirit.

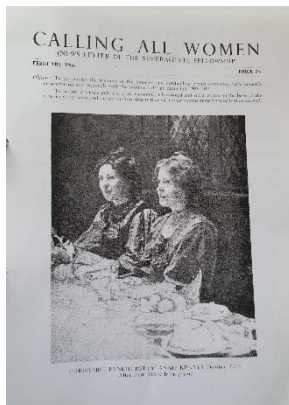


Figure 25. Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst, *Calling all Women*, 1966.

One of the final covers, in 1979, featured a reproduced photograph of Suffragette Victoria Liddiard and the Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher (who became Prime Minister on 4 May 1979). The photograph was taken in 1968 at the fiftieth anniversary of Votes for Women

¹⁰ Thereafter the majority of *Calling all Women* covers continued to portray the statue of Emmeline in Tower Gardens, portrait of Mrs Pankhurst (1968 and 1969) or photos of Fellowship gatherings at the statue (1967). An exception was made in the 1978-1979 Edition of *Calling all Women*, when Victoria Liddiard was photographed with The Rt. Hon Margaret Thatcher at the 50 Years commemoration of Votes for Women, taken at Westminster Hall. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1978-79, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP.

¹¹ L. Jenkins, 'Annie Kenney and the Politics of Class in the Women's Social and Political Union', *Twentieth-Century British History*, vol 0, No. 1, 2019, pp.18-19.

at Westminster Hall. *Calling all Women* paid tribute to Mrs Thatcher: 'On behalf of the Suffragette pioneers – some of whom we are so proud to have still as members – the Fellowship warmly welcome this practical realisation of their hopes and aim of full citizenship'. The photograph on page 1 speaks for itself. A woman citizen of today stands gratefully with a woman once classed – along with criminals, lunatics and paupers – as 'unfit to vote'.¹² The Fellowship was linking its members' sacrifice, imprisonment and 'memories of anti-suffrage sentiment directed toward Suffragettes, as coming to fruition now that a woman had earned her place in the seat of power in England'. Notably, Thatcher, a Conservative, was considered a feminist 'friend' by the Fellowship and was obviously willing to attach herself to the public memory of Suffragettes, and by association, though not in literal terms, to the militant activities of suffrage campaigners. Kay and Mendes have argued that, by 1975, the media had given credit to Suffragette victories in achieving votes for women for the rise of Thatcher.¹³ Undoubtedly, however, as a politician, Thatcher also understood that attaching her political identity to the Fellowship, and by association, its member base and feminist allies, would garner her much needed 'Votes from Women'.

Demonstrating the strong sense of history members attached to militant news-sheets, the front page of the final unpublished edition of *The Suffragette*, dated August 1914, was reproduced in *Calling all Women* in 1960; the 1914 publication featured articles noting that suffragettes, as patriots, would continue with militant campaigning whilst the government continued to 'torture' WSPU prisoners.¹⁴

In Tribute

A significant feature of the *Newsletter* was profiles of surviving and fallen comrades. In 1947 the Fellowship focused on the special contribution of Kitty Marshall who had died, age 78, noting her contribution to raising funds to erect the

¹² The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1978-79, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP.

¹³ J. B. Kay, and K. Mendes 'Gender, Media and Protest', *Media History*, vol 26, no. 2, 2018, pp.137-152.

¹⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1960.

statue of Mrs Pankhurst in Victoria Gardens.¹⁵ In 1955 Barbara Wylie was remembered as 'one of the finest speakers in the militant movement' who 'had a great sense of humour and it was a pleasure to hear her deal with hecklers at meetings'. Gwen O'Brien recalled her early days in India and on her return to England 1913 was swept up in the militant movement. She recalled her days guarding Mrs Pankhurst was rather difficult given the size of the police contingent intent on re-arresting her at every opportunity.¹⁶ Despite falling out with the Fellowship in 1931, Sylvia Pankhurst was memorialised in 1963 and paid tribute to pioneer Miss Elizabeth Garrett and reported that a plaque had been erected at her former home in Upper Berkeley Street.¹⁷ Other profiles highlighted living members, including Una Duval, Mary Gawthorpe, Lilian Lenton and Mary Phillips. Lilian Lenton was acknowledged as 'a racy and witty speaker' and was infamous for skill at escaping from authorities, known as 'the elusive Pimpernel', described in suffrage days as a 'tiny, china-like figure – wiry and wily!'. Grace Roe paid tribute to Suffragettes, and exclaimed, 'They couldn't stop us. These warriors left a message for the women of today and tomorrow'. Grace Roe described the militant act in Manchester 1905 and first imprisonments that had an effect of her that was 'electric'¹⁸ *Calling all Women* featured many other Suffragettes, including General Flora Drummond, AFL founder Adeline Bourne and members of the Male Suffrage Leagues, the 'Suffragents', described by the Fellowship as a 'gallant band of men'.¹⁹

In the 1930s and 1940s the *Newsletter* featured obituaries of many Suffragettes and supporters, a tradition also replicated in the sister

¹⁵ 'She Was a Friend of Mrs Pankhurst', *Suffolk and Essex Free Press*, 16 December 1947, p.4.

¹⁶ The same edition also noted the passing of Helen Crawford Anderson, Lucy Minnie Baldock, Evelyn Haig, Florence Haig, Herbert How-Martyn, Rose Lamartine-Yates, Arthur Marshall, Lilian Metge, Mrs Peters, Madeline Rock, Miss Tucker, Mabel Wilkinson and Agnes Cash Hordern. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1955. *Calling all Women*, 1967.

¹⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1963.

¹⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1963. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969. *Calling all Women*, Suffragette Fellowship, 1971.

¹⁹ Suffragette Fellowship *Calling all Women*, 1966. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1967 and 1975 noted that thirty men are mentioned on the Prisoner *Roll of Honour*, but 'there were countless others who faced hardship and ridicule in the struggle for the vote'. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

publication of the WFL, *The Bulletin*.²⁰ In the 1960s Winifred Mayo, former President and Trustee, was remembered with affection by President Enid Goulden-Bach. Enid believed that 'her dainty, vivid personality and charming voice made her, even in her late 80s, a Suffragette "hit" on TV and Radio. She never lost interest in the Fellowship. Let us remember her'.²¹ In 1975 tribute was paid to Lilian Lenton, Lady Sarah Winstedt, Elsie Bowerman, Una Dugdale Duval and Marian Lawson.²² Members were also encouraged to provide funds to assist with printing costs and storage and rent to maintain the Suffragette Collection. A bequest template encouraged Suffragettes and supporters to donate funds and Suffragette-related objects to bolster the collection.²³ Despite modest means, several Suffragettes felt such affection for their sister Suffragettes that they left their remaining funds to the Fellowship; this included Kitty Marion, who left a small amount. Additionally, despite financial constraints, Edith How-Martyn and Ellen Crocker bequeathed, between them, over £6,000 in 1964. Other Suffragettes bestowed more modest sums.²⁴

Feminist News

In line with the remit of the Fellowship to work with like-minded feminist organisations, *Calling all Women* also galvanised the support of associate organisations to amplify feminist gains and feature 'women firsts'.²⁵ Many

²⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1936. 'In Memoriam', WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 28 March 1936, LOU.LON 741. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1945, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library on the History of women in America, Alice Paul Papers, Series 11. Suffrage, MC399, Folder 279. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1947, *Calling all Women*, Suffragette Fellowship, 1965.

²¹ Enid Goulden-Bach, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women* 1968.

²² Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

²³ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 June 1951, LOU.LON 217.

²⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1947, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1962, The Women's Library LSE 2JSA/G3. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women* 1965. Lilian Buckley (Dove-Wilcox) left ten pounds.

²⁵ Listed women 'firsts' in public life in England and America, including actor Shirley MacLaine who was 'the first woman to address New York's National Democratic Club

columns were dedicated to the Campaign for Equal Pay, and to providing international news and reports from the United Nations and lobbying efforts by women's organisations to increase participation of women in the political sphere.²⁶ Edith How-Martyn worked diligently from Australia monitoring press reports of women firsts and the status of political gains for women. Edith also recorded her delight at watching news reports and finding articles about Suffragette histories.²⁷

Though *Calling all Women* became an annual publication, unlike the WFL's the *Women's Bulletin* which was issued several times per month, supporters understood the subscriber base could be useful for promoting a cause. This was evidenced in 1970 when Baroness Summerskill called on supporters to remain vigilant at monitoring Parliamentary 'announcements concerning legislation which affect women', noting that gender equality not yet been attained: 'the Suffragettes aimed a staggering blow at custom and prejudice, but it was not lethal'.²⁸ Other featured articles included 'Women on Jury Service' and a report on the success of the National Union of Women Teachers in obtaining equal pay. President Winifred Mayo reinforced to supporters that there was still work to do – there was not yet full equality with men – and she restated the Fellowship's aim to 'promote a fellowship among women – a need which caused our own organisation to be founded, [that]

since it opened 1834' and Nicolette Milnes-Walker the 'first women to sail the Northern Atlantic Route solo'. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1971.

²⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937. Women's Library. 7ELI/A Box 1. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1946. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1953. Suffragettes Across the Seas, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279. Reports provided from Washington and on Indian Feminist Dhanvanthi Rama Rau, including Italy and Helen Archdale in Australia. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1967. Congratulations given to Mrs Indira Gandhi on becoming Prime Minister of India.

²⁷ In 1949 Edith How-Martyn recalled her thrill at watching *Women in our Time*, featuring Lady Pethick-Lawrence and Lady Rhondda, at her local cinema in Sydney. The newsletter reported on the 20th Congress of the International Alliance of Women. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279.

²⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, Suffragette Fellowship, 1970.

still exists if we really want to see the emancipation of women this century'.²⁹ Well into the 1960s *Calling all Women* continued to rouse feminist supporters and report on affiliate organisations.³⁰ President, Grace Roe, roused readers by calling on the Suffragette Spirit: 'In these troubled times Women are called upon, as perhaps never before, to WAKE the SPIRIT and carry the TORCH OF FREEDOM'. Grace ordered readers to 'reinvoke the DEDICATION used in VOTES FOR WOMEN throughout the Militant Struggle'.³¹

Members used *Calling all Women* to mark the passing of time since Suffragette days. In 1955 President Winifred Mayo, in an affectionate greeting to old friends, looked back with feminist pride and some nostalgia, noting that as the years went by the 'ranks grow thinner' and collective memories began to wane; but she believed there were 'bright hopes for a future' when men and women would share equal rights.³² In a sign of decreasing membership, by 1970 the subscriber list was reduced to eighty-one, with seven life members.³³ Poignantly, one of the last newsletters profiled the historical beginnings of the Fellowship and founder Edith How-Martyn, remembered as one of the first prisoners, who believed that 'the comradeship of the Suffragette days should continue fulfilled in the Suffragette Fellowship'. *Calling all Women* 1979 also reminded readers that the purpose of the memorial to the rank and file in Christchurch Gardens was to 'remind the public of how hard (sic) Equal Franchise was won'. The Fellowship, keen to point out the connection of the election of a woman Prime Minister to achieving votes for women in 1918, pointed out that the memorial had fulfilled its stated purpose when an unknown 'woman citizen' had left flowers at the monument with the words, 'in grateful thanks to those....whose

²⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1962, The Women's Library LSE 2JSA/G3.

³⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968. The Fellowship reported on activities of associate societies: Status of Women Committee, Fawcett Society and Library, Human Rights Committee and International Status of Women.

³¹ Grace Roe, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1966.

³² New Year greetings from Dame Christabel Pankhurst and new Fellowship President, Winifred Mayo, elected at the AGM March 1954 following the death of Edith. Suffragette Fellowship *Calling all Women*, 1955.

³³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women* 1970. A subscriber list included a Princess Inematinski.

struggle and dedication made possible the election of the first woman Prime Minister in British History'.³⁴ Notably, the Fellowship linked its heritage directly to the historic occasion of the election of the first female Prime Minister in Britain had assumed it was also a woman who had left flowers.³⁵

Book Reviews

Calling all Women flagged recent and upcoming publications centred on suffrage histories as worthy reads, or alternatively portrayed them as an imperfect representational history of the suffrage movement. No doubt recommendations would help or hinder upcoming book sales. One example in 1967 was *The Monstrous Regiment* by David Mitchell. The Fellowship expressed some support to the publication, which it said 'show[ed] the effects of the suffrage struggle on the development of women's self-reliance, courage and tenacity, qualities which were to serve their country well in World War I'. However, Enid Goulden-Bach pointed out that several of the statements regarding Mrs Pankhurst were inaccurate.³⁶ The Fellowship reviewed a program in 1967 by Maurice Brown on 'Votes for Women' and deemed the broadcast as 'satisfactory'.³⁷ Other notable books reviewed in the 1960s were *The Hard Way Up* by Hannah Mitchell, *A Woman's World* by Edith Summerskill, *Women at Westminster* by Pamela Brookes, *The Petticoat Rebellion* by Marian Ramelson, *Honourable Estate* by Vera Brittain and *Lady in Blue* by Commandant Mary Allen.³⁸ Stella Newsome reviewed *Laugh a Defiance* by Mary Richardson, described humorous scenes of Suffragettes interrupting political meetings and invading the Foreign Office

³⁴ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1978-79, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP.

³⁵ See Chapter 10 *Pankhurst to the Pill* (Margaret Thatcher MP)

³⁶ Enid Goulden-Bach, in comments about Emmeline Pankhurst, noted that Mitchell stated, that she had a 'Lancashire Burr' and Christabel's education made her a 'lady'. Enid stated that the author 'knows little of English boy's schools and less about the Pankhursts'. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1967.

³⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1967. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968. Book reviews covered *From the Wings* by Thelma Cazalet-Keir, *Truth or Repose* by Jessie Street.

³⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1968.

Reception, depictions of forcible feeding and amusing escapes by Lilian Lenton. Stella contended 'it is well to be reminded of the horrors of forcible feeding, and of the attempt of certain mental specialists to prove that some suffrage prisoners were insane'. Stella recommended the book as a 'useful supplement to the more comprehensive works – Sylvia Pankhurst *The Suffragette Movement* and Lady Pethick-Lawrence's autobiography *My Part in a Changing World*'. However, Stella pointed out that the text contained some inaccuracies 'which should be rectified in later editions'.³⁹ In 1962 a review of the latest biography of Emmeline Pankhurst by Josephine Kamm declared in a benign way, 'the book was simply, but vividly written, and pleasantly illustrated, and tells the story of the militant Votes for Women campaign centred around Emmeline Pankhurst'.⁴⁰

The Women's Bulletin

The WFL journal, first called *The Vote* in 1909, became *The Women's Bulletin* around 1933–1934.⁴¹ *Calling all Women* and *The Women's Bulletin* shared editors, contributors, content and subscribers and remained heavily involved in feminist causes after the granting of Equal Franchise. As a sister publication to *Calling all Women*, *The Women's Bulletin* was published weekly and provided timely updates on Fellowship events and reunions. In addition, it provided post-event reviews of speeches, notified readers of upcoming Suffragette-related publications and advertised Fellowship publications for sale. The *Bulletin* also memorialised Suffragette comrades, including Minnie Turner in 1948; Elsa Gye, Mrs Sadd-Brown and Annie Kenney in 1953; and Edith How-Martyn in 1954. It noted that with Annie's death 'yet another of the pioneers has gone'.⁴²

³⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 6 March 1953. LOU.LON 99.

⁴⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1962, The Women's Library LSE 2JSA/G3.

⁴¹ Delap, Ryan, and DiCenzo, *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and the Public Sphere*, 2011, p.105.

⁴² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 24 July 1953, LOU.LON 99. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 April 1938, LOU.LON 717. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 16 April 1948, LOU.LON 521. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 February 1954, LOU.LON 260.

The Women's Bulletin continued with the same focus on and coverage of feminist news until the WFL disbanded in 1961.⁴³ Following the demise of the WFL, the Fellowship, catering to a shared membership of ex-WFL members, and associated feminist organisations, increased the content of *Calling all Women* to over thirty pages of feminist news and additional Suffragette profiles, including one of WFL leader Charlotte Despard.⁴⁴ Before the WFL disbanded 1916 Stella Newsome published a booklet outlining the history of the WFL, *Hats off to the Past, Coats off to the Future*.⁴⁵

The Suffragette Lecture Series

Fellowship leaders desired to control and manage representative Suffragette histories and invited special guest speakers to deliver a perspective on suffrage histories at a series of Suffragette Lectures. The lecture series served to preserve the ideology linked to the cultural memory of Suffragette history. All speeches implied that pioneering feminists underwent a transformative experience; speakers highlighted the heroics and self-sacrifice of strong, pioneering feminist women who had set the standard for generations of women. The emphasis was on a spirit of resistance that became the self-identity of a select group of women who defied the conventions of the day, that came to embody the Suffragette Spirit. The lectures were conceived by Edith How-Martyn to honour the unknown and unhonoured women pioneers and to educate younger women about

Edith How-Martyn was remembered by Marian Reeves (WFL) as 'so gallant a colleague, we are conscious of relief to know that her long suffering is ended'.

⁴³ C. Eustance, 'Daring To Be Free: The Evolution of women's political identities in the Women's Freedom League 1907-1930', 1993, p.32. The Vote renamed the Women's Bulletin in 1934. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 22 September 1961, LOU.LON 533. The Bulletin noted that the Leagues records had been sent to Miss Douie at the Women's Service Library, 'where they will be available to future students and others interested in the women's movement'.

⁴⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969. Images devoted to the Suffragette leaders and filled with reports of news of other feminist societies.

⁴⁵ S. Newsome, 'Hats off to the Past, Coats off to the Future 1907-1957', Women's Freedom League, 1957. *Hats off to the Past* singled out the 'outstanding protests' of Muriel Matters, picketing the House of Commons, Ballot Box Protest, Tax Resistance and Census protest of 1911, and the role of the League to work for inclusion of women in the Police Force 1914.

Suffragette histories. Edith believed that ‘the young women who might someday be leaders should know something about the historical background of the women’s struggle for freedom, and it would be difficult to gain much idea of the outstanding incidents which formed part of the militant campaign unless facts were placed on record now’.⁴⁶ Moreover, presented as a direct legacy of the ‘memory of a campaign that had now passed’, the lectures paid solemn homage to pioneering feminists, with heroines drawn from Suffragette histories, included stories of male Suffragettes, and retold critical moments in militant campaigning.⁴⁷ The first lecture was presented in 1928 and continued until 1934, were presented at Days of Obligation and other commemorative and reunion events.

Evelyn Sharp delivered the first lecture, honouring the eighteenth-century feminist Mary Wollstonecraft. The press release suggested there was an abundance of memorials in stone to fallen pioneers, and that the Fellowship desired to honour a pioneer via a more ‘original method of immortalising pioneers, who are in danger of being forgotten in these days’.⁴⁸ The second lecture was delivered in 1929 by Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence and was a form of eulogy to Lady Constance Lytton.⁴⁹ The following year the third lecture, delivered by Nina Boyle, who began by stating that, “the Suffragette campaign had fanned to a flame the smouldering embers of centuries, the women who had struggled for the vote had stirred up stagnation so vigorously that the world would never be the same again. It was not a new spirit; it had burnt all down the ages in spite of suppression and ill-usage’. Boyle also highlighted one core aim of the Fellowship: ‘Women Pioneers, Unknown and Unhonoured’.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ ‘Woman Pioneers Unknown and Unhonoured by a Correspondent’, *The Woman’s Leader*, 19 December 1930, p.347.

⁴⁷ ‘Suffragettes Memorial’, *The Nottingham Journal*, 19 May 1928, p.8.

⁴⁸ ‘Suffragettes Memorial’, *The Nottingham Journal*, 19 May 1928, p.8.

⁴⁹ ‘Suffragette Lecture’, *The Vote*, 15 November 1929, p.7.

⁵⁰ ‘Woman Pioneers, Unknown and Unhonoured, Report by a Correspondent’, *The Woman’s Leader*, 19 December 1930, p.347. Nina drew a historical analogy to Princess Margaret, wife of Malcolm of Scotland, who converted her husband to Christianity and now revered as a Scottish Saint.

The fourth lecture, 'The Suffragette Spirit and Modern Problems', was delivered by member Geraldine Lennox in 1931 at a Votes for Women Day celebration where Cicely Hamilton proposed a toast to the now ideologized Suffragette Spirit.⁵¹ The speech highlighted the pioneering spirit of women of the ages. Lennox asserted she was amazed when she looked at the 'beginning of things' and 'how that spirit came into being'. Lennox began with the century of the birth of Christ, and women in Greek history, arriving at the story of Boadicea who 'so successfully commanded the British Armies'. *The Suffragette Spirit* commanded a sweeping history of women and the disproportionate power of men over women. Lennox's history of women and power wove a story of 'brave women', beginning with the 1867 emancipation of slaves and concluding in Manchester and a 'very happy family' and children who were 'born at a time when the great struggle for human freedom was in progress and doubly so because their parents took a personal part in the great movements of their time'. Lennox focused heavily on the personal history of Emmeline Goulden, from her transformative experiences in childhood to her leadership of the militant movement. Lennox concluded her piece with a quote from Boadicea: 'they saw in that battle, they must conquer or perish'. She noted that in the sacrifices endured, 'some brave souls perished, but the battle was won'. For Lennox, and the Fellowship, here was the Suffragette Spirit, all who participated now anointed, having followed Emmeline into battle. Lennox concluded with an appeal to 'young voters' to 'take up the torch and face the problems of today in the spirit of high endeavour, resolving that you will do your share, selflessly and ceaselessly to prove your right to the magnificent heritage left you, and then once more men will reverence womanhood and women will sympathise with man and Britain will lead world in peace and in prosperity'. The tone was a reference to feminist pioneers, including leader Emmeline Pankhurst endowing a duty of responsibility to a younger generation of feminists.

The following year the Fellowship published the *Suffragette Spirit* as a booklet, complete with a reproduction of a 1911 speech by Emmeline

⁵¹ 'Suffragette Club', *The Vote*, 6 Feb 1931, p.6. The Fellowship published *The Suffragette Spirit* in 1932.

Pankhurst that effectively epitomises the Fellowship's belief in the magnitude of responsibility handed down to members to share their collective history: 'The men and women of the coming time will, I am persuaded, be filled with admiration for the patient work of the early pioneers and the heroic determination and persistence despite coercion, repression, misrepresentation, and insult of those who fought the later militant fight'.⁵² Members drawing on the historic words of their leader, introduced the Suffragette Spirit to new audiences, demonstrating imagined pasts full of stress, struggle and sacrifice, and the heroics of the underdog as an ultimate victor.

*Perhaps the women born in the happier days that are to come, while rejoicing in the inheritance that we of today are preparing for them, may sometimes wish that they could have lived in the heroic days of stress and struggle and have shared with us the joy of battle, the exaltation that comes with sacrifice of self for great objects and the prophetic vision that assures us of the certain triumph of this twentieth-century fight for human emancipation.*⁵³

Lennox exalted that the Spirit was 'an unswerving loyalty to an ideal – the political emancipation of womanhood, with all that it implied, obedience to leaders, a thorough discipline, and denial of self, with all its petty weaknesses, a sharing of work and hardships, and a magnificent enthusiasm which made all loss and suffering of no account'. It was furthermore 'a spirit that would not sit down under injustice – a spirit that meant to get things done'. Lennox quoted Baldwin in 1930 at the unveiling of the statue to Mrs Pankhurst: 'The Suffragette Spirit while it cannot be captured in a net of words it is a very real thing which in its many manifestations was a spirit of joyful sacrifice, a spirit which expressed itself in deeds of daring'.⁵⁴

Lennox was laying down the gauntlet to those who came after, to 'get things done', to adopt the Spirit in meaning and purpose. The Suffragette Spirit was

⁵² Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932.

⁵³ Foreword by Emmeline Pankhurst in Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932, The Women's Library LSE, 7VJH/1/5/10.

⁵⁴ Lennox, *The Suffragette Spirit*, 1932.

created from lived memories embedded in the ghost of Emmeline Pankhurst, adopted as a form of self-identity for Suffragettes. A derived identity, it described the contribution and sacrifices of Suffragettes for the cause. It was a lived experience, according to Mayhall, centred on hunger-striking and forcible feeding that was 'crucial to forging a collective identity'.⁵⁵ For the Fellowship, it was effectively also a blueprint, outlining a generational spirit of resistance drawn from past pioneering women, and drawn into the souls and being of Suffragettes that became a lifelong identity and responsibility. Mayhall and Cowman contend that the Spirit came into being as a creation of the Fellowship, and became central to later fetishism of the militant suffrage movement.⁵⁶ However, I would add to this claim that the Spirit, though constructed by the Fellowship, was also heavily rooted in a past historical relationship with the histories of pre-Suffrage era of pioneering women through the ages, was drawn on for inspiration and as examples of exemplary sacrifice and resistance to fixed authorities.

In 1932 Edith How-Martyn invited notable labour activist Harold Laski to deliver the 'male viewpoint' at the fifth Suffragette lecture, 'The Militant Temper in Politics'. Harold recalled ejections from halls in Oxford and Bristol due to his constant 'disturbances'. He recalled with pleasure being at the 'most admirable riot' he had ever known inside the House of Commons. Looking back, Harold expressed no remorse or regret at his actions. He found an 'infinity of things that it is a pleasure to remember'. Harold believed that aside from the Suffragette 'movement as a batch of memories' he wished to generalise as an academic and stated that there were 'five lessons inherent in the movement'. Firstly, the Suffragette movement 'taught women the art of fellowship'. Secondly, the movement 'taught women the opportunity of self-sacrifice for the public welfare'. Thirdly, he believed that Suffragettes had 'awakened men to the significance of the claim for women's emancipation'

⁵⁵ L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, p.320.

⁵⁶ L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, p.135. K. Cowman, 'Women's Suffrage Campaigns in Britain'. *Women's History Review*, 9, no. 4, 2000, pp.815-823.

Fourthly, that the genesis for (select) men's involvement was the first militant action that resulted in the imprisonment of Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst in October 1905. Finally, to great applause, he suggested to the receptive crowd, that Emmeline Pankhurst was 'one of the great pioneers in the history of social progress' and in his view, that the movement 'conferred upon the participants in the movement memories so precious, traditions so invaluable as the Suffrage movement has done' and that the era 1906 to 1914 had a 'quality of devotion, that is unequalled in their time'.⁵⁷ In 1934 friend of the Fellowship Vera Brittain, delivered the sixth lecture. Brittain outlined the position of the married woman in 1934 compared to women of hundred years before and highlighted the cascading effect the women's vote had on legislation affecting women between 1914 and 1926 by comparing the various 'political rights' of women then and at present.⁵⁸

Finally, in 1957, to commemorative fifty years since militant campaigns ceased, the Fellowship published a booklet by Mary Phillips titled *The Militant Suffrage Campaign in Perspective*. The booklet was a 'story of the Votes for Women Campaign 1905–1918' and aimed to 'explain the reasoned policy upon which it is based'.⁵⁹ Mary believed that the passing of years, and thinning of the ranks, had provided the reason to publish the 'history' booklet. Mary was concerned that those who had gone deserved to have their deeds remembered. Although she considered she was objective in her summation of history, by stressing her work had been fact-checked and referenced, her account overly preferences the militants' account of events. Her account of the escalation of militant events recalled, 'as time went on more challenging tactics had to be adopted' and highlighted the effects of prison and the trauma of forcible feeding that hardened the resolve of the women. Although the 'history' includes a brief mention of the Pethick-Lawrence forced split in 1912,

⁵⁷ Fifth Suffragette Lecture, Professor Harold Laski', *The Vote*, 11 November 1932, p.7. Harold Joseph Laski (1893-1950)
<https://www-oxforddnb-com.rp.nla.gov.au/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34412?rskey=E3hTUC&result=2>.

⁵⁸ V. Brittain, 'The Married Women in the Modern World', *The Suffragette Fellowship*, 1934. Was reproduced, and sold, by the Fellowship.

⁵⁹ Phillips, 'The Militant Suffrage Campaign in Perspective', 1957.

apart from the brief mention of Mrs Fawcett and suffrage societies at the beginning, suffragist accounts disappear entirely in Mary's recall of suffrage history. Despite her assertions of objectivity, Mary's history granted most credit for Votes for Women to the militant campaigners under the strategic leadership of WSPU and WFL leaders. Despite their softer militant stance, the WFL, in a review of *The Militant Suffrage Campaign in Perspective*, argued there was a need for a book due to a gap in public memory of the suffrage campaigns, noting with sadness that younger people had 'very vague ideas as to what Suffragettes were, or even why they were there!'⁶⁰

Surveys

In 1929 Florence Knight of the Suffragette Club issued a circular advising club members that Edith How-Martyn and Florence herself were, 'anxious to make a full and complete record of the Prisoner's experiences', to 'dispel ignorance' that will 'supply data for the History of the whole Movement'.⁶¹ Survey responses were to be curated into a book featuring Suffragette prisoners. One Fellowship organiser advised members that, as the police confiscated records from the WSPU office, the Fellowship was unable to confirm, or deny, bona fides of Suffragettes and was forced to compile a prisoner list from other sources.⁶² Helen Atkinson notified members the book would provide a 'personal narrative describing the motives which led women to join the movement; the impressions they received during the campaign and reflections that occurred to them in prison. It should be a wonderful "human document" if those who endured the fighting will try to record their impressions'.⁶³ Stella Newsome declared the aim of the Prisoners Book was a 'grandiose one' of being produced as a 'biography of each prisoner together

⁶⁰ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 25 January 1957, LOU.LON 194.

⁶¹ Florence Knight, The Suffragette Club to Mr Franklin, 5 November 1929. The Women's Library LSE, HFD/A/4/07/01-37.

⁶² The Fellowship to Miss Margaret McPhun, 24 May c1930-31, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.116/54.

⁶³ Correspondence Helen Atkinson to Alice Farmer, 14 & 19 March 1931, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 58.87/61.

with photographs of her in militant days and at the present time'. However, the Fellowship later came to realise that the cost to produce a book of that size was prohibitive and the book was modified. Mari Hussey suggested that the 'names alone' should be 'enshrined' and this was accepted. However, it is feasible that the delay of twenty years in publishing the book, as a list of names, was due to sensitivities at the publication of names. The Fellowship stressed inclusion in the book was voluntary and that no doubt caused soul searching by former prisoners.

The first survey contained six questions. Respondents were asked to confirm location, date and length of imprisonments, details of participation in marches and processions, and confirmation of membership of the WSPU.⁶⁴ Class distinction was not evident; the focus in this survey was to draw out experiences and activities of rank and file Suffragettes via a series of questions with a declaration of a level of commitment to the cause. However, although women who were not imprisoned, were not explicitly left out of the survey, the questions posed meant that they would not have felt that their experiences were being requested. The opportunity to participate in the survey was also a means to fully participate in commemorative activities by way of public acknowledgement gained by a listing in the proposed 'Book of Prisoners'. Both surveys also offered militants outside London, who were unable to attend Days of Obligation events, the opportunity to be counted for the cause. The surveys became both the authority and validation of active participation of prisoners for commemorative purposes on Prisoners Day, by drawing out prisoner experiences using active recall.

Suffragette Club member Florence Knight believed that the proposed questions 'cover the ground fairly well' that 'each case was, from the nature of our "Great Purpose", a special one, we shall be very grateful if you will

⁶⁴ Florence Knight to Club Members, 5 November 1929, The Women's Library LSE, 7HFD?A/4/07/01-37. *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*, Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 'Questionnaire by the Suffragette Club, London', Personal Papers, Response from Alice Beamish to Edith How-Martyn, 2 Feb 1931, Reel 1, 7/116/68, p.5. Mary Richardson, *Tortured Women A Prisoners Testimony*, 8 August 1914, Reel 1, 116/52, p.95. Alice Paul *Biographical Notes*, Reel 1, 57.116/45, pp.121-123. Anne Cobden-Sanderson, Date Unknown, Reel 1, 57.116/42, p.112. Ethel Clarice Haslam, Reel 1, 58.87/66, p.95. M S Turner, Reel 1, 57.113/10, pp.18-20. For a complete list see 'The Suffragette Fellowship Collection'. Reel 1 contains a complete list of survey respondents, c1929-1930s.

kindly carry your mind back as well as can, and give us any personal reminiscences or ideas you may have.' Florence also suggested that it would also be interesting to state, briefly, 'what led you into the Suffragette movement' in addition to membership of other suffrage societies. In this way, she suggested, 'our records will disclose a personal touch that ordinary Records do not possess'.⁶⁵ Club members were swift to respond. Many commented on the importance of preserving memories of the militant suffrage campaigns. Margaret MacPhun commented, 'the fact is that I think it extremely important for both present and future generations to know that the Suffragettes, so far from being drawn from the "uneducated" classes were very frequently highly educated. I seem to hear the cry uneducated hooligans and notoriety hunters still ringing in my ears from those far-off days, joyous but terrible!'⁶⁶ Constance Collier contended, 'I may say that I was born a Suffragette and that it was reading Votes for Women who made me see it was my duty to take an active part in the movement in the beginning and then it was regular attendance at the weekly meetings which convinced me that nothing could be achieved without militancy'.⁶⁷ Other respondents reflected on the level of importance of their involvement in the movement, and their contribution to the cause, appearing to question if their sacrifice was enough? Alice Farmer indicated that she felt her effort was not enough, despite providing a blow-by-blow account of forcible feedings that caused pneumonia and pleurisy.

Alice Farmer chose only to divulge her memories of forcible feeding and did not provide evidence of her activities that led to her imprisonment in 1912.

Statement of Alice Farmer:

I was first fed through the nasal tube on Sunday afternoon the 23rd June after I had been fasting less than 36 hours. The next day, when

⁶⁵ Florence Knight to Club members, 5 November 1929, The Women's Library LSE, 7HFD/A/4/07/01-37. Previous authors have described this circular as the moment that the Suffragette Fellowship opened the 'floodgates of memory'. Liddington, *Rebel Girls : Their Fight for the Vote*, 2006, p.308.

⁶⁶ Margaret McPhun to Una Duval, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.116/53.

⁶⁷ Constance Collier to Miss Bright, 6 December 1929, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2, 57.113/16, p.26.

the operation was repeated in the afternoon, the tube was not passed through the same nostril, and when it reached the throat, it caused me a sharp pain. I did not struggle at all or make any resistance. When the tube was withdrawn, I was violently sick', and for a long time afterwards coughed uncontrollably at intervals.' 'Upon early release, I arrived at my mother's home in Wales. I was found to have a high temperature and to be suffering from pneumonia and pleurisy.⁶⁸ June 12, 1912. Winson Green prison.

Thus, forcible feeding provided a potent collective experience for select Suffragettes, more so for some than imprisonment itself.

Alice, who modestly discounted her contribution, prompted a warm acknowledgement from Helen Atkinson, eager to assure Alice that her efforts did matter, 'I do not know what you mean by saying that your efforts were feeble compared with mine'. And 'how obliged we are for the account of your sojourn at Winson Green, what you suffered at the hands of the medical men'.⁶⁹

A second survey requested photos and personal testimony to confirm respondents' participation in Suffragette activities, and details of participant-authored books and pamphlets. Respondents were asked to confirm any involvement in or any official support of activities during the Great War. Compared to the first survey the previous year, the second questionnaire (c1931) was inclusive of non-prisoners. By omitting reference to WSPU membership, the Fellowship effectively opened the door for inclusion of all past and current members of the WFL. There is also evidence that some women had attempted to take financial advantage of the Fellowship's offer of financial support to Suffragettes in need, so that it was deemed necessary for friends to provide testimonies for fellow militants. A letter to Miss McPhun

⁶⁸ Statement of Alice Farmer, 14 March 1931, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 58.87/61.

⁶⁹ Helen Atkinson to Alice Farmer, 19 March 1931, Alice Farmer to Helen Atkinson, Reel 1, 58.87/61, pp.88-89, p.91.

from the Fellowship advised her against assisting Miss Sprott as she was provided with £2 from the welfare fund that had not been repaid.⁷⁰

The second survey requesting that Suffragettes provide details of any participation during the Great War also appears to affirm claims by some politicians, journalists and Suffragettes that their efforts during the First World War were, in part, responsible for partial enfranchisement.⁷¹ Grace Roe claimed that Mrs Pankhurst said that women of the country were 'prepared to sacrifice, serve and suffer', and were waiting to be told what to do. Grace also suggested that the British Government had already begun to make plans to enfranchise women before the war had ended.⁷² However, potentially due to the contested nature of this claim, apart from a few mentions in *Calling all Women*, the Fellowship did not appear to publicly spread the view linking granting of votes for women to the efforts of militants during the Great War.

⁷⁰ The Fellowship to Miss Margaret McPhun, 24 May 1930-31, 57.116/56. Letter Alice Farmer to Helen Atkinson, 14 March 1931, *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 1, 57.116/54.

⁷¹ Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, 2003, p.138.

⁷² Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling All Women*, 1969.

The Roll of Honour

Due to the use of nom de plumes by Suffragettes, uncertainty over exact names and numbers of Suffragette prisoners, and the passing of time since the last prisoner was released in 1914, Fellowship compilers Stella Newsome, Helen Atkinson and Louise Thompson requested assistance from suffragettes, and authorities, to confirm names and details of prisoners. This was a task no doubt made more difficult due to events in 1913, when authorities raided WSPU offices and removed records.⁷³ Compilers were therefore delighted when they were granted exclusive access by authorities to the prison records of women arrested between 1905 and 1914. (this record likely to have been HO 45/24665).⁷⁴ In a concession to available data, Stella acknowledged that her search was limited to records from Holloway Prison. However, lists of subscribers to suffrage newspapers, *Votes for Women*, *The Suffragette* and *The Vote*, had provided most names.⁷⁵ However, noting the limitations of her methods, Stella pointed out that not all prisoners termed 'Suffragettes' were identifiable as militants. Moreover, Stella noted that authorities had made a point that some women were identified as having a 'good education, but arrested for obstruction', and were thus accepted by the Fellowship to have been Suffragettes, but not identified as such in the official records.⁷⁶ The identification of some women as having an education suggests that authorities believed that educated women law-breakers were viewed as aberrations and untypical of women prisoners.

Although records were collected from the early 1930s, it was not until 1955 that the Fellowship proudly displayed the 'Prisoners Book' on the fiftieth

⁷³ *The Suffragette Fellowship Collection*. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985. Letter to Margaret McPhun, 24 May 1930-31. Reel 1, Reel 1, 57.116/54. Correspondence Helen Atkinson to Alice Farmer, 14 and 19 March 1931, Reel 1, 58.87/61.

⁷⁴ *Suffragette Amnesty August 1914. Index of Women Arrested 1906-1914*. HO45/24665, Minutes 253:259. 'Prisoner Roll of Honour 1905-1914', The Suffragette Fellowship, c1955.

⁷⁵ Stella Newsome, The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1955. Presumably, Prisoners imprisoned outside London were not included; if not, there is further scope to increase knowledge of prisoner numbers by reviewing prison records elsewhere in Great Britain.

⁷⁶ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1955, & WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 September 1955, LOU.LON 57.

anniversary of the first imprisonment in 1905, featuring a sketch of the Holloway Badge, and the names of 1,100 people, including twenty men.⁷⁷ *The Bulletin* described the book as ‘resplendent in morocco leather’ and many visitors have found this of absorbing interest’.⁷⁸ The WFL acknowledged funds to publish the Roll came from the estate of Miss Ada Flatman. The difficulty associated with correctly identifying eligible participants was noted: ‘as will easily be realised, much research was necessary that names might be omitted, and that research was undertaken primarily by Edith How-Martyn, Elsa Gye and Stella Newsome’. The WFL also noted the book received attention in *The Times*.⁷⁹

The Prisoner Book was reproduced as a fifteen-page *Roll of Honour Suffragette Prisoners 1905–1914*. The roll was a simple list of prisoner names, including many false names, listed alphabetically, without context or explanation.⁸⁰

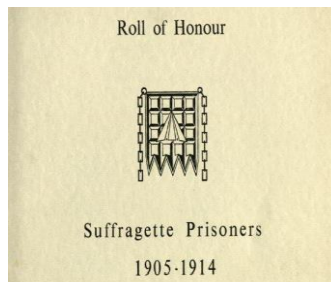


Figure 26. *Roll of Honour Suffragette Prisoners 1905-1914* c1955. ⁸¹

⁷⁷ Suffragette Fellowship Notice of Prisoners Day, 13 October 1954. Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library of Australia, MS2004, Series 3, Obj: 438128068.

⁷⁸ *Annual Report of the Fawcett Society*, The Women's Service Library, 1955, pp.21-27. The Gerritsen collection of Aletta H. Jacobs.

⁷⁹ WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 October 1954, LOU.LON 260. The Fellowship sold and distributed copies of the *Prisoner Roll* at social events from 1955.

⁸⁰ 'Prisoner Roll of Honour 1905-1914', The Suffragette Fellowship, c1955. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 29 July 1955 & WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 September 1955, LOU.LON 57. The roll was available for sale at 2s 6d. *Roll of Honour Suffragette Prisoner 1905-1914*, Suffragette Fellowship, Printed by Farmer & Sons Ltd, London, c1955, The wrap around cover in parchment quality paper, inserted with numbered pages. Luscombe Collection.

⁸¹ 'Roll of Honour Suffragette Prisoners 1905-1914', *Suffragette Fellowship*, c1955. Image, Luscombe Collection.

Importantly, as a comparison, in the Home Office, *Index of Women Arrested 1906-1914* (HO 45/24665) it is noticeable there are more male prisoners in the Home Office index (86 in total) compared to 50 male prisoners in the Fellowship-compiled *Roll of Honour*. It is also apparent there are 280 more names in the Home Office Index (HO 45/24665) than in the Fellowship *Roll of Honour*, suggesting that the use of multiple aliases by Suffragette men and women caused the inflation of numbers of actual people imprisoned. More men listed in the Home Office index compared to the Fellowship Roll may also suggest that men were called to service in the Great War and may have been reluctant to provide details to the Fellowship for various personal reasons, or it may reflect the loss of life during World War I: these men may not have returned home to be counted by the Fellowship, or perhaps they were not vouched for by the testimonial of fellow Suffragettes. The difference in numbers may also reflect the strict vetting criteria, vouching of names, and provision of dates as set out in the early 1930s, required by the Fellowship for inclusion. It is also important to note that the Home Office index contains arrests from 1906, a year later than the Fellowship list which begins at 1905, suggesting that a definite number will perhaps never be known.⁸²

Notably, the third Suffragette lecture, 'Woman Pioneers, Unknown and Unhonoured' and the later compilation, the Prisoner *Roll of Honour*, were both framed as memorials to the Suffragette rank and file.⁸³ Mayhall also highlights similarities of the *Prisoner Roll* to memorials created to honour those killed in the war and rolls of honour listing fallen comrades published in newspapers during World War I.⁸⁴ It is apparent that criteria for admittance to the *Prisoner Roll*, set out in two surveys, was a public declaration of worthy Suffragette status. In adopting the practices produced during other wars, the

⁸² Suffragette Amnesty August 1914. *Index of Women Arrested 1906-1914*. HO45/24665, Minutes 253:259.

⁸³ *Suffragette Lecture*, Edith How-Martyn Parliament Mansions, 'Suffragette Club', *The Vote*, 6 Feb 1931, p.6. Note, Edith How-Martyn office was at 9 Parliament Mansions operated as a clearing house for information about Birth Control. Edith hosted weekly lunches at her office where Fellowship members and feminist friends gathered to discuss news of the day and exchange ideas and information.

⁸⁴ L. Mayhall, 'Defining Militancy: Radical Protest, the Constitutional Idiom, and Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1908-1909', *Journal of British Studies*, vol 39, no. 3, 2000, p.343.

format of the *Prisoner Roll* was solemn and straightforward in design. Names, recorded for posterity, were presented alphabetically, without biographical information. The *Roll* also signalled prisoner status and ultimately granted a Suffragette legacy not bestowed, at least in the *Roll*, on any other serving Suffragettes at that time.

In Memoriam

Over the organisation's lifetime, several books of remembrance valorising deceased comrades were produced by the Fellowship, seeking to ensure that old friends and supporters were not forgotten. Books of remembrance, also known as 'the book of life', profiled important milestones in Suffragette lives. Except for profiles of Emmeline Pankhurst, Fellowship publications did not include the family background of women but instead focused on suffrage stories, including the conversion to Suffragette life. Members were memorialised via their activism, thus emphasising their direct link to suffrage comrades and associated shared histories. The memorial booklets, organised by Fellowship sub-committees, functioned to create a legacy for honourees, who were all buried with full Suffragette honours.⁸⁵ In 1959 Grace Roe, Charlotte Marsh and members of the Memorial Fund Committee honoured the life of Dame Christabel Pankhurst in a memorial service in London.⁸⁶ Two years later the Fellowship, in public recognition of her revered prisoner status, produced a memorial booklet to their colleague Charlotte (Charlie) Marsh, featuring a photograph of her Hunger Strike Medal on the

⁸⁵ C. Hamilton, 'The Nina Boyle Memorial Committee', 1949. Nina Boyle was an author, journalist, writer and member of the WFL and Fellowship. T. Keir-Cazalet, 'I Knew Mrs Pankhurst', 1945. First broadcast 1937 and reproduced 1945, Published by Marian Lawson for the Suffragette Fellowship. At Wars end 1945, the Fellowship reproduced a 1937 Radio address by Thelma Cazalet-Keir MP honouring the life of Emmeline Pankhurst. C. Hamilton, 'A Pageant of Great Women', 1910 reproduced by the Suffragette Fellowship, 1948. 'In Memoriam Edith How-Martyn, This Short Appreciation' published by the Suffragette Fellowship 1954. Following the death of Edith How-Martyn many friend's past and present paid tribute to Edith's contribution to public life. Contributors included Helen Atkinson, Muriel Matters.

⁸⁶ 'Christabel Pankhurst Memorial' Programme, 1959. The Programme reproduced a speech by Lord Kilmuir honouring the life and work of Dame Pankhurst and included a sketch of the proposed plinth addition at the statue of Mrs Pankhurst in Tower Gardens.

cover and her Holloway Badge. Many of her friends, including Teresa Billington-Greig, Una Dugdale Duval, Jessie Kenney and Grace Roe, paid tribute to Charlie's passion and commitment to the cause.⁸⁷

Conclusion

The Fellowship successfully created a suite of bespoke publications to effectively communicate with Suffragettes near and far, including allies and supporter groups, to reinforce the militant suffrage narrative of sacrifice linked to victory. One of the legacies of these efforts was that the Suffragette Spirit, as a concept, was linked to feminist pioneers of the age and carried forward, ethereal yet tangible in context and form, representing a continuum, an unbroken lineage, a lifelong conceptual identity.

Fellowship editors and contributors created a specific narrative of militant legacy through constant repetition mediated via newsletters, speeches and memorial booklets. Sharing resources with *The Women's Bulletin* helped editors and writers to control the public memory of ultra-militant activities. For example, discussion about fire bombings of public buildings, including churches, was noticeably absent from the pages of associated publications. In addition to over-reliance on certain 'star' Suffragettes, including Lilian Lenton and Grace Roe, the publications also preferenced personal histories without providing other points of view, such as those of the police, or property and business owners. The use of surveys continued to reinforce self and group identities of belonging to a select cohort of individuals. In addition, as highlighted by Mayhall, inclusion in the *Book of Prisoners* and *Honour Roll* provided an automatic, and visible, entry into the lexicon of Suffragette militant history; exclusion from these published lists sent the opposite message.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ 'Memories of Charlotte Marsh', The Suffragette Fellowship, 1961, Women's Library LSE, TBG FL244. Pethick-Lawrence Memorial Committee, 'Memories of Fred and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence', 1963.

⁸⁸ L. Mayhall, 'Creating the Suffragette Spirit: British Feminism and the Historical Imagination', *Women's History Review* 4, no. 3, 1995, p.331.

Through the decades, *Calling all Women* provided a snapshot of the life cycle of Suffragettes, from its depictions of young women daring to disobey the law down the years to its photos and accounts of respectable and aged women. In 1957 Dame Christabel, in a contemplative message, declared, 'the future is to the young, but there is still need of the crusading courage and inspiration of our Suffrage Days'. Fellowship President Winifred Mayo, acknowledging the advancing of years, called out to women that the feminist fight was not yet won. Winifred noted 'as the light fades and the shadows lengthen, we who are old look back on the day's work with mingled feelings. With many regrets for failures and omissions, and yet with some measure of satisfaction at tasks accomplished. The young women of today have considerable political power. I hold this confident hope that they will use it as to create a world fit not only for heroes and heroines, but also for the weak and helpless to live in.'⁸⁹ However, some individuals, including men omitted from the *Honour Roll*, through self-exclusion or having otherwise potentially slipped through the cracks of official histories of suffrage campaigns. Though the unpublished suite of created memoirs derived from surveys, journals, speeches and memorial booklets are not well known to the public, they all serve to provide a rich store of Suffragette memories that offer additional material evidence of the active afterlives of Suffragettes and Fellowship supporters.

The selective and repetitive use of imagery featuring Emmeline Pankhurst and other WSPU-centric individuals, although demonstrating the lifelong affection held for specific individuals, had the potential to skew the public memory, and cultural legacy, of the history of suffragist leaders. Ryan highlights the problematic nature of over-reliance and select use of images to portray a truth that is often mediated 'through layers of representations', and that lead to memories of movements becoming 'reified'. She warns researchers that there is a richer, private life, not always uncoverable or evident to modern-day researchers, that has the potential to alter perceptions

⁸⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1957.

of history.⁹⁰ Thus, the Fellowship publications' selective use of images, and in particular the repetitive use of Mrs Pankhurst's image, depicted a single point of view of the militant leader that suggested, in no uncertain terms, the unquestionable authority of Mrs Pankhurst as the eternal figurehead. It is also evident that Fellowship publications served to perpetuate a stable, harmonious, and unchallenged leadership. The physical remnants of Fellowship publications have also, in part, contributed to the impression that the memory work of the Fellowship was focused solely on prison and Suffragette prisoners.

Accordingly, Chapter 9 – *Friend or Foe?* Explores the more secretive and personal nature of the Fellowship, highlighting internal disagreements between Trustees and general Committee members and the reactive responses by Fellowship leaders to perceived external threats to representations of Suffragette histories.

⁹⁰ Delap, Ryan and DiCenzo, *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and the Public Sphere*, 2011, p.200.

Chapter 9 Friend or Foe

The Fellowship endeavours to correct all false or damaging stories which may be circulated, not only about the militant movement but of the women who took part in the militant campaign. In this way, the Fellowship hopes to hand down to posterity a true and accurate account of the Militant movement and its leaders.¹

Introduction

Friend or Foe explores the attempts of Fellowship leaders – tasked with managing a group of strong-minded women all carrying memories of past personal conflict – to monitor and control the representation of militant histories through a process of cultivating and maintaining old and new friendships. The historic founders, who established legal safeguards to protect the growing collection, faced hostility from members that tested Suffragette loyalties and pushed the boundaries of friendships. A legacy of personal politics caused by historic splits in the movement triggered distrust and resentment that threatened to derail the harmonious public face of the Fellowship.

In addition to the collection and safekeeping of objects and relics of shared histories, the Fellowship tasked itself with the onerous responsibility of remaining relevant as memory makers, as the living memory of the fight faded from public view. In 1947 Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence contacted Edith How-Martyn, commenting that ‘public opinion seems to be waking up very much with regard to the Suffrage movement of forty years ago’.² Notably, in 1929, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence wrote prophetically to a friend, after rereading the memoir of Constance Lytton, that ‘few people have understood

¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December 1936.

² ‘The Documentary is The Modern Age’, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence to Edith How-Martyn, 3 March 1947, The Women’s Library LSE, TWL 6.1 Box 2.

the full significance of the militant movement'.³ Attempts by Suffragettes to control representations of their shared histories required a heightened level of attention to potential and upcoming books authored by people outside the movement. Despite the passage of time, in 1960 the Fellowship believed that the 'passage of years has not extinguished the flame lit [by the Suffragettes] sixty years ago. It still captures the imagination and respect of the world today'. With longevity came ongoing responsibility, beset with difficulties, that would repeatedly test friendships and threaten the very future of the Fellowship.⁴

Despite the Fellowship's idealised stated aim 'to continue the good comradeship engendered in the militant movement' ⁵, comradeship was only experienced by those who did not attempt to infiltrate the leadership or suggest profound reforms that questioned the status quo. At the heart of this was the leaders' need to control and have influence, as well as their sense of duty to others and themselves. They sought to monitor, protect and defend reputations and their preferred narrative at all costs. Though only some disputes became public, behind closed doors dissent and discord caused by old conflicts reappeared in disputes over legal governance, control over donated funds, and disagreements over providing assistance to external authors. That led to members falling out with each other and threats of expulsion from the Fellowship ⁶ Leaders did not have a comfortable journey managing strong, feisty opinionated women, who did not care to age quietly and fade from public view. Memories of differences of opinion in policy and the dissolution of friendships did not disappear over time, but for some lay festering under the surface, to re-emerge in committee meetings.

Evidence shows that certain publications from 1928 onwards, including works by Ray Strachey in 1928, George Dangerfield in 1935, Sylvia

³ Mrs Pethick-Lawrence to Mrs Solomon, 23 October 1929, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106/ALC/3492.

⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1965.

⁵ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1947.

⁶ See Chapter 3 *Memorials and Monuments*. Public discourse triggered during discussions at potential alterations and additions to the Pankhurst statue in 1958.

Pankhurst in 1931 and 1935, Roger Fulford in 1957 and David Mitchell in 1967, caused immense angst to former militants.⁷ Additionally, the Fellowship practised hypervigilance at commemorative events hosted by other organisations. Fellowship Minutes noted that the Fawcett Society and St Joan's Alliance had omitted to acknowledge the work of the Fellowship at previous events commemorating Votes for Women Day.⁸ Any absence from historical accounts, or untruths observed in published accounts, also caused members to voice their concerns in *Calling all Women* and *The Bulletin*.

Ongoing attempts to monitor and control associated suffrage 'memory wars' was fought head-on in a battle between individuals both outside and within the Fellowship. These battles threatened to derail the Fellowship's aims and objectives, but would ultimately contribute to the determined efforts of the Fellowship to remain cohesive and to survive for a long period of time.

Vigilance

Shortly after the Fellowship was legally constituted, historical accounts of suffrage histories began to appear that attracted much public interest. When Fellowship members and supporters did not approve of books, they published damning reviews of them in feminist journals and print media. Strachey's *The Cause; a History of the Women's Movement* (1928) caused considerable angst within the Suffragette community.⁹ While Strachey provided accounts of both the constitutional and militant contributions to the suffrage movement, her references to the WSPU and its supporters were

⁷ Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931. R. Fulford., *Votes for Women; the Story of a Struggle*, Faber and Faber, London, 1958. Mitchell, *The Fighting Pankhurst's: A Study in Tenacity*, 1967.; D. Mitchell, *Queen Christabel: A Biography of Christabel Pankhurst*, Macdonald and Jane's, London, 1977.; Pankhurst, *The Life of Emmeline Pankhurst: The Suffragette Struggle for Women's Citizenship*, 1935.; R. Strachey, *The Cause; a Short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain*, G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., London, 1928. Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England 1910-1914*, 1935.

⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Meeting of the Executive Committee*, 24 February 1960. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

⁹ A reviewer in *The Vote* stated the book 'was delightfully readable'. R. Strachey, *The Cause; a Short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain*, 1928. 'The Vote', *The Cause*, 9 November 1928, p.360.

perceived by the Fellowship as less than favourable. Holton points out Strachey's statement that, 'its [the WSPU's] leaders did not care whom they shocked or antagonised, what they believed in was moral violence'. Kean suggests that Strachey's account threatened to derail the preferred version of history, which highlighted efforts of militant suffrage campaigners.¹⁰ Accordingly, the militants felt that their efforts were undermined and autobiographical accounts in the 1920s became a trigger that prompted the Fellowship's later Suffragette surveys (discussed in the previous chapter), designed to capture accounts of the rank and file. Strachey's comment that the 1912 expulsion of the Pethick-Lawrence's brought the militant movement to the 'end of its importance' also led Sylvia Pankhurst to defend her mother's legacy. According to Caine, Sylvia threatened legal action against Strachey.¹¹ In a further prod to Suffragette outrage, Strachey condemned the actions of the militants as unconstitutional and argued that the militants had in effect delayed the granting of votes to women in England.

Not long after the unveiling of the statue of Mrs Pankhurst in 1930, *The Suffragette Movement*, by Sylvia Pankhurst, was released to mixed reviews. Pugh contended correctly that the book would be a 'literary bombshell, which was soon to explode with devastating effect in suffrage circles'.¹² Family tensions were further inflamed when Christabel and members of the Fellowship viewed the book. Purvis has stated that the Fellowship asked Christabel to write her account of the campaigns to counteract what members perceived to be negative sentiment by Sylvia toward her mother. However, Purvis found that Christabel remained steadfastly loyal to her sister Sylvia and refused to disagree publicly with her views. Geraldine Lennox reportedly stated that "it is a pity that Sylvia has not emulated her elder sister's loyalty and greatheartedness and kept a fine book free from a personal bitterness

¹⁰ S. Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.18. H. Kean, 'Searching for the Past in Present Defeat: The Construction of Historical and Political Identity in British Feminism in the 1920s and 1930s', *Women's History Review* vol 3, no. 1, 1994, p.59.

¹¹B. Caine, 'Mothering Feminism/Mothering Feminists: Ray Strachey and the Cause', *Women's History Review*, 8/2, 1999, p.306.

¹² Pugh, *The Pankhurst's*, 2001, p.210. Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.301.

that had nothing to do with the Movement".¹³ In the wake of this latest publication, Strachey made her views known, labelling Sylvia's text as inaccurate, bitter, and a misrepresentation. In Australia, Adela Pankhurst considered the book to be a display of treacherous disloyalty to her mother. Purvis noted Adela's remark that the text 'makes out that my father was faultless, my mother full of faults. Readers should understand that in Sylvia's eyes to cease to be a socialist, if one had ever been one, is a moral crime'.¹⁴

Sylvia openly discussed the personal politics of the WSPU. Discussing the lead-up to the 1907 split, Teresa Billington-Greig (TBG) was especially singled out for criticism. Sylvia claimed that her mother had stated, 'as for the TBG affair, we have just to face her and put her in her place. She has gone too far this time'.¹⁵ Suffragettes and supporters were prompt to react to perceived inaccuracies and slurs in the text.¹⁶ Purvis also noted that Fellowship member Elsa Gye had commented that the 'book has created a rather bad feeling and most of us were terribly disappointed. Sylvia is still the same intolerant person'. Purvis also quoted Geraldine Lennox, who commented in the press that 'it is a pity that Sylvia has not emulated her elder sister's loyalty and great-heartedness and kept a fine book free from a personal bitterness that had nothing to do with the Movement'. Sylvia was critical of Emmeline and Christabel in supporting the war effort, including the white feather campaign, which was an attempt to shame young men into recruitment. Sylvia also stated that the Equal Franchise in 1928 was achieved virtually without effort, making no reference to the efforts of former Suffragettes post-1914.¹⁷

¹³ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.359. 'Letters to the Editor' by G. Lennox and C. Drake, *Everyman*, 5 & 19 March 1931, p.186, p.249.

¹⁴ Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.359.

¹⁵ Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.265.

¹⁶ Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.301.

¹⁷ Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement : An Intimate Account of Persons and Ideals*, 1931, p.594, p.608.

Apart from public support from Mrs Pethick-Lawrence, Sylvia had managed to offend many former comrades, both militants and suffragists. A reviewer in *The Vote* expected that the text would be of special interest as it 'comes with a special thrill!' The reviewer was drawn in by the book: 'the excitement and accounts of old incidents' and 'mention of old familiar names' gave this reviewer a vivid trip down memory lane. However, the review acknowledged that Sylvia's text was an incomplete and biased history, with little regard for the efforts of constitutional societies that the reviewer believed had broken the 'hard ground' that would pave the way for the militant and 'more active workers'. The reviewer was also critical that 'little notice is given to the efforts of the WFL'.¹⁸ The mainstream press gave more positive reviews, noting that the feminist journals had highlighted the animosity inherent in the text. And further noted 'it may be that she [Sylvia] is merely frank, but there does seem almost a touch of maliciousness, here and there, in this part of the writing'.¹⁹ Bitterness and dissension toward Sylvia were apparent when, on the day of the Prisoners Dinner that year, several newspapers published the following as a direct quote from Sylvia in 1933: 'I will not attend [the Dinner], the Fellowship knows I am not in sympathy with it. When people have fought for an objective, they often fly to the other extreme, the spirit of the pioneers was democratic, that of many members of the Fellowship is not'.²⁰ The public had become witness to the open divisions now laid bare between former suffrage fighters. Thus, in the wave of dissent, concern and anger at Sylvia's text, a private gathering of the Suffragette Club was held at the office of Edith How-Martyn, where Edith and Suffragette friends Elsa Gye, Helen Atkinson, Mary Phillips, L. M. Thompson and Katherine Gillett-Gatty agreed to form a provisional committee to formally adopt the title of 'Suffragette Fellowship'.

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¹⁸ 'Book Review, The Suffragette Movement by Sylvia Pankhurst', *The Vote*, 13 March 1931, p.6.

¹⁹ 'Miss Pankhurst History of Suffragettes', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 16 Feb 1931, p.6.

²⁰ 'Sylvia Pankhurst', *Nottingham Evening Post*, 12 October 1933, p.3.

²¹ *Aims and Objects*, Suffragette Fellowship Memorandum, 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. The memorandum in 1965 outlined the early history of the Fellowship.

Publications focused on suffrage history continued to be released. In 1935 the book *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, drawing on material quoted in Sylvia Pankhurst's text, also supported the general claims made by Sylvia. According to Purvis, the Dangerfield text was anti-militant in view and damaging to militant leaders and Suffragettes; she notes that it was to be the beginning of a field of suffrage writings led by a 'masculinist view' of suffrage histories.²² Other authors, including Vera Brittain who released *Lady into Woman* in 1954, received objections from Sylvia Pankhurst and Helena Normanton. Helena contacted publisher Andrew Daker, expressing her dissatisfaction and shock at the representation of the mismanagement of WSPU finances by Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. Helena pointed out that she was a member of the WSPU and witness to events as they occurred. Stating 'now to read that they were actually "careless about their accounts" is to me an appalling shock'. Helena believed that the author was citing Ray Strachey as 'a valid authority', which took her by surprise – she stated her belief that Ray Strachey was an 'utterly unreliable Historian of the Women's Movement'. Helena suggested that Daker was 'courting colossal damages'.²³

Defensive Measures

Defence of their leader, and by association protection of their legacy, became a lifelong responsibility in the afterlives of Suffragettes.

In 1930 the WFL journal, *The Vote*, published an article posing the often-heard question, pre- and post-suffrage, 'Was the Vote worth fighting for?' An editorial by Marian Reeves, in defence of their actions, argued against recent criticism that the struggle for the vote was possibly 'wasted years, that the victory has not brought with it all we had hoped for, and that the country is no

²² Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England 1910-1914*, 1935. Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst : A Biography*, 2002, p.75.

²³ Helena Normanton to Andrew Daker Publisher, 19 March 1953 or 1954, The Women's Library LSE ,7HLN/D/07. Sylvia Letter to Andrew Daker, copy provided in letter to Helena Normanton, March 1953 or 1954, Women's Library LSE 7HLN/D/07. Sylvia Pankhurst requested that Mr Daker publish a statement apologising to the memory of her mother. Note that the Fellowship would have been made aware of the book, however no evidence is available gauging reaction of membership.

better because women have the vote'. Marian believed that in addition to achieving the vote, the fight for the cause had forged valuable friendships and that 'many of us were richer in experience and richer in friendship that we could have been without it. Most Suffragettes agree that they would not have missed the heat of the battle, the hardships, and the work, as well as the enthusiasm and comradeship that made the movement unlike any other, nor would they exchange the memory of it for all the opportunities that life has to offer the young women of today'.²⁴ In 1947, Lady Pethick-Lawrence defended militant tactics by stating that not 'a single case had been brought against us in the Police courts of injury to life or limb and that we had received and not given wounds in the battle and in this way had won our victory'. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, fully aware of the power of mass media, stated that 'by means of the broadcasting and the cinema, we shall hope to dispel the feeling of failure of the movement'.²⁵ In 1965 *Calling all Women* reprinted a historic quote by Millicent Fawcett: 'I feel the action of the prisoners has touched the imagination of the country in a manner quieter methods did not succeed in doing'.²⁶ The Fellowship was also forced to defend itself in 1965, when a speaker referred to the Fellowship as a 'dying organisation, as though its mission had been fulfilled'. Lilian Thomas declared in defence, 'somehow I felt there was more than ever a great need to explain it all to the newcomers. How else can they maintain the position so hardly won?'²⁷ Highlighting the historical admission by Fawcett demonstrates the Fellowship's desire to amplify the scope and breadth of acceptance of militant actions. However, Fawcett was no doubt referring to earlier militancy – gaining attention, disrupting meetings – and not to later, ultra-militant activities.

As evidence of the selective nature of the Fellowship, leaders and members aided specific authors, while attempting to dissuade others within the ranks from assisting some other writers. After the passing of Teresa Billington-

²⁴ M. Reeves, 'Was the Vote Worth Fighting For?' *The Vote*, 10 October 1930, pp.5-6.

²⁵ *The Documentary is The Modern Age*, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence to Edith How-Martyn, 3 March 1947, The Women's Library, LSE TWL 6.1 Box 2.

²⁶ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1965.

²⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1965.

Greig, the Fellowship appeared to be keener to assist a 'friendly author' (that is, friendly to the Fellowship) to publish texts that they believed to be a fairer and more accurate rendering of Suffragette histories. This is evident from a notice published in the Fellowship journal asking subscribers to assist new Fellowship friend, Antonia Raeburn, who had been granted access to the inner Suffragette circle, and requesting 'interesting pictures or reminiscences' from Suffragettes.²⁸ Emphasising the importance of timing, and the potential to increase interest in new 'women's histories', in the 1960s Grace Roe highlighted to fellow Committee members that a recent radio address by Mr Stackpole, would raise awareness of the upcoming book by Raeburn and increase interest in Mrs Pankhurst and the militant campaign. In 1966 The Fellowship Committee also discussed a concern raised by Jessie Kenney, regarding a 'libellous reflection on Suffragettes in a play broadcast September 3rd'.²⁹

Writers, Researchers and Historians

In line with the remit to monitor and safeguard the militant suffrage legacy, the Fellowship was forced to either be proactive in cooperating with keen storytellers and providing access to collected primary materials, or be sidelined, waiting for publications to surface and reacting in response. Potential researchers, writers, and historians, no matter how sincere, found they were faced with a lion's den of women who, due to bitter experience, had become conditioned to distrust outsiders. Over the decades both male and female writers and producers of cultural content were forced to negotiate with an entrenched group of women determined to close ranks to outsiders who attempted to infiltrate the inner Suffragette circle

²⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1966.

²⁹ *Minutes Executive Committee*, Suffragette Fellowship, 5 September 1966, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. Potential to speculate that mention was made of Bombs and Arson?

Jill Craigie

In 1944 filmmaker Jill Craigie, bitten with the Suffragette bug, felt compelled to do her bit to record militant Suffrage history and became ensnared in Suffragette politics. Craigie had contacted Christabel Pankhurst seeking support to produce a script covering the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst. Craigie, keen to be historically accurate, commented to Christabel that she had support from Helen Archdale to contact surviving Suffragettes. Jill Craigie stressed she was interested only in the public events, and not the private lives of the women involved.³⁰ Craigie recalled her discovery of Suffrage history began with the Sylvia Pankhurst 1931 text that 'kept her awake at night'. She believed that no other historians had approached Suffragette histories 'conscientiously' and voiced her sincere desire to portray militants as rational, engaged women and not as caricatures.³¹ Craigie's initial contact with militants, including Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, led to a chain of correspondence with many other women, triggering a request from Christabel that Craigie refer her enquiries to a committee established to act on her behalf.³² However, concerns were raised immediately by Annie Kenney, not at all responsive, believed that the timing

³⁰ Jill Craigie to Christabel Pankhurst, 9 June 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5. Jill Craigie to Annie Kenney, 16 June 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5. Craigie also wrote to Annie Kenney, noting that she was referred by Mrs Archdale.

³¹ J, Craigie., 'Honourable Gaol-birds', *Radio Times*, March 1951, Women's Library LSE 7JCC/O/01/001. WSPU Postcard Album, Jill Craigie Collection, The Women's Library LSE, 7JCC/O/01/001. Jill Craigie donated her collection of Suffragette postcards to the Fawcett Library.

³² Jill Craigie to Annie Kenney, 16 June 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5. Craigie also wrote to Annie Kenney, noting that she was referred by Mrs Archdale and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence to request a meeting. Helen Archdale to Annie Kenney, 29 June 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5. Letters also exchanged between Helen Archdale, Annie Kenney, Flora Drummond (signing herself the General) and Christabel. Helen Archdale had confirmed to Annie that it was the Pethick-Lawrence's who sent Jill Craigie to her and advised her that Craigie has also visited the Record Room several times, but as she was in the middle of cataloguing the inventory, she was unable to research the collection. Cable from Christabel Pankhurst to Jill Craigie, June/June 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5, Comprised of Mrs Goulden-Bach, Mrs Durand, Annie Kenney Taylor, Flora Drummond, Mabel Tuke and Kitty Marshall. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.489. Purvis states that Sylvia was also not in agreement with production of the proposed script and that Helen Archdale was appointed as a paid consultant that effectively made 'the situation yet more complicated'.

was off given circumstances caused by the current war.³³ Additionally there is evidence that the Kenney family held concerns that depictions of Annie would overly focus on her working-class roots, concerns that were later realised when the resultant production, broadcast on the BBC in March 1951, depicted Annie with a heavy northern accent.³⁴ However, despite Annie's previous refusal to assist Craigie, the Fellowship, in the belief it was better to assist so that accuracy could be maintained, gave initial support to the project and gave Craigie full access to the Record Room. However, in what appears to have been a miscommunication between Annie, Helen Archdale and the Fellowship, support and access to Suffragettes was subsequently withdrawn, no doubt due to loyalty to Christabel and Annie. Craigie found herself relegated to the outer Suffragette circle.³⁵ Seven years later in 1951, the undaunted Craigie produced a script for *The Women's Rebellion* and not unsurprisingly, the ever-vigilant Kenney family, keenly aware of the need to work with the Fellowship, remained in close contact with Committee members. This is evidenced by Trustee Mari Hussey, who intensely disliked Craigie, warning the Kenney family about having any dealings with Craigie. In another aside, Jessie Kenney shrewdly noted in a family letter that they 'must make friends with all Suffragettes, especially the Fellowship, and make positive contributions to the Cause'. And warned family members to be careful to retain key correspondence involving representation of the cause and to 'burn all internal correspondence mentioning personalities between ourselves'.³⁶ Despite her challenging encounters with the militant campaigners, in 1977 Craigie stated, 'no greater political and social movement in British history has been more maligned and misunderstood by male Historians than the women's campaign for the vote'. Craigie also

³³ Annie Kenney to Jill Craigie, 14 July 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5.

³⁴ K. Cowman, 'The militant suffrage campaign on screen', in A. Robertson, eds, *Screening Protest: Visual Narratives of Dissent across time, space and genre*, Routledge, 2018, pp.209-230. 'The Women's Rebellion', *Radio Times*, 11-17 March 1951, p.1. KP/AK/5/2. Screened 13 March 1951, Front page, *Radio Times*, March 11- 17 1951. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.495.

³⁵ Helen Archdale to Annie Kenney, 8 August 1944, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5.

³⁶ Kenney Family Correspondence, 12 April 1951, UEA, KP/'AK/5 . Jessie Kenney to Joan Taylor, 29 May 1951, UEA, KP/AK/5.

referred to the 'traditional (male) view' of the Suffragettes, adopted by Fulford in *Votes for Women* to acknowledge the view of Christabel, who had believed that Fulford had 'mocked the movement, her mother, her father and herself'.³⁷ Demonstrating her desire to protect Suffragette legacies, Craigie later donated her collection of suffrage postcards to the Fawcett Library.

Roger Fulford 1957

Roger Fulford was one of the earliest researchers to access the Suffragette Fellowship Collection at the Museum of London and was awarded a financial prize by the *Evening Standard* for his then-upcoming book, *Votes for Women*.³⁸ In June 1957 Phillipa Strachey contacted Roger Fulford to discuss his new book, which was about to impact negatively on Fellowship members.³⁹ After the Fulford release, Christabel was angry when she noticed her involvement in the campaign was downplayed and believed there were many errors in the text. She contacted Jessie Kenney and wondered why no militants were consulted before publication.⁴⁰ Sylvia and Christabel agreed that it was Teresa Billington-Greig who had cooperated with Fulford.⁴¹ In his review, Lord Pethick-Lawrence believed there was 'much useful and informative matter in the book and written in a racy and conversational style which will help the casual reader digest the formidable historical details which are given'. However, he lists what he calls defects, or

³⁷ J. Craigie., 'Men against Women', *Observer Magazine*, 16 January 1977, pp.12-13.

³⁸ Correspondence Roger Fulford to Assistant Keeper, Museum of London, 10 December 1956. Fulford enquired about the rights to publish images from the collection. Museum of London, Suffragette Fellowship, *Objects Relating to Suffragette Movement*, 50.82/1-1549.

³⁹ Phillipa Strachey to Roger Fulford, 9 June 1955, The Women's Library LSE, LSE TWL 6.1 Box 2. Roger Fulford to Phillipa Strachey, 22 June 1955. The Women's Library LSE, TWL 6.1 Box 2.

⁴⁰ Christabel Pankhurst to Jessie Kenney, 25 May 1957, The Kenney Papers, UEA KP/JK/3. Harrison, *Sylvia Pankhurst: A Crusading Life, 1882-1960*, 2003, p.272.

⁴¹ Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.510. Purvis stated that there was a 'three-hour bust-up' at a Fellowship meeting regarding unauthorised support given by Stella Newsome, and Teresa Billington-Greig, to Fulford.

inaccuracies, and notes Fulford's inherent political bias.⁴² *The Evening Standard* published a series of extracts from the book. One reviewer suggested that Fulford had a 'slight distaste for the Pankhurst's but had a special emphasis of admiration on Mr Pethick-Lawrence'.⁴³ Other criticisms of the text, as Purvis has highlighted, included Fulford's dismissal of the dangers of forcible feeding, which he claimed 'was not dangerous'; Purvis also points out that Fulford had claimed that forcible feeding 'could destroy woman's greatest asset, her "looks" is facetious'.⁴⁴ The Fellowship was no doubt aghast at the dismissal of the dangers of forcible feeding. Tellingly, in 1976, in an oral interview with Brian Harrison, Fulford recollected that he, in his own words, 'formed a very poor opinion of them, partly because it was clear it was all over sex, hysterical worship of Mrs Pankhurst and much worse really of Christabel'. Harrison and Fulford both agreed the WSPU was a fascist group. Fulford also acknowledged that Charlie Marsh was unhappy with him when the book came out, as 'she believed that book did not do justice to them'. However, he believed she was still charming and, oddly, felt the need to add that he thought she was very good looking. In news that would have pleased the Fellowship, Fulford disclosed that sales of the book were poor.⁴⁵

David Mitchell 1967

A decade after Fulford published his book, David Mitchell released a biography of the Pankhurst family, *The Fighting Pankhursts*.⁴⁶ Mitchell had

⁴² WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 May 1957, LOU.LON 194.

⁴³ Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.510.

⁴⁴ Purvis, 'Deeds, Not Words: The Daily Lives of Militant Suffragettes in Edwardian Britain', *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol 18, no. 2, 1995, p.98.

⁴⁵ "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF. Roger Fulford interviewed by Brian Harrison, 13 April 1976, 8SUF/B/083. Fulford noted that his publishers were disappointed with the low number of sales. Fulford liked Teresa Billington-Greig and believed her to be 'balanced and fair'.

⁴⁶ D. Mitchell, *The Fighting Pankhurst's: A Study in Tenacity*, 1967.

contacted Stella Newsome three years earlier to request that a notice be placed in *Calling all Women* to ask for the loan of materials for a forthcoming book about the 'Pankhurst family'. Recalling the bad feeling caused by the previous text by Fulford, and in what would later prove to be a sound decision, Stella, now battle-weary, responded with a firm 'no' to his offer of sponsorship. She advised Mitchell that publication of the notice would give members the idea that the Fellowship was endorsing his, as yet unseen, manuscript.⁴⁷ On publication, Enid Goulden-Bach gave the text a scathing review and took a swipe at those she believed had assisted Mitchell in production of the book, no doubt referring, in part, to Jessie Kenney, who had been in contact with Mr Mitchell and his publishers since 1964.⁴⁸ Enid continued, 'presumably those listed as having generously helped with material for its preparation are satisfied; And, it is 'clear his literary skills and factual reliability are not on a par with his flair for picking on a worthwhile theme'. Enid concluded, 'for this reader, 340 pages marred by recurring howlers and slick comment are too much. Mr Mitchell should do some home-work'.⁴⁹

No doubt the Fellowship reserved its most bitter, private criticism for the chapter detailing efforts of comrades to memorialise Mrs Pankhurst – Chapter 6, 'The Canonization of Mrs Pankhurst'. Mitchell contended that followers had begun to enter a 'process of ennoblement and embalming' of their former leader. In the unreferenced text, Mitchell declared that the statue in Tower Gardens resembled the portrait of Mrs Pankhurst by Georgina Brackenbury, with the sitter portrayed by the sculptor in a 'rather languid quizzical, elder states-womanly pose, bare-headed and with the coiffure and

⁴⁷ David Mitchell to Stella Newsome, 10 December 1964, Stella Newsome to David Mitchell, 23 December 1964. Museum of London, David Mitchell, Suffragette Fellowship Collection, correspondence with Stella Newsome, 73.83.51.

⁴⁸ Correspondence between Jessie Kenney and David Mitchell reveal he had been in contact with her since 1964. David Mitchell to Jessie Kenney, 24 April 1964. Graham Greene to Jessie Kenney, 24 August 1964, Jessie Kenney to Graeme Greene, 5 October 1964, Graeme Greene to Jessie Kenney, 6 October 1964, David Mitchell to Jessie Kenney, 13 January 1965, UEA KP/JK/3. Approx. 1965 or 1966, Jessie provided corrections to David Mitchell in response to a draft Manuscript, Jessie Kenney, Mr David Mitchell Comments and some Corrections, UEA KP/JK/3.

⁴⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling All Women*, 1968. Enid observed that such 'inaccuracies occur again and again'.

features of her later, Tory-Imperialist phase'. As a final stab to the Fellowship, Mitchell, in describing the unveiling ceremony for the statue, stated that Mrs Drummond 'confined herself to a few pious remarks about Mrs Pankhurst's love and devotion to humanity' and described Mr Baldwin's address as a 'piece de resistance', noting that as a former Prime Minister he could afford to deliver a speech with 'euphoric magnanimity' talking about the heroine with 'unfailing drama and a shuddering sincerity'. Baldwin and Pankhurst were, in Mitchell's view, cut from the same cloth. Here was the 'dilemma of the idealist forced to acknowledge the virtues of authoritarianism, of the emotional socialist recoiling from the ugly brink of regimentation'. Mitchell caustically stated Mr Baldwin had delivered a 'hackneyed statement in 1930 that 'she' (Mrs Pankhurst) had 'won for herself a niche in the Temple of Fame which would last for all time'. Mitchell noted that the statement by Brailsford the following day that was 'so moving and so trenchant that Baldwin might have done well to substitute it for his own tired composition'.⁵⁰ Fellowship members and supporters were deeply offended by Mitchell's slurs against the character of Mrs Pankhurst and, by direct association, their ongoing commemorative efforts to safeguard her memory, begun in 1928 that resulted in the erection of the statue in her memory in Tower Gardens.

Raeburn, Rosen and the Reappearance of Mitchell

As a defence against previous publications criticising Suffragettes and militant actions, the Fellowship was prepared to give all available assistance to enable the publication of *The Militant Suffragettes* by Antonia Raeburn in 1973.⁵¹ An earnest marketing flyer quoted an introduction by J B Priestly. Touted, as providing a sympathetic account detailing the history of 'brave, devoted, often fanatical women', 'filled with stories of feats of endurance, ruses, escapes and disguises – amusing, touching and sometimes horrifying. Additionally, noting that 'class barriers ceased to exist led by the Pankhurst's,

⁵⁰ Mitchell, *The Fighting Pankhurst's: A Study in Tenacity*, 1967, pp.207-209. Mitchell, *Queen Christabel: A Biography of Christabel Pankhurst*, 1977. Mitchell also released *Queen Christabel* in the same era as both Raeburn texts.

⁵¹ Raeburn, *The Militant Suffragettes*, 1973.

mill girls and ladies of high rank worked equally together'.⁵² 'The Suffragette history is told in a vivid, graphic way, utilising contemporary images and noticeable for the theme of overcoming, against all the odds through comradeship, women helping women to evade authorities, to develop coping skills in public speaking and prison'. Many surviving militant campaigners contributed oral histories and original material. Antonia acknowledged assistance from Susan Davis, former Assistant Curator at the London Museum, and former librarian of the Fawcett Library, Vera Douie.

Raeburn declared primary material for the book was drawn from three sources. There were oral interviews, letters and cuttings from the Suffragette Fellowship Collection; contemporary press accounts; and personal correspondence in the Fellowship collection. She declared the collection a 'wonderful fully documented record, both from the literary and the pictorial point of view'. Esther Knowles and Grace Roe were singled out for working 'tirelessly on the script' and for assistance in typing the first drafts. The author believed 'from my friendship with them, I have learnt a great deal – not about the Suffragette movement alone'. Esther Knowles was introduced as a thirteen-year-old Suffragette, who had marched in a mass procession as part of the 'children's contingent', despite her 'father's disapproval'. Black Friday was recalled in vivid detail, noting the alarm expressed by Christabel when told of the violence toward women by police. Noting that 'they're bashing the women', concerns were raised when it was realised they were without protection: 'Inspector Jarvis, our great friend is not there, Superintendent Wells is not there'. The days and events leading to the death of Emily Wilding-Davison were recalled in detail, including the following remark: 'despite her determination to sacrifice herself, Emily loved life'. Notably, this quote by Raeburn, presumably coming directly from Fellowship members, indicates that militant campaigners believed that Emily was bent on becoming a martyr by committing suicide. Raeburn expressed great empathy toward the Suffragettes by acknowledging their actions to be a reaction against the cruelty of the government, which appeared to be in apparent sympathy with the statement 'Let them die', in contrast to the support expressed by the

⁵² Flyer, 'Introduction by J B Priestly. The Militant Suffragette Antonia Raeburn', The Women's Library LSE 7ACP.

Church of England and the medical profession of the day, specifically against the practice of forcible feeding of women.⁵³

In the 1970s Raeburn also released *The Suffragette View*, giving complete coverage of ultra-militant activities, and highlighting the strategy of the Young Hot Bloods in targeting public buildings with crudely constructed bombs and arson attacks.⁵⁴ Reviews of the Raeburn books were mixed. Andrew Rosen stated *The Militant Suffragettes* (1973) text lacked depth and was a 'less penetrating' account of the militant campaign. The text was a 'historical curiosity', 'simplistic and uncritical' and an over-reliance on the use of imagery and lack of critical analysis of the material was noted. Rosen acknowledged that the author was a friend of the Suffragette Fellowship. Rosen also believed that memory, over time, becomes 'dull' and that this leads to a temptation to fill in the blanks.⁵⁵ Perhaps, however, Rosen does not acknowledge that the 'vivid' nature of the particular memories, the comradeship and excitement of the events that took the women far out of their comfort zone and usual reality of the era, would have ensured that lived memories, no matter how many years passed, were seared into personal memories. Academic Historian Brian Harrison, who had also begun an oral history project to capture lived memories of Suffragettes and suffragists, had earlier suggested, in his 1974 review of the first Raeburn text, that it was strange that Priestley (published reviewer within the Raeburn text) had praised Raeburn's lack of professionalism. Harrison voiced his belief that 'amateurs' were not equipped with the necessary skill and expertise to conduct impartial, unbiased, interviews. Harrison was also concerned at the lack of available material that would allow scrutiny of the Raeburn book, observing that the author did not provide context, footnotes or a bibliography. For instance, Harrison questioned the vivid details recalled by Grace Roe in her interview with Raeburn about the raid on the WSPU offices in 1912, which were reproduced in the book. He claimed Grace could not possibly have

⁵³ Testimonies provided by Leonora Cohen, Lilian Lenton, Theresa Garnett, Vera Holmes, Gladys Roberts, Mary Phillips, Olive Bartels, Clara Codd, Marian Lawson, Kathleen Pepper, Grace Roe and Cecily Hale, Raeburn, *The Militant Suffragettes*, 1973. Acknowledgements, 1973, xiii,xiv,xv pp.145,154,201,235.

⁵⁴ Raeburn, *The Suffragette View*, 1976.

⁵⁵ Rosen, *Rise up, Women!* : 1974, p.xv.

remembered the details with such clarity due to her 'extreme old age'. He was questioning either Raeburn's skill at transcribing, or Grace Roe's ability to recall such momentous events in her early life. Arguably Harrison, who up until that point no doubt had little direct experience with Suffragettes or Fellowship activities, was unlikely to have taken into account that Suffragette memories were retold over and over again, and were not forgotten, even by women in their nineties. It is not likely that Harrison would have doubted male soldiers recounting memories of war on the battlefields. Harrison did concede that the timing of the book, with the emergence of second-wave feminists, was excellent but he stated his preferred suffrage history remained Sylvia's 1931 book, and the work of Teresa Billington-Greig in 1914; he believed these authors had offered the 'shrewdest analysis' and presented the 'most comprehensive narrative of the history of the movement'. Harrison further stated that 'Miss Raeburn's unsatisfactory treatment of oral evidence is indicative of the book's overall quality'.⁵⁶ Notably, by 1974, Harrison was well into preparation of his own Suffrage history project, and his accusation of bias inherent in the Raeburn text at that time is better understood in relation to his personal notes accompanying the oral history project and the selection of subjects profiled in his later publication.⁵⁷

Two years after Raeburn's book Andrew Rosen released *Rise up, Women!* The front cover of the book features a colour reproduction of the 'Cat and Mouse Act' poster and is richly illustrated with plates sourced from the Suffragette Fellowship Collection housed at the Museum of London. Rosen claims his text was the first 'scholarly analysis' of the militant campaign. Rosen pointed out that he had used unexamined documents that belonged to Suffragettes, archives in personal collections and official papers to create his text. Rosen believed that Raeburn's 1973 text was a 'less penetrating account' that was 'largely anecdotal', relying on 'personal experiences of individual Suffragettes' and states that Raeburn 'does not attempt to capture the complexity of the WSPU, her approach to which is both simplistic and

⁵⁶ B. Harrison, 'The Militant Suffragettes by Antonia Raeburn,' *Oral History*, vol 2, no. 1, 1974, pp.73-76.

⁵⁷ Harrison's Oral Tapes, held at Women's Library LSE, are accompanied by research notes. See Chapter 10 *Pankhurst to the Pill* for further examination. Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987.

uncritical'. Rosen referred to the 'standard' works of the movement as *The Cause* (1928) and *Fulford Votes for Women; The story of a Struggle* (1957). Rosen's account is presented in a detached and professional manner. It is inclusive of all militant activities, including arson and bombing campaigns. He argued that ultimately the ultra-militant acts had not led to a delay in enfranchising women. Rosen believed that he had 'tried to write history, which is evocative as well as accurate' and that, though interesting, militant campaigning was somewhat of a 'historical curiosity' and of minor importance to history. Rosen also acknowledged that he did not attempt to 'chronicle the doings of the non-militant National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies'.⁵⁸ However, as a result, the Rosen text is also devoid of WFL activities, helping to forcefully push the WFL deeper into a history hole. The WFL, a suffrage group that self-identified as both constitutional and militant, was to remain an ongoing casualty of the contested nature of re-telling in various representations of suffrage histories.

In 1977 Antonia Raeburn published *The Suffragette View*. The book is structured chronologically and uses chronological imagery to tell the story. Raeburn referenced the campaigning of Sylvia Pankhurst and praised Christabel's intellect, organisational skills and mastery of oratory. Raeburn acknowledged the Suffragettes for their assistance with the book.⁵⁹ There is a mention of WFL protests, including census resistance, but the book omits mention of the dirigible protest or pictures of census resistance. Raeburn spoke of Emmeline and Christabel in glowing terms and described Sylvia as a supporter of working-class women. Raeburn was clear in her admiration for Suffragettes and was not an impartial writer. The text reproduced select images, some of which have become iconic representations of Suffragette

⁵⁸ Rosen, *Rise up, Women!* :1974, Introduction xvi. Rosen acknowledged assistance from Fellowship members, Jessie Kenney, Kathleen Pepper, Grace Roe, and the late Stella Newsome. Primary material was sourced from the Fawcett Library, private collection of papers of Teresa Billington-Greig and the suffrage collection at the London Museum.

⁵⁹ The Suffragette View featured a picture on the cover of a screaming Eleanor Higginson 'release of the furies' picture as police twist her arms backward, May 1914 demonstration at Buckingham Palace. Muggeridge, in the introduction, description of woman under arrest, as 'dishevelled and dejected, has a certain timeless quality about her appearance'. Raeburn, *The Suffragette View*, 1976, p.4, p.8, p.78, p.84.

activities. The publication of both Raeburn's suffrage biographies actively challenged the masculinist historical narratives. Cowman suggested that Raeburn worked to portray Suffragettes as empowered actors equipped with 'powers of endurance'.⁶⁰ However, the text also gave readers the idea that Mrs Pankhurst's declaration of a truce in 1914 was viewed favourably by all militants.

Also, that year, David Mitchell released *Queen Christabel, a Biography of Christabel Pankhurst*.⁶¹ Purvis states that Mitchell was rebuffed by the family of Emmeline Pankhurst, including Enid Goulden-Bach, and Grace Roe, when requesting further information for the text. Purvis argues that these refusals to cooperate with Mitchell would have 'undoubtedly helped to shape his already jaundiced masculinist view' of Christabel. Ultimately, *Queen Christabel* was a 'hostile biography' of Christabel that drew heavy criticism from Fellowship leaders Enid Goulden-Bach and Grace Roe. Grace Roe advised Mitchell that she had sought legal advice and, as Executrix as prepared to 'take action on any breach of copyright'.⁶² It is incredible to note that at age 92 Grace Roe was forced to defend her legacy, and those of her sister Suffragettes, over events that had occurred over sixty years ago.

On several occasions, members and supporters were swift to condemn writers who dared to describe Suffragettes as 'hooligans', or even worse, to attribute the title of a Suffragette to individuals who had no genuine claim to use the exalted word. In 1936 Elsa Gye took offence at a statement made by Dr Edith Summerskill at a Labour reunion, who claimed that Suffragettes fought, 'like hooligans in the streets to gain women's suffrage'. Elsa stated that 'those scenes outside the Houses of Parliament were repeated and again during the years 1906-1914...there was never any fighting like hooligans on the part of the Suffragettes'.⁶³ In 1962 committee members tabled an objection to an article by Sylvia Haymon who had labelled Mrs

⁶⁰ K. Cowman, 'Carrying on a Long Tradition', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol 17, no. 3, 2010, p.201.

⁶¹ Mitchell, *Queen Christabel: A Biography of Christabel Pankhurst*, 1977.

⁶² Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*, 2018, p.527.

⁶³ 'Backbone of the Party', *Hendon and Finchley Times*, 8 May 1936, p.8.

Corbett-Ashby a 'Suffragette'.⁶⁴ Notably the title of Suffragette, first conceived as a put-down by journalists and then adopted by militants, continues to be conceived as an honourable and sacred title for a collective group of women, one that was carefully protected over a lifetime of memory work by the Fellowship.

The Return of 'The Wrecker'

In 1972 Marie Lawson, recalling the close friendship between Edith How-Martyn and Teresa Billington-Greig, stated that, despite their different natures, 'Edith had great affection and respect for Teresa'. Marie believed that Edith 'was the gentlest militant of them all' with a 'very feminine sort of character', whereas Teresa had a more forceful character.⁶⁵ Teresa Billington-Greig's dominant, though well-meaning personality, was not always well received by others.⁶⁶ In 1976 her daughter Fiona Billington-Greig recalled that her mother's personality traits, including her inability to make small talk and tell white lies, could make it difficult for her to operate within group settings. Fiona recalled that as a little girl she would attend the Fellowship gathering with her mother. Fiona observed that 'women's organisations were a rather sectarian world' and there was bitterness and petty-mindedness within the Fellowship, 'you could feel it'. Despite her eligible status, Fiona was not involved in the Fellowship.⁶⁷ Teresa's friendship with Edith How-Martyn may have compelled Teresa to offer her services to the Fellowship, as a chronicler of suffrage history. Her desire to assist her late friend, Edith, may have caused her to consider ways of helping with the survival of the Fellowship. However, she appears to have met with resistance from Fellowship members, not because she was proposing

⁶⁴ Mary Phillips to Sylvia Harmon, May 1962, 'The Patient Suffragette', *The Guardian*, 23 April 1962, Women's Library, LSE 7LAC.

⁶⁵ Teresa had noted wistfully, 'who will count the plaudits at the end?'. Harrison Oral Tapes, Marie Lawson, 14 November 1972, The Women's Library, LSE 8SUF/B/024. Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.72.

⁶⁶ Teresa Billington-Greig, *Suffragette Fellowship Plans for Survival*, c1956, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401.

⁶⁷ Harrison Oral Tapes, Fiona Billington-Greig, 24 August 1974, The Women's Library LSE, 8SUF/B/010.

unworkable solutions but because of hangovers from personal politics, and distrust in her motives emanating from Sylvia and Christabel Pankhurst.

During 1943, after it became apparent that Edith How-Martyn was unlikely to return to England, Elsa Gye was in contact with Teresa Billington-Greig, and asked her (Teresa) to act as political advisor for the Fellowship.⁶⁸ However, it later became apparent that Elsa, and later Stella Newsome, had little foresight of the ramifications of allowing the somewhat problematic Teresa Billington-Greig direct access to the group of strong-minded committee members. In 1949, Teresa Billington-Greig, now appointed as Fellowship Historian, contacted librarian Vera Douie and expressed her desire to create a comprehensive history of the suffrage movement. Teresa Billington-Greig wrote to Vera 'do you not feel that while we are still alive, who took some part in it – a move should be made to get, if not a detailed record, at least an accurate condensed presentation made by the right person – or the right group of persons?'⁶⁹ Teresa Billington-Greig set to work corresponding with members, including Stella Newsome, who had arranged unlimited access for Teresa to the Fellowship collection of records, memoirs and materials.⁷⁰ Teresa Billington-Greig was also corresponding with Annie Kenney, Christabel in America and Sylvia in Ethiopia.⁷¹

From the early 1950s, Teresa Billington-Greig was welcomed into the Fellowship, no doubt with encouragement from Edith, now ill, in Australia. Stella Newsome continued to send parcels to Teresa containing pamphlets, newspapers and materials of the WFL and WSPU from the collection to assist with publication of an updated history of the suffrage movement.⁷² Not content with researching and writing for the Fellowship, Teresa also offered

⁶⁸ Elsa Gye to Teresa Billington-Greig, Suffragette Fellowship, 10 February 1943. The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401.

⁶⁹ Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.67.

⁷⁰ The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG.

⁷¹ Sylvia Pankhurst to Teresa Billington-Greig, c 1956, The Women's Library LSE, GB 106/9/20/057. Teresa Billington-Greig, notes Sylvia Pankhurst, c1950-1956, LSE 7TBG FL399.

⁷² Stella Newsome to Teresa Billington-Greig, 4,12,29 Sep and 1,2 October 1956, LSE 6.1 Box 2.

her services as a consultant to Phillipa Strachey, who was seeking materials for an updated release of *The Cause*.⁷³ In June 1956 Teresa Billington-Greig outlined the history of the WFL and WSPU at a Fellowship meeting.⁷⁴ Newspaper editors were also contacted with offers to provide histories of the suffrage movement. The editor of *the Guardian* advised that it was seeking prepared obituaries on Sylvia and Christabel Pankhurst.⁷⁵ This prompted Teresa to issue a survey to former campaigners, requesting personal details and a brief testimony of colleagues, living or dead.⁷⁶

However, not content to confine her Fellowship duties to those of historian, in 1956 Teresa voiced other concerns to Stella Newsome, after attempting to speak unsuccessfully at a Fellowship meeting. Teresa had wanted to address the committee directly so that she could articulate what she considered to be 'dangers ahead'. Teresa apologised to Stella for speaking out of turn. However, she believed that the ageing nature of Fellowship members was about to have a detrimental effect on the Fellowship. Teresa, no longer able to contain herself, expressed her belief there was an excessive focus on the memory of Emmeline Pankhurst and indicated her desire to air her ideas about suitable reforms to negate the danger of being forgotten 'as we all die off and also do a great deal more than pay emotional tribute to Mrs Pankhurst's memory'. Teresa called on members to follow what she believed would also be the wishes of founder Edith How-Martyn, who she believed 'would have approved as she was out for practical things as Mrs Pankhurst

⁷³ Phillipa Strachey, *London and National Society for Women's Service* to Teresa Billington-Greig, 27 June 1949, The Women's Library LSE, 7TBG FL402. It is not clear if the Fellowship is aware that Teresa Billington-Greig was transparent in her intention to provide history of the militant movement for a new edition of *The Cause*.

⁷⁴ Meeting 5 June 1956, Stella Newsome to Teresa Billington-Greig, 8 June 1956, LSE 6.1 Box 2.

⁷⁵ A P Wadsworth, *The Guardian Manchester* to Teresa Billington-Greig, 2 May 1956, LSE 6.1 Box 2.

⁷⁶ Teresa Billington-Greig, Suffragette Records, *Notes of Recollections*, LSE 7TBG FL359. Adeline Bourne to Teresa Billington-Greig, August 2 and 30th 1956, LSE 6.1 Box 2. Adeline Bourne of the AFL promised to provide Teresa Billington-Greig with events of her 'rolling stone life'.

herself was'.⁷⁷ Teresa was given an opportunity to speak at a meeting of the Executive Committee, where she suggested that the overriding issue facing the Fellowship, and feminist organisations in the 1950s, was the ageing nature of the current membership. She stated that over 90% of present members were 'over middle-aged – probably 60% are old. Within ten to twelve years, most of us will be dead. If we are to do anything to perpetuate the movement to complete its accepted task of securing complete sex equality, we have only a short time in which to do it'.⁷⁸

Teresa suggested female-only schools and other female societies such as 'the women journalists' should be offered speakers to talk about the militant movement so long as there were speakers left 'who were Suffragettes or in touch with the movement'. 'The Fellowship could try the idea' 'to see if it produced new blood' to enlist 'a wider and younger following'.⁷⁹ She also suggested that Fellowship members make public appearances, 'have a special pledge ceremony, get into the press with letters, announcements, reports, use any material that comes into our hands, and pass it onto the press'. Teresa penned a 'Unity Creating Plan', with two proposed commemorative functions: the annual Suffragette function and a Dorothy Evans Function. She suggested creating a 'big annual commemorative rally' to highlight history of women pioneers, to 'stimulate and educate' and redesigning the annual Fellowship meeting to service a broader function, 'linking as far as possible all pioneering and campaigning feminist movements with the Suffragette Fellowship in commemorating pioneer and present women of achievement'. Teresa also suggested the new form of annual meeting could be titled 'The Pankhurst Memorial Lecture with a subtitle, giving the aspect of women's advancement' together with highlighting a 'particular pioneer woman'. She suggested that 'the Fellowship could define the method and purpose of these annual meetings to arrange

⁷⁷ Teresa Billington-Greig to Stella Newsome, 7 August 1956, The Women's Library LSE, 6.1 Box 2.

⁷⁸ Stella Newsome to Teresa Billington-Greig, 31 October 1956, The Women's Library LSE, 6.1 Box 2. Teresa Billington-Greig Feminist Movement, c 1956, The Women's Library LSE, TBG FL399.

⁷⁹ Teresa Billington-Greig, *Suffragette Fellowship Plans for Survival*, c 1956, Women's Library LSE, TBG FL399.

that a tribute to the Pankhurst work and spirit was always the preface of the meeting', possibly in the form of the chair's speech. Teresa also wanted to broaden the extent of commemoration of women pioneers: 'This year pioneers in Education, next medicine, next prison reform, etc. The Suffragette records would provide a topic for some years and could be thus brought to the attention of many who would otherwise never been aware of them. Great adventurers among women would give another attractive list of women to be commemorated – explorers, war heroines, air-women, etc.'⁸⁰

In January 1957 Teresa contacted Christabel, no doubt in frustration at both the Fellowship's inability, or refusal, to adopt any of her proposed reforms and at the lack of progress with writing Suffrage history. Teresa, unwittingly and to her detriment, declared to Christabel: 'to hear the speeches at the Suffragette Fellowship meetings and to read the various volumes dealing with the movement shows how utterly they lack what is needed. The purely personal "I went to prison" line is re-told ad nauseam without historical context, philosophy or principle'.⁸¹

The unwelcome involvement of Teresa Billington-Greig in supporting author Fulford, and her zeal to introduce Fellowship reforms had in effect scarpered any goodwill that had existed toward her. This also forced an end to her commissions to prepare Pankhurst obituaries and her plan to write an updated suffrage history.⁸² Additionally, demonstrating that she was no longer welcome in Fellowship circles, when Teresa sought material from the General Manager of the Liberal Party she was informed by a Mr Harris that Enid Goulden-Bach had advised him not to provide material to her (Teresa Billington-Greig).⁸³ It is feasible that, for Teresa, in addition to attempts to

⁸⁰ Teresa Billington-Greig, 'Suffragette Fellowship Plans for Survival', c1956, Women's Library LSE, 7TBG Box 401.

⁸¹ Teresa Billington-Greig to Christabel Pankhurst, 8 January 1957, in Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.68.

⁸² Note: Teresa Billington-Greig had received a request from a newspaper to provide obituaries of Suffrage leaders. Letters Christabel to Teresa Billington-Greig & Teresa Billington-Greig to Christabel, requesting material and approvals to provide obituaries. Women's Library LSE Autograph Letter Collection, 5 August 1956, 9/20/035, 4 October 1956, 9/20/037.

⁸³ Herbert Harris to Teresa Billington-Greig, 3 August 1956, Women's Library, LSE Women's Library Autograph Letter Collection 9/01/1365.

block her by Christabel Pankhurst and Enid Goulden-Bach, her involvement had simply come too late in the lives of surviving Suffragettes. These women may have also felt aggrieved at Teresa's comment that less attention should be paid to Mrs Pankhurst in commemorations. By 1961 Teresa had withdrawn from public life, now widowed, and following a period of ill-health she died in 1964.⁸⁴

Teresa Billington-Greig had re-emerged out of loyalty to her good friend but was unable to shake off old animosities from Christabel, and her allies. The politics of the past had cancelled out her enthusiasm and desire to be useful. Despite the regrouping of the WFL and WSPU within the Fellowship, memories of the past remained a bitter obstacle that others refused to forgive and forget.

Governance

In 1947 Marian Lawson reminded readers that the Fellowship, in addition to its stated aims and objects, existed with a less tangible aim 'to continue the good comradeship engendered in the militant movement; to perpetuate the Suffragette Spirit. In this respect, it has been a very happy association'.⁸⁵ Distant subscribers possibly had little idea if there were 'rats in the ranks'. Dissent in the organisation was swiftly dealt with by Trustees and members of the Executive. However internal dissent was unintentionally sown in 1939 by the forward-thinking actions of Edith How-Martyn and Elsa Gye, who had initiated the appointment of Trustees via the Fellowship Trust Deed and enshrined the Suffragette Fellowship 'Constitution'.

On the outbreak of World War II Edith How-Martyn, who was about to embark on a 'world tour' delivering lectures on birth control, contacted her good friend from suffrage days, Teresa Billington-Greig, seeking her opinion on the appointment of Trustees to safeguard the growing Suffragette Fellowship Collection. Miss Irene Stoney was appointed by Edith to prepare legal documents, as Edith was keen to ensure the role was granted to a female

⁸⁴ A. Fitzgerald and C. McPhee, *The Non-Violent Militant*, Routledge, London, 2013, p.23.

⁸⁵ 'Our New Dress', Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1946.

lawyer. Self-appointed Trustees were Edith How-Martyn (Chair), Una Duval (Vice-Chair) Elsa Gye, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster and Winifred Mayo (Honorary Treasurer).⁸⁶ However, due to the difficulty of obtaining a quorum of the Executive Committee during the war, the newly formulated constitution was self-ratified.⁸⁷ The original Fellowship Constitution outlined the legal authority to appoint Trustees, to maintain financial control of funds and legal ownership of donated objects and records. All power and authority were granted to the governing body, as appointed Trustees and members of an ordinary committee appointed at an Annual General Meeting AGM. Three appointees would form an Executive Committee to act directly with Trustees. Notably, the Executive Committee, appointed by members, also had the direct power to fill all vacancies during its term of office. Membership categories of ordinary or associate membership were available, or life membership at the cost of £5, available only on the recommendation of the Executive Committee. Accordingly, the original self-appointed Trustees, and by proxy, the Executive Committee formed with limited powers, in 1930–1931 were given full authority to collect funds, records, memorials and objects henceforth to be known as ‘the Suffragette Fellowship Collection’ that remained forever after the sole legal responsibility of the Trustees.⁸⁸ Accordingly, all property and assets after that time, including gifts of some value from members of the AFL, and funds or future bequests of property, also became the legal property of Fellowship Trustees, and after that outside the control of the ordinary committee or members.⁸⁹ The formal constitution,

⁸⁶ Phyllis to Tess, 20 September 1939, The Women’s Library LSE, 7TBG B401. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1939-1940. Edith and Herbert sailed for New Zealand August 1940, Passenger List, Rangitata, The New Zealand Shipping Company, August 27, 1940, Ancestry.co.uk.

⁸⁷ ‘Suffragette Fellowship Memorandum’, 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

⁸⁸ ‘At the AGM the Secretary argued that the Trust Deed had placed the Fellowship on a ‘sound legal basis as it is now legally constituted to inherit, and own, the donated records. See Appendix 1: *Trustee and Committee Members*. ‘Suffragette Fellowship Constitution and Rules’, 1 July 1940, Women’s Library 7TGB Teresa Billington-Greig, Box 401. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1942, The Women’s Library LSE, 7TBG.

⁸⁹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, February 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279. noted that, Adeline Bourne of the Actress Franchise League gave 125 pounds and gift of a Jewelled Seal. A legacy form was included, suggested that members could ‘give and bequeath unto the Trustees of the Suffragette Fellowship’ an amount of funds or, in

as it stood, remained unaltered, and unchallenged until 1965. In the 1940s Stella Newsome replaced Marian Lawson as a Trustee, and in 1946 Enid Goulden-Bach replaced Elsa Inkster.⁹⁰

Discord

However, by the 1960s, out of concern at the perceived undemocratic nature of the constitution, rumblings were heard from ordinary members. From its inception, the Fellowship had encouraged members and supporters to provide financial support to fund proposed projects. One initiative, formed after the establishment of the Trust Deed, sought bequests of property, cash, bonds, shares, or any item of value, from supporters and like-minded organisations to be held in trust by Fellowship Trustees.⁹¹ Annual member subscriptions, reproduction of Suffragette speeches and sales of the *Roll of Honour of Suffragette Prisoners 1905-1914*, provided ongoing funds to print newsletters and host reunion events.

Funds were also bolstered with bequests from loyal members, and supporters, including founder Edith How-Martyn and Ellen (Nellie) Crocker. After Fellowship coffers were provided with a substantial boost in 1958, the Executive met to discuss expenditure of the residue of the legacy received that year from the estate of Herbert How-Martyn (who had inherited from Edith How-Martyn in 1954) and a financial bequest from Ellen (Nellie) Crocker.⁹² Two years later Grace Roe, now Vice President, informed members that the How-Martyn bequest was in the hands of solicitors and

part, 'I devise my dwelling house at (address) to the Trustees to be applied by them for any of the objects or purposes of the said Fellowship as defined by a Trust Deed bearing date 1st August 1940'. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1946. Winifred Mayo, Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1949, Harvard University, Schlesinger Library, Alice Paul Papers, MC 399, Folder 279.

⁹⁰ The Suffragette Fellowship, Memorandum, 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. See Appendix 1: *Suffragette Fellowship Trustee, Committee Members*.

⁹¹ The Fellowship bequest notice reproduced in 1951, 'the Trust Deed bearing the date of first day of August 1940, made by Edith How-Martyn and others. WFL, *Women's Bulletin*, 22 June 1951, LOU.LON 217.

⁹² The Suffragette Fellowship, *Executive Committee Minutes*, 25 September 1958, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

would shortly be at the disposal of the Trustees.⁹³ A few years later, the Crocker Bequest, estimated to be £6,000, was deposited into Fellowship coffers. Trustees called on members for suggestions 'as to the most appropriate use, in their opinion, this most generous gift should be put to'.⁹⁴ Lilian Lenton suggested that funds from the Crocker Estate should not be frittered away but saved for emergencies or special purposes.⁹⁵ The Fellowship received a diverse range of proposals to disburse the funds. Una Duval and Mari Hussey proposed a memorial, 'to be set up in a public place to commemorate the rank and file who worked for Women's Enfranchisement'. Others suggested that a sum of £1,000 be set aside for Suffragettes who were in advanced age and in need of welfare, or that a memorial prize be established as a contest open to all women voters in the Commonwealth. Suggestions were also made to split the funds in two: half for those who might need help and investment of the balance. Gladys Roberts suggested a trust fund to provide a bursary to a student at Oxford Women's Colleges, to be called the Ellen Crocker Bursary for 'study or research into some subject affecting the lives of women, or historical aspect of the emancipation of women'. Grace Roe seconded that suggestion and suggested the remaining funds provide books or cash grants to female students in need. Grace Roe and Sarah Winstedt suggested that 'necessary sums of money' be given to the Princess Tsahai Memorial Hospital in Ethiopia to 'endow a bed in the name of Sylvia Pankhurst'. Theresa Garnett suggested that a scholarship be established in the name of the Suffragette Fellowship to support activities of the International Alliance of Women, targeting help for women in countries where they did not yet have a vote. Mrs Eirene White MP, on behalf of the Fawcett Library, stated to date the Fellowship Trustees had provided 'only 1500 pounds' to the library and that the funds could contribute to purchasing additional books to add to its vast

⁹³ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1961. Luscombe Collection.

⁹⁴ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1964.

⁹⁵ The How-Martyn and Crocker bequests contributed to financial coffers, over 10,000 pounds in cash, shares and bonds in assets. Outgoings totalled over 400 pounds. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1965. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1964. Suffragette Fellowship, 'Statement of Current Account 1965', Women's Library LSE 7ELI/A Box 1.

collection of Suffragette materials.⁹⁶ Stella Newsome also reported that the Fawcett Society had suggested that ‘some of the Crocker legacy might be given to the support of their library’. The Fellowship, keen to ensure decisions remained in-house, declared the request would be kept in mind, but that any future requests must be sought directly from members’.⁹⁷

At the following AGM, in 1967, another four proposals were tabled: a scholarship of £2,000, to be known as the Christabel Pankhurst Scholarship at Manchester University for the benefit of female law students; a fund for the same amount to be known as the Emmeline and Frederick Pethick-Lawrence Fund for the benefit of Indian female students ‘undertaking a course of postgraduate work in the United Kingdom’; a £2,000 scholarship in the name of Edith How-Martyn at London University for female science students; and a proposal from Jessie Kenney that a plaque be erected at the Paris flat that had been occupied by Christabel.⁹⁸ A common theme of the proposals was a focus on providing educational opportunities for women to assist entry into various professions, the provision of books for women’s libraries, and the welfare of women. There were also proposals suggesting funding commemorations of women ‘firsts’ and contemporary women pioneers. Interestingly, despite the previous focus on prison and prison reforms aimed at women, apart from one suggestion to provide welfare, none of the suggested projects targeted programs to assist women prisoners. Ultimately the Trustees’ proposal for a permanent memorial to the rank and file became the preferred option. Without access to subsequent discussions, which may or may not have reflected a democratic decision-making process between Trustees and members, it is reasonable to assume that a physical monument may have been thought to provide a more fitting, and permanent, legacy of

⁹⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, Suggestions from members for the disposal of the How-Martyn and Ellen Crocker Legacies, The Women’s Library LSE, 7ACP.

⁹⁷ Suffragette Fellowship, *Executive Committee meeting*, 14 May 1964. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

⁹⁸ A proposed plaque inscription read; ‘Here were the Paris Headquarters of the British WSPU known as the Suffragettes, where Christabel Pankhurst allowed the Suffragettes to carry on their propaganda work and the raising of funds without fear of interference or of being extradited. Vive la France!’ Jessie’s proposal was seconded by Stella Newsome. Suffragette Fellowship, *Annual General Meeting*, 19 May 1967, The Women’s Library LSE 7ELI/A Box 1.

rank and file members, representing these women as feminist role models to inspire enfranchised women in England.

Reform and Resistance

Despite the good intentions of the Trust Deed – to safeguard collected materials – members expressed concern at the lack of input from members on the expenditure of available funds arising from several financial bequests granted to the Fellowship, and controlled solely by Trustees, in the 1950s. This discontent was combined with continued murmuring and disquiet from ordinary members at what they perceived to be an undemocratic process of appointing Trustees when positions became vacant due to the resignation or death of a Trustee. Dissenting members threatening legal action had the potential to cause irreversible damage to the long-standing work of Trustees to protect the reputation of the excellent work of the Fellowship. In 1954 Teresa Garnett was appointed Honorary Treasurer after emerging from the rank and file membership and would attempt to implement reforms and question the quality of governance and the legal standing of the Trustees.⁹⁹

In 1963 Marian Lawson, in response, to disquiet among some members, distributed a notice to all members acknowledging that there were ‘questions’ asked over the ‘internal arrangements of the Fellowship’.¹⁰⁰ At a specially convened meeting on 28 February, Marian Lawson proposed that Trustees present an Annual Report and Accounts to the AGM, that Trustee vacancies be filled at the AGM (in contrast to the previous custom of the Trustees) and that the AGM should have control of the Trust Fund. The Executive declared that the proposal was not, in fact, an amendment of the constitution, but of the Trust Deed. Marian Lawson hoped that the draft was a basis for discussion and that Trustees ‘would acquiesce in these proposals as she felt they had not fulfilled their obligations’. Teresa Garnett voiced her support for the proposal. Noting the concerns of other committee members, the chair

⁹⁹ See Appendix 1 *Suffragette Fellowship Trustees and Committee*.

¹⁰⁰ Suffragette Fellowship, *Minutes of the Executive Committee*, 13 March 1963, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

stated that an 'open split on these issues would greatly damage the reputation of the movement and be a disservice to the founder of the Fellowship and of the Trust Deed'. Mrs Duval 'emphasised that the very title "Trustee" implied trust'. The chair declared that some of the proposals 'put forward by Miss Lawson impinged upon the Trust Deed and were, therefore, ultra Vires and were not acceptable to the Trustees'. One Trustee noted with concern if Trustees were elected at an AGM, 'difficulties could arise if someone were elected who would not work harmoniously with the other Trustees in the spirit of the Trust Deed'. The other Trustees agreed with the concern and stated that they had always 'tried to follow faithfully the principles laid down by Edith How-Martyn'. Before voting, letters were read from Grace Roe, in support of Miss Lawson's draft, and from opposing committee members Mary Phillips and Winifred Mayo. All present agreed that written views 'should not be accepted as votes'. Six members voted against the proposal, three voted for and there was one abstention. Those who voted against believed that the proposal 'infringed the Trust Deed provisions'.¹⁰¹ The Executive further agreed that Marian Lawson, 'if she wished could submit a minority report at the 1964 AGM'. A letter was also read from Miss Lawson to Miss Bach noting that of the people who had voted 'against her draft, only one was an elected member'.¹⁰²

Minutes of the next meeting reveal that Teresa Garnett objected to the minutes of the previous meeting as 'one-sided'. Teresa believed that 'arguments submitted by herself and Miss Lawson were not reported'. It was agreed that Miss Lawson would provide a Minority Report for consideration at the next meeting.¹⁰³ The Minority Report, signed by Marian Lawson and Sarah Winstedt, was duly offered at the next post-AGM meeting, setting out the reasons for their objection to the majority vote to disregard a proposed amendment by Marian Lawson on 28 February 1964. The report outlines the history of Trustee appointments from August 1940, noting that two of the

¹⁰¹ Suffragette Fellowship, 'Special Meeting of the Executive', 28 February 1964, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹⁰² Suffragette Fellowship, 'Memorandum', 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹⁰³ Suffragette Fellowship, 'Executive Committee meeting', 24 March 1964, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

original Trustees had since died and were replaced by direct appointments that gave automatic ownership of all funds, legacy funds, relics and materials collected by the Fellowship. The signatories declared that 'the Suffragette Fellowship as such was not a party to this Agreement'. The report notes that there are no records that survived of these two appointments, either 'by written agreement or by resolution of the Suffragette Fellowship in General Meeting'. It was also recorded that 'there is no indication that we can discover that they were otherwise than self-appointed' and the report acknowledged the 'complete confidence in the integrity and good intentions' of the original Trustees. 'We do understand they took legal advice and we suggested that the Solicitor concerned does not seem to have specialised knowledge or experience in the law of Trusteeship, otherwise he, or she, would undoubtedly made it clear to their clients that there are ordinarily two parties to a Trust Deed. (a) The Settlers (in this case the Suffragette Fellowship) of the one part and (b) The Trustees of the Second Part. It is the Suffragette Fellowship in fact in our view from which the Trustees derive their authority, and to which they are responsible. But in the aforesaid agreement, these facts do not appear – it is entirely a one-sided agreement'.¹⁰⁴ The signatories declared that, in their view, counsel's opinion should be sought, and another Trust Deed prepared to define both the rights and responsibilities of Trustees.¹⁰⁵ The signatories noted that, as matters currently stood, the present Trustees 'stand possessed absolutely of the funds, including legacies upon trust, to apply the said trust for the purposes of the Suffragette Fellowship'. Concerns were also expressed that the Trustees could, at their discretion, move Trust funds to another association if the Trustees decided to divest themselves of the Fellowship altogether. The report highlighted the original Trust Deed appeared to give the Trustees all discretion to decide on the competency of Trustees. In other words, the Trustees answered to no-one other than themselves. The report's signatories believed that the absolute power of the Trustees was invested within the Trust Deed and there

¹⁰⁴ Suffragette Fellowship, 'Executive Committee meeting', 24 March 1964, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹⁰⁵ It is likely that the Lawson, Garnett and Winstedt sought Counsel from Lloyd Stott. Referenced in a copy of the Memorandum outlining the background of the Trust Deed formation, Women's Library LSE 7ACP. Marian Lawson, Theresa Garnett, Sarah Winstedt, *Minority Report*, c1964, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

were no provisions to question if the appointments or retirements of Trustees had been 'properly or regularly performed'. The signatories stated that, in their opinion, all the above behaviour of previous Trustees was 'quite out of character when applying to a democratic society like the Suffragette Fellowship'. The signatories, concerned that Trustees would begin to dispose of legacies from Edith How-Martyn and Ellen Crocker, proposed that the situation be 'rectified without delay'. It was estimated that on full handover of any legacies there would be 'in the region of 7000 or 8000 pounds' which in their view would provide a 'substantial foundation' that would make possible a memorial to the 'pioneers'.¹⁰⁶

At the AGM in 1965, Marian Lawson was determined to push through Trustee reforms and submitted a five-point resolution. Firstly, that the Trust Deed executed in August 1940 be terminated as from 1 August 1965, due to its invalidity. Secondly, that the Fellowship acknowledge and record 'gratitude to the signatories' of the 1940 agreement, and 'their successors for the duties and responsibility they voluntarily carried out'. Thirdly, that a new deed 'be prepared under which the Trustees' would be appointed from within the Fellowship. Fourthly, that all 'funds, legacies, relics, mementoes, etc. now held by present Custodians be handed over to the Trustees to be appointed as provided in the third point'. Finally, that 'New Trustees be appointed from the following list of members or such of them as may be willing to act; Enid Goulden-Bach, Sylvia Goulden-Bach, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Lilian Lenton, Stella Newsome, Grace Roe and Alsa Rhodes'. Notably, all the names were those of current committee members, although Marion's own name and those of several other committee members were omitted.¹⁰⁷ At the next ordinary meeting in June, demonstrating the escalating dissent linked to financial management, Marian Lawson called on the committee to appoint an independent auditor to examine the financial accounts.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Marian Lawson, Theresa Garnett, Sarah Winstedt, *Minority Report*, c1964, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. In Laughton, *The Woman with the Suitcase*, 2015.

¹⁰⁷ Due to uncertainty, and turmoil within the current Committee, a general election was not held as the AGM was further adjourned. Suffragette Fellowship, 'Resolution to be submitted to the AGM', 31 May 1965, The Women's Library LSE 7ACP.

¹⁰⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Meeting of the Executive Committee*, 15 June 1965. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

President Grace Roe, concerned at further damage to the Fellowship, proposed a peace offering to members of the Executive Committee, outlining her understanding that the 'main point of contention centres around' the 1940 Trust Deed. She acknowledged that some members were 'now questioning the validity of this Trust Deed and the relationship between the Trustees and the Suffragette Fellowship itself' and advised that the Trustees had sought legal advice on the matter. Grace pointed out that if the dispute became public, it would not only cause untold financial damage due to legal costs, but that the 'whole spirit of the Fellowship' would be destroyed. Grace pointed out it was a no-win situation for all parties that could cause 'great harm to the women's movement'. Grace's suggested alternative was to protect the current Trust Deed, and Trustees, whilst offering ordinary members additional input into decision-making in the Fellowship. Grace concluded her appeal to members, as a way to keep the peace with the following words: 'it is a testing time for us for unless we can find the way to work amicably together in a co-operative spirit, what is the purpose of having a Fellowship?'¹⁰⁹ Following legal advice, in April 1966 the Executive agreed to amend the constitution.¹¹⁰ The final draft constitution included new rules to elect the Executive and ordinary committee members at an AGM, to 'fill by co-option vacancies normally filled by election occurring during the term of office'. Though the Trust Deed was left to stand as ratified in 1940, replacement Trustees were no longer appointed when a vacancy occurred. It was also agreed that powers to alter the Constitution and Rules 'can only be made at a General Meeting of members' provided prior notice was distributed to all members. The remaining, and final, Fellowship Trustees were Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Enid Goulden-Bach,

¹⁰⁹ Grace Roe *notice to Executive Committee and Trustee's*, 25 June 1965, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

¹¹⁰ *Minutes Suffragette Fellowship*, 29 April 1966, Casey Papers, Laughton Archive. (Private Collection) Trustees acknowledged that 'difficultly re expenditure from Trust funds with the threat of legal action' (had) necessitated a new Constitution draft. The Draft was circulated to members which was approved at the AGM in June at Caxton Hall. Suffragette Fellowship, AGM Agenda, 6 June 1966, Women's Library LSE 7ELI A.

Stella Newsome and Mari Hussey.¹¹¹ The amended constitution was formally approved at the AGM the following year, and at the same time a proposal was approved for the memorial to rank and file Suffragettes, and in gratitude to 'the benefactors who have bequeathed legacies for the objects of the Suffragette Fellowship'.¹¹²

Grace Roe became President of the Fellowship at an opportune time; she was able to provide a stabilising influence on the Fellowship until ill-health in the 1970s forced her withdrawal from public life. From that time, due to the withdrawal of now elderly surviving Suffragettes, the Fellowship remained stable under the influence of Enid Goulden-Bach as President.

Conclusion

Though the Fellowship was democratic in ideology, the self-appointment and legal protections provided to Trustees, including their full control of funds, had caused rancour among members. Leaders were forced to navigate a rocky path to maintain control and monitor the management of militant legacies. However, precarious alliances and associated personal politics, directly seeded from historic splits in 1907, remained deeply embedded in the psyche of Suffragettes, causing much criticism and anger that led to Suffragettes closing the ranks to former old friends and outsiders. In addition to objecting to the ongoing airing of external opinions as to the effectiveness of militant activities, leaders would simply not tolerate division, or dissent, among members. However, there appears to be little evidence that the private schisms, caused by personality clashes and disputes over power and Fellowship assets, spilled over to soil the public face of the Fellowship. Arguably, if private disputes became public, any goodwill toward the Fellowship would have potentially been damaged and detrimentally affected the working relationships established with feminist networks. In addition,

¹¹¹ Suffragette Fellowship, *Constitution and Rules*, c1966, Women's Library, LSE 7ELI/A Box 1.

¹¹² Suffragette Fellowship, Annual General Meeting, 19 May 1967, Women's Library LSE 7ELI/A Box. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 30 July 1954, LOU.LON 260.

publicity about these disputes had the potential to destroy the authority of select member Suffragettes as leading authorities on militant histories.

Sympathetic potential new friends and allies, such as Jill Craigie, were thwarted due to timing, personal politics and distrust fuelled by anxiety at the perceived danger of personal histories being misrepresented. The Fellowship was aware of dangers lurking to damage their legacy, but later had little ability to effectively control the use of its collated materials after the Suffragette Fellowship Collection was handed over to the Museum of London and the Fawcett Library. Christabel and the Kenney sisters (Annie and Jessie) remained bonded in close friendship, and maintained a close, but wary eye, on the Fellowship, to ensure their own public images were represented in a suitable manner. Problematic acquaintances from the past, including Teresa Billington-Greig, remained 'old foes', distrusted by some Suffragettes, including the Pankhurst sisters. Male authors, in particular, were subjected to the full wrath of Fellowship threats and treated with disdain when the Fellowship's greatest fears were realised after the publication of several suffrage histories depicting militant campaigners as overly emotional, irrational women of the 'fairer' sex.

It is a testament to the combined leaderships of Edith How-Martyn, Grace Roe, Lilian Lenton and the Goulden-Bach women that the Fellowship successfully weathered the onslaught of various storms from within, and without, for decades, culminating with the erection of the memorial to the rank and file in 1970.

Chapter 10, *Pankhurst to the Pill*, explores the end days of the Fellowship, forced to yield control and management of its legacy to a new generation of critical feminists. It discusses the resultant clash of social mores arising from the end of first-wave feminism to the emergence of second-wave radical feminists in the 1960s and 1970s.

Chapter 10 From Pankhurst to the Pill

Introduction –The Ebbing of a Dwindling Tide

In the final decade of the Fellowship's organisational life, not only were members facing the challenge of ageing, they were also witness to the rise of the radical Women's Liberation Movement, viewed by some Suffragettes with bemusement. Whether viewed as a personal blessing, or curse, militant campaigners had endured a lifelong public fascination with their shared pasts.¹ Survivors found themselves in more demand than ever, sought out by a curious media keen to capture the final recall of memories of militant campaigners. New feminist campaigners, historians and researchers created new productions, utilising the Suffragette Fellowship Collection, to highlight 'unsung' suffrage stories and to amplify new suffrage heroines. Additional publicity generated by the release of a wave of new suffrage histories, including the docu-drama, *Shoulder to Shoulder* in 1974, spearheaded further interest in suffrage histories.² Yet, at the same time, ageing and loss of control forced remaining Fellowship members to hand over responsibility for the commemoration of suffrage histories, introducing a new dynamic in suffrage commemorations that opened the way for 'others' to recontextualise and re-interpret suffrage legacies.

The Second Wave

In the 1960s as the first-wave feminists and associated feminist groups, including the Women's Freedom League faded from public view the baby boomer generation of young women were stirred into action, fuelled by what they believed to be the oppression of their grandmothers and mothers as 'housewives', trapped in a cycle of domestic drudgery. A new wave of feminists demanded social reforms aimed at improving the lives of women

¹ 'Women's Defence Work: Former Suffragettes', *Manchester Guardian*, 8 September 1939, p.14.

² 'A Time to Remember. The Time of the Suffragette 1911-1913'. *The Canberra Times*, 21 February 1963, p.27. In 1970 Lilian Lenton, the only woman on a panel of men, was interviewed by David Frost. Program with Malcom Muggeridge. *The Reason Why? Calling all Women*, Suffragette Fellowship, 1970

on the margins who sought to escape the confines imposed by structural inequities imposed by class and gender. The cry of the second-wave feminist was 'liberation' for women: liberation from the demands of men and freedom to control one's own mind and body. Feminists became active in organising campaigns to insist on a woman's right to access safe abortions, and they demanded freedom of choice to dress and behave how they desired. Unlike the first-wave feminists, who considered leaders as role models, Hannam contends that women liberationists were suspicious of 'charismatic leaders' and preferred openly democratic, female-only groups that sought to subvert society's inherent views of women.³

Intergenerational Tension

In 1970 feminist Germaine Greer released *The Female Eunuch*, in which Greer suggested that women were 'frigid' and were too afraid to fly out of their self-induced cages. *The Female Eunuch* introduced a manifesto for the liberation of women that began by highlighting the achievements of Suffrage campaigners. The book made a series of pointed remarks highlighting what she believed to be a lack of achievements gained since feminists won Equal Franchise in 1928. Greer wrote of 'the old Suffragettes, who served their prison term and lived on through the years of gradual admission of women into professions which they declined to follow, in parliamentary freedoms which they declined to exercise, into academies which they used more and more as shops, where they could take out degrees while waiting to get married, have seen their spirit revive into younger women with a new and vital cast'. Greer was keen to inform her readers that she had sought out the 'blessing' of surviving first-wavers by quoting Mrs Hunkins-Hallinan, who 'welcomed the younger "militants"' and even welcomed their sexual frankness.⁴

³ See J. Workman, 'Wading through the Mire: An Historiographical Study of the British Women's Movement between the Wars'. *University of Sussex, Journal of Contemporary History*, Issue 2, April 2001. The Women's Freedom League disbanded November 1961. See Hannam, *Feminism. A Short History of a Big Idea*, 2007.

⁴ G. Greer, *The Female Eunuch*, New York, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1971, pp.1-2.

It is important to note that methods employed by the Women's Liberation Movement mirrored the spectacle-making used by first-wave feminists to publicise their anti-Establishment message via disruptions caused by public marching. The second-wave feminists sought public attention by highlighting provocative activities, such as symbolic public bra burnings, activities that Greer believed made women's liberation a 'hot number in the media'. Greer was keen to offer up women liberationists as an anti-female stereotype. This was in contrast to first-wave suffragists and Suffragettes, who openly sought to assure those who opposed Votes for Women that supporters of female suffrage desired to project womanly decorum and presented no threat to the gendered family status quo. Activities of the younger feminists, who according to Greer, through creating their own 'spectacle', gave the media provocative images of women, tainted sensationally with lesbianism and hinting at depravity and female perversions. These differed radically from the historic use of spectacle which featured women in white and marching in unison, an image now attached to Suffragettes' place in history. Howarth has suggested that the Women's Liberation Movement had in fact sought to mirror militant Edwardian campaigners, seeking to capture media attention.⁵

In a direct affront to the Fellowship, Greer continued to hurl comments questioning Suffragette ideology: 'the old Suffragette ladies ran about assuring everyone that they did not want to disrupt society or unseat God'. She continued, 'they spent so much time allaying the fears of the conservatives that they betrayed their cause and prepared the way for the failure of emancipation'.⁶ Greer's radical message urged women to break free from existing gender boundaries, to be more self-aware. Arguably, Germaine Greer was echoing the sentiment of Edith How-Martyn in the 1940s and 1950s in the expression of her disappointment in the perceived lack of gains for women. Both Greer and How-Martyn acknowledged that women had been empowered by gaining the vote, and by obtaining some gains between the wars, but both considered that the bulk of women remained overall decidedly

⁵ C. Wallace, *Greer, Untamed Shrew*, Sydney: Pan Macmillan, Australia, 1996, p.180-181. Howarth, *Women in Britain: Voices and Perspective from Twentieth-Century History*, 2019, pp. xxxix-xl.

⁶ G. Greer, 'Women will set their own mark', *Montreal Gazette*, 6 May 1971, p.33. Lake, *Getting Equal : The History of Australian Feminism*, 1999, pp.227-228.

apathetic at asserting their rights and furthering their cause. Greer also reasserted long-held assumptions, directed at militant Suffragettes, that Pankhurst-led campaigners were too concerned with maintaining the Edwardian, conservative, middle-class status quo.⁷

Additionally, the 'radical' notion of individualism over collectivism and the perceived insults to their devotion to long-deceased leaders was associated by the ageing Suffragettes with a perceived loosening of public morals, triggering them to voice their disapproval at the ethos and activities of the new feminists. In 1975 Grace Roe voiced her displeasure at new feminists: they 'seem to imagine that by imitating men, women can obtain equal privileges and rights and thus strengthen their position'. Grace believed that any activism of new feminists, as she saw it, was somewhat ineffective and sought to position the Suffragette use of militancy as a more effective campaign, as it directly affected only those organisations that had denied women the vote. For Grace, her feminism, 'was a spiritual campaign, where Women's Lib is primarily materialistic and does not attack those aspects of life and morals which have reduced the world to its present state of vulgarity and chaos'. Moreover, she believed that 'mere talk of burning bras and sexual politics is not going to make the world secure for the girls of the future'. Moreover, militancy was only used against organisations who feared financial disruption and loss, and to those in power who had denied women the vote.

⁸ Connie Lewcock, Suffragette and confessed arsonist, stated she did not 'identify as a feminist' and noted sarcastically, 'I think the jokes about Women's Lib nowadays are rather asked for'. Connie also joked about burning bras for publicity and believed that the stunts were a 'bit soft'.⁹ Suffragettes Elsie Bowerman and Grace Roe also took exception to the appropriation of the word 'militant' by second-wave feminists. The women pointed out that, 'no two organisations could have been more unlike each other'. Elsie and Grace pointed out that the WSPU took its inspiration from

⁷ Greer, *The Female Eunuch*, 1971, p.2.

⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

⁹ Connie Lewcock, *Harrison Oral Project*, Women's Library LSE, 15 April 1976, 8SUF/B/084/085.

the Victorian pioneers in social work, Florence Nightingale, Josephine Butler, Elizabeth Fry 'and Mrs Pankhurst herself', noting that women of that time had been positioned as 'second rate citizens, only useful to satisfy the materialistic or social needs of men, and without any political power to remedy these evils of society maintained through wrong political and social standards of the masculine element'.¹⁰

Contextually, radicalism is relative to changes swirling about generations at any given time. Suffragettes were considered radical in their day for daring to march en masse through public streets. Despite the radical nature of staging bra burnings, it was not viewed as being as radical as breaking windows, setting fire to buildings and placing explosive materials in public spaces. Women's libbers were viewed by some first-wave feminists as not employing radicalism to full effect to contribute to women's causes. Bra burners did not put their bodies on the line and were not forced into hiding to avoid further imprisonments. Some Suffragettes would have perceived Greer's statements as a personal criticism, though at heart this was a generational divide and a perceived loosening of morals by the new women libbers. Some ageing campaigners could not comprehend the symbolic nature of staging bra-burnings and failed to comprehend both the rationale and the activities the women used to draw attention to the manifesto of the second-wave feminists. For women of the Fellowship, who had continued to campaign on behalf of women from the 1930s through to the 1960s, it was a bittersweet message from a younger generation of women to accompany them into their fading years.

Creating a Spectacle

In July 1978 Connie Lewcock, Leonora Cohen and Fellowship Chair Enid Goulden-Bach, wearing prison medals and sashes, were front and centre at a service held near the statue of Mrs Pankhurst to commemorate fifty years of Equal Franchise in the UK. Gottlieb argues that this particular celebration was being held more 'within the context of the wider feminist movement in Britain than those of previous years'. The event was interrupted during official speeches by members of the Spare Rib Collective, dressed as Suffragettes,

¹⁰ The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling All Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

and targeting conservative MP. A statement, though steeped in respect, was directed at sister Suffragettes, pointing out that inaction over gender equality had led to a new reckoning and the rise of women's liberationists.¹¹ Protestors Lorraine Davis and Germaine Greer were invited onto the platform to speak. Davis and Greer appealed to Suffragettes and 'sisters' in the crowd by noting the dominance of the militant campaign in public memory and the lack of recognition of the feminist work of previous decades. However, in an apparent endorsement of the effectiveness of the memory work of the Fellowship, second-wavers acknowledged that 'few people now recall the forty-year fight of feminists and prostitutes working together to stop a legalised brothel system and the slave trade in under-aged women; or the early birth control campaigns which demanded women's right to control their own bodies. Yet almost everyone has heard about women chaining themselves to railings in pursuance of the vote. Why should this be so? Then, as now, focusing on the vote – in our childhood history books as such as in these 50th-anniversary celebrations – diverts attention away from changes that would materially affect the position of women'.¹² The new feminists concluded with a respectful nod to sisterhood by acknowledging the previous work of suffragists and Suffragettes: 'we want to make it clear that no feminist 50 years ago thought that getting the vote was the end of the struggle. We have not won – we've only just begun!'¹³

It was a nod to sisterhood, old and the new, with more in common than not to the way that constitutional or militant Edwardian campaigners had the same aims but adopted different methods. The Fellowship's Enid Goulden-Bach was 'rather amused by the great public fuss' that occurred during commemorations of Votes for Women.¹⁴

¹¹ C. Berthezene and J. Gottlieb, *Rethinking Right-Wing Women: Gender and the Conservative Party, 1880s to the Present*, Oxford University Press, 2018, pp.150-151.

¹² 'Protestors Speak out at Suffrage Ceremony', *The Times*, 3 July 1978, p.2.

¹³ Press Release, 'An Open Letter to Suffragettes', July 1978, The Women's Library LSE, 7CMS/04/01.

¹⁴ 'Liberty, Equality and Sisterhood', *The Canberra Times*, 1 July 1978, p.11.



Figure 27. Members of WFL, *Spare Rib*, Issue 70, May 1978.

The feminist journal *Spare Rib* also reported on commemorative activities and highlighted stories of first-wave campaigners by dedicating feature articles to suffrage campaigners using repurposed images from the Fellowship Suffragette Fellowship Collection. An issue in 1978 featured a front-page image reproducing a poster of WFL women affixing a 'proclamation poster' to a public building (Figure 25). Other images chosen included the caricature poster of doctors and nurses forcibly feeding an imprisoned Suffragette. Images, created for impact, were appropriated once again for a new feminist movement, casting Suffragettes as victims of oppression.¹⁵ A profile of Emmeline Pankhurst by Antonia Raeburn and Suffragette Jessie Stephens featured in 1975. *Spare Rib* focused on Jessie's working-class background and extracted material from her unpublished autobiography and oral interviews.¹⁶

The arrival of the second-wave feminist movement also led to an increased interest in women's history, that incorporated suffrage histories.¹⁷ The

¹⁵ See Miller., *A History of Hunger Strikes, Prisons Force Feeding and Medical Ethics*, 2016, p.205.

¹⁶ "Cover by H. M Paget reproduced courtesy of the Fawcett Library", in *Spare Rib*, Issue 70, May 1978. D. Gloden, 'Jessie Stephen, militant Suffragette, socialist pacifist', *Spare Rib*, Issue 32, 1975, p.13. Grace Roe appeared in *Spare Rib*, 1979, Issue 88, p.14.

¹⁷ L. Downs, *Writing Gender History*, Bloomsbury Academic 2nd, London, 2010, p.25. Liddington, *Rebel Girls : Their Fight for the Vote*, 2006, p.311. Jill Liddington reprinted the front page of the 1974 *Radio Times Special*, noted that *Shoulder to Shoulder* had gathered a great deal of interest, not only in the UK, but in America and Australia.

occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Equal Franchise (in 1928) prompted public exhibitions of suffrage histories, articles and interviews with surviving Suffragettes. Son of Sylvia, Dr Richard Pankhurst, opened the exhibit 'Liberty, Equality and Sisterhood' held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, organised by the Fawcett Library and others.¹⁸ The BBC interviewed Suffragettes Elizabeth Dean and Connie Lewcock in 1978. Connie was billed as the Suffragette whose childhood in Lincolnshire had 'within it the seeds of her later rebellion' and her activities as a militant Suffragette who had 'played a major part' in securing votes for women and 'looks back on her own life and the Suffragette's struggle'.¹⁹

In line with a strengthened interest in suffrage history, in November 1974 the BBC announced that a new series of 'plays', *Shoulder to Shoulder*, highlighting the 'Suffragettes' fight for votes for women' were to be screened the next year. The docu-drama by Midge Mackenzie screened in 1975, told the suffrage story purely from the Suffragette viewpoint. Mackenzie drew heavily from archival material in the Suffragette Collection and the docu-drama, produced as six plays, focused on members of the Pankhurst family – Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia. Purvis argues that *Shoulder to Shoulder* portrays Emmeline as a bad mother who was neglectful of her 'less favoured children, Harry, Adela and Sylvia'. The series was filtered through the lens of Sylvia as the unhappy, angry 'socialist daughter', producing a history favouring the socialist Sylvia over the authoritative Christabel and Emmeline. Furthermore, Purvis has argued that it was Sylvia's 1931 text *The Suffragette Movement* that provided crucial underlying reference points throughout the series. The first screening in the UK was on 3 April 1975. Each episode began with a rendition of *The March of the Women*. The first episode focused on the

¹⁸ 'The Right to Vote' exhibition at Westminster was organised by Jill Craigie was staged to showcase the 'stages of the suffrage campaign, and the progress of women thereafter, in New Zealand and Australia, who modelled themselves so much on the Mother Country gave the women the Vote in 1893 and 1901'. The author noted that the 'right to vote' exhibition . had 'stirring badges, banners and news pictures of Suffragettes fading out into women celebrities of the present'. Liberty, Equality and Sisterhood, Women's Library LSE 7CMS/04/01. C Spedding, *Spare Rib*, 'Fifty Years On', Women's Liberation Movement, Issue 73, August 1978, p.11.

¹⁹ 'A Rebel Remembers', Connie Lewcock BBC, *Evening Express*, 7 October 1978, p.2.

Pankhurst's, Episode Two on Annie Kenney, Episode Three on Lady Constance Lytton, Episode Four on Christabel Pankhurst. Episode Five, 'Outrage', centred on events leading to the death of Emily Wilding-Davison. The final episode, screened on 9 May, was presented via events centred on Sylvia Pankhurst, including the outbreak of the First World War and the contribution made by women during that war. The series focused heavily on the bonds of friendships forged between the women, from working-class Annie Kenney to the Pethick-Lawrences and Lady Constance Lytton. The docu-drama was supported by several publications and public events to mark the series' release.²⁰ In a *Radio Times* special supplement Mackenzie acknowledged that after meeting with the survivors, Grace Roe, Lilian Lenton, Una Duval and Alice Paul, 'and listening to their stories of this great struggle', she 'resolved to make my own attempt to redress the balance'. Mackenzie stated her motivation to create the docu-series came from her concern that history will be lost. She believed that Suffragettes were 'women of principle and passion were fighting one of the most important- and continuing- battles for human liberty'. Mackenzie also acknowledged as far as most women are concerned the [current] contest [second wave feminism] is taking place in a historical vacuum'.²¹

²⁰ *Television Today*, BBC Drama to Move Away from history and the classics, 22 November 1974, p.11. J. Purvis, 'The March of the Women', *History Today*, November 2014: <https://www.historytoday.com/march-women>.

²¹ Mackenzie, *Shoulder to Shoulder*, 1975. Radio Times Special, *How Women Fought for the Vote. A full illustrated guide to the new BBC TV Series Shoulder to Shoulder*, BBC Oxley Press, 63 pages, 1974. 'Invitation to a Luncheon', hosted by Joan Lester MP for the publication by Penguins/Allan Lane. Women's Library LSE 7VLI/FL637. A reception was hosted by Joan Lester MP.

Shoulder to Shoulder – The Book

The publication of a book to accompany the series featured a front cover noting that *Shoulder to Shoulder* was ‘the stirring history of the Militant Suffragettes: the voices, the faces, the deeds, the memories, the personal testimony of the remarkable women who fought – and won – the battle for the vote’. The book began with ‘the making of a militant’ featuring Emmeline Pankhurst as a young woman and concluded with a woman casting a vote in the first election following partial enfranchisement. Midge Mackenzie acknowledged the assistance of Fellowship President Enid Goulden-Bach, and Grace Roe, Una Duval, Lilian Lenton and ‘other surviving members’ of the WSPU, who she considered represented a most important factor of women’s hidden history. Mackenzie believed that other authors had denied the Suffragette movement its ‘spirit and soul’: ‘They seemed to take a consciously impersonal stand and in no way to reflect feelings and commitment of the women involved’. Mackenzie suggested the Suffragettes believed that achieving the vote would open the door to the ‘beginning of wide-ranging changes in the lives of all women’. The book also depicts the WFL-led boycott activities on census night 1911.²² The historical events are reproduced, in vivid detail, including individual activities, meetings and militant activities, demonstrating that by the 1970s, there was no attempt to sanitise Suffragette history. The text included images of property damaged or destroyed by fire; it highlighted the events of 1912 and of the ‘split’ of the Pethick-Lawrence’s from the WSPU. January 1913 events were termed ‘guerrilla militancy’. The book provided a detailed list of its source material, as well as a bibliography and complete index. Sawyer has suggested that the advertising flyer, in the tricolours, led to the Women’s Liberation activists adopting the colours for the movement in the 1970s.²³ A supplementary article, produced to introduce the series, featured interviews with Suffragettes Cicely Hale, Grace Roe and Leonora Cohen, who recalled that Suffragettes had been called ‘scum of the earth’. Cicely Hale, when asked for her views

²² Mackenzie, *Shoulder to Shoulder*, 1975. Mackenzie, *Shoulder to Shoulder*, 1975, p.172. Quoting, Emmeline Pankhurst.

²³ M. Sawyer, ‘Wearing Your Politics on Your Sleeve: The Role of Political Colours in Parties and Social Movements’, *Social Movement Studies*, vol 6, no. 1, 2007, p.50.

on 'Women's Lib', displayed her empathy and understanding, 'well, we were [also] laughed at in our time'.²⁴

However, historian Brian Harrison signalled he was not a fan of *Shoulder to Shoulder*. Pulling no punches, Harrison published a scathing attack of MacKenzie's methodological approach to the representation of suffrage history. In a further statement that would prove to be a forewarning to readers, Harrison also declared, 'if anything, the militant Suffragettes have received too much attention from Historians. Not too little; not does *Shoulder to Shoulder* live up to the brouhaha with which it has been launched'. Furthermore, Harrison voiced doubts about the veracity of the archival material used and claimed that it was largely a work of fiction, written in late life, by 'the Suffragettes themselves, and uncritically accepted by their latter-day disciples'. Harrison charged Mackenzie with practising history with a biased eye.²⁵ Ultimately, Harrison's oral history project, featuring interviews with suffragists and Suffragettes, including Fellowship President Grace Roe, was his attempt to correct what he viewed as an entrenched unbalanced view of suffrage history. Harrison charging Mackenzie with bias was the pot calling the kettle black. Harrison echoed Dangerfield in 1935, who had commented that 'the price of alleged Suffragette victory was to be a myth of female hysteria-tinged with the absurdity that has prevailed until our own times'. Harrison further claimed that it was highly questionable that 'in the political context of Edwardian England, Suffragette militancy was in fact justified, let alone successful'. Subsequently, as a result of his undertaking an oral history project, Harrison published a text that preferenced suffragists accounts of suffrage history – *Prudent Revolutionaries*, published in 1987.²⁶

²⁴ 'Keep the Torch Burning', *TV Life*, April 1974, The Kenney Papers, UEA, KP/AK/5.

²⁵ B. Harrison, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 13 February 1976, p.157. Harrison also stated that Mackenzie's claims that her subjects have 'been almost successfully erased from the history books' was a spurious claim given that her bibliography "lists two books published on the Suffragette movement by Antonia Raeburn and by Andrew Rosen in the past two years alone".

²⁶ Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*: 1987.

Rebirth of the Brave and the Righteous – Heroic Feminist Icons

Not only was *Shoulder to Shoulder* produced as a result of increased interest in suffrage histories, the series and book encouraged others to conduct additional research to rediscover Suffragettes who were not highlighted by the Fellowship.²⁷ Feminist historians began to research, publish and debate previously unrepresented suffrage histories, focusing on other, less well-known suffrage heroines, and resulting in a partial narrative shift away from ultra-militant campaigners, including Christabel, and Emmeline. Additionally, students of suffrage history often focus on discussions of the deep personal ties of former militants that also actively incorporate theories of radical feminism, discussions that are less focused on individual heroism.²⁸ Pankhurst family dynamics, quashed publicly by the Fellowship, once again became a focus of any discussions highlighting the history, and public memory, of Sylvia Pankhurst. Notably, a letter appeared in *The Times* after the screening of the series suggesting that the statue of Mrs Pankhurst would be improved by the addition of a memorial to Sylvia Pankhurst. The writer suggested that the bronze medallion of the Holloway Badge is moved to another location on the memorial and replaced with a representation of Sylvia.²⁹

At the same time, public withdrawal of ageing members of the Fellowship had effectively opened the door for other histories of suffrage woman to be re-discovered and spotlighted. As such the previous decades of dedicated memory work by the Fellowship to police and monitor public mentions of Suffragette histories, including their potentially unbalanced view of Sylvia Pankhurst and attempts to distance themselves from the actions by Emily Wilding-Davison that led to her death, wound down to a somewhat ineffective conclusion. Cowman and Purvis both agree that second-wave feminists

²⁷ Liddington, *Rebel Girls : Their Fight for the Vote*, 2006, p.311. Jill Liddington reprinted the front page of the 1974 *Radio Times Special*, noted that *Shoulder to Shoulder* had gathered a great deal of interest, not only in the UK, but in America, Australia and inspired a 'new generation of suffrage enthusiasts', including herself.

²⁸ S. Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, p.27.

²⁹ 'Pankhurst Memorial', *The Times*, 26 June 1974. p.19.

believed that Christabel and Emmeline had sought only to obtain gains for women on the same terms as men and did not go far enough in support of women; their leadership was also viewed as undemocratic and autocratic. Also, the abandonment of campaigning for votes for women and the contribution and support of Emmeline and Christabel to First World War efforts did not sit well with second-wave feminists, who contrasted this with the work of Sylvia Pankhurst and her day-to-day focus on the plight of working-class women and children in the East End of London. This ironically also mirrored previous and contemporary views of suffrage histories, and Sylvia was promptly anointed by second-wave feminists as the 'good Pankhurst'. Nevertheless, it is not readily acknowledged that the subscriber and supporter makeup of the Fellowship was, from its inception, comprised of a wide range of individuals: female, male, a mix of classes, backgrounds and members of both the WSPU, AFL and the WFL. Notably, accordingly to Cowman and Purvis, new historians preferred accounts incorporating Pankhurst family politics and favoured accounts by Sylvia Pankhurst due to perceptions that Emmeline and Christabel championed causes affecting only middle-class women.³⁰

In addition to attention on Sylvia Pankhurst as the 'good feminist', historians became more interested in the life, and death, of Emily Wilding-Davison. In 1983 *Spare Rib* devoted three pages to her militant career by highlighting images of the incident that led to her death; it reproduced the front page of *The Suffragette* journal that featured Emily reimagined as an Angel ascending to heaven.³¹ However, as discussed previously, Emily was barely acknowledged publicly by the Fellowship, possibly because her life and memory were ably represented by her good friend Mary Leigh. Notably, per Figure 21 (Chapter 6 *The Great Silence*) Kay and Mendes suggest that Emily

³⁰ Cowman, *Women of the Right Spirit: Paid Organisers of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), 1904-18*, 2007, p.3-4. M. Joannou and J. Purvis, 'Introduction', in Joannou and Purvis, eds, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : New Feminist Perspectives*, 1998, p.4.

³¹ R. Ferguson, 'In Praise of an Extremist', *Spare Rib*, January 1983, Issue 126.

is now seen as a 'figure of historical importance' and placed 'firmly within a history of democracy and struggle for political equality'.³²



Figure 28. Emily Wilding Davison, *The Suffragette*, 13 June 1913.
33

A memorial edition of *The Suffragette* featuring Emily Wilding-Davison was reproduced in the 1970s. The Fellowship would be aghast at today's creation of the cult of Emily, recast as the only apparent martyr for the cause, based solely on a decision made by her that led to her untimely death.

The Rise of Feminist Oral History

Bookending the rise of second-wave feminism, work featuring the recovery of women's histories led to an interest in practising oral history that aimed to capture living memories of participants. Practitioners coaxed out untold stories from those often denied a voice in other mainstream, and commercial, productions of history. Feminist historians are thought to have begun in the 1970s work that sought to uncover stories from a gendered working-class perspective. Practitioners in the social sciences often approached their subjects in a more relaxed and informal way than established historians of the day.³⁴ Feminist-focused oral history projects are assumed to 'emphasise understanding' and to encourage individual ideas and expression by allowing the subject to control the interview, rather than imposing questions or

³² J. B. Kay, and K. Mendes 'Gender, Media and Protest', *Media History*, vol 26, no. 2, 2018, pp.7-8. Figure 21: Table 1. Number of Articles per newspaper, 1913-2013, pp.6-7,8-12. In addition, and rightly so, the authors contend that despite her name appearing with some frequency since her death it 'cannot be understood straightforwardly as an indicator of the worth ascribed to women's history within our culture'.

³³ Emily Wilding-Davison', *The Suffragette*, 13 June 1913, pp.1-2.

³⁴ See: P. Hamilton and L. Shopes, *Oral History and Public Memories. Critical Perspectives on the Past*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 2008. J. Sangster, 'Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History', *Women's History Review*, vol 3, no. 1, 1994, p.5.

assuming to know more than the subject about the events in question. Mirroring the practice of the Fellowship in 1930 that drew on personal recall, feminist writers, including *Spare Rib*, also issued participant surveys and questionnaires. *Spare Rib* noted it was important to capture oral histories highlighting stories of overcoming adversity via the use of resistance and perseverance before it was too late.³⁵

In 1960 Australian feminist Jessie Street met with Suffragette friends in London at an International Women's Day function. Jessie recorded interviews with Fellowship members Eileen Casey, Charlotte Marsh, Lilian Lenton and Mary Leigh. The casual and informal banter on the recording reveals Jessie's ease and friendship with the Suffragettes and she quickly assimilates into the interviews by recollecting her own experiences in London as a young woman. Lilian, Charlie, Eileen and Mary gave vivid depictions of marching in deputations and participating in stone-throwing raids and spoke of the uncomfortable and painful experience of imprisonments and forcible feedings in prison. Lilian told, to mirth, how she targeted two properties a week to burn down and that when she asserted her objective in court, it caused quite a sensation in the press. Jessie's interviewing style was very relaxed, friendly and jovial. The women spoke openly about committing ultra-militant acts, including using bombs and arson. Eileen Casey, a hardened ultra-militant and member of the secretive Young Hot Bloods, recalled how a policeman had chivalrously carried her suitcase that was, unbeknown to him, loaded with explosive materials. The women spoke with ease of arrests, imprisonments, forcible feedings. Given the mirth and laughter of the women, it is easy to imagine this group of women perhaps on one level playing up to the recorder, all recalling Suffragette exploits with a twinkle in their eyes.³⁶

³⁵ See: S. Geiger, 'What's So Feminist About Women's Oral History?'. *Journal of Women's History*, vol 2, no. 1, Spring 1990, pp.170-175. P. Coleman, 'The Women Who Went Before', *Spare Rib*, May 1985, Issue 154.

³⁶ Speeches at the International Women's Day event focused on the Disarmament and the Peace Movement, notably 'The invisible dust of death' and 'Shadow of the Atomic War'. Recordings held by NSW State Archives. William Morrow-recordings of addresses given by Jessie Street and interviews with Jessie Street, 1953-1960, *Interviews by Jessie Street with Suffragettes including Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Eileen Casey and Mary Leigh*. NSW State Archives, CY MLOH52/8 & MLOH52/9. International Women's Day hosted by the National Assembly of Women at the White House London. Transcript copies *Recorded at The White House, Albany Street, London, NW1, March 1960*, Suffragette Fellowship, *The Suffragette*

The women were at ease with each other, sharing a collective recall of memory. The recorded interview revealed a warm, empathetic band of women, who at times egged each other on to reveal more information. It was a very friendly group dynamic that would have been lost if the women had been formally interviewed. Julie Stephens suggests there may be a tendency for oral interviews to become performative in nature.³⁷ The ageing Suffragettes, mindful of the recorder and the potential legacy of the material, may well have been over-dramatizing for the sense of occasion.

In comparison to the Street interviews, the Harrison oral project commenced in 1974, prompted by the release of *Shoulder to Shoulder*. It focused on campaigners, descendants and former workers from a diverse range of suffrage societies. A total of 210 oral interviews were conducted from 1974 to 1981.³⁸ Liddington described the interviews as ‘magnificent oral histories.’³⁹ Unlike Jessie Street’s grouped oral interviews in 1960, Harrison’s approach was more formal, methodical and scholarly. In meticulous project notes, Harrison outlined his methodology, requiring a ‘precise balance of skills’, preparing with considered notes beforehand and requiring patience and tolerance.⁴⁰ There is ample evidence that (most) militants, in particular, were quite open with Harrison, including Connie Lewcock who admitted to setting fire to a little wooden rail station when she was a teacher. Connie called it ‘a perfect crime’, to laughter from Harrison. Connie noted she regretted that she did not go to prison as she was too young at the time. Harrison was friendly, he suggested, ‘you must have been a very pretty girl... you certainly looked

Fellowship Collection. Museum of London, Microfilm 1985, Reel 2, Group B, 61.218/2.

³⁷ See: J. Stephens, ‘Our Remembered Selves: Oral History and Feminist Memory’, *Oral History*, Spring, vol 38, no. 1, 2010, p.87.

³⁸ “Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews,” The Women’s Library, LSE, 8SUF.

³⁹ Liddington, *Vanishing for the Vote: Suffrage, Citizenship and the Battle for the Census*, 2014, p.215. Fellowship members including Grace Roe, Marian Lawson, Helen Fraser, Victoria Lidiard, Jessie Stephens, Olive Bartels.

⁴⁰ “Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews,” The Women’s Library, LSE, 8SUFA., Project Documentation, p.5.

pretty in the photographs'. Sensing she was open to disclosure at that moment, Harrison used flattery to draw out information from his subject. Harrison particularly enjoyed recording with Grace Roe. Harrison later reflected on Grace, 'there was the fine, musical voice (despite all that forcible feeding, so many years ago) of Grace Roe, then almost blind, which carried away both herself and her listener with its enthralling portrayal of all that the militant movement had meant to her'. Grace spoke of her Suffragette work, ultra-militant activities, imprisonment, and the secretive Young Hot Bloods. Grace was very bright and spoke vividly and at length about Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney and recalled other comrades fondly. Again, in this interview, Harrison enquired of Grace whether Charlotte Marsh was good looking. Notably, the women in these interviews did not appear to take offence at his questioning about looks; perhaps they were flattered at talk of attractiveness or did not want to appear to not cooperate with their interviewer. It is certainly evident that the intimate nature of oral interviews, combined with the strategic preparation by Harrison to win over the trust of the women, paved the way for Suffragettes to provide quite reflective and open responses. Harrison described his interviews with Grace Roe, Connie Lewcock and Leonora Cohen as 'provocative and imaginative'.⁴¹ Demonstrating the level of trust placed in him, Harrison was also tasked with transporting treasured artefacts from their homes.⁴²

One of the few exceptions to the openly warm reception Harrison received during his oral history project was an interview with Fiona Billington-Greig, the daughter of Teresa. Fiona spoke about her mother's suffrage history and

⁴¹ Connie Lewcock, "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF/B/084/085, 15 April 1976. Fiona Billington-Greig, "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, SUF/B/010, 24 August 1974. Grace Roe, "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, 8SUF/B/007, 23 September 1974. 8SUF/B/13A, October 4, 1974 & Harrison Notes pp.1-4. "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUFA, Project Documentation, p.12.

⁴² *Oral Evidence on the Suffragette and Suffragists Movements*: The Brian Harrison Interviews 8SUF/A, July 1981, Women's Library LSE. Harrison noted he transported Mrs Despard's Mantilla, Nora Balls postcards and manuscripts to the Museum of London.

her personality traits, including her vulnerability, her lack of 'ruthlessness' and 'strong belief in rationality'. Fiona revealed to Harrison that her mother was unable to make small talk and incapable of white lies, and, in a revealing statement that provided context to the problematic history of 'splits' in suffrage days and with the Fellowship, that her mother was 'unable to work with others for long periods'. Fiona believed that her mother was 'straight-talking and refused to compromise'. Throughout the interview Fiona appeared to speak cautiously, often pausing, to form a carefully worded response before speaking on the record. Another wary descendent was Ms Stedman, daughter of Myra Sadd-Brown, who provided further context to her mother's involvement in suffrage history and other feminist causes. Ms Stedman instructed that future researchers be provided with two pages of explanatory notes to accompany her oral interview.⁴³ In the end, Harrison chose to dedicate a full chapter to a history of Teresa Billington-Greig, assisted by Fiona's oral evidence.⁴⁴

Harrison also interviewed suffrage author Roger Fulford, where his interviewing style was more relaxed and open. In a revealing interview, the men spoke of their common political world view and their attitudes toward militant campaigners and were quite dismissive of the effectiveness of militancy on the suffrage campaign. The men acknowledged they shared a view that the WSPU was a 'fascist organisation'. Harrison also acknowledged he was not an admirer of women in Parliament, believing that women MP's 'were a disaster' and that Lady Astor, 'made the whole thing slightly ridiculous'. Tellingly, Harrison also acknowledged that he was writing his book as a 'vindication of the Liberal Government'. Both men also confirmed that they looked to Sylvia's 1931 text as their bible and Fulford admitted he did not read autobiographies of Emmeline or Christabel as he believed they were 'less dependable'. Harrison praised the Fulford book and argued it was

⁴³ "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981 : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF. Ms Stedman, Notes, Harrison Oral Project, 8SUF/B/133B 1977 Ms Stedman accompanying notes. *Document written by Ms Stedman to be produced to readers wishing to listen to her interview.* Ms Stedman also acknowledged the support given to Suffragettes by Reverend Hankinson.

⁴⁴ Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987. *Prudent Revolutionaries* focused on non-militant accounts and featured a chapter on Teresa Billington-Greig, supplemented by oral information provided by her daughter, Fiona.

not 'unfair at all'. Fulford voiced his displeasure at being singled out for criticism by Suffragettes after the publication of the book. It is clear they were both dismissive of the militant leaders Emmeline and Christabel, and that Fiona Billington-Greig was correct to be cautious in expressing her views. It is also evident, by their willingness to talk to Harrison, that the Suffragettes were unaware of Harrison's private views; if they had known, they would not have agreed to participate in the oral history project.⁴⁵

In accompanying notes, Harrison openly reflected on his inability to remain unbiased in interviews, particularly with the militant campaigners. Although stating his support for 'feminism ideals' across all aspects of women lives, he noted, referring to his reviews on *Shoulder to Shoulder*, that he did not agree with some aspects of feminist writing. Though he expressed sympathy with the position of the militants, he did not agree with their methods. Harrison acknowledged that due to his gender, he invariably lacked a deeper understanding of the female plight and that his professional status as a historian had placed him at a disadvantage when interviewing women.⁴⁶ Holton has suggested that Harrison, expressing his understanding that militant campaigners, were unduly led by militant leaders, had embodied a 'liberal masculinist' view towards Suffragettes.⁴⁷

Harrison's interview style was to lead with open-ended questions to draw out accounts featuring differing personalities, disputes and opinions on Suffragettes and suffrage leaders. He approached his subjects calmly, often saying 'that is interesting', to coax the women to keep yielding information. In comparison, Jessie Street's more informal interviewing style, sharing friendly banter, did not probe for additional information in the same way as Harrison. Jessie understood the need for discretion and did not push the point. For Jessie, sisterhood forged over decades provided a level of trust between

⁴⁵ "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, 8SUF, Roger Fulford, 8SUF/B/083. Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987.

⁴⁶ "Oral evidence on the Suffragette and suffragist movements 1974-1981, : the Brian Harrison Interviews," The Women's Library, LSE, Project Documentation, 8SUFA, pp.3-6.

⁴⁷ S. Holton, 'The Making of Suffrage History', Purvis and Holton, eds, *Votes for Women*, 2000, pp.24-25.

interviewer and interviewees. The nature of the group interview made it appear more friendly, with no tension apparent between the women, who shared a rich store of memories presented in an informative and entertaining fashion. Harrison attempted to understand his subjects' formative years, and resultant world view by delving into their private and family backgrounds. In contrast, Jessie's interviews were not designed to reveal private or family matters, or to hint at a life lived outside suffrage campaigning, but were focused solely on Suffragette stories, detailing furious activities of daring and cunning escapades. Jessie understood her subjects, she had intimate knowledge of their shared past lives, and responded with empathy, humour and shared understanding.

End of Days

Poignantly, the final decade of the Fellowship, accompanied by an inevitable loss of control over the public representation of Suffragettes, aligned with an increased interest in suffrage histories. Votes for Women Day and Prisoners Day came to a natural end. However, the day commemorating Mrs Pankhurst continued into the 1980s. The ageing Suffragettes continued to be in demand for public appearances and interviews throughout the 1960s, 1970s and into the 1980s. As Trustees and Suffragettes died, the final responsibility to oversee the Fellowship legacy fell to Enid and Sybil Goulden-Bach. Enid, no doubt pleased to witness the formal emergence of 'women's history', had remarked, with insight from decades of memory work with the Fellowship, that women of history deserved more public recognition, not only as a specialised side note, or niche, but fully incorporated into mainstream history.⁴⁸

Through the 1960s and into the 1970s *Calling all Women* highlighted several media appearances by Lilian Lenton as the only female panel member in an interview with David Frost.⁴⁹ Marian Lawson, a WFL member, also remained

⁴⁸ Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1970.

⁴⁹ For a complete list of Suffragette appearances on TV and Radio see Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*. 2001, pp.218-221, pp.586-590.

in demand and recalled events that had occurred over sixty years ago, often recalling the daring adventures of former comrade Muriel Matters.⁵⁰ In the anniversary year of 1968 Grace Roe and Eleanor Higginson were interviewed by author Antonia Raeburn for the BBC Woman's Hour, billed as 'veterans of the Suffragette movement'.⁵¹ Mary Leigh, who was often singled out for mention by the media, was photographed in possession of the flag belonging to Emily Wilding-Davison. The article highlighted that Mary, was importantly an original Suffragette, who was seated next to a 'mini-skirted beneficiary of struggle'. In the same year as the Suffragette Memorial to the rank and file was unveiled, Fellowship subscribers dwindled to ninety-two with six life members. In July 1974 the papers noted that 'last week, a neglected anniversary passed again, almost without notice. A handful of people from an organisation called the Suffragette Fellowship gathered for tea at a London hotel and laid flowers at the Suffragette memorial near Caxton Hall. Among them were nine frail old ladies some of the very, very few original Suffragettes still living'. Cicely Hale, at the event, was asked for her views on their participation in the suffrage campaign. She retorted, 'of course I think it was worthwhile. I think we achieved a great deal, though there is still much further to go'. Cicely expressed her disappointment in women (of the present day) failing to take advantage of their rights, the failure of the educational system at not educating young women about history, and the disproportionately low number of women in Parliament. She suggested that young women would not take their right to vote for granted if students were taught of the struggles of women to gain enfranchisement.⁵²

⁵⁰ Marian recalled she was eyewitness to Muriel Matters dropping handbills from a dirigible balloon 1909. WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 17 November 1961, LOU.LON 533.

⁵¹ 'Woman's House' Eleanor Higginson and Grace Roe, 6 February 1968, BBC Archive. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1969.

⁵² 'Emancipation Then and Now', *The Illustrated London News*, 17 February 1968, p.20. *Suffragette Fellowship subscriptions paid for 1969*. The Women's Library, LSE, 7ACP. 'The Freedom Fighters Remembered over Tea', *The Liverpool Echo*, 20 July 1974, p.5.

By the following year, only three Trustees remained: Enid Goulden-Bach, Mari Hussey and Sybil Goulden-Bach. *Calling all Women* informed members that the end of the Fellowship was looming.⁵³



Figure 29. Fellowship Gathering 1975.⁵⁴

Within two years Grace Roe was in an assisted living facility reportedly regaling all within earshot of her Suffragette exploits.

Now in a nursing home Grace continued to be well known for her lively recall of Suffragette exploits. The housebound Leonora Cohen gave an interview to schoolgirl Amanda Rayner. Leonora Cohen died in 1978 and was respectfully remembered in *Spare Rib*.⁵⁵ A year after the demolition of the Suffragette Wing at Holloway Prison in 1977, President Enid Goulden-Bach was sought out by a young female researcher who expressed her wish to interview a living Suffragette. Enid, with a ready opinion, replied, 'I don't know

⁵³ The Executive Committee comprised of Grace Roe, Leonora Cohen, Lilian Thomas, Elizabeth Weir, Ann White and sister of Lilian Lenton, Katy Ash. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

⁵⁴ Fellowship gathering c1975, left to right Miss Potten, Lilian Thomas, Mrs Popplewell, Grace Roe, Cicely Hale, Marian Lawson. Standing, Henry Taylor, Miss Simmons, and friend. *Calling all Women*, 1975, The Women's Library, LSE, 2SJA/G/3.

⁵⁵ Ann Harling to James Taylor, 4 April 1977, The Kenney Papers, UEA KP/JT/3. James Taylor, husband of Annie Kenney, revealed that Grace Roe, aged 92 years was happy in her twilight years. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1977, The Women's Library LSE, 7VLI. The Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, 1978-79, The Women's Library LSE, 7ACP. A. Sebestyen, 'Century of Struggle', *Spare Rib*, November 1978, Issue 76, p.14.

of anyone who would be available, and if you want my candid opinion, I don't think they would come. They are of a good age now, and they don't see why they should do this, and nor do I. You've got the vote. Have a meeting to discuss what you think is wrong and decide how to use your vote to change it'. It was an admission that it was time to let Suffragettes rest in peace.⁵⁶ Grace Roe died 1979, aged 94, and was remembered in *Spare Rib* for her skill at evading arrest and her defiance at authorities while imprisoned. *Spare Rib*, in a nod to sisterhood, justified Grace's displeasure at activities of the Women Liberationists, and graciously closed with, 'we would have disagreed with her about so much, but can still respect her bravery and hope that we'll stay in the fight as long'.⁵⁷

Epilogue – 1980s and 1990s

The last surviving Suffragette, Victoria Liddiard, continued to be in demand by a curious public and participated in interviews well into the 1980s. In 1982 Enid Goulden-Bach expressed her own admiration to Victoria, 'you and your sisters represent the Suffragette inspiration to the present-day members, and we know you are with us in spirit'. Victoria's archive held at the Women's Library, holds a small news clip with a quote from Suffragette, Alderman Dorothy Bowker, quoted at a Fellowship event while wearing her prison medal, 'we must be the first prisoners ever to be vindicated in our own lifetimes'.⁵⁸ Though not a serving Suffragette, Enid Goulden-Bach, as a representative of the Pankhurst family, had loyally served the Fellowship. She died in February 1983 and was memorialised at the same church in

⁵⁶ In papers of Charlotte Mary Stott, Enid Goulden-Bach, 1978, Women's Library LSE, 7CMS/04/01. Charlotte was a journalist at *The Guardian*, London.

⁵⁷ 'You can do nothing with us at all', 'Grace Roe Under Arrest May 1914', *Spare Rib*, November 1979, Issue 88, p.14.

⁵⁸ Enid Goulden-Bach to Victoria Liddiard, The Women's Library LSE, 7VLI. Victoria Liddiard MOW's Prisoner, 'Women and Religion', *Chrysalis*, Publishers Grimstad, Rennie, 1977-1980, The Women's Library LSE 7VLI/3/3-12. The Women's Library LSE, 7VLI/1-2. Victoria, aged 102, also received requests from the public, and notably young women, seeking approvals to exhibit Suffragette objects and interviews asking her about Suffragettes and her activities. Tracey McCulloch (Age 14) to Victoria Liddiard, 2 June 1988. Elizabeth Kemp to Victoria Liddiard, 6 January 1984, The Women's Library LSE, 7VLI.

Westminster where her Great Aunt Emmeline was memorialised in 1928. Her daughter, and final Trustee, Sybil died, aged 93, in May 1998.⁵⁹

Conclusion

The memory work of the Fellowship that began in the 1930s overlapped with the emergence of the second-wave feminists. Despite claims of an ineffective first wave legacy, the second wave adopted similar methods to draw attention to its causes. Both relied on the power of disruption by radical action, creating public spectacles, making a 'noise', attracting media and reportage to raise public sympathy for and awareness of women's causes. Female solidarity and marching in numbers created scenes of a collective group of 'sisters' seeking to empower themselves and each other for future generations of women. Suffragettes employed oral history to capture immediate memories of surviving campaigners that preceded the work of second-wave feminist historians and Brian Harrison in the 1970s. The Fellowship oral interviews provide an enduring legacy of self-reflection, portraying a sense of deep sisterhood, intimacy, immediacy and empathy among fellow Suffragettes.

The 'liberal masculinist' approach of Harrison, strategic in planning, was professional and insightful in preparation and mindful of his outside status to interviewees. His follow-up notes, oral interview with a fellow male historian, and later publication, amply demonstrate his personal bias. In comparison, Jessie Street, as a friend of Suffragettes, provided a more intimate and playful interaction between the women. The friendly, open dialogue yielded additional information about ultra-militant activities, including bombs and arson attacks, that also served to demonstrate that by 1960 there was little constraint in personal disclosure. It should be acknowledged that Suffragettes, no doubt aware of the past value of their 'stories' in attracting media attention, had potentially overemphasised some acts to foster ongoing public interest in militant history. Oral history was employed by Suffragettes

⁵⁹ *Memorial to Enid Goulden-Bach*, 11 May 1983, Museum of London Suffrage Collection. 'Memorial Service, Enid Goulden-Bach', *The Times*, 24 February 1983, p.16. England and Wales National Probate Calendar, Index of Wills and Administrations 1858-1995. Ancestry.co.uk.

as another memory tool, a way to complement, and reinforce, their historical legacies.

Second-wave feminists adopted the Suffragette ideology of sisterhood as an enduring role model, as a demonstration of bravery, persistence and the power of direct action against authorities by demanding rights for women. However, some Suffragettes believed that their younger sisters did not deserve to be labelled as radicals. They bristled at the sentiment, and at the younger women's apparent disregard of their feminist work post-suffrage, and the suggestion that the Edwardian generation of feminists did not work hard enough to obtain additional rights after the granting of Equal Franchise. Suffragettes had placed their bodies on the line, some handled explosives, were imprisoned, chose to starve themselves and were forcibly fed; they objected being told by women who came after, who merely burned their bras, that they did not do enough. There was a generational mismatch of social mores, younger sisters wanted free love, while the older sisters had taken pains to counteract cries of 'hooligan women' by emphasising that their womanhood would not be affected after obtaining the vote. Additionally, second-wave feminists adopted Sylvia Pankhurst and Emily Wilding-Davison as their version of idealised feminists. Moreover, second-wave feminists also contributed to the continued preferencing of militant historical accounts over suffragist accounts by offering the ultra-militant, Emily Wilding-Davison, as the ultimate martyr for the cause.

From the 1960s, as the ageing Suffragettes were withdrawing from public life, and with the associated loss of public exposure and control of Suffragette history, a narrative turn shifted slightly from a Fellowship-preferred legacy of rank and file spokespeople, to new heroines to champion women's causes. The pioneering memory work of the Fellowship to recover their own heroines is also unacknowledged when attributing the 'recovery' of women's history from the 1960s. The new wave of feminists and historians also directly benefited from decades of work of the Suffragette Fellowship to collect and curate a collection of objects, relics and documents relating to militant suffrage campaigning.

Despite the claim that Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst sought to obtain votes on equal terms with men that also preferenced the welfare and interests

of middle-class women front and centre. There is demonstrated evidence, in part due to Suffragette oral histories in 1960, that during imprisonment Suffragettes took an active interest in the welfare of working-class women prisoners including flower sellers and cleaning women, some in prison due to charges of drunkenness. Thus, interest and compassion for fellow prisoners had seeded a lifelong interest that continued to drive Fellowship members to be active campaigners, seeking legal reforms on behalf of woman prisoners, and marginalised sex workers.⁶⁰

Moreover, despite the broad depth and scope of Fellowship memory work to highlight histories not involving imprisonment, claims persist that the work of the Fellowship focused solely on militant history. This can be partially attributed to the rise of second-wave feminism, and associated adoption of militant campaigners via *Spare Rib*. The championing by *Spare Rib* of Emily Wilding-Davison, to highlight her martyrdom, should also be considered as responsible for cultural and public memory preferences for militant histories, beyond the life of the Fellowship.

Besides, as was the case with every special suffrage anniversary, demonstrating the enduring legacy of militant suffrage pasts, each new 'commemorative wave' gives a louder voice to newly discovered rank and file militants, providing fresh perspectives of suffrage histories to be produced and, on occasion, further contested, by writers, researchers and historians.⁶¹

⁶⁰ William Morrow – Recordings of Addresses given by Jessie Street, and interviews with Jessie Street 1953-1960, Australian National Library. Also see Thesis Chapters 4 & 7 – *Shoulder to Shoulder Redux* and *Prison and Prisoner*.

⁶¹ 'Introduction', Joannou, and Purvis, eds, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : New Feminist Perspectives*, 1998, p.9. 'In 1991 the Women's History Network was established. April 1996 a conference 'Seeing Through Suffrage' was held at Greenwich University. In 2018 to mark the Centenary of partial Votes for Women, the '27th Annual Women's History Network Conference, hosted *'The Campaign for Women's Suffrage: National and International Conference'* held at Portsmouth University, August 31st - September 1st, 2018.

Conclusion

This thesis has critically examined the scope and breadth of activities employed by the Suffragette Fellowship and its preservation of historic materials, which offered an idealised version of feminist resistance. The Fellowship produced a curated version of history further assisted by reliance on a curated inventory of created publications, objects and relics that also eclipsed the cultural memory of suffragist groups and leaders. The research has demonstrated that the Fellowship has existed in archives, in notices, in newsletters, in imagery – invisible but hiding in plain sight. Any discussion that the Fellowship was overly focused on prisoners and imprisonment is also incomplete without taking into consideration decades of Fellowship memory work that was also created to support feminist causes. Moreover, despite claims that the Fellowship configured post-suffrage memories into a single narrative preferring prison and imprisonment, the Fellowship cannot be held entirely responsible for the partial representations of militant suffrage pasts by other authors, researchers and historians. This research has also demonstrated that despite claims of a feminist void post-1918, feminist activity in the UK remained active throughout the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, 1950s up until the supposed second wave of feminist activity.¹ It is clear that after the disbanding of the WSPU, Suffragettes did not believe that their work was done and they continued their activism through various avenues. One of these was the ongoing memory work of the Fellowship that has made a substantial contribution to British feminism that endures to this day.²

The Suffragette Fellowship, with a combined membership of sister Suffragettes from the WSPU, WFL and AFL, supporter feminist groups and individuals, actively commemorated past historic and contemporary successes of all women citizens and feminists. Suffragettes, who had centred themselves as living actors within suffrage history, sought to take control as official historians of the militant suffrage campaign by fashioning memories into commemorative activities, while in effect planning for

¹ See: A fuller discussion of the myth of the 1st and 2nd 'feminist waves.' E. Evans, P. Chamberlain, "Critical Waves: Exploring Feminist Identity, Discourse and Praxis in Western Feminism." *Social Movement Studies* 14, no. 4 (2015/07/04 2015): pp. 396-409.

² Harrison, *Prudent Revolutionaries*:1987, p.69.

their own passing and the Fellowship's eventual obsolescence as an organisation. Fellowship leaders were determined to leave behind memory traces to endure through time and space, fully aided by like-minded supporters and critical allies. They did this whilst also navigating the contested nature of suffrage histories caused by a legacy of militant campaigning and the personal tensions generated by past splits within militant suffrage organisations. The Fellowship included friends and supporters who were continually engaged via potent shared memories forged via ongoing Days of Obligation and Fellowship-sponsored events. Women in England and Australia were coaxed to participate, via shared bonds seeded in the past. Shared memories of the past involving exciting scenes of battles with police, evading arrest or 'rushing' on Parliament were utilised to empower, encourage and enhance friendships, and to provide group support to work toward common goals and objectives. This was helped by a commemorative fervour to tap into the branded nature of Suffragette spectacle, utilising tools of suffrage-created propaganda to establish the Suffragettes' historical legacy.

Fellowship members sharing sacred bonds, seeded in the past, were bound together by lived memories, and were equally equipped with a feminist sense of duty. Shared duties were activated by a repetitive commemorative calendar, capturing the past and often curating Suffragette memories, assisted by historic allies and unlikely friends, that collectively became the cultural memory of suffrage militant history. This process was further assisted by additional public attention on special suffrage anniversaries, enabling the Fellowship to ride the commemorative waves so as to amplify past gains to the general public.

The created Suffragette Fellowship Collection, and documents detailing suffrage histories, is the physical legacy of decades of memory work, comprising memoirs, images, objects and ephemera that provide a pictorial snapshot of militant suffrage history, to reveal the enduring nature of friendships and the sense of sisterhood among members across the UK and Australia. The collection, including the Prisoner *Roll of Honour*, memorial booklets, speeches and survey responses, provides a rich cultural legacy now heavily utilised by historians, researchers and authors. Although this study focuses on the afterlives of rank and file Suffragettes, the ghost of militant leaders, and specifically the Pankhurst family, often shaped decisions and events initiated by the Fellowship. Christabel Pankhurst, as one of the Pankhurst family and one of the first Suffragettes imprisoned for the cause, remained a core Fellowship

supporter and member. This research also reveals the contested nature of Christabel's memory when, after her death in 1958, objections were raised regarding the suitability of including her on the memorial to her mother in Tower Gardens. Despite an estrangement from the Fellowship following publication of her text in 1931, Sylvia Pankhurst was remembered fondly after her death. In recognition of her desire to not have a physical monument erected in her name, Fellowship members proposed an enduring memorial to her memory in the form of scholarships for women students.

Memory and Control

The establishment of a commemorative calendar centred on three Days of Obligation, using traditional norms of commemoration, with set rituals. This established a pattern of commemorative services that endured for decades.

Fellowship members recreated a version of a past using memory recall and cultural devices at commemorative services and reunion events, and in publications, by tapping into emotions. While this version no doubt exhibited a natural bias, it was also evidenced by available material evidence. While some objects were created through a prism of manufactured suffrage era propaganda, later eyewitness and personal testimonies backed up the recall of militants. Underpinned by anxiety about the misrepresentation of militant history by others, and of being forgotten, the Fellowship used tried and true tactics that mirrored practices of the past. They were also keenly aware that any form of history that puts women at the centre is often overlooked, and they successfully used known tools and strategies to effectively gain media attention by re-using images and objects of the past. The media, playing a mutually beneficial role, was also keen to report, tape and photograph the spectacle of ageing women, proudly wearing their 'war' medals and marching through the streets, whilst providing informative editorials highlighting suffrage histories as entertainment for readers. However, for the Fellowship, the danger inherent in courting the media was to risk negative editorialising. Recreating suffrage marches, wearing prison medals, sashes and carrying banners helped to sell their histories, and providing select interviews featuring colourful stories of imprisonment and, for some, forcible feeding, helped to keep the public memory alive and helped the Fellowship meet its aim and objectives. Though the use of wearing of medals, holding banners and singing songs provided engaging copy and good media coverage, the images of Suffragettes marching in public, in full regalia, led some reporters to describe this vision of 'grey-haired' women

in tones of parody. The stories were further assisted by reportage focused on old foes in the fight now becoming old friends, complete with images of Edith How-Martyn with Inspector Jarvis, suggesting that all was now forgiven, and helping to further legitimise past actions of militant Suffragettes.

The most important memory tool the Fellowship possessed was a network of friends who were possessed with an ample supply of lived, vivid memories of suffrage campaigning. Memories were evoked by physical reminders of the past, including imagery of ‘the colours’ attached to objects, and paraphernalia displayed repetitively at commemorative services, the distribution of surveys, the creation of publications, and later the use of oral histories. Connie Lewcock reflected many years after campaigning that her old friend Grace Roe had planted her garden in Suffragette colours, and that this never failed to trigger her memories of suffrage days.³

This thesis has demonstrated that militant campaigners, as self-appointed experts in select historic events, demanded complete ownership of Suffragette histories. It has also demonstrated that, as in suffrage days, militant campaigning remained contested history, forcing members to be hypervigilant in regard to incorrect or defamatory public comments aimed at militant leaders or about militant campaigners, leading to decisive action by members. Leaders were forced to navigate and manage ongoing public and private discourse and disagreements about who deserved memorialising, and what form of commemoration was suitable to remember fallen comrades. Therefore, the ongoing memory work, and feminist activities, of the Fellowship became another form of activism that carried on beyond suffrage campaigning. Accordingly, this study has provided a full account of Fellowship activities, including the purposeful role of the Days of Obligation – the day in July centred on the memory of Mrs Pankhurst, Prisoners Day in October, and Votes for Women Day in February – which all relied on commemorative practices of tradition, combined with a duty to remember, and regrouping friends together in comradeship. Commemorative events were also inclusive of like-minded supporters, and new friends, carefully curated and utilised with mutual purpose.

³ Connie Lewcock, 15 April 1976, Harrison Oral Project, The Women’s Library LSE, 8SUF/B/084/085.

Pankhurst family dynamics, and previous splits in the movement, remained a problematic legacy requiring careful and strategic management that required decisive action by Fellowship leaders who desired to heal old wounds and project a united front. This thesis has demonstrated that, with the help of unlikely friends, the Fellowship in its early history practised a form of consciously forgetting in order to deradicalize select aspects of militant pasts featuring bombs and arson. This was done to not only retain public sympathy for the Suffragette cause but to protect the reputations and livelihoods of specific individuals. The research demonstrates that after the death of Edith How-Martyn in 1954 and certainly by the 1960s, key individuals, now relieved of a sacred duty to guard the truth, openly discussed personal involvement in secretive targeted militant attacks on public property. The research has shown that the Fellowship was not comprised solely of former prisoners but was also inclusive of other suffrage groups, including the WFL, which did not support ultra-militant activities. Edith How-Martyn, as Fellowship founder, and Muriel Matters were key WFL members who did not hunger strike and were not force-fed. The study has also demonstrated that the Fellowship worked closely with the WFL to preference commemorating specific militant incidents over others, to omit the fouling of the ballot box in favour of the highly symbolic Grille Incident, featuring Muriel Matters as a speaker at reunion events.⁴

The Spirit and New Feminist Causes

This study has demonstrated that Fellowship's memory work was not focused solely on winning the vote but was inclusive of a broader feminist agenda concerned with issues including equal pay, and legal and prison reforms aimed at women. The Fellowship believed that, as pioneers, its members were uniquely possessed of a sacred feminist duty to continue campaigning and were compelled to work cooperatively with like-minded organisations.⁵ Members threatened governments of the day, mobilising women to rise up and revolt in numbers. And furthermore, in recognition of a feminist duty to pay it forward, in 1936 when questioned about the purpose of the Fellowship, the response was 'when all of us have passed away, we

⁴ See Chapter 1 *Origins*

⁵ *Aims and Objects*, Suffragette Fellowship, T. Keir-Cazalet, 'I Knew Mrs Pankhurst', 1945. Luscombe Collection.

must leave some women behind to carry on the Suffragette Spirit'.⁶ Demonstrating their self-belief as pioneers, Hannah Sheehy-Skeffington recalled that 'the path of the pioneer is a glorious and enviable one'.⁷ Additionally, all memory work and collected archives were in effect a form of memorial to the self, and all militant campaigners were offered as a template of feminist resistance. In the 1970s surviving Suffragettes were witness to the ascension of Margaret Thatcher to the position of Prime Minister in the United Kingdom.

The study provides fresh evidence that Fellowship leaders set out to highlight and amplify a range of inspirational 'women firsts' drawn from a diverse list of classes, professions and political beliefs. There is no evidence of disunity for example among members over the ongoing Fellowship support of aspirational conservative female politicians, Lady Nancy Astor and Margaret Thatcher. The research of this thesis has demonstrated that members continued to hold diverse political views and belonged to differing political parties from socialist to conservative. The study reveals that rather than focusing on political and class differences between women, the overriding consensus for inclusion into the Suffragette Fellowship was a purely personal belief in the historic right of suffragettes to campaign on a platform of 'Deeds not Words' in order to achieve votes for women.

The Fellowship created an archive of objects, relics and artefacts, gifting future feminists with a decidedly feminist archive by preserving historic images of militant suffrage campaigning as a form of 'prospective memory' by curating and collecting memory tools. Preservation and public displays of 'the colours' are now viewed as symbolic of feminist resistance.⁸

Despite claims that the Fellowship had created a master narrative, highlighting prison and prisoners, this study illuminates that Votes for Women Day and the remembrance of Mrs Pankhurst in July did not rely on highlighting stories of prisoners and

⁶ Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, December, 1936.

⁷ 'Looking Backward', *The Vote*, 9 May 1930, p.5.

⁸ Chidgey, 'Feminist Assemblages', 2013, p.92. Chidgey has argued that Suffragette related objects are used in present day to mobilise feminist causes.

imprisonment. Furthermore, I argue that the Suffragette Spirit, drawing heavily on feminist pioneers, was offered by the Fellowship as an example of female defiance, highlighting bravery and persistence, and not reliant on activities that led straight to prison. This research reveals that the Fellowship also provided a platform for suffrage and feminist groups, the WFL and AFL, to also commemorate their shared past. The Fellowship provided an appreciative, and empathetic audience, for the AFL, whose members recreated suffrage plays and provided financial bequests. Commemorative events hosted for the WFL included events focused on the Grille Incident and memories of the census protest, remembered at social gatherings as highlights of the WFL suffrage campaign.

A Feminist Archive

This study has highlighted the pioneering efforts of the Fellowship in creating a collective feminist archive; it has outlined the work that was undertaken to curate, and collect, relics, records and ephemera as well as the negotiations with, and eventual handover of the Collection to the Museum of London. Moreover, this thesis profiles the history of select objects and relics and examines the emotional attachment to these, and level of trust in the Fellowship held by original owners Suffragette artefacts and their families. Select objects, loaded with symbolic meaning, were handed over with great ceremony, including the Votes for Women banner held aloft by Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst in 1905, given to Manchester Council in 1960 for safekeeping.⁹ The study highlights the reverence with which objects were treated by the Fellowship and helps to further emphasise the importance of preserving all manner of objects linked to historic events. Objects and relics from Suffragette history assisted in creating and amplifying the dominant narrative of resistance toward authorities, in some cases prompting the reliving of the experience of trauma that led to the positive story of victory that appears to provide a grand narrative of Suffragette histories. The thesis has argued that the curation and collection of objects did not create a 'new narrative' of suffrage histories, but that these objects were re-used by the Fellowship to capture memories within the highly mediated environment of the Suffragette museums. Memories were also harnessed via written accounts, the creation of the Prisoner *Roll of Honour* and reported in *Calling all Women* and supporter newsletters, were also reflected within the Suffragette Fellowship Collection

⁹ Current location unknown, or not on public display.

of objects. Current Curator of the Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Beverly Cook, highlighted in the centenary year of Votes for Women in 2018, the profound responsibility entrusted in the Museum, which aims to keep 'alive the Suffragette Spirit'. Demonstrating the enduring emotional appeal of the collection, Cook believes that Suffragette-related objects continue to 'inspire, shock and divide opinion' for contemporary audiences.¹⁰

Memorials and Monuments

Demonstrating the fondness for her memory, Emmeline Pankhurst was remembered by people from all walks of life. From the humble flower seller Teddy to Prime Ministers, past and present. This study has demonstrated how the Fellowship conducted commemorative activities based on private and public memories of the militant leader, demonstrating the emotional capital invested in the statue by rank and file Suffragettes and supporters. The speedy unveiling of the statue, and prompt action by Fellowship members to guard against its relocation in the 1950s, also demonstrate that acts of remembrance are not 'set and forget'. Furthermore, those who initiate commemorations of the past via statuary do not view monuments as purely static objects but rather see them as endowed with embedded emotion that resurfaces when commemorating the past. The statue, though a shrine to a militant leader, was by direct association a temple of Suffragettes' own memories, continually reactivated via purposeful use, using traditions of marching, the wearing of Suffragette paraphernalia, and singing of suffrage songs, all presided over by the ghost of Emmeline. Undoubtedly, Suffragettes and supporters who campaigned tirelessly to erect the first statue to Emmeline Pankhurst would no doubt be pleased to know that the statue continues to stand on a critical site of memory, overseeing the Houses of Parliament, as an enduring feminist symbol of female defiance.¹¹

Conclusion and Limitations of the Research

¹⁰ <https://artsandculture.google.com/theme/keeping-alive-the-Suffragette-spirit/UQKyM8G-XaNFJA?hl=en>

¹¹ Suffragette Fellowship, 'Invitation to Mrs Pankhurst Birthday', 14 July 1986, The Women's Library LSE, 7VLI/1-2, 7LAC.

This research, drawn in part from personal letters, correspondence and associated publications, representing a fixed point of view of individuals and therefore a representation of their preferred selves, uses the framework of an organisational biography. The research seeks to extend knowledge of the history of the Suffragette Fellowship and its members' efforts as memory activists and attempts to nurture, reconcile, protect and legitimise an enduring cultural legacy of militant suffrage campaigners. No doubt, there is more history to be uncovered on the nature of interpersonal relationships between Fellowship leaders, with further scope to uncover other points of view and the opinions of those who disagreed with the activities of the Fellowship. The thesis also demonstrates there are new Suffragette stories to be uncovered that may provide a deeper understanding of the role of memory, and ageing, by illuminating the nature of personal friendships forged in history, and the enduring memories of women, which often last a lifetime. In a broad sense, this study has also examined how the title of Suffragette was successfully nurtured and protected by the Fellowship, a term that has endured and remains a feminist cultural icon.

In conclusion, as surviving militant campaigners retreated from public life, the public face of the Fellowship as an organisation also disappeared from public view. Despite decades of commemorative activities from 1926, including the Days of Obligation and feminist work, the overall story of the Fellowship was somewhat lost to history. However, its work to curate a broad and varied range of objects and its campaigns to erect memorials and monuments continue to provide opportunities for public engagement and to allow ongoing robust discussions among historians, researchers and writers that will continue to provide materials for public histories well into the future. The study has demonstrated that ultimately the Fellowship remained active not only to protect personal legacies but to carry on collecting and curating memories and objects sacred to Suffragettes, driven by a personal desire, inherent in all, to leave behind a legacy worth remembering. This thesis is therefore my memorial to Suffragists, Suffragettes and pioneering feminists through the ages, as a demonstration that Suffragettes, via the Fellowship, not only continued to campaign for equality for women, but worked together despite contestation, illness and the inevitable decline that comes with age, and remained united in sisterhood to celebrate and commemorate the power of the past. It is therefore my hope that the Fellowship will no longer remain invisible to a broader audience of scholars, historians, researchers and writers.

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Evening News Rockhampton
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Hull Daily Mail
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Mercury Hobart
Mirror Perth
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Morning Post
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Saskatoon Phoenix
Sheffield Independent
Suffolk and Essex Free Press
Sun Sydney
Sunday Observer
Sunday Times
Sunday Times Perth
Sunday Times Sydney
Sydney Morning Herald
Telegraph Brisbane
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<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-43868925#:~:text=A%20statue%20commemorating%20the%20life,of%20the%20past%20100%20years>.

Ongar Historical Society. <https://omhs.org.uk/>

Smith College Library. <https://libraries.smith.edu/research-tools/smith-digital-collections>

Surrey History Centre. <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/history-centre>

The Museum of London
<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/museum-of-london>

Unwin. M., 'Women and the Vote, Holloway medal awarded to Emmeline Pankhurst'. Accessed 08 October 2018.
<https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/parliamentary-collections/collections-suffragettes/medal/>

Archives:

City of Westminster Archive - *Westminster Minutes of Proceedings*, Town Planning Committee, 26 June 1969.

Gerritsen Collection of Aletta H. Jacobs via ProQuest - Annual Reports of the Fawcett Society.

Harvard University, Schlesinger Library on the History of women in America, Alice Paul Papers, Series 11. Suffrage, MC399, Folder 279. Cambridge Mass.

Laughton Archive - Casey Papers.

Luscombe Archives:

'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London 17 June 1911, Australian section forming up on the Thames embankment'. George Rose Stereo view, 11,950.

'Great Suffragette Demonstration in London 17 June 1911, Australian contingent on the embankment'. George Rose, Stereo view, 11,954.

M. Lawson in T. Cazalet-Keir, 'I Knew Mrs Pankhurst', Suffragette Fellowship, 1945

'Roll of Honour, Suffragette Prisoners 1905-1914', The Suffragette Fellowship. c1955. *The Suffragette*, 13 June 1913, 26 June 1914.

WSPU Prisoner Badge

WSPU Enamel Shield Badge

National Library Australia:

Papers of Bessie Rischbieth, National Library Australia, MS2004, Series 3.

Papers of Thelma Hunter 1950-2000, National Library Australia, MS 9353.

Papers of Jessie Street, National Library Australia, MS2683, Series 3.

Suffragette Fellowship – *Calling all Women* 1946, 1947, 1948, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1959, 1960, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, S 324.3

National Portrait Gallery, Heinz Archive and Library:

NPG 2360 – Images of Portraits, sculptures and photographs of Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst.

State Library Victoria:

Collections held by the Fawcett Library relating to Australia and New Zealand (M2291-2314), (19) (Microform)

The British Library:

The Suffragette Fellowship- *Newsletter*, 1936, 1938, 1939/40, 1944. General Collection P.P. 7616.IF

The Suffragette Fellowship – *Calling all Women*, 1956, 1957, General Collection, P.P. 7616.IF

Women's Freedom League - 'Women's Freedom League Bulletin' & 'The Women's Bulletin', 1933-1961

The Muriel Matters Society:

'The 10th Anniversary of Votes for some Women', 11 February 1928.

Reproduction image of WFL Prisoner Badge.

The Museum of London:

Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette movement, 50.82/1-1549.

Suffragette Fellowship Collection, David Mitchell Suffragette Fellowship Collection, 73.83.51.

The National Archives UK:

Director of Public Prosecutions, DPP 1/23

Home Office, HO144/891/17154

Home Office, HO45/24663

Home Office, HO/24665

Metropolitan Police: Office of the Commissioner: Correspondence and Papers ,MEP03/203

Ministry of Works, MOH 20/188 – Statues, Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst, Victoria Tower Gardens.

Ministry of Works, MOH 20-306

Ministry of Works, MOH AL 9047

Parliamentary Works Office, PWO 16/26

Parliamentary Works Office, PWO 11/146

Prime Minister's Office, PREM 11/1036

Victoria Tower Gardens, AL 9047/25

The Women's Library LSE :

2SJA/G/3 Records of the St Joan's Political Alliance

7ACP Papers of Alicia Percival

7AMP Papers of Muriel Pierotti

7CMS Papers of Charlotte Mary Stott

7EHM Papers of Edith How-Martyn

7ELI Papers of Elizabeth Impey

7EWD Emily Wilding-Davison

7HFD Papers of Hugh Franklin and Elsie Duval

7HLN Papers of Helena Normanton

7JCC Papers of Jill Craigie

7LAC Papers of Annie Lacon

7MER ME Roberts

7MLB Papers of Mary Leigh Brown

7TBG Papers of Teresa Billington-Greig

7VDG Vida Goldstein

7VJH Vera (Jack) Holme

7VLI Victoria Liddiard

7WFL Women's Freedom League

8SUF Oral Evidence on the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements

GB 106 9/31/55 Correspondence Album 1

TWL 2004.44 Series Photographs

TWL 1999.32/3 Posters

TWL 6.1 Series Photographs

University of East Anglia – The Kenney Papers:

KP AK 2

KP AK 5

KP JK 3

KP JT 3

University of Melbourne Library:

The Suffragette Fellowship Collection, The Museum of London. London
Harvester Microfilm 1985. Accessed 2017-2019, University of Melbourne,
Uni/M Bail/5095.

Wellcome Collection:

PPEPR/A Edith How-Martyn: Personal and biographical

Appendices

1. Suffragette Fellowship Trustees and Committee

Newsletter, Suffragette Fellowship, 1935-1946

Calling all Women, Suffragette Fellowship, 1947-1978

Year	Trustees Custodians	President	Chair	Deputy Chair	Treasurer	Sec	Committee
1928 to 1934	Edith How- Martyn, Una Duval, Elsa Gye, Geraldine Lennox, Winifred Mayo	Edith How- Martyn				Winifred Mayo	Custodians
1935	Edith How- Martyn, Una Duval, Winifred Mayo, Mary Phillips, Elsa Gye	Edith How- Martyn			Mary Phillips	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1936	Edith How- Martyn, Una Duval, Winifred Mayo, Mary Phillips, Elsa Gye, Olive Walton	Edith How- Martyn			Elsa Inkster	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1937	Edith How- Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Winifred Mayo, Elsa Gye,	Edith How- Martyn			Elsa Inkster	Elsa Gye	Custodians

1938	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Winifred Mayo, Elsa Gye,	Edith How-Martyn		Una Duval	Elsa Inkster	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1939	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Winifred Mayo, Elsa Gye,	Edith How-Martyn		Una Duval	Winifred Mayo	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1940	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Winifred Mayo, Elsa Gye,	Edith How-Martyn		Una Duval	Winifred Mayo	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1941	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Winifred Mayo, Elsa Gye,	Edith How-Martyn		Una Duval	Winifred Mayo	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1942	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval Elsa Gye, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster, Winifred Mayo	Edith How-Martyn			Rose Lamartine-Yates - Record Room	Elsa Gye	Custodians
1943	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval Elsa Gye, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster, Winifred Mayo	Edith How-Martyn			Winifred Mayo	Elsa Gye	Custodians

1944	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster, Winifred Mayo, Marian Lawson	Edith How-Martyn		Marian Lawson	Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Archdale, Helen Atkinson, Enid Goulden-Bach, Stella Newsome, Marian Reeves,
1945	Edith How-Martyn, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster, Winifred Mayo, Marian Lawson	Edith How-Martyn		Marian Lawson	Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Archdale, Helen Atkinson, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster, Marian Reeves
1946	Edith How-Martyn, Marian Lawson, Winifred Mayo, Stella Newsome, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Elsa Inkster,	Edith How-Martyn		Marian Lawson	Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Archdale, Helen Atkinson, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Marian Reeves
1947	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Archdale, Helen Atkinson, Una Duval, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Marian Reeves, Marian Lawson

1948	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Archdale, Helen Atkinson, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Marian Reeves, Una Duval,
1949	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Archdale, Helen Atkinson, Una Duval, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Marian Reeves
1950	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Atkinson, Theresa Garnett, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Olive Llewellyn, Marian Reeves
1951	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Atkinson, Theresa Garnett, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Olive Llewellyn, Marian Reeves, Charlotte Marsh,

1952	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Atkinson, Una Duval, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Olive Llewellyn, Charlotte Marsh, Marian Reeves
1953	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Atkinson, Una Duval, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Olive Llewellyn, Charlotte Marsh, Marian Reeves
1954	Enid Goulden-Bach, Edith How-Martyn, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Edith How-Martyn	Enid Goulden-Bach		Winifred Mayo	Stella Newsome	Helen Atkinson, Una Duval, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Olive Llewellyn, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Phillips, Marian Reeves
1955	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Marian Reeves	Theresa Garnett	Stella Newsome	Helen Atkinson, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Olive Llewellyn, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Phillips

1956	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Marian Reeves	Una Duval	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Philips
1957	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Marian Reeves			Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Philips
1958	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Marian Reeves	Una Duval	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Philips
1959	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Marian Reeves	Una Duval	Stella Newsome	Sybil Goulden-Bach, Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Phillips, Norah

							Bowes - Press Officer
1960	Enid Goulden- Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden- Bach	Marian Reeves	Una Duval	Stella Newsome	Sybil Goulden- Bach, Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Lilian Lenton, Charlotte Marsh, Mary Phillips, Norah Bowes - Press Officer
1961	Enid Goulden- Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden- Bach	Mari Hussey/Grace Roe	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Sybil Goulden- Bach, Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mary Phillips, Norah Bowes
1962	Enid Goulden- Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden- Bach	Grace Roe	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mari Hussey, Mary Phillips, Norah Bowes
1963	Enid Goulden- Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval,	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden- Bach	Una Duval/ Marian Lawson, Helen Pethick- Lawrence,	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mary Phillips,

	Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach			Grace Roe/ Mari Hussey			Alsa Rhodes, Sarah Winstedt, Norah Bowes
1964	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Una Duval, Marian Lawson, Helen Pethick-Lawrence, Grace Roe, Mari Hussey	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mary Phillips, Alsa Rhodes, Sarah Winstedt, Norah Bowes
1965	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach	Winifred Mayo	Enid Goulden-Bach	Una Duval, Marian Lawson, Helen Pethick-Lawrence, Grace Roe, Mari Hussey	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Theresa Garnett, Mary Phillips, Alsa Rhodes, Sarah Winstedt, Norah Bowes
1966	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach	Winifred Mayo	Grace Roe	Una Duval/Helen Pethick-Lawrence, Marian Lawson, Mari Hussey	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Eileen Casey, Gwen O'Brien, Mary Phillips, Sarah Winstedt, Lilian Thomas, Sybil Goulden-Bach
1967	Enid Goulden-Bach, Winifred Mayo, Una Duval,	Winifred Mayo	Grace Roe	Una Duval, Helen Pethick-Lawrence, Marian	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Gwen O'Brien, Elizabeth Weir, Sarah Winstedt,

	Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach			Lawson, Mari Hussey			Esther Knowles, Lilian Thomas,
1968	Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Leonora Cohen, Una Duval, Helen Pethick-Lawrence, Marian Lawson, Mari Hussey,	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Sybil Goulden-Bach, Gwen O'Brien, Mary Phillips, Elizabeth Weir, Sarah Winstedt, Enid Goulden-Bach (Editor), Lilian Thomas
1969	Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Stella Newsome, Sybil Goulden-Bach	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Leonora Cohen, Una Duval, Mari Hussey, Marian Lawson	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Sybil Goulden-Bach, Gwen O'Brien, Mary Phillips, Elizabeth Weir, Sarah Winstedt, Lilian Thomas
1970	Mari Hussey, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval,	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Leonora Cohen, Una Duval, Muriel Pierotti, Marian Lawson, Mari Hussey,	Lilian Lenton	Stella Newsome	Gwen O'Brien, Elizabeth Weir, Sarah Winstedt, Esther Knowles, Lilian Thomas,

1971	Mari Hussey, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval,	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Leonora Cohen, Una Duval, Muriel Pierotti, Marian Lawson, Mari Hussey,	Lilian Lenton	Esther Knowles	Lilian Thomas, Katy Ash (sister of Lilian Lenton) Sarah Winstedt, Elizabeth Weir, Gwen O'Brien,
1972	Mari Hussey, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval,	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Mari Hussey, Leonora Cohen, Muriel Pierotti,			Sybil Goulden-Bach, Lilian Thomas, Katy Ash, Elizabeth Weir, Gwen O'Brien
1973	Mari Hussey, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval,	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Mari Hussey, Leonora Cohen, Muriel Pierotti,			
1974	Mari Hussey, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Enid Goulden-Bach, Una Duval,	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Mari Hussey, Leonora Cohen, Muriel Pierotti,			
1975	Enid Goulden-Bach, Sybil Goulden-Bach, Mari Hussey	Grace Roe	Enid Goulden-Bach	Mari Hussey, Leonora Cohen, Muriel Pierotti,	Katy Ash		Sybil Goulden-Bach, Lilian Thomas, Elizabeth Weir, Ann White
1976 - 1978			Enid Goulden-Bach	Leonora Cohen			

2. Select History of Objects

Note: this list represents a fraction of objects collected by the Fellowship.

Description	History	Donor	Source
1. Teresa Billington-Greig Banner	In 1935 Teresa Billington-Greig presented a banner embroidered in WFL colours, with her name in gold thread, on a green background that Teresa claimed to have found at the Caledonian markets.	Teresa Billington-Greig	Suffragette Fellowship, <i>Calling all Women</i> , 1936
2. Portrait of Edith How-Martyn	In 1937 Inspector Jarvis donated a large picture of Edith How-Martyn, given to him in 1908 that he had kept as a memento, 'of some very stirring times'.	Inspector Jarvis	Inspector Jarvis to Edith How-Martyn, 3 November 1937. Women's Library, LSE, TWL 6.1 Box 2
3. Prison Badges	Two WSPU Prison Badges	Una Duval	Suffragette Fellowship, <i>Calling all Women</i> , 1937
4. Mementoes of Marian Wallace-Dunlop.	In 1945 Mrs Dixon, donated mementoes of her late sister Marian Wallace-Dunlop. Note: Marian Wallace-Dunlop was the first Suffragette prisoner to hunger strike June 1909.	Mrs Dixon	Suffragette Fellowship, <i>Calling all Women</i> , 1945
5. Inscribed Musical Baton and Photograph	Baton and a photograph belonging to Dame Ethel Smyth donated at a commemorative service to Mrs Pankhurst in 1945 where guests were entertained by a choir singing <i>March of the Women</i> .	Commander L R Venn	Suffragette Fellowship, <i>Calling all Women</i> , 1945
6. An original copy of March of the Women, Hat and Bannerette	Jessie Kenney presented mementoes given to her and Emmeline Pankhurst by the Grand Duchess Elizabeth on her Russian Mission and an original copy of March of the Women. Annie Kenney donated the hat and bannerette owned by Lady Constance Lytton when dressed as 'Jane Wharton'.	Jessie Kenney & Annie Kenney	Jessie Kenney to Vera Holmes, 28 September 1949, Women's Library, LSE 7VJH/1/4-3
7. Diaries and Letters	In 1951 diaries and letters of Lady Constance Lytton presented by Lady Emily Lutyens and Lady Pethick-Lawrence	Lady Emily Lutyens, Lady Pethick-Lawrence	Suffragette Fellowship, <i>Calling all Women</i> , 1951

8. A Miniature Portrait of Mrs Pankhurst	Handover to the Suffragette Fellowship at the Minerva Club in 1956	Yvonne and Biddy Gough, on behalf of their mother Teresa Gough	WFL, <i>The Women's Bulletin</i> , 24 February 1956.
9. A portrait of Mrs Pankhurst	A portrait of Mrs Pankhurst by Julia Pannett presented to the Fellowship.	Mrs Buckley	WFL, <i>The Women's Bulletin</i> , 26 September 1958
10. An etching of Christabel Pankhurst	The Fellowship took possession of the etching of Christabel Pankhurst.	Adeline Bourne - Actress Franchise League	The Suffragette Fellowship, 'Executive Meeting Minutes', 5 November 1958
11. Bronze Bust of Emmeline Pankhurst	In 1954 a bust of Emmeline Pankhurst, cast from a clay model carved in prison by Alice Morgan Wright was donated to the Fellowship. Stella Newsome was not a fan of the model and considered the bust was 'badly expressed'. The Museum of London featured the bust in a special exhibition in July 1958, to commemorate the birthday of Mrs Pankhurst.		WFL, <i>The Women's Bulletin</i> , 30 July 1954. The plaster bust was donated by Smith College for Women Northampton New York and exhibited at the Cromwell Rd Museum until handover to Museum of London in 1950/51. Stella Newsome to Mr Grimes Museum of London, 7 September 1950. Museum of London, <i>Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Objects relating to Suffragette Movement</i> , 50.82/1-1549. Aunt Emmeline, <i>The Times</i> , 7.7.1958

12. A bronze statuette of Christabel Pankhurst.	13. In Spring 1962 the bronze statuette of Christabel Pankhurst was exhibited at the Royal Academy. Christabel posed in full flight, hand on hip, right hand extended in gesture, hatless with her long flowing skirt appearing to be pulled back by the wind.		Photograph of Statuette of Christabel Pankhurst by Sir Charles Wheeler 1962, <i>Women's Library</i> LSE 7JCC/O/02/161. The location of this statuette is currently unknown. The National Portrait Gallery holds a post card depicting the bronze of Christabel. Noting the last known address in 1970. , <i>Heinze Archive</i> , NPG, Christabel Pankhurst 1880-1958
13. Photographs, Brooch, Postcards and Correspondence	In 1963, donations to the Fellowship included, A large photo of Elsie Howey as Joan of Arc, from the estate of Miss Howey, a large framed photograph of Christabel from Una Duval, a Boadicea brooch, a letter from Mrs Pankhurst and various postcards were donated to the Fellowship and handover to the Museum of London.		Suffragette Fellowship, <i>Minutes of the Executive Committee</i> , 25 June 1963. Casey Papers, Laughton Archive.

3. Biographical Index

Helen Archdale (1876-1950) WSPU organiser. Imprisoned and hunger struck. Active in local and international feminist causes post suffrage. Mother of feminist Betty Archdale. Sources: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A Reference Guide, 1866-1928*, Women's and Gender History, New York: Routledge, 2001, p.15. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women! The Remarkable Life of the Suffragettes*, London: Bloomsbury, 2018, p.524.

Helen Agnes Atkinson (1873-) Born Lancashire. WSPU Imprisoned 1910 and 1911. Charged with throwing a bottle, with Edith Rigby in 1913. Source: 'Suffragettes Go to Prison', *Globe*, 25 March 1913, p.7. *Suffragette Amnesty August 1914. Index of Women Arrested 1906-1914*. TNA, HO45/24665.

Sarah Jane Baines (1866-1951) Born Birmingham. WSPU speaker and organiser. Imprisoned multiple times and hunger struck. Arrested as Lizzie Baker in Dublin. Fled to Australia with family in 1913-1914. Actively supported Vida Goldstein in Australia. Imprisoned in Australia with Adela Pankhurst and released after thirst and hunger striking. Was a Children's Magistrate in Melbourne. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.26. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.525.

Arthur George Barrett (1884-1960) Born Nottingham. Photographer at the Daily Mirror. Sources: D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.122. Ancestry.co.uk, 1911 England Census. England and Wales Death Index, 1916-2005.

Teresa Billington-Greig (1877-1964) Founding member WSPU, organiser, teacher, writer, and speaker. Active in women and children causes. Left WSPU with Charlotte Despard to form the WFL. Resigned WFL 1910. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.55-56.

Adeline Bourne (1873-1965) Member AFL. Remained active post suffrage. Source: C. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.73. See also N. Paxton, *Stage Rights! The Actress Franchise League Activism and Politics 1908-1958*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2018.

Eileen Casey (1881-1972) Born New South Wales to Dr Phillip Casey and Isabella Julia Agnes Raey. Family relocated to England in 1890. Joined the WSPU with her sister and mother. Arrested and forcibly fed multiple times.

Source: Laughton, S., *The Woman with the Suitcase*, Unpublished MS, 2015. Eileen Luscombe, 'Casey, Eileen Mary (1881–1972)', People Australia, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://womenustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/casey-eileen-mary-17259/text29041>. Accessed 20 April 2020. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.531.

Edwy Clayton (1858-1936) A chemist specialised in matches. Wife and daughter active WSPU and Church League for Women's Suffrage. Member of Men's suffrage leagues. Imprisoned and hunger struck. Sources: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.115. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.531.

Leonora Cohen (1873-1978) Member WSPU Leeds Branch. Smashed windows and glass case in the Tower of London. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.135. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.531.

Nellie Crocker (1872-1962) Cousin of Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence. WSPU organiser. Imprisoned and hunger struck. Left bequest to the Suffragette Fellowship. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.153.

Louisa (Louie) Cullen (1876-1960) WSPU Organiser. Imprisoned once and arrested twice. Emigrated to Australia 1911. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.154. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.533.

Victor Duval (1885-1945) Married to Una Dugdale 1912. Imprisoned. Founder of the Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.181.

Una Duval nee Dugdale (1880-1975) Married to Victor Duval 1912. Known as the Bride who would not pledge to 'obey' her husband. Member WSPU. Toured with Mrs Pankhurst. Arrested and imprisoned. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.177.

Hugh Franklin (1889-1962) Mother Caroline Franklin, was member of Jewish League for Women Suffrage. Began militant campaigning 1909, attending WSPU meetings. Joined Men's League for Women's Suffrage and organiser for the Men's Political Union (MPU) for Women's Enfranchisement. Participated in Black Friday November 1910, arrested and imprisoned for taking a whip to Winston Churchill.

Arrested for arson, forcibly fed multiple times. Married Elsie Duval 1915, who died of Spanish flu in 1919. Remarried Mabel Tuke 1921. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.228-229.

Theresa Garnett (1888-1966) WSPU organiser and member. Known for 'whipping' Winston Churchill November 1909. Imprisoned, hunger struck and forcibly fed. Left a financial bequest by Charlotte Marsh. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.236-237.

Katherine Gillett Gatty (1870-1952) WSPU Member. Also known as Catherine Reid. Was imprisoned and hunger struck. Emigrated to Australia 1947. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.241.

Paul Gliddon. Known as Charles Gray. Imprisoned two months hard labour for assaulting Mr Lloyd George at Kennington Theatre, 1912. 'Male Suffragette', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 16 July 1912, p.8. Sources: Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A. *Suffragettes: Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested 1906-1915*, HO 45/24665. Ancestry.co.uk.

Vida Jane Goldstein (1869-1949) Born Portland Victoria. Attended Presbyterian Ladies College Melbourne. Was widely read on politics and economics. First spoke on suffrage for women in 1899. Lectured in the United States and the United Kingdom. Was a pacifist and founded the Women's Peace Army. Remained acquainted with suffrage friends in America and England. Campaigned multiple times for a seat in Parliament. See C. Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom*. Melbourne, Text Publishing 2018. J. Bomford, *That Dangerous and Persuasive Woman : Vida Goldstein*. Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1993. J. Brownfoot, 'Goldstein, Vida Jane (1869–1949)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/goldstein-vida-jane-6418/text10975>. Accessed 22 April 2020.

Enid Goulden-Bach (1901-1983) Mother was Ada Sophia Goulden, sister of Emmeline Pankhurst. Cousin of Christabel, Sylvia, and Adela Pankhurst. Sources: England and Wales National Probate Calendar, England, and Wales Civil Registration Death Index, ancestry.co.uk. See J. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*. London: Routledge, 2018, p.523.

Sybil Goulden-Bach (1904-1998) Mother was Ada Sophia Goulden, sister of Emmeline Pankhurst, Cousin to Christabel, Sylvia, and Adela Pankhurst. England and Wales Civil Registration Death Index, ancestry.co.uk. Sources: J. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*. London: Routledge, 2018, p.523. 'They Fought For Women', *Kensington Post*, 21 October 1949, p.1.

Elsa Gye (1881-1943) Born London, studied music. WSPU, organiser and arrested multiple times. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.254. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.539.

Frederick Hankinson (1875-1960) Unitarian Minister. Member of Men's League for Women's Suffrage. Prisoner Chaplain who supported morale and acted as courier by carrying in and taking messages out of prison. A regular guest at Prisoners Day events. WFL, *Women's Bulletin*, 18 October 1935, LOU.LON 692. Suffragette Fellowship, *Calling all Women*, September 1935. The Women's Library LSE PC/06/390. Visited Muriel Matters, Sime Seruya, Arabella Scott, Catherine Gatty, Charlotte Marsh. Attended WFL meetings and remained a close friend of Fred Pethick-Lawrence. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.267.

Eleanor Higginson (1881-1969) Born London, teacher. Active Preston Branch WSPU. Imprisoned, thirst and hunger struck. Remained active in local politics. Sources: Dictionary of National Biography, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/70139>, Accessed April 23 2020.

Edith How-Martyn (1874-1954) Born Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. Awarded a BSc University of London 1903. The first woman awarded a MSc in 1922 at the Royal College of Science. Married George Herbert Martyn 1899. Member WSPU left in 1907 to form the Women's Freedom League. Stood for Parliament in 1918 and became a Councillor at Middlesex county 1919. An active campaigner for Birth Control. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.115. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p388-389,550. Dictionary of National Biography, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/56238> Accessed April 23 2020.

Hazel Hunkins-Hallinan (1890-1982) Born Colorado United States. Lecturer in Chemistry. Active in women's suffrage in United States. Member of Six Point Group. Correspondent and Editor. Lifelong feminist, guest of honour at White House to witness signing of Women's Equality Day Proclamation 1977. C. Law,

'Hallinan, Hazel Hunkins, (1890-1982), Campaigner for women's rights', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004. Accessed 29 May 2020.

Gertrude Mari Hussey (1894-1978) Suffragette. Sources: Ancestry.co.uk. *England and Wales National Probate Calendar. England and Wales Civil Registration Death Index*. 'Suffragette Relics', *Belfast Newsletter*, 25 August 1951, p.4.

Elsa Sedgwick Smith Inkster (1891-1946) WSPU. 'Tribute to Mrs Pankhurst', *International Women's News* 1942, p.204. Source: England and Wales National Probate Calendar. Ancestry.co.uk.

James Henry Jarvis (1862- 1947) Born Stepney. Chief Inspector Police - London. Married three times. Died London aged 85. Source: England and Wales Civil Registration Marriage Index. Ancestry.co.uk.

Annie Kenney (1879-1853) Born Lancashire. A millworker from age ten. Was first militant Suffrage prisoner, with Christabel Pankhurst in 1905. Rose to prominence within the WSPU worked closely with Christabel Pankhurst. Proactively worked with Government on outbreak of World War One, travelled to Australia in an attempt to persuade Prime Minister Billy Hughes to join the War Council in England. Married James Taylor 1920 had a son Warwick 1921. Remained good friends with Grace Roe and Christabel Pankhurst. Retired from public life and remained interested in affairs affecting the Suffragette Fellowship. For a fuller account of Annie's life. E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* p.313. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.544.

Jessie Kenney (1887-1985) WSPU Organiser. Travelled widely, including America and Russia, worked closely with Mrs Pankhurst. E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* , pp.319-320. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* ,p.544.

Rose Lamartine-Yates (1875-1954) Member speaker of Wimbledon WSPU. Guard of honour to coffin of Emily Wilding Davison. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.765.

Marian Lawson (1881-1975) WSPU, defected to WFL 1907. Formed the Minerva Publishing Co 1909. Remained active in social causes. Died in France. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.336.

Mary Leigh (1885-1979) WSPU member. Arrested multiple times, hunger strike and forcibly fed. Founded the Emily Wilding Davison Lodge. Tended the grave of Emily. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.338-340. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.546.

Geraldine Laura Lennox (1883-1958) Born Bantry, Co. Cork. WSPU organiser. Imprisoned several times. Active World War and several women's groups. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.340.

Lilian Lenton (1891-1972) Active WSPU organiser. Dancer 'Ida Inkley'. Imprisoned, hunger struck and forcibly fed multiple times. Later Editor of the WFL Bulletin. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.341-342. *Suffragettes: Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested, 1906-1914*. TNA, HO45/24665.

Victoria Liddiard nee Simmons (1889-1992) WSPU speaker. Imprisoned for window smashing 1912. A lifelong activist for women and animal causes. Source: D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.559.

Olive Gwendoline Llewellyn (c1881-) WSPU. Lewisham Branch. Arrested 1913. Sources: *The Suffragette*, October 10, 1913, p.18. TNA: 1911 Wales Census. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A. *Suffragettes: Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested 1906-1915*, HO 45/24665, TNA. Ancestry.co.uk

Auguste MacDougall (1875-1945) WSPU - arrested December 1906 with Australian Nellie Martel and Jennie Baines Source: 'Notes from London', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 22 January 1907, p.42. My Experience in Prison, *The Clarion*, 25 January 1907, p.7. Another Suffragette Raid on the House, *Irish Times*, 18/12/1906. Australian Women's Register, <https://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE6275b.htm>. Accessed 22 April 2020.

Kitty Marion (1871-1944) AFL & WSPU. Born in Germany. Imprisoned, hunger struck and forcibly fed multiple times. Colleague of Edith How-Martyn. Continued birth control work in America. Died in New York. Sources: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.377-379.

Charlotte Augusta Leopoldine Marsh (1887-1961) 'Charlie' Marsh was a WSPU Organiser. Arrested multiple times. According to Votes for Women, Charlie was

forcibly fed by tube 139 times. Worked with Grace Roe in London. Friend of Teresa Garnett. Sources: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* , p.381. See also M. Maynard and J. Purvis, 'Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective', *In Gender and Society*, v, 217 p. London ; Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis, 1994, p.175.

Emily Katherine Willoughby Marshall (1871-1947) Member WSPU. Married to WSPU Solicitor Arthur Marshall. Arrested multiple times. Friend of Mrs Pankhurst. Sources: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* , p.384-385.

Rosamund Massy (1870-1947)WSPU Organiser. Imprisoned multiple times and hunger struck. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.391, See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.550.

Muriel Matters (1877-1969) Born Adelaide. Studied music and elocution. Became interested in suffrage movement when in London to further her career in 1905. Joined the WFL in 1907. Involved in Grille Incident October 28, 1908, toured England in a horse drawn caravan, hired a Dirigible Airship February 1909 and attempted to drop pamphlets over the Houses of Parliament. Trained as a Montessori teacher and worked with Sylvia Pankhurst. A Labour party candidate in 1924 and remained a lifelong feminist. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* ,p.392-393. See also C. Wright, *You Daughters of Freedom*. Melbourne, Australia Text Publishing 2018. Atkinson, D., *Rise up Women!* ,p.550. R. Wainwright, *Miss Muriel Matters*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2017

Winifred Alice Monck-Mason (Mayo) (1870-1967) Member AFL and WSPU. Cousin of Australian feminist Jessie Street. Gave elocution lessons to suffrage campaigners. Imprisoned multiple times. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* , p.393-394. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!* p.550.

Stella Winifred Newsome(1889-1969) Born Leicester. Teacher. Member Leicester branch of WSPU and later joined the WFL. Set fire to pillar boxes and raided golf courses. Maintained a lifelong interest in women's causes and educational opportunities for girls. Source: Cameron, Gail."Newsome, Stella Winifred (1889-1969), women's activist" *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 September 2004. Accessed 29 May 2020.

Adela Constantia Mary Pankhurst (1885-1961) Youngest daughter of Emmeline and Richard Pankhurst. WSPU Organiser. Arrested multiple times One occasion with Helen Archdale. Emigrated to Australia February 1914. Offered a post by Vida Goldstein as organiser for Women's Political Association. Worked with Jennie Baines for the Victorian Socialist Party. Was imprisoned, with Baines, for nine months in Victoria. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* ,p.486. See also V. Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst, the Wayward Suffragette 1885-1961*, Melbourne University Press, 1996. M. Lake, *Getting Equal : The History of Australian Feminism*. St Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1999.

Sylvia Estelle Pankhurst (1882-1960) Second child of Emmeline and Richard Pankhurst. Won scholarships to study art in Manchester and Venice. Was arrested, hunger and thirst struck and forcibly fed multiple times. Established the East London Federation of Suffragettes in 1913. Was a pacifist and not in support of activities of Emmeline and Christabel during the First World War in supporting Government efforts. Wrote extensively of the militant Suffrage campaign. Remained a lifelong activist. Died 1960 and awarded full honours by the Ethiopian Government. Sources: Hannam, June. "Pankhurst, (Estelle) Sylvia (1882-1960), political activist, writer and artist" *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 September 2004. Accessed 29 May 2020. see S. Harrison, *Sylvia Pankhurst: A Crusading Life, 1882-1960*. Aurum Press, 2003. E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* , pp.515-525.

Christabel Harriette Pankhurst (1880-1958) Eldest child of Emmeline Pankhurst, nee Goulden, and Richard Pankhurst. Active in women's suffrage work from 1902-1903. Founded the WSPU with her mother 1903 in Manchester. First to be imprisoned, with Annie Kenney, for the cause in 1905. Close to the Pethick-Lawrence's until the 1912 split. Organised the WSPU from Paris to evade authorities and imprisonment in Britain. Supported Government efforts during World War One. Stood unsuccessfully in the 1918 General Election. Awarded a DBE in 1936. Lived in America until her death in 1958. Sources: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.487-499. J. Purvis, *Christabel Pankhurst a Biography*. London: Routledge, 2018.

Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence (1867-1954) Active in many causes focused on women and children. Joined the WSPU in 1906 and co-founded Votes for Women in 1907, with Fred Pethick-Lawrence. Founder of the militant colours of Purple,

White and Green in 1908. Arrested multiple times, forcibly fed once. Forced to leave the WSPU in 1912. Active in feminist causes until her death in 1954. Left funds to several Suffragette friends in the Fellowship, and to Sylvia Pankhurst. President of the Women's Freedom League 1926-1934. Source: WFL, *The Women's Bulletin*, 19 March 1954. LOU.LON 260. E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.535-539.

Frederick Pethick-Lawrence (1871-1961) Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. Was editor of *The Echo* in London and married Emmeline Pethick in 1901. Introduced to Emmeline Pankhurst by Keir Hardie. Established the Women's Press and published *Votes for Women* and suffrage booklets. Financed Suffragette legal defence. Split from the WSPU in 1912 with wife Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence. Married Helen Craggs after the death of Emmeline. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.541-542.

Helen Pethick-Lawrence nee Craggs (1888-1969) Active WSPU member and Organiser. Imprisoned, hunger struck and forcibly fed. Widowed and married Fred Pethick-Lawrence in 1957. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement* p.147.

Mary Phillips (1880-1969) WSPU Organiser in Scotland and England. Imprisoned and hunger struck. Joined Sylvia Pankhurst East London Federation of Suffragettes 1913. Remained active in women's causes, including Six Point Group and Fabian Society. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.544-546. D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!*, p.556.

Marian Reeves (1879-1961) Born London. Member WFL, operated the Minerva Club. Oxford Source: *Dictionary of National Biography*. <https://www-oxforddnb-com.rp.nla.gov.au/search?q=Reeves%2C+Marian+%281879%E2%80%931961%29%2C+feminist+activist>. Accessed 22 April 2020

Mary Richardson (1883-1961) WSPU - Imprisoned multiple times, hunger struck and forcibly fed. March 1914 Richardson slashed painting by Velazquez, *Rokeby Venus*. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.596-598.

Bessie Rischbieth (1874-1967) Born Adelaide. Active in women and children causes. Founder of Federation of Women's Societies in 1921. Active in many International Feminist organisations. Sources: Nancy Lutton, 'Rischbieth, Bessie Mabel (1874–1967)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Australian National

University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rischbieth-bessie-mabel-8214/text14373>. Accessed 20 April 2020. See also M. Lake, *Getting Equal*, 1999.

Grace Roe (1885-1979) Born London. WSPU member, very active organiser. Close to Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. Was imprisoned and forcibly fed. Post suffrage was active in religious causes and social work. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.605-606.

Myra Sadd-Brown (1872-1938) WSPU, friend of Sylvia Pankhurst. Lifelong feminist. Died Hong Kong. Source: D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!*, p.529.

Arabella Charlotte Scott (1886-1980) Member of WFL. Also known as Catherine Reid. Later Mrs Colville-Reeves. Bodyguard to Mrs Pankhurst. Imprisoned multiple times, hunger struck and forcibly fed. Emigrated to Australia 1946. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.620. 'Suffragettes swap jail yarns over cups of tea', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 July 1945, p.6.

Seruya Sime (1876-1955) Born Portugal. Active WSPU, AFL and later organiser for WFL. Imprisoned twice. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.626. For further information N. Paxton, *Stage Rights!* 2018.

Thomas Bayard Simmons (1883-1963) A clerk employed by Fred Pethick-Lawrence. Arrested and imprisoned for fourteen days for protesting at the Houses of Parliament 1906. Sources: D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!*, p.55. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A. *Suffragettes: Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested 1906-1915*, HO 45/24665, TNA. England and Wales National Probate Calendar. Ancestry.co.uk

Jessie Street (1889-1970) Daughter of Charles Lillingston, civil servant, and Mabel Harriet, born in India. Educated in England later attended University of Sydney. Active in sports, volunteered in London for causes including a reception centre for young women prostitutes. Married Sir Kenneth Street 1916 in Sydney. Became active in feminist causes in Australia and across Europe. President of the United Associations of Women in Australia. Financed publication of the Australian Women's Digest 1944-1947. Stood for Parliament several times. Published memoir, *Truth or Repose* in 1966. Sources: H. Radi, 'Street, Lady Jessie Mary (1889-1970)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography,

Australian National University. <http://womenustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/street-lady-jessie-mary-11789/text21089>. Accessed 20 April 2020.

Marian Wallace-Dunlop (1865-1942) Member WSPU. Known as the first Suffragette to hunger strike in 1909 and first to use stencil, Votes for Women, outside 10 Downing Street. Pallbearer at Mrs Pankhurst funeral. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, pp.178-179.

Olive Walton (1886-1937) WSPU organiser. Imprisoned, hunger struck and forcibly fed. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.699. See also D. Atkinson, *Rise up Women!*, p.563.

Olive Wharry (1886-1947) Member WSPU and Church League for Women's Suffrage. Imprisoned and hunger struck multiple times. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.707.

Sarah Mary Josephine Winstedt nee O'Flynn (1886-1972) Born Co. Clare. Graduated Edinburgh University 1912. WSPU. Imprisoned and hunger struck. Appointed one of three first female Doctors in Malaya. Married Richard Winstedt 1921 and became head of Singapore Paediatrics Ward. Assisted Director of Marie Curie Hospital 1937. Post War worked at Dartford asylum. Was a friend and benefactor of Sylvia Pankhurst hospital in Addis Ababa. Maintained a lifelong interest in women and children's medicine. Inducted Women's Hall of Fame Singapore. Source: Sutherland, Duncan. "Winstedt [nee O'Flynn], Sarah Mary Josephine [Sara Paddy] Lady Winstedt, (1886-1972) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 17 September 2015; Accessed 29 May 2020.

Letitia Withall (1881-1963) Born South Australia to Architect Latham Augustus Withall and Louisa Reed. WSPU member. Arrested multiple times as Lesley Hall. Arrested 1909 with Mary Leigh and Charlotte Marsh. Hunger struck and forcibly fed. Source: 'On the Roof. Suffragettes Desperate Methods at Birmingham', *Yorkshire Telegraph and Star*, 18 September 1909. Suffragette Fellowship, *Newsletter*, 1937, The Women's Library, LSE, 7ELIA/A. *Suffragettes: Amnesty of August 1914: Index of Women Arrested 1906-1915*, HO 45/24665, TNA. Ancestry.co.uk

Barbara Wylie (c1862-1954) WSPU Organiser, imprisoned. Pallbearer at Funeral of Mrs Pankhurst. Source: E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, p.762.