

UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

“The Women were marvellous”¹

To what extent were the contributions of radical women activists significant in the No-Conscription Fellowship’s ability to maintain a stance of opposition to the First World War?

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¹ William J Chamberlain *Fighting for Peace: The Story of the War Resistance Movement*, London 1928, p.1.

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ABSTRACT

“The Women were marvellous”. To what extent were the contributions of radical women activists significant in the No-Conscription Fellowship’s ability to maintain a stance of opposition to the First World War?

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This study concerns the war resistance activities of groups of women who worked for the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF or Fellowship), a pacifist organisation that operated on mainland Britain during the First World War. It examines how women’s contributions to war resistance, enabled this organisation to sustain its position of opposition to the war, and the government’s policy of conscription.

The contributions by these women to the persistence of the Fellowship’s war resistance, were not fairly acknowledged by their contemporaries at the time, or by historians since. This study uses collective biography to analyse the significance of their contributions to the maintenance of war resistance and goes on to consider how the history of the NCF might be modified, if their contributions were included in the narrative of that organisation, and thereby, that of war resistance in Britain.

In undertaking such a task of recovery, Joan Scott’s work on women and their invisibility in history, has been employed, alongside a gendered perspective, when examining the available sources. Evidence of women’s involvement in war resistance has been recovered from a range of collections which have included, the Catherine Marshall papers, relevant documents at the Friends Library, a repository for sources that relate to pacifism, The National Archives and the NCF’s newspaper, *The Tribunal*. Marshall’s papers have proved to be a fruitful source of evidence for her own prodigious contribution to the Fellowship’s war resistance, as well as revealing the presence of several previously unknown or obscured women to the work of the NCF. The documents that relate to the work of the Conscientious Objectors Information Board, (COIB), an organisation founded by Marshall and used to assist the political activism of the NCF, which she organised, have proved to be a rich resource for the discovery of women whose contribution to war resistance has been overlooked. *The Tribunal* has been a fount of evidence throughout the study, as a source which publicised the various war resisting activities of the women involved with the NCF and the anti-war movement (AWM).

During analysis of the research findings there has been some reflection on the nature of war resistance taken by women during the First World War and how this might enhance an understanding of women’s involvement in war resistance activities.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Name
AG	Attorney General
AWM	Anti-war movement
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
BSP	British Socialist Party
CEM	Catherine Elizabeth Marshall
CEMP	Catherine Elizabeth Marshall Papers
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CO	Conscientious Objector(s)
COIB	Conscientious Objector's Information Bureau
CMP	Competent Military Authority
DORA	Defence of the Realm Act
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
EFF	Election Fighting Fund
ELFS	East London Federation for Suffrage
FAU	Friends Ambulance Unit
FL	Friends Library (Society of Friends or Quaker Library on Euston Road, London)
FOR	Fellowship of Reconciliation
FSC	Friends Service Committee
HQ	Head Quarters of the NCF
HMG	His Majesty's Government
HMSO	His Majesty's Stationery Office
HO	Home Office

IAPA	International Association for Peace and Arbitration
ILP	Independent Labour Party
IWM	Imperial War Museum
IWSA	International Women's Suffrage Alliance
JAC	Joint Advisory Council
LDG	London Divisional Group
MSA	Military Services Act 1916
NC	National Committee (of the NCF)
NCAC	National Council Against Conscription
NCC	Non-Combatant Corp
NCCL	National Council for Civil Liberties
NCF	No-Conscription Fellowship (Also known as the Fellowship)
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NLHL	North London Herald League
NLP	National Labour Press
NSL	National Service League
NUWSS	National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies
PCOD	Pearce's Conscientious Objector Database
PNC	Peace Negotiations Committee
SMT	Social Movement Theory
SNT	Social Network Theory
TNA	The National Archives
UDC	Union of Democratic Control
WCG	Women's Co-operative Guild
WFL	Women's Freedom League

WIL	Women's International League
WILPF	Women's International League of Peace and Freedom
WNI	Work of National Importance
WPC	Women's Peace Crusade
WSL	Women's Suffrage League. From 1916 Workers Suffrage League
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union
WO	War Office

Introduction

This thesis considers the nature, significance and impact of the war resistance of a set of radical, pacifist women on the ability of the No-Conscription Fellowship's (NCF or Fellowship) to maintain its opposition to the imposition of conscription during the First World War. The Fellowship was created to support the Conscientious Objector (CO); men of military age who opposed the imposition of conscription. The extent and significance of the role of women in the NCF's war resistance and sustained opposition to conscription, is an issue which has not previously been considered by historians in their deliberations on the nature of opposition to the war.¹

The aim of this thesis is to analyse and raise awareness of women's roles and contributions as war resisters, with a focus on women who worked for, and campaigned on behalf of, the NCF, and who participated in a variety of politically active roles. For the purposes of this study, the term political activism refers to undertakings by individuals and groups to oppose or undermine government policies, with conscription and its consequences the focal point of activism. Other government legislation that attracted the attention of war resisters was the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA), particularly the clauses that monitored and restricted propaganda and publicity from anti-war groups and individuals.

The four questions addressed by this study relate to the nature, significance and impact of the war resistance activities carried out by the pacifist, radical women featured. The central questions concern the extent to which these women's war resisting activities on behalf of the NCF contributed to the ability of the Fellowship to maintain its opposition to the war, and how an understanding of these activities encourages modification of the narrative of the NCF and the nature of its war resistance. A related enquiry addresses whether a raised awareness of the extent of the contribution made by women to the war resistance of the NCF adds to a wider understanding of the nature of war resistance activity undertaken by women during the war, and whether the results of the research undertaken, add to or change understanding of women's involvement in it and the meaning of war resistance in a wider context.

For the purposes of this thesis, the term war resistance is understood to mean opposition to the war, and to government war policies, such as conscription and censorship. The ways in which women became involved in such war resistance was through, for example, publicly

¹ See Appendix B for some brief biographical details of the women featured in this thesis.

questioning methods of recruitment and government policy, making overtly anti-war or pacifist speeches, joining in protests, singing outside prisons which held COs, or by writing critical articles condemning militarism, conscription and the government's failure to enact a negotiated peace.² Their actions during the war can be deemed to have been radical acts, such as supporting COs as a "watcher" in attendance at a recruitment tribunal, and then reporting the outcome to the NCF.³ Some women became involved in publishing anti-war ideas and beliefs. This was a risky activity, as the government exercised their right under DORA to control publications and their contents.⁴ In addition women became involved in more covert acts of war resistance, such as contributions to the Fellowship's financial funding, offering accommodation or work to the families of COs, or attending rallies as supporters rather than activists. The friends and families of COs could demonstrate their war resistance by reading *The Tribunal* and, if they could afford it, supporting the stance of their friend or relative by visiting them in prison.⁵

The total number of women who engaged in covert rather than overt war resistance may remain unknown, although, during this research, several have been identified, due to their presence in the small advertisements within *The Tribunal*. This led to a consideration of issues that affected the women directly, such as their motivation for involvement with the NCF, or whether their social class, education or marital status inhibited their ability to either become directly involved in war resistance or to take a more covert route to demonstrate their support for the CO and the NCF. The contribution of women to the war resistance of the Fellowship has been at best minimised, and at worst ignored or disregarded, by those who have written the histories of opposition to the First World War.⁶ The foremost reason for the omission of women in the literature of war resistance was the publication of the NCF's *Souvenir* that celebrated the Fellowship's achievements in

² Swanwick and Marshall wrote pacifist articles and made speeches condemning conscription and the militarism of the wartime government. Other radical women who were not necessarily associate members of the NCF, such as Sylvia Pankhurst, the suffragette socialist and Mary MacArthur, the women's trade unionist, made speeches that supported pacifist ideas.

³ Helena Swanwick and Lydia Smith were "watchers" and attended tribunal hearings of men who wished to apply for exemption on the grounds of conscience.

⁴ As the war continued the government became increasingly repressive over printed material.

⁵ B Runham Brown *The No-Conscription Fellowship: A Souvenir of its work during the years 1914-1919*, London 1920. See p.36.

⁶ John Graham *Conscience and Conscription A History 1916-1918*, London 1923, David Boulton *Objection Overruled* 2nd edition, London 2014, Cyril Pearce *Comrades in Conscience, The Story of an English Community's Opposition to the Great War*, London 2001, Lois Bibbings *Telling Tales Against Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service During the First World War*, Manchester 2009, Anne Wiltsher *Most Dangerous Women: Feminist Peace Campaigners of the Great War*, London 1985, Jill Liddington *The Road to Greenham Common: Feminism and Militarism in Britain since 1920*, London 1985, Thomas C. Kennedy *The Hound of Conscience, A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship 1914-1919*, Arkansas 1981.

maintaining its opposition to conscription, and to the war itself.⁷ This first account of the NCF was edited by Barry Runham Brown, who had been, before his imprisonment as a CO, the secretary of the Enfield branch of the NCF in North London. The *Souvenir* accounted for the successes of the NCF and the heroism of its leading members, such as Clifford Allen and A Fenner Brockway, yet it minimised the contribution of women to the cause of the COs. Only seven women's contributions were outlined, six of whom were NCF associate members; Catherine Marshall, Joan Beauchamp, Violet Tillard, Lydia Smith, Ada Salter, and Gladys Rinder. The seventh woman was Edith Ellis, who had not been a member of the NCF, but who had been a member of the Friends Service Committee (FSC), one of the NCF's partners in war resistance. There is some, albeit inadequate, acknowledgement that there were women other than these, whom Runham Brown praises as a "splendid band of keen and capable women."⁸ Such casual disregard for their contribution to the NCF's persistent war resistance is summed up by the author as "their names deserve to be recorded, but that is obviously impossible."⁹ In an era of endless casualty lists in the daily popular press, and lists of COs released from prison, or in ill-health in the NCF's newspaper, *The Tribunal*, this could be regarded as dismissive of the role and contribution made by women as associate members of the NCF, but was in keeping with the time and the fact that the NCF had been created to support men who became COs. Similar disregard of the involvement of women extended to the local level, where, in some areas, women were active in support of local COs and their families. This view dominated the narrative of women's contributions to, and involvement in, the NCF's war resistance for the next 50 years. This thesis aims to correct such dismissal of the war resistance undertaken by women and bring the significance of their contributions into the narrative of the AWM and that of the NCF.

In the course of this research, a small but important minority of 86 women, can be recognised, from the available evidence, as having been involved directly in war resistance, either as workers at NCF Head Quarters (HQ) in London, or as district or local branch secretaries.¹⁰ Most of these women can be named, and an understanding reached about the nature and significance of their contribution to the war resistance of the NCF.¹¹ A further 45 women have been identified as war resisters through other means, such as through donations to the NCF or by engagement in anti-war activity within other groups,

⁷ Runham Brown *The No-Conscription Fellowship*.

⁸ Runham Brown *The No-Conscription Fellowship*, p.82-85.

⁹ Runham Brown *The No-Conscription Fellowship*, p.82.

¹⁰ See Chapter 6 for an analysis of the work carried out by these women. Approximately 150 men were involved with the administration of the NCF at HQ and local level, some of whom were COs.

¹¹ See Appendix B.

such as the Women's Peace Crusade (WPC), the Women's International League (WIL), the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), the Friends Service Committee (FSC) or the Union of Democratic Control (UDC).¹²

Even though women were not able to be conscripted into the army because of their gender, the women featured in this study chose the imposition of conscription as the focal point of their war resistance. This commitment to a man's anti-war group merits some thought, as the role women played in the NCF became crucial to its sustained attempts to pressurise the government to re-consider conscription and its consequences for COs; their contribution became vital to the NCF's ability to maintain its war resistance.

The Fellowship is considered here as the 'leading light' in the war resistance movement because it was the only organisation formed solely to oppose military conscription,¹³ with a mission to support the stance of the CO. The Fellowship was unusual in its focus on the concerns of the CO, and organised support for him through attendance at tribunals, prison visits and support for families. The questions raised by this study which concern the nature, significance and impact of war resistance undertaken by radical women,¹⁴ focus on their involvement in the anti-war activities of the NCF because, as the war drew on and male members went to prison, women took positions of responsibility, power and authority within the Fellowship and became involved in all aspects of the NCF's work.

Methodological Issues

The roles that women played in the contribution of the Fellowship to war resistance have previously been ill-defined, an issue which is addressed by the questions which underpin this study. Indeed, their presence and efforts have been marginalised by contemporaries who wrote the history of the NCF, and historians of war resistance within Britain, such as John Graham, David Boulton, Cyril Pearce, Lois Bibbings, Anne Wiltsher, and Jill Liddington.¹⁵ Thomas Kennedy has integrated and acknowledged the work and contribution of women such as Marshall, Beauchamp and Tillard into the narrative of the NCF's war

¹² See Chapter 3.

¹³ The NCAC and League Against Conscription campaigned against the possibility of industrial conscription as well as military conscription.

¹⁴ For the purposes of this study the featured women are considered to have radical opinions because of their views on the war and/or for the actions they took in opposing the war. They all had Liberal or socialist and feminist sympathies and were pacifists through political, religious or moral convictions, these views took them outside of and away from mainstream attitudes and beliefs of the day; that the war should be supported and if one was against it then you were unpatriotic and a traitor.

¹⁵ See fn 6, p. 12.

resistance,¹⁶ although the contributions made by women to the maintenance of war resistance at a national and local level were not considered in his text.

Joan Scott's consideration of gender as a category of historical analysis has been useful in challenging the assumptions, made by these previous historians, that women had minor roles in the organisation and conduct of war resistance. An appreciation of Scott's point that "gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power,"¹⁷ can "[enable] a critical re-examination of existing scholarly works,"¹⁸ such as Bibbings¹⁹ who emphasised issues relating to COs and masculinity, and Boulton²⁰ who ignored the role and contribution of women to the gendered issue of opposition to conscription altogether.

In addition, Scott states that "studying women in isolation from men perpetuates the myth that one sphere has little...to do with the other,"²¹ and she maintains that as gender is relational, any study about men or women must "imply the study of the other,"²² then the contribution of women to war resistance needs to accompany and complement that of the men. Women's invisibility in male accounts of the past, was identified and explored by Scott within her theoretical analyses that aimed to change the way women's history has been written²³. This discourse has had resonance for this study, as one of Scott's priorities was to bring women into the traditional male area of political history. This issue of silence, or invisibility, is one that requires examination if the contribution of the women of the NCF is to be understood and appreciated. Although Scott wrote about women and invisibility over twenty years ago, her words and guidance are still relevant, markedly for this study, as her suggestion to combat invisibility, through an "exclusive focus on female agency,"²⁴ has helped to address the critical questions raised which relate to the significance of women's contribution to war resistance, and so encourages a re-assessment of the NCF's influence and place in the war resistance movement. The Fellowship's endurance was crucial to the preservation of opposition to government war policies, and it seems unlikely that this would have been possible without the contributions of a number of women. Therefore, the

¹⁶ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*.

¹⁷ Joan Wallach Scott 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis' in *Gender and the Politics of History*, New York 1999, p.44.

¹⁸ Scott 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', p.29.

¹⁹ Bibbings *Telling Tales against Men*.

²⁰ Boulton *Objection Overruled*.

²¹ Scott 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', p.32.

²² Scott 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', p.32

²³ Joan Wallach Scott 'Women's History and the Re-writing of History' in Christine Farnham (ed) *The Impact of Feminist Research in the Academy*, Bloomington 1993, p.38.

²⁴ Scott 'Women's History and the Re-writing of History' in Farnham (ed) *The Impact of Feminist Research in the Academy*, p.38.

history of the Fellowship needs to be re-considered to take account of the impact of these women's involvement, which included "normative definitions of femininity"²⁵ such as war resistance within domestic settings such as the home or garden.²⁶ Further gendered areas for war resistance were found within an office environment with women undertaking administrative tasks such as filing, indexing and typing²⁷ or in outdoor activities such as singing.²⁸ However, as this study indicates, some of the women involved with war resistance for the NCF challenged these accepted gender settings through their adoption of masculine gender roles which involved undertaking positions of power and authority within and on behalf of the organisation and its members.

This examination of the gendered contributions women made to the anti-war agitation of the Fellowship, raises questions about women's impact on the effectiveness and endurance of the NCF's war resistance, particularly when considered alongside the roles that they undertook in its political activism. A consideration of the women as both individuals and groups allow insight into the nature of war resistance effected by an eclectic group of women brought together by their determination to resist the war, conscription and censorship. The use of collective biography has enabled women to be gathered into groups and brings them, about whom little has been discovered, into the narrative of women's anti-war activism, enabling their involvement to be recognised and added to the contribution of women to war resistance.²⁹ In addition, the presence of these women in its ranks, enabled the NCF to generate a dynamic political presence in London, and contributed to its ability to remain active throughout the war across mainland Britain.³⁰

The importance of women's roles, in administration, office organisation, and political activism, is revealed by routine administrative documentation, such as that from the COIB (Conscientious Objectors Information Bureau).³¹ These sources, which include, business letters, invoices and financial statements, signal a group of women who worked under difficult and challenging conditions and expectations, both personal and professional, to support the cause of the CO.

²⁵ Scott 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', p.29.

²⁶ See Chapter 7.

²⁷ See Chapter 6.

²⁸ See Chapter 7.

²⁹ See Chapter 2 pp.63-65.

³⁰ See Chapters 4 and 7 and Cyril Pearce and Helen Durham 'Patterns of Dissent in Britain during the First World War', *War and Society*, 34:2, pp 140-159.

³¹ COIB Correspondence, SERV 4/7, FL. There are further papers relating to the work of the women in the Bureau in CEMP.

The Tribunal, the newspaper of the NCF, the Catherine Marshall Papers (CEMP), a miscellany of papers related to pacifist activity held at The Friends Library (FL) in London, and some central government files from the War Office (WO) and Home Office (HO), have formed the core of primary sources used to address the questions that have shaped the research for this study. When examined, they brought to light contributions which were unacknowledged in the histories of anti-war agitation. For instance, while Marshall's papers have revealed her pivotal role in the NCF,³² they also acknowledge the involvement of other women, most of whom have been neglected by historians. This thesis identifies that women played key roles in the anti-war political activism of the First World War era. It concludes that it was because of their involvement in war resistance activities that the NCF was able to maintain its opposition to the war throughout the conflict. The significant roles in the political activism undertaken by women which drove the NCF's war resistance have been overlooked.

The NCF was formed when Lila Brockway, the wife of pacifist, A Fenner Brockway,³³ "made the proposal" on the outbreak of war, that he find like-minded people who wished to oppose the possibility of the introduction of conscription.³⁴ Advertisements in the *Labour Leader* brought a response of 150 letters,³⁵ and Brockway recalled in the *Souvenir* of the NCF, published after the war, that "it at once became clear that there was need for a Fellowship in which the prospective resisters might unite."³⁶ At first, it seemed that the NCF would represent the socialist objector to conscription. However, as their central tenet was based on sanctity of life, it was hardly surprising that the organisation also attracted individuals with religious and moral objections to conscription.

The NCF, or the Fellowship, was created to support the cause of the CO in his opposition to compulsory military service. The legislation that encompassed conscription, the Military Service Act of 1916 (MSA),³⁷ allowed for an exemption to military service if the applicant's

³² For example, see Kennedy *Hound of Conscience* and Bibbings *Telling Tales About Men*. See Chapter 4.

³³ A. Fenner Brockway was a journalist, editor of the *Labour Leader*, the newspaper of the ILP and a prominent socialist activist.

³⁴ Recalled in A. Fenner Brockway *Inside the Left*, London 1942, p66, and by W.J. Chamberlain in *Fighting for Peace: The Story of the War Resistance Movement*, London 1971, p.27.

³⁵ *The Labour Leader* 12 and 19 November 1914.

³⁶ Quoted in Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.43 from Runham Brown *The No-Conscription Fellowship Souvenir*.

³⁷ The Military Service Act of 1916 (MSA), was the legislation that brought compulsory military service (conscription) to Britain for the first time. There had been other forms of conscientious objection to government compulsion in the years before 1916, such as to the compulsory vaccination of children, between 1853 and 1898. There was no legal conscientious objection allowed until after this time. See Constance Braithwaite *Legal Problems of Conscientious Objection to Various Compulsions Under British Law*, *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, 52:1 1968. Some women chose not to participate, illegally, in the 1911 census and on some of the census forms can be found written a statement about conscientious objection to filling in the

conscientious objection to being compelled to join any military service could be proved before a tribunal of local dignitaries.³⁸ Although thousands of men applied for this exemption, most were refused, and some ended up in prison or government-organised work camps.³⁹ The NCF, although initially designed to support the men at the tribunals, expanded their activities and membership over the course of the war; they publicised their position on conscription, organised political lobbying to bring their cause into the public domain, kept track of the location of the men, and undertook welfare activities. Much of this work was carried out by both men and women at Head Quarters (HQ) in London, and within local branches across the country. Associate members, consisting of women and older men, took more responsibility within the Fellowship as the men of military age who refused to fight went into custody.

The NCF promoted co-operation with other anti-war groups, and its representatives attended meetings of the FSC, FOR, UDC, and National Council Against Conscription (NCAC), and a Joint Advisory Council (JAC) was convened to bring all war resistance groups together. There were, on occasions, differences in opinion and policy, such as the option of alternative service for COs; initially the NCF was against any form of alternativism, but later modified its view.⁴⁰ A further area of disagreement was over the welfare of COs, and how much time should be spent in trying to improve conditions for them. The FSC were against such campaigns, whereas the NCF, led by Marshall, negotiated with government officials for improved welfare conditions.⁴¹

Why the NCF was needed: The conscription debate.

The Liberal government of the time was averse to the idea of conscription, as it went against their deepest held principles of individual and free will. As a government and a party, they held the view that Britain's naval supremacy and a small, highly trained, professional army would be sufficient to protect the nation. Their position was partially

census form without being a citizen. See Jill Liddington *Vanishing for the Vote: Suffrage, Citizenship and the Battle for the Census*, Manchester, 2014.

³⁸ Men could apply for exemption on other grounds such as health and economic.

³⁹ Cyril Pearce's database of COs has 17,500 names on it. It is likely there were many more men who, despite their beliefs, went to fight in the war. These numbers are not known. Pearce Conscientious Objectors Database (PCOD). This database has been available intermittently on the Imperial War Museum (IWM) website. For this study a privately held copy has been used.

⁴⁰ Alternativism was a CO choosing to take the government's offer of work in a camp. The men were still in custody but not held in prison. This was known as "The Home Office Scheme."

⁴¹ Chapters 3 and 4 discuss this controversy in more detail.

justified, as at the declaration of war, recruitment was brisk, and "... almost as many men joined the army voluntarily as joined after the introduction of conscription."⁴²

As recruitment slowed in 1915, the government realised that military conscription was needed, if the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, was to have the men he required to win the war. The move to conscription was inexorable, as the conscriptionists waged a campaign which was "brilliantly conceived and executed,"⁴³ and included demands for registration of the male population. The National Registration Act was passed in June 1915 and found that once the medically unfit and those needed for vital occupations in the war industries were accounted for, there were between 1,700,000 and 1,800,000 men who were available for military service.⁴⁴ The recruitment campaign was continued through moral pressure on those who had not volunteered. Posters, newspapers and Music Hall acts all encouraged young men to join up. In the autumn of 1915, to silence the anti-conscriptionists, the government set up the Derby scheme, where men registered their intent to join up when there was the necessity. Groups, based on the men's utility to the domestic war effort, would be called up gradually, with the married men in each group being called on last.⁴⁵

By November 1915, it was clear that the Derby Scheme could not produce the men required, as only 340,000 had been made available out of the two million required.⁴⁶ In the debates in Parliament leading to the passing of the Military Service Act (MSA), there was successful lobbying for a clause that would allow men who had a conscientious objection to fighting to apply for exemption, which was to allow for pacifist concerns of the Quakers. In January 1916, the MSA was passed, which stated that all men between the ages of 18 and 35 would be eligible for military service.

The MSA and the CO

Under the conscience clause, men could apply to a local tribunal for one of three types of exemption: absolute, conditional or temporary. Absolute meant no contact with the military at all, conditional meant the applicant could be put in the Non-Combatant Corps

⁴² Two and a half million men volunteered to join the armed services during the war, about 25% of those eligible. Niall Ferguson *The Pity of War*, London, 1998, p.198. His statistic from Jay Winter *Great War and The British People*, London 1985, p.30.

⁴³ David Boulton *Objection Overruled*, 2nd edition, London 2014, p.79.

⁴⁴ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.79.

⁴⁵ Group 1 were essential civilian occupations, Group 2 men in trades and occupations from which a 'few' could be spared, Group 3 was where a large proportion could be spared, and Group 4 were men in unnecessary occupations. The Board of Trade made the necessary judgements.

⁴⁶ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.89.

(NCC) or sent to do Work of National Importance (WNI). Temporary exemption meant for the man to get his affairs in order and was usually used for those who applied on economic grounds. The tribunal system was unable to cope effectively with the terms of the MSA, as the government had not expected so many men to apply for exemption on economic or health grounds, and the provision for applications for exemption was inadequate. The numbers of those prepared to apply for exemption, due to their conscientious objection to fighting, was far higher than expected and included men who were not Quakers, with about 17,500 men applied for exemption on the grounds of conscience.⁴⁷

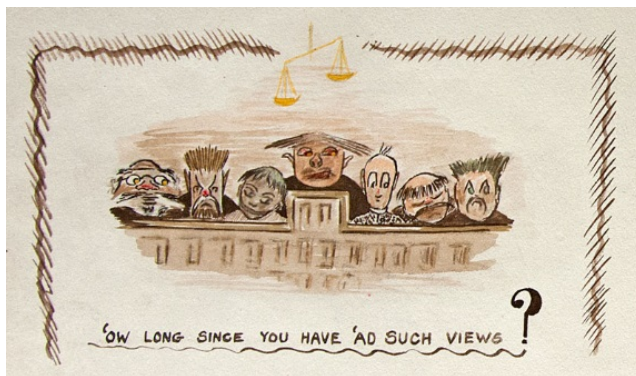


FIGURE 1: ILLUSTRATION OF A TRIBUNAL FROM HAROLD BROWN'S AUTOGRAPH BOOK⁴⁸

The time and energy taken up by their appeals, and consequent criticism and invective heaped upon the tribunals, could be seen to be disproportionate to the numbers. For example, at the Middlesex tribunal, of the 8,791 men who appealed to the tribunal for exemption, only 577 were appealing on the grounds of conscience.⁴⁹ Those applying for exemption on these terms tended to want an absolute exemption, a request difficult to grant by the tribunal if they saw a healthy young man in front of them and the military representative under pressure to recruit as many men as possible. The tribunals tried to manage the influx of applications but were found to be 'wanting' when making decisions about conscience; sometimes the young men were called upon to explain why they did not want to fight or were told they were too young to have a conscience. Later, once forced into the military, some were subject to the brutality of army discipline, which was laced

⁴⁷ Adrian Gregory in *The Last Great War, British Society and The First World War*, Cambridge 2008, points out on p.91 that "The most obvious reason for not volunteering was a disinclination to be killed or maimed." This suspicion must have had some effect on the outcomes for genuine COs.

⁴⁸ <http://menwhosaidno.org/context/contexttribunalsintro.html>, accessed June 2017.

http://menwhosaidno.org/men/men_files/b/brown_harold_j.html, accessed June 2017.

⁴⁹ Figures from Middlesex Appeal Tribunal, Statistics of cases, MH 47/143 The National Archives (TNA) quoted in John Rae *Conscience and Politics: The British Government and the Conscientious Objector to Military Service*, London 1970, p. 98.

with fervour and suspicion about the objectors' patriotism and morality. Most were refused absolute exemption and those who refused to serve were imprisoned, which began in May 1916. In addition to the treatment received during the years of the conflict, the government believed it necessary to punish the COs beyond the end of the war, with absolute objectors being held in prison long after the armistice, denied jobs in certain occupations, and disenfranchised for five years.

Opposition to the First World War.

In Britain, the First World War began on 4 August 1914, although a crisis had been brewing in central Europe since the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, on 28 June 1914. Britain stayed out of the diplomatic wrangles between Austria, Germany, Russia, and Serbia; Germany's invasion of neutral Belgium took Britain into war.

On the outbreak of war, several groups organised opposition to Britain's involvement in the conflict, which was led by the Independent Labour Party (ILP), the UDC and the NCF.⁵⁰ These groups had central offices in London and local branches across the country, which communicated the work carried out at the centre to their members, and encouraged local groups to pursue their own activities.⁵¹ There were non-political groups that became involved in war resistance, such as the Quakers, non-conformist Churches, and groups concerned primarily with social conditions, such as the Women's Co-operative Guild (WCG). These groups supported the anti-war lead taken by the NCF, ILP and UDC, but did not necessarily have this as part of their aims and objectives. The nature of their support consisted of the distribution of literature at their own meetings, and attendance at NCF, ILP and UDC meetings or rallies. As well as the NCF, there were other groups, featured in this thesis, which were created specifically to oppose this war: the WIL, the WPC, the National Council of Civil Liberties (NCCL), the FOR, and the FSC.⁵²

⁵⁰ Groups that specifically opposed the war were the National Council Against Conscriptio NCAC), later to become the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL), The League Against Conscriptio and the Stop The War Committee (STWC). Other groups which represented other interests opposed the war such as Women's (later Workers') Suffrage Federation (WSF) led by Sylvia Pankhurst and the Women's Freedom League (WFL), led by Charlotte Despard.

⁵¹ There were 150 branches of the NCF in 1917 according to Kennedy *The Hound of Conscience*, Appendix A, page 294-301. Copy of a list in the Friends Service Committee Files, Friends House Library, London.

⁵² Other groups referenced briefly in this thesis are: STWC, The League against Conscriptio and the Peace Negotiation Committee (PNC).

Women, the NCF and resistance to war.

Few women became involved in the NCF in its early days, because, initially, only men of military age, eligible to be COs, could be members. Women, and men too old to be enlisted, wished to support those who would take the position of conscientious objection, so an associate membership status was created, thus broadening and increasing membership.⁵³ During the NCF's existence,⁵⁴ the role of women increased, from almost no involvement in 1914, to a significant number running large parts of the Fellowship by 1918; as full members went to prison, associate members took over the organisation, offering women opportunities to undertake roles of authority and influence within the organisation. Several women, who are featured in chapters 4, 5 and 6, held posts of authority, such as Catherine Marshall, the focus of chapter 4, who was the Associate Members' Parliamentary Secretary, initiated the COIB, and acted as Honorary Secretary while Brockway was in prison. In chapter 5 the focus turns to three women; Lydia Smith who became editor of *The Tribunal*, the Fellowship's newspaper which was published by Joan Beauchamp. Their colleague, Violet Tillard, held a range of responsibilities, which included NCF publications, the Maintenance Committee, which looked after the welfare of released COs and their families, and as General Secretary from January 1918. Margaret Morgan Jones and Gladys Rinder organised the COIB and Visitors department and are the focus of chapter 6.⁵⁵

The Women's Movement and the First World War

Political opposition to the war and the possibility of conscription took the radical women featured in this study towards a pacifist, or an anti-war position, which was not shared by all members of the pre-war women's movement. At the onset of war, The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), along with the International Women's Suffrage Alliance (IWSA), organised a peace rally for the 4 August 1914. Helena Swanwick, a member of the NUWSS and IWSA, recalled in her autobiography that, despite the reluctance of some members of the NUWSS for the meeting to go ahead (she does not specify who was reluctant), "[the Kingsway Hall] was crowded to overflowing by an excited and enthusiastic audience of women." The resolution passed was of a "non-committal nature", urging

⁵³ This was at the suggestion of the Fellowship's Birmingham Branch, Kennedy, *Hound of Conscience*, p.56. NCF Circular letter, 24 May 1915, NCF file, SCPC. From the date of the circular letter, this suggestion was probably made at the first national convention which took place in April 1915.

⁵⁴ November 1914 to January 1920.

⁵⁵ See Chapter 2 pp.63-65 for an explanation of reasons for the use of collective biography and the work of Joan Scott to bring the war resistance of these women together.

governments not yet involved “to work unceasingly towards a settlement, not by force but by reason.”⁵⁶ Although Mrs Fawcett, the leader of the NUWSS, presided at the meeting, she did so with “grave doubts in her mind.”⁵⁷ Swanwick recalled that she felt that “it seemed so appalling that this senseless brutality should come to man,” and that men should now have to “foreswear their culture ... humanity... and wallow in the joys of regimentation, brainlessness and the abandonment of will.”⁵⁸

In contrast, the leader of the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU), Emmeline Pankhurst, gave an extraordinary order for all members to withdraw from the militant action they had been engaged in, and to support the war.⁵⁹ In June 1915, Mrs Pankhurst and her supporters pushed their claims for involvement in the war effort by leading a ‘Right to Work March,’ during which they demanded that women, who were largely excluded from employment, should be allowed to work to aid the war effort for the duration. This patriotic gesture was accompanied by the continued demand by the older Pankhursts, and their supporters, for the vote. They “fashioned an image of nationalist feminism attuned to popular tastes” while denigrating the unenlisted man and making sure the “notion of citizenship was [grounded] in personal sacrifice.”⁶⁰

Mrs Pankhurst’s actions brought into sharp relief the divisions within the women’s organisations, and the ideologies of the women’s movement. The NUWSS were divided by the challenges that war brought; highlighting conflicting loyalties between the campaign for women’s rights and the roles that suffrage and patriotism would take in the era of war. At the end of the meeting on 4 August, as it was realised that Britain was at war with Germany, Mrs Fawcett told the NUWSS “women ...your country needs you...let us show ourselves worthy of citizenship, whether our claim to it is recognised or not.”⁶¹ This signposted an assumption by Fawcett that all the women present would conform to the

⁵⁶ Helena Swanwick *I have Been Young*, London 1935, p.25.

⁵⁷ The meeting was well attended by noted pacifists and suffragists of the time. Olive Schreiner spoke; Rosika Schwimmer spoke of her own country, Hungary with Labour women represented by Mary MacCarthy the union leader, Marion Phillips and Mrs Barton of the Women’s Cooperative Guild. Swanwick spoke on behalf of the NUWSS.

⁵⁸ Swanwick *I have Been Young*, p.240.

⁵⁹ Some of the women’s tactics had been violent, such as setting fire to letterboxes and smashing the windows of shops on Oxford Street, and a few had chained themselves to railings outside the Houses of Parliament. In June 1913, Emily Wilding Davison had been fatally injured when she threw herself under the King’s horse at the Epsom Derby. Many members of the WSPU had been imprisoned because of their violent actions and some, when on hunger strike, had been force fed because of their determination to be treated as political prisoners.

⁶⁰ Nicoletta F Gullace “*The Blood of Our Sons*,” *Men, Women and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War*, Basingstoke 2002, p.6.

⁶¹ Andro Linklater *An Unhusbanded Life Charlotte Despard: Suffragette, Socialist and Sinn Feiner*, London 1980, p.176.

roles assigned to women in time of war; duty, sacrifice, patriotism, and a focus on domestic issues. There was clear opposition to the war amongst a small, but significant, minority of members (as there was in the WSPU), and the NUWSS had a difficult time in 1914 and early 1915, trying to accommodate a variety of views about the conflict. This was challenging, as some of the most prominent members, such as Marshall, Swanwick, Kathleen Courtney and Maude Royden eventually broke away from the NUWSS to pursue pacifist and war resistance campaigning.⁶² Two days after the women's peace rally, the NUWSS executive suspended all political activity. The organisation was to be used to help those who had suffered from the economic and industrial dislocation of the war.⁶³ Initially, Marshall and other pacifist members continued their work on behalf of women by "watch[ing] carefully for war time exploitation of women and resisting police surveillance of the behaviour of soldiers, [above all] they refused to take part in recruiting."⁶⁴

This tense atmosphere within the British women's movement came to a head, just as the 1915 Women's International Congress was to start, at The Hague in neutral Holland. Although several dozen British women applied to attend, only three made it, as they were already on the continent or in America.⁶⁵ The remaining British women were left at the dockside at Tilbury, having been refused passports by the government. The newspapers of the time did their best to humiliate and belittle the efforts of the women by, for example, labelling them the "Peacettes."⁶⁶ British women were inspired by the conference to form their own peace organisation, the WIL, led by Swanwick.

Women's roles in the First World War

The First World War challenged attitudes about the roles that women were expected to take in society. Before the war, women of all classes had been expected to take a domestic role. Middle class women were required to keep public appearances and paid work at a minimum and were not expected to be as well educated as their male counterparts. From

⁶² Catherine Marshall joined the NCF, Helena Swanwick became a member of the UDC, Maude Royden became involved with the FOR, Kathleen Courtney carried out peace and welfare work and all the women became members of the WIL.

⁶³ Correspondence of the NUWSS 1914, circular from the NUWSS executive committee, 6 August 1914. Quoted in Leslie Parker Hume *The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1914*, New York and London 1982.

⁶⁴ Jo Vellacott 'Women and War in England: The Case of Catherine E Marshall and World War One', *Peace and Change*, Vol 4, no 3, autumn 1977.

⁶⁵ Chrystal Macmillan, Kate Courtney, and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence were the only British women who attended the conference, because the first two women were in Holland and Pethick Lawrence travelled with the American contingent. Jill Liddington, *The Road to Greenham Common, Feminism and Militarism in Britain since 1920*, London 1989, p.102.

⁶⁶ They were thwarted by Churchill, First Sea Lord, who closed the North Sea of shipping just before they were due to sail. <http://www.wilpf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Passports-women-who-got.pdf>.

the middle of the nineteenth century new schools, such as Cheltenham Ladies College, had been opened for the education of middle class girls and, for example, by 1901 there were 38 high schools supported by the Girls Public School Company.⁶⁷ Working class women were expected to work to help support their families, as well as take responsibility for domestic duties in the home. Yet, some educated middle class women did develop interests in the relevant “masculine” issues of the day that are central to this study: war, militarism, patriotism, and public duty, such as service to local school or poor law boards. Topics, such as anti-militarism, had been discussed within women’s groups since the middle of the nineteenth century, while working class women were not without their opinions on political issues of the day, such as that of women’s suffrage, working conditions and economic issues.⁶⁸

In 1914 the people of Britain became involved in a ‘total war,’ which meant that every aspect of daily life came to be dominated by the conflict. The first months of the war brought volunteers in their thousands to army recruitment offices, Belgian refugees who had fled from the German Army settled in towns around the country, and there were anti-German riots. One of the narratives of the war is of the public parts that some women took in their support of the war effort. These roles can be seen to follow similar themes that existed within the parameters of expected traditional gender roles of the time; domesticity, nurturing, and sacrifice. In the initial stages of the war, women staffed relief agencies for servicemen’s wives, and were involved in several voluntary agencies, such as the nurses who worked for the Red Cross, shown in Figure 2, or in aiding Belgian refugees. Although the bulk of these volunteers were unpaid middle and upper-class women, the entire country was able to contribute pennies to war loans and send comforts to soldiers.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Edward Royle *Modern Britain A Social History 1750-1997* 2nd edition, London 1997, pp.168-169.

⁶⁸ Books written on the political activism of working class women at the end of the nineteenth century and into the First World War include Jill Liddington and Jill Norris *One Hand Tied Behind Us: The Rise of the Women’s Suffrage Movement*, London 1978, and Jill Liddington *Rebel Girls*, London 2006, Sheila Rowbotham *Friends of Alice Wheeldon*, London 1986, Gillian Scott *Feminism and the Politics of Working Women*, London 2005.

⁶⁹ Susan Grayzl *Women and The First World War*, London 2002, pp.45-47.



FIGURE 2 NURSES OF THE RED CROSS⁷⁰

In the context of the war, these qualities were enhanced by an expected sense of patriotism and public duty, which manifested itself, not only within a traditional expected gender role, but correspondingly in the 'new' contributions made by women in uniform and in paid employment. There was an assumption that all women would take either the expected domestic or newly socially acceptable roles to assist in the war effort. Initially women's war efforts were to be based in the home and in their unquestioning patriotic support for the nation and recruitment for the army. This part was played out through gendered propaganda posters which linked with their expected role, as in the poster in Figure 3, 'Women say Go.' This was a particularly clever poster which encouraged men to think about joining up, as it was their women folk and children they would be defending, and it made clear to women that, no matter how difficult, they must encourage their men to go, so exploiting the essential and powerful nature of links between femininity and domesticity.⁷¹

⁷⁰ www.redcross.org accessed April 2018.

⁷¹ These posters were designed by the Parliamentary Recruitment Committee. Other themes of the posters were the atrocity stories from Belgium along with leaflet 23 published by the British Parliamentary Recruitment Office, *Women and The War*, directed at women who had held back their men. Grayz I *Women and The First World War*, p.16.



FIGURE 3: PROPAGANDA POSTER⁷²

This example reflects the expectation that women’s war efforts were to be based in the home, in their unquestioning patriotic support for the nation and recruitment for the army.

This prosaic and limited activity had changed by the end of war, as “there was virtually no work that women ... had not done to aid the war effort.... [in addition] the war provided women with a range of new opportunities.”⁷³ Susan Grayzl goes so far as to say that the contribution made by women to the British war effort, “illuminates what made the various efforts [of the combatant nations] succeed or fail.”⁷⁴ The war nurse came to symbolise women’s contributions to the war effort, giving women the opportunity to “get close to the battlefield ...provide vital aid...while still enabling them to be seen as fulfilling a caregiving and feminine role.”⁷⁵ A further visible contribution made by women to the war effort was the work they carried out in the munitions factories, which provided more employment for

⁷² <http://www.ww1propaganda.com/sites/default/files/3g10915u-80.jpg?1308436721>. Accessed May 2018.

⁷³ Grayzl *Women and The First World War*, pp.45-47.

⁷⁴ Grayzl *Women and The First World War*, p.3-4.

⁷⁵ Grayzl *Women and The First World War*, p.38. A good example of the numbers of nurses trained and working with the wounded in the war is that of the Queen Mary’s Army Auxiliary Corps. In November 1918, the Corps reached its peak with 40,850 women serving as nurses at home and abroad. Arthur Marwick *Women at War 1914-18*, London 1977, p.169.

working class women than any other form of war work. Grayzl's assessment of the significance of women worker's contributions to the war effort is that, through mobilising the women of the nation and harnessing trade union support, this not only provided material support for the war effort, but boosted morale on both the Home and War Fronts.⁷⁶ Women became highly visible as they were, essentially for the first time, seen in uniform in various guises, such as policewomen.⁷⁷ These women tended to be middle or upper class, and were mainly there to monitor the behaviour of the younger working-class women who worked in the factories.⁷⁸

The pacifist stance that the women in this study assumed fell outside these two positions; that of the ideals of the so-called 'patriotic woman' who stayed at home, and those women who worked in a factory, or conformed to the militarism of the day by joining a volunteer force. They viewed the issues of sacrifice, duty and patriotism in a different light to their working or uniformed sisters, risking social isolation because they opposed the war, so they fell outside the mainstream of expected and accepted gender roles. The radical women in this study broke away from the women's groups with which they had been associated prior to the war, and either allied themselves with women's groups that focused on internationalism, such as the WIL, or specific war resistance groups such as the NCF or UDC. Some became involved in, or supported, the aims of various anti-war women's campaigns, such as the WPC.

Government Persecution of War Resisters.

Throughout 1917, war losses had been consistently heavy, about 2000 a week between April and October 1917 and "...by the summer of 1917 public opinion had become more war weary."⁷⁹ The Battle of Passchendaele had left terrible scars on those who endured and survived it, as well as those who came to know of its horrors. In London, German bombing raids from Gotha biplanes were becoming part of the life of the city. A raid on Poplar, in the East End, in June 1917 killed 145 people, with 382 injured, while at the beginning of July 1917, a huge amount of property was destroyed in the City, with 53

⁷⁶ Grayzl *Women and The First World War*, p.29. There have been several texts written on the nature and significance of women's war work. The key texts are: Gail Braybon *Women Workers in the First World War*, London 1981; Gareth Griffiths *Women's Factory Work in World War One*, Stroud 1991; Susan Pyecroft "British Working Women and the First World War", *The Historian* 56:4 1994; Deborah Thom *Nice Girls and Rude Girls: Women Workers in World War One*, London 1998.

⁷⁷ See Louise A Jackson *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford 2012.

⁷⁸ See Deborah Thom *Nice Girls and Rude Girls*.

⁷⁹ David Stevenson *With Our Backs to the Wall Victory and Defeat in 1918*, London 2012, p.21.

people killed and 182 injured. This raid was particularly terrifying as it showed the ineffectiveness of London's defences.⁸⁰ Rationing had gradually been introduced throughout the country from the end of 1917, and that winter became known as the winter of the queue.⁸¹

The emergency Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) regulations that affected the NCF were restrictions put on publishing, printing and the freedom of expression. By 1917, all printed material that expressed anti-war or pacifist sentiments, had to be passed by a Press Bureau, essentially a censor, 72 hours before publication, making it increasingly difficult to print a dissenting newspaper. The name of both printer and publisher had to be on the newspaper (creating an 'imprint'), rendering those involved with the publication, and any other printed propaganda, vulnerable to police action.

Throughout this time, the NCF maintained its dissent towards militarism and the strictures of DORA, as well as trying to put pressure on the government to release COs who had been made ill by their imprisonment. There was some victory when both Clifford Allen, Chairman of the NCF, and Stephen Hobhouse,⁸² a well-known Quaker war resister, were released in 1917. This decision may have been made because they were high profile COs, and if either of them died they may have been raised to martyrdom by the pacifists.

Dissent seemed to increase during 1917, as munitions strikes swept throughout the north west, and the first Russian Revolution in March 1917 heralded in a new age of possibilities for socialists. Christopher Addison, the Minister of Munitions, reported the singing of the Red Flag at Woolwich Arsenal in July, and there had been calls for worker's soviets to be set up in factories at a socialist meeting in Leeds in June. Although the end of the year saw the Bolsheviks in power and Russia withdrawn from the war, Britain and France had a new ally in America. It was hoped that with the influx of manpower from across the Atlantic, the stalemate on the Western Front could be broken, and the allies sweep to victory.⁸³

The revolutionary fervour of 1917 had a negative impact for war resisters, with unprecedented violence occurring during some pacifist meetings. In London, for example, a

⁸⁰ See Jerry White *Zeppelin Nights, London in the First World War*, London 2012, pp. 124-129, 168-173, 211-19, 249-52.

⁸¹ See White *Zeppelin Nights*, Chapter 12.

⁸² Stephen Hobhouse was a Quaker CO whose health deteriorated while in custody. He became the object of debates in Parliament as his mother, Margaret Hobhouse, wrote a pamphlet called *I appeal Unto Caesar* which requested that he be released because of his poor health. The government relented and released him as they were concerned he would die in prison and give the anti-war movement a martyr.

⁸³ David Stevenson *With Our Backs to the Wall*, p.29.

peace procession in April at Victoria Park was broken up, with Australian soldiers involved in the fighting on the pro-war side, while a debate in Finsbury Park saw the pacifists literally swept from the platform and the park. The Brotherhood Church in Southgate was set alight when a pacifist meeting was held there in October.⁸⁴ In the previous July, the church had been attacked by an angry crowd.⁸⁵ Additionally, 1917 saw several anti-war organisations raided by the police, including the Peace Society, the UDC, NCCL and ILP, as well as the NCF.

Further challenges to the publishers of *The Tribunal* involved police raids, which seized and broke up printing equipment believed to have been used for producing pacifist papers.⁸⁶ Violet Tillard, Lydia Smith and Joan Beauchamp who were in charge of *The Tribunal* during the extremely testing times of 1917 and 1918, yet due to their fortitude and guile, *The Tribunal* continued to be printed and distributed to supporters. In the face of these challenges, the newspaper became increasingly important, not just for supporters, but as a representative of a public voice of dissent against the war, as well as a crucial element in the contribution made by women to the Fellowship's persistent war resistance.

Organisation of the thesis

The thesis is in two sections. To respond to the research questions, the first part of this thesis outlines the historiography, methodology and historical context in which the women featured operated.

Part I

Chapter 1 examines the historiography of the anti-war movement with focus on the NCF, and the reason for its existence, the CO. This is followed by an analysis of the historiography of the role and dissent of women in the anti-war movement of the First World War. The methodologies of feminist and gender theories used to inform Part II are considered in chapter 2, alongside the reasons for the choice of collective biography as the methodology. Chapter 3 outlines, contextualises, and considers whether the AWM was a political movement. There is reflection on the position of the NCF within the AWM, and whether it could be considered the prime element of the movement.

Part II

⁸⁴ Examples from *White Zeppelin Nights*, p.208.

⁸⁵ <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-pacifists-routed-at-brotherhood-church-1917-online>.

⁸⁶ 15 February 1918, the offices of the National Labour Press were raided by the police and the printing equipment that produced *The Tribunal* was dismantled. Kennedy *The Hound of Conscience*, p.248.

This is divided into four chapters, each of which highlights women who contributed, in differing ways, to the work of the NCF. The presentation and construction of the chapters has been influenced by an understanding of collective biography, which has enabled an examination of the contribution of the women as individuals and as members of groups. This section shows how a relatively small, but significant, number of women made a substantial contribution to war resistance during the First World War. Furthermore, it examines how their roles, political activism and commitment to war resistance stimulated a modification of the roles that women took in war resistance, the nature of such activities and how they enabled the maintenance of opposition throughout the conflict. Although several of the women are already known to historians, many further women have been discovered during this investigation, and these women, unfortunately not all of them able to be named, are featured within the chapters in this section.

Catherine Marshall is the focus of chapter 4, as she held several positions of authority and influence in the NCF. Marshall is the best known of the NCF women in this study, as her role in the war resistance of the NCF has been widely acknowledged. This chapter examines the extent of her distinct contribution to the war dissent of the Fellowship, and considers for the first time here, specifically the impact of her principles of political activism on the ability of the NCF to maintain its stance of war resistance.⁸⁷

Chapter 5 highlights the roles and contribution of three further women, Joan Beauchamp, Lydia Smith and Violet Tillard, who, in 1917, took 'centre stage' and played crucial parts in the maintenance of the NCF presence within the anti-war movement, as they became responsible for producing *The Tribunal* and other printed propaganda and material. This chapter explores more fully the varied roles that these women played in the maintenance of the NCF's opposition to the war and conscription.

Chapter 6 highlights the "invisible" women of the NCF who worked behind the scenes, for the NCF and its 'sister' organisation, the COIB. The nature of their resistance was more covert, as they worked in offices and within the confines of official acceptance when they became involved in investigative activities, such as reporting on tribunals, courts martial, and conditions in the Home Office work camps. They organised departments, sorted mail, and collated the intelligence gathered by supporters of the Fellowship and the CO. This

⁸⁷ Catherine E Marshall's papers (CEMP) can be found at The Cumbria Record Office in Carlisle and cover the whole of her adult life.

type of resistance, although more discreet than that of Marshall and the women who produced *The Tribunal*, was nevertheless a key part of the NCF's ability to maintain its opposition to the war. The information, gathered and collated at HQ, was crucial to the NCF in its opposition to conscription and its campaigns to improve the quality of incarceration for COs. In this chapter the contribution of Margaret Morgan Jones to the COIB is introduced as an example of women who have been overlooked by historians of war resistance.

Chapter 7 examines the significance and the nature of the contribution of women to the NCF at district and branch level. Several women, some named and others who remain, at this time, anonymous, appear in the narrative of women's war resistance for the first time. It is within this chapter that a spotlight is thrown on a new aspect of women's local activism; the demonstration of overt support for the CO through singing outside prisons in London. The chapter highlights for the first time, the role and significance of a further group of women, through an examination of the small advertisements in *The Tribunal*. It is here that these 'invisible' women, who supported the CO and the NCF in the local communities, through lower levels of resistance by covert means, can be identified. These women supported the CO, his family and the NCF through sales of work, the organisation of singing outside prisons, offers of work, and providing accommodation to CO's wives and families.

Chapter 1 Historiography

This thesis seeks to examine and close a gap in understanding that concerns the significance of the contribution made by women to the war resistance of the NCF, and further, the extent to which this commitment to resistance enabled the organisation to maintain its opposition to conscription. The historiography of the involvement of women in anti-war activity during the era of the First World War, with a few exceptions, has either minimalised their input by emphasising the involvement of only a few of the dozens of women involved in domestic war resistance, or has focused on a small group of women involved in international women's groups, which campaigned for an end to the war and a just peace. As during the course of this research, a number of women who have never been acknowledged as having participated in war resistance have been uncovered, so this study seeks to place them within the narrative of the contribution of the NCF to war resistance and thereby close the gap between minimal recognition of women's involvement, and a richer understanding of women's contributions to the war resistance that was undertaken during the First World War.

Because the stance of the CO was central to the motivation of the women featured in this study, this chapter reflects initially on work which was written by or about COs; the men whose war resistance lies at the core of the issues considered within this enquiry. There was little interest in the position of the CO in the years leading to, and immediately after, the Second World War, and it was only in the 1960s, with its interest in political resistance and activism, that attention to pacifism and war resistance was revived, initially by David Boulton's work on socialist COs¹, to be followed by projects to record and collect the experiences of aging COs. New approaches in history have considered the CO more broadly and placed his resistance within the context of the time, such as Bibbing's² consideration of the CO as a gendered being, with an examination of the expectations of masculinity in the war era. Recent publications have reflected on the role of resistance in the context of the Home Front and the extent of the impact of the activism of a relatively small group of men.

In the 1980s, women became more prominently involved in peace activism, such as peace protests centred on Greenham Common. This active war resistance stimulated some examination of the role and contribution of a small group of women to the cause of the CO

¹ David Boulton *Objection Overruled* 2nd edition, London 2014.

² Lois Bibbings *Telling Tales Against Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service During the First World War*, Manchester 2009.

and the legacy and example they left of women's war resistance. This has led to interest in war resistance at a local level, albeit with limited focus on the involvement and contribution of women to that activism, in such groups as the WIL and WPC, which were active within the AWM and have attracted some attention of historians.³ In addition, since the 1980s, there has been increased awareness of the parts that women took in international efforts to resist the war through, for example, Women's International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and the British branch, the WIL.

The women who feature in this study, with a few exceptions, have rarely, if ever, been mentioned by historians. Their significance in the maintenance of support for the CO, a symbol of war resistance, has been marginalised and overshadowed by their internationalist sisters, and even more so by the narratives and analyses of the CO himself.

The CO Experience

A raft of books was published, during and immediately after the war, which were related to, and reflected upon, the experience of COs, pacifists and war resisters. These texts focused on the treatment and attitude faced by COs from the military authorities, soldiers and the public and, in some instances, their families and friends. These texts have informed this study of the personal experience of the CO and the support he received from fellow war resisters. Additionally, their accounts created the initial narrative of the CO and, until the 1960s, were accepted as the standard history of the CO and the nature of war resistance at the time of the First World War. An understanding of this field of literature or historiography of COs is pertinent, as it was because of their stance, that many women became involved in the anti-war movement. Furthermore, an appreciation of the literature concerning the CO can clarify the context within which the women worked, with the CO as the focus of their war resistance, particularly for those women who became involved with the NCF. They have rarely been acknowledged within the personal accounts of COs, which have driven the history and legacy of the anti-war movement.

For this study, the key contemporary personal accounts are those of William J Chamberlain, A Fenner Brockway and James Scott Duckers, all of whom were prominent members of war

³ The WIL focused upon international options for peace, and the central role that women should play in attaining and maintaining this goal. The latter was a popular peace protest movement organised, and led by, women whose aim was to persuade the government to end the war. See Chapter 3.

resistance groups and became anti-war activists.⁴ These men told a common story; the personal belief system that led the individual to the decision not to be conscripted under the Military Service Act (MSA), on the receipt of call-up papers. Then, the decision whether to attend the tribunal to request an exemption for military service on the grounds of conscience, or to ignore the summons and wait to be arrested. All transmit the frustration of having to face, either voluntarily or by compulsion, a tribunal who may, or may not, appreciate or even acknowledge that they had a conscience. They relate how they survived prison or life in a Home Office camp, production of illicit newspapers, health difficulties, torment from the warders and, when finally released, the difficulties of being received back into a society just beginning to recover from the shock of the total war experience. Many of these stories were published during the war, or relayed through the pages of *The Tribunal*, the newspaper of the NCF. Along with unpublished manuscripts, they have formed the accepted narrative of the experiences and fate of the CO.⁵

There are several texts either about, or written by, men and women who were involved with the Fellowship. If the anti-war movement could be considered to have been centred on the NCF, then Allen, as the leader of this group, was influential in the conduct of the protests and opposition to conscription. Yet, he did not write a book that related his experiences as Chairman of the NCF, or his experiences in prison; we are left with his biographers for this insight,⁶ Martin Gilbert and Arthur Marwick. Gilbert's book focuses on Allen's correspondence, while Marwick's is a more orthodox biography.⁷ Although adding to the canon of literature about this period, both authors put Allen's war experiences into the context of the rest of his life and, through necessity, the war years only take up a portion of each of the books.

The Gilbert book is of greater value for this research, as the collection of letters includes some to Marshall, in which Allen outlines his motivation and ideas for policy for the NCF.

⁴ A link with previous anti-war activity was James Scott-Duckers who had been involved in the Stop The War Committee during the Boer War, a group which revived their activities once war with Germany was considered inevitable.

⁵ Examples include: George Baker *The Soul of a Skunk, The Autobiography of a Conscientious Objector*, London 1930, James Scott-Duckers, *Handed Over: The Prison Experiences of Mr. J Scott-Duckers*, London 1917. In addition to these published works, there are unpublished personal accounts in archives throughout the country, all of which give roughly the same tale. Examples include the diary and letters of John (Bert) Brocklesby, Cornelius Barritt and Fred Murfin in the Friends Library, the private papers of W Harrison, W Cartwright, HJ Hosmer Boorman, H Millward, and H Lennard, amongst others, in the Imperial War Museum Document Archive.

⁶ Clifford Allen left a large collection of papers and an unpublished diary which is located at the University of South Carolina.

⁷ Arthur Marwick *Clifford Allen The Open Conspirator* London 1964, Martin Gilbert *Plough My Own Furrow: The Story of Lord Allen of Hurtwood as told through his writings and correspondence*, London 1965.

They reveal a sophisticated political alliance between the two campaigners, as in some of the letters he outlines policies or action which he wishes her to implement. The impression is of an intense, trusting professional relationship on his part, an acceptance of her authority in the NCF, and an appreciation of her ability to carry out his instructions, and the letters reveal the extent to which Marshall was involved in policy making. Regrettably, Gilbert has not included her letters in reply to Allen, so Marshall's responses to him may not exist or have not been considered relevant by Gilbert, therefore letters selected are of limited value in considering the role of Marshall and other women in the NCF.⁸ The catalogue of Allen's papers do not contain any reference to Marshall's letters.

Marwick's biography of Allen focuses on his position as a pacifist, his time in prison and political career after the war. As the focus is on Allen there is no discussion of the role of women in war resistance or the NCF, or Allen's view of Marshall and the work she oversees while he is in prison. Marshall and Beauchamp are mentioned, but his discussion omits the various contributions that were made by them or other women in the maintenance of the NCF's opposition to conscription. Overall, Marwick's evaluation of the contribution women made to war resistance is minimalist, as he calls for "a footnote [that] might be added [to the history of women gaining of the vote, in] mentioning ... [the] activities of the few [women] who contributed to the anti-war cause."⁹

Brockway's autobiography illustrates political motivations in the context of the position of the political objector. He was an active member of the National Committee, spoke at conventions, and spent some time in prison as a CO. Written in the early 1940s, his reminiscences of his experiences as a CO are noteworthy and, if viewed alongside Graham's *Conscription and Conscience*, have been considered as "an authoritative version of the CO experience."¹⁰ This personal account of the NCF is in the style of an adventure story, which relays the stories of gallant COs who defied the authorities, amongst which is an account of the setting up of a secret press to print *The Tribunal*. Despite their important contributions to the survival of the NCF as a group adept in the maintenance of anti-war propaganda,

⁸ Some of Marshall's letters to Allen feature in the collection of her papers at Cumbria Record Office. Whether this was because during the war they were not delivered or were returned to her when their friendship came to an end in 1919. See for example: Letter extracts to Marshall from Allen, November 1917 D MAR 4/26, CEMP and Letter to Marshall from Allen to CEM, 7 December 1917, D MAR 2/27, CEMP. Allen's letters are held at University of South Carolina. The information about the letters does not reference any from Marshall. <http://libcat.csd.sc.edu/search~S10?/aClifford+Allen+papers./aclifford+allen+papers/-3%2C-1%2C0%2CB/exact&FF=aclifford+allen+papers&1%2C97%2C>, accessed 30 July 2018.

⁹ Marwick *The Open Conspirator*, p.34.

¹⁰ Cyril Pearce review of 'Writing about Britain's 1914-18 War Resisters Literature Review,' *Reviews in History*, No 1779, <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1779> accessed 8 January 2016.

publisher Beauchamp gets barely more than a paragraph for her efforts, while Smith's and Tillard's roles are completely overlooked. As a comment on the contribution to the role that women played in the NCF, it adds little to the *Souvenir*¹¹ or Chamberlain's account as discussed below.

At the end of the war the NCF published its own account, known as the *Souvenir* here, of how it resisted the war and confronted the government's conscription policies. It is an uncritical and flattering account of the work of the Fellowship which takes great care to praise the sacrifice of the COs and the hardship they endured, while celebrating the war resistance of the members of the Fellowship. Although it does recognise that women played a role in the sustenance of opposition to conscription and government policies, the account of the women's roles is limited to two pages and their number to seven. This publication, the first history of the NCF, has had some impact on the understanding of the presence of women in war resistance, as it has paved the way for the accepted narrative of its resistance, which has been repeated in subsequent evaluations of the Fellowship.

After the *Souvenir*, the most utilised, non-personal account of the process of conscription and objection, from call up through tribunal and onto imprisonment, is *Conscription and Conscience*, by the Quaker preacher, John Graham. This key text, referenced by most historians of the war resistance movement,¹² consists of evidence gathered by Graham during his visits to CO prisoners as a Quaker preacher, or via interviews with the COs and their supporters after the war. Published in 1923, it contributes to the genre of post-war reflection on the horrors encountered by many participants.¹³ It can be considered as a reliable, useful, and carefully compiled account, as Graham took care to interview many COs and their families, and the variety of narratives included in the book qualifies it to be a comprehensive survey of the CO experience.¹⁴ Graham's book is valuable in that it is a reflection of some of the experiences that men faced as COs. However, the interviews have been selected by Graham and, as far as is known, there is no complete set of surviving interviews from which the examples have been selected. The focus of the text is a detailed account of the work of the NCF, "the largest and most comprehensive of the organizations

¹¹ See Introduction pp. 12-13.

¹² John W. Graham *Conscription and Conscience: A History 1916-1919*, London 1923. Google Scholar 22.2.2016 39 citations. This book was reprinted by Bibliolife in 2015.

¹³ Examples of texts reflecting on the experience of war are: Siegfried Sassoon *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* London 1930, Richard Aldington *Death of A Hero*, London 1929, Robert Graves *Goodbye To All That*, London 1929.

¹⁴ For example, he included accounts of the work of the tribunals, Courts martial, MPs, anti-war groups, individuals such as Bertrand Russell.

(sic) for the defence of conscience.”¹⁵ The sense of moral and spiritual outrage Graham felt at the time is reflected in his book; he refers to the CO as “isolated and despised,” forced to take a course [prison], that would “weaken his morale, depress his personality.....enslave his will.”¹⁶

The book’s significance to the history of the NCF, is that it brings together the disparate voices of COs and their varied experiences. He relates the humiliating experiences of the tribunal where, for instance, at Shaw in Manchester, a respected member of the scientific community was insulted for his claim for an exemption on the grounds of conscience as “exploiting God to save your own skin.”¹⁷ As he brings together accounts from Quakers, socialists and those of other objections to combat, he demonstrates that the experiences the men had, as documented in their letters, oral accounts and diaries, were similar and occurred all over the country. Several texts about COs, published in subsequent years, lift stories and anecdotes straight from Graham.¹⁸ He does acknowledge the roles that Beauchamp and Smith, “two clever girls,” took in “baff [ling] the police” so that *The Tribunal* could continue to be produced, and tells it as a “delightful story.”¹⁹ Nevertheless, although he relates the story of the secret press and acknowledges the role that the women took in this feat of war resistance, Graham does not evaluate the significance or impact of the role that the women he mentions in maintaining *The Tribunal*, as his purpose is to relate the story of the NCF’s anti-war activities and to draw attention to the shocking treatment CO’s were subject to by the authorities.

William Chamberlain’s history of the NCF, *Fighting for Peace*, written within ten years of the end of the war by a prominent member of the Fellowship, focuses on the development of the Fellowship as a war-resisting organisation and how it supported men who applied for exemption from military service. Chamberlain acknowledges the essential role of the women in the Fellowship and allows more space for an account of their contribution than Runham Brown. Only the women who appeared in the *NCF Souvenir* are discussed, albeit in slightly more detail, while the vast array of women who were involved in the offices and at a local level remain overlooked. This gap opens opportunities for fresh insights into the

¹⁵ Graham *Conscription and Conscience*, p.171.

¹⁶ Graham *Conscription and Conscience*, pp.33 and 41.

¹⁷ Graham *Conscription and Conscience*, p.71.

¹⁸ For example: Boulton *Objection Overruled* 2nd ed. Kendal 2014. Felicity Goodall *A Question of Conscience*, London 1997, re-published as *We Will Not Go to War: Conscientious Objection during the World Wars*, Stroud 2010. Will Ellsworth Jones *We Will Not Fight: The Untold Story of World War One’s Conscientious Objectors*, London 2008.

¹⁹ Graham *Conscription and Conscience*, p.203.

contributions made by women to the NCF, and opinion on the significance of the contribution and analysis of the contribution that women made to war resistance activity. Chamberlain believed the NCF was the “spearhead” of the English anti-war movement and the group that was the “focal point of resistance.”²⁰ Furthermore, there is no suggestion that through the years that the men were in prison, the women and the older men resisted persecution and harassment from the authorities to keep the Fellowship operating.

In the 1930s, Julian Bell gathered a variety of accounts from pacifists who had been COs, or supporters of the CO movement, and those who had performed non-combatant national service, such as humanitarian relief officers and ambulance drivers.²¹ The chapters demonstrate the mixture of beliefs that existed in the anti-war movement; together they create a strong account for the role and contribution of those who were its supporters. Emphasis has been placed on experiences, rather than an analysis of why there was a need for an anti-war movement, or the engagement of war resisters with the conscription and conscience debate. There are no contributions from women, even though there were several politically prominent women, such as women suffrage campaigners, Sylvia Pankhurst, Marshall, Helena Swanwick, and Maude Royden, all of whom undertook significant involvement in war resistance activity. Bell’s collection goes some way to explain how the women of the NCF became increasingly unnoticed in the chronicle of war resistance.

The only woman who worked in the NCF and wrote of her experiences was Constance Malleeson, who described the administration of the COIB in her autobiography.²² Her account of the reception she and her radical companions received in Leeds when they attended a socialist conference in June 1917, gives a flavour of the hostility that some people felt for pacifists, as “the crowd hissed at us as we went through the streets to the conference.”²³ The “cause” of the CO was taken up by her because “conscription was a thing one could fight tooth and nail- body, boots and braces.”²⁴ She was a member of the Bloomsbury set and spent time at Ottoline Morrell’s house at Garsington “a haven of rest

²⁰ William J. Chamberlain *Fighting for Peace: The Story of the War Resistance Movement*, London 1971, pp.5-6.

²¹ Julian Bell (ed) *We Did Not Fight*, London 1935. Bell was the son of Clive and Vanessa Bell who were members of the Bloomsbury group; a set of writers, artists, and intellectuals who professed their opposition to the war. Bertrand Russell was a prominent member of this group. Julian Bell died driving an ambulance for the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War.

²² Constance Malleeson, known as Colette O’Neil, an Irish actress, who was for some time during the war married to pacifist Miles Malleeson and who was probably the mistress of Bertrand Russell. She worked at the office of the NCF during 1916 and 1917.

²³ Constance Malleeson *After Ten Years, A Personal Record*, London 1931, p.113.

²⁴ Malleeson *After Ten Years*, p.99.

and encouragement for all weary people at that time.”²⁵ Much of the war chapter is taken with her social engagements and blossoming affair with Bertrand Russell, who was, from the summer of 1916 until December 1917, the acting chairman of the NCF. Malleson’s autobiography, as a contribution to an understanding of the role that other women played in the Fellowship, is limited, as it does not mention any other women who worked at the NCF, not even Marshall or Gladys Rinder, who must have been involved in directing her work. Placing war resistance into the context of the Home Front for the first time is Sylvia Pankhurst’s account of the first two years of the war, which was the first account to acknowledge that women participated in anti-war agitation.²⁶ This text offers a balance to Graham’s work, which omitted the context of the time and was uncritical of those engaged in peace work. Pankhurst is somewhat disparaging of the methods of the war resisters, finding their parliamentary lobbying and talking rather futile and hopeless. Her exposure of the divisions within and between groups presents a further dimension of understanding of the challenges that war resisters faced in developing a unified campaign of resistance to conscription and the war.

Since the 1960s several texts have been published which have aimed to bring forth the experience of the CO, and therefore developing the narrative that he was the central force in war resistance. These texts echo this narrow view of resistance previously advocated by the primary accounts of the NCF and, therefore, there is little acknowledgement of the different types of role that women played in active war resistance, so rendering them invisible. Nevertheless, these texts have some relevance, as they assessed the stance taken by the men who feature in these collections, and for whom the women were prepared to be involved in a variety of war resistance activities.

David Boulton’s *Objection Overruled*, the first history of the NCF and COs, to be published since the Second World War, addressed what he considered to be a neglected issue; the marginalisation of the role and the influence of socialist COs in accounts published since the First World War. He points out that at the end of this war, the religious and moral attitudes of the COs dominated published accounts, even though socialists, such as Chamberlain and Scott Duckers, had published their memoirs, either during the war, or soon afterwards.²⁷ The significance of Boulton’s book is that it alone foregrounds the influence and importance of the motivation of international socialist thought in the CO’s

²⁵ Malleson *After Ten Years*, p.103.

²⁶ E. Sylvia Pankhurst *The Home Front*, London 1916.

²⁷ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.305.

narrative, in contrast to the position taken by the Quakers and other religious groups, who had previously been dominant in the historiography, and have continued to be as discussed below. Boulton points out that socialist opposition to the war was led by the ILP, who “maintained an astonishing degree of unity in propagating its bitterly anti-war line.”²⁸ By acknowledging the role of different approaches of socialism to the war, and bringing it into the narrative of war resistance, Boulton’s book unites “... the Christian and ... agnostic...inflexible faith in ‘the sacredness of human life and personality’...the common denominator which united religious and secular objectors.”²⁹ Boulton enjoyed the support of Brockway and Russell for his book, both leaders of the NCF and, through publicity in *The Observer*, he received written stories and memorabilia from a number of CO veterans.³⁰ Therefore, the narrative of the CO became more complete, as Boulton’s work complemented and extended the largely religious objector’s accounts Graham had collected at the end of the war. Although Boulton may have brought the contribution of the socialist CO into the war resistance narrative, his acknowledgement of the significance of the work of the women at the NCF has minimised their efforts.³¹ In the introduction to the reprint of Boulton’s book, he admits “the glaring omission in most accounts, including my own, is the role played by women.”³² Despite this admission the gap is not filled in the new edition; Marshall’s papers get some attention, as does the work completed by other historians in a short literature review, but it does not evaluate the contribution made by the women he references in the original text.³³

In contrast, several texts, published since the 1960s, focused on the experience of the religious CO. Felicity Goodall’s, *A Question of Conscience*, utilised, and focused on, sound recordings of the experiences of several men who were in prison or work camps for some, or all, of the war. These were recorded in the 1970s in a collaborative project with the

²⁸ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.49.

²⁹ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.65.

³⁰ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.ix.

³¹ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.78. Examples of his inaccuracy and reductive attitude towards the contribution of the women; he mentions that the record department was begun by Marshall “a militant suffragette.” P.78. She was a prominent member of the NUWSS, therefore a constitutional suffragist, not a militant suffragette. He makes no mention of her role as Parliamentary Secretary, a more prestigious and public role. There is some inference that the reason she joined the NCF was because “she had been captivated in more or less equal measure by Clifford Allen and his cause,” p.78. He unnecessarily repeats the story that a “malicious CO” (no name is given) called the group of women who had “taken over” had called them a “coven,” and goes on to state that at the beginning of 1918 Russell was “presiding” over the women on p.267. Russell had left the NCF at the end of 1917, as had Marshall. The women Boulton refers to, Beauchamp and Smith, had probably been running much of the Fellowship with the help of Tillard and further colleagues such as Ada Salter and Gladys Rinder since the autumn of 1917.

³² Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.xiii.

³³ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.xiii-xix.

Imperial War Museum (IWM) and are accessible through their website.³⁴ Although she focuses on the stories related by mainly Quaker COs who feature in the recordings, there is a chapter on the impact of their stance on the women who were left at home. These extracts show that those women who were interviewed received help and some financial support from the NCF and the Quakers. None of the women who feature in this study are referenced, either in the text or the recordings, yet this account does acknowledge that women did share the narrative of the COs and their war resistance. It allows a personal insight into the nature of war resistance that women were able to engage upon, such as reading *The Tribunal*, meeting together in support groups, and showing support for their relatives by visiting them in prison. Caroline Moorehead's text, *Troublesome People*, relays the story of the NCF with an emphasis on the men's contributions as COs and as anti-war activists. The involvement of women is minimised, with only Marshall and Beauchamp briefly mentioned as workers for the Fellowship. The stance taken by COs and pacifists during the First World War is related alongside subsequent attempts at pacifism, concluding with the Greenham Common peace protests during the 1980s, which became a stimulus for a re-assessment of women's previous involvement in war resistance.

Clive Barrett's recent text offers insight into the religious motivations of those war resisters who worshipped in the Anglican Church and were influenced by Quaker sentiments and beliefs.³⁵ There is a chapter on women, with Maude Royden the focus of his analysis. Royden was an Anglican and a prominent member of FOR, and this account does add to the understanding of the extent of religious opposition to the war and to a deeper appreciation of the role that Royden played in the organisation and sustenance of that opposition, and gives some further understanding of the breadth of war resistance and women's involvement which existed during the war. The text does not contribute to any further understanding of the significance and impact of the contribution the women featured in this study made to war resistance within the NCF, even though the FOR and NCF worked closely together in the latter stages of the war.

Keith Robbins takes a middle view of COs and introduces an integrated perspective into the CO narrative.³⁶ He positions the experience of the CO within the context of the war being fought, in a sympathetic précis of the CO movement. He aligns himself with the view that

³⁴ <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/> Accessed 13 April 2016.

³⁵ Clive Barrett, *Subversive Peacemakers, War Resistance 1914-18: An Anglican Perspective*, Cambridge 2014. See also Alan Wilkinson *Dissent or Conform? War, Peace and the English Churches 1900-1945*, London 1986.

³⁶ Keith Robbins 'The British Experience of Conscientious Objection.' in *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced*, edited by Hugh Cecil and Peter Liddle, London 1996, pp.691-705.

there was a strong element of religious motivation for conscientious objection, but that political considerations need to be acknowledged. He states there was no division between religious and political COs, only in their methods of how to achieve their goal, a statement not borne out by the difficulties experienced by the NCF with its allies the FSC.³⁷ This conclusion has become the orthodox view of motivation, rather than that of Graham; that only men who had strong religious convictions, became COs.

This middle path is reflected in the most comprehensive history of the NCF to date, Thomas Kennedy's *Hound of Conscience*,³⁸ which takes account of the different political, religious and moral positions that members and supporters took to conscientious objection. Its assertions that the NCF was "unique" and that, "only with the NCF is there a coherent...nationwide resistance against a total war that is ...accepted as necessary by [the] majority of the population,"³⁹ connects with one of the core deliberations of this thesis; that the aims and political activism of the Fellowship, combined with the contribution of the women within it, made the NCF the leading group within the AWM. Kennedy hints at a correlation between the success of the NCF, and the roles that women undertook within it, not least because he integrates the contribution of the women into the narrative, rather than allocating them a chapter to themselves, so not isolating their involvement from the rest of the Fellowship. He falls short of considering the impact or significance of their contributions to its "accomplishments in political organisation and propaganda."⁴⁰ The extent and breadth of women's involvement in the work of the Fellowship is not realised by Kennedy, as his narrative is restricted to the contribution of Marshall, Beauchamp, Tillard and Rinder. In his conclusion about the legacy of the NCF, he does not refer to any of the women whose activities and contributions he had narrated in the main text, even though many of the women featured in this study became involved in peace or socialist movements in the 1920s and 30s.⁴¹

New approaches to war resistance.

New approaches in history since the 1990s, such as interest in cultural influences, have allowed further insights into what made a CO; his motivation, belief system and the

³⁷ See Chapter 3.

³⁸ Thomas C. Kennedy *Hound of Conscience: The History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1919, Arkansas 1981*.

³⁹ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.53, fn 75.

⁴⁰ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.285.

⁴¹ Marshall is mentioned on p.289 as "every major leader of the NCF, including Marshall, as having accepted the necessity of using every possible means to defeat Nazi Germany."

reactions of others to his actions and purpose. This open and analytical approach to the existence of the CO and his motives for opposition to compulsion has encouraged a wider view of resistance to the First World War, and has revealed that the role of women in this activity has been underestimated, a gap that will be filled, to some extent, by this study.

Of interest is the comparative approach of Peter Brock.⁴² He explored the nature of the experience of not only the British CO in the First World War, but also narratives of COs from other countries in the same war and in subsequent conflicts, such as the Second World War, Vietnam, and Iraq. He investigates the moral issues that lead men to decide whether to become a CO, alongside the issues that surround the resisting of war and militarism across these conflicts. Brock acknowledges that the role of the NCF was that of the central engine of the CO movement, and that the NCF and COs were only allowed to exist because of the British tradition of radical dissent. Even though none of Brock's studies consider the role of women in the stand against conscription or militarism, their value to this study has been as context to the motivations and impetus of the CO, and that the NCF, the organisation in which the women featured in this study are associated, took a significant role in the anti-war movement.

Lois Bibbings, in *Telling Tales About Men*, focuses on the stories and experiences of the CO from the wider perspective of cultural and gender studies; the CO as a hero, coward, role model. This is an enlightening perspective, as she reveals, and enables the reader to understand, the immense difficulties faced by the CO as a man striving to survive in a formal, largely illiberal, Christian and conformist society that, in a time of war, had certain expectations of its men; that they should fight to protect their country and its people.⁴³ Bibbings' gendered perspective on the expectations of men in time of war, offers a contrasting view of the CO to that of Scott, who sees gender as relational and an indicator of power.⁴⁴ Bibbings' approach is helpful to this study as it highlights the expectations of masculinity at the time of the war and enables consideration of women's expected and accepted gendered roles in time of war; positions not conformed to by the women featured in this study.

Despite these wider and more inclusive approaches to the question of the CO, they contain scant consideration of the role that radical, pacifist women played in the maintenance of

⁴² Peter Brock *These Strange Criminals, Against the Draft: Essays on Conscientious Objection*, London 2004.

⁴³ Lois S. Bibbings *Telling Tales about Men. Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service during the First World War*, Manchester 2009.

⁴⁴ See Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and The Politics of History*, New York and Chichester, 1999.

war resistance through their own agency and responsibilities within the NCF. Even though these texts focus on the experience of the CO, and this thesis concerns the role and perception of women in the AWM, these accounts of COs are of some value as they assist in contextual understanding of the positions on gender that were taken at the time. This thesis builds on these accounts by adding more detail of women's involvement in war resistance. Recognition that the women examined in this study took on tasks that might have been considered at the time as 'men's roles,' modifies the current androcentric model of the CO movement. Women became involved in the organisation's maintenance of its war resistance, and took responsibilities such as political lobbyist and printer of dissent propaganda. This reveals a gap in the correlation between women, involved in war resistance, and their activity and authority within the NCF that was designed to assist the CO and his stance; a gap which this study seeks to fill.

Several texts have placed active war resistance within the context of the Home Front. In contrast to Boulton's and Graham's approach on the CO and his resistance to Conscription, John Rae's study, *Conscience and Politics*,⁴⁵ scrutinises the challenges of the CO from the government's perspective. His text examines the institutions and organisations set up to manage the recruitment of soldiers, along with the groups that were formed to deal with those men who wished to take advantage of the conscience clause in the MSA, such as the local government department, under Walter Long, which administered the Home Office Scheme.⁴⁶ The text highlights the debate that took place at the time and subsequently, over the impact the CO had on the administration of the MSA. The strength of this text to the perspective of this thesis is the detail it offers on the MSA, the administration of conscription and the CO, and as a contrasting view of the AWM.

One criticism levelled at Rae's study has been that the nuances of local responses to conscription brought about by MSA (1916) are not considered. Pearce's local study of war resistance in Huddersfield⁴⁷ covers ground that national works, such as Rae's, are either not able to address due to lack of space or, more critically according to Pearce, are not interested in. For example, Pearce is particularly critical of Rae's use of the London-based Central Tribunal figures to calculate the numbers of COs granted exemption. According to

⁴⁵ John Rae *Conscience and Politics: The British Government and the Conscientious Objection to Military Service*, London 1970.

⁴⁶ The Home Office Scheme gave the COs the option of alternative service. They could opt to go to a work camp to serve their sentence, and so were sent to camps, for example, such as on Dartmoor or at Dyce near Aberdeen.

⁴⁷ Cyril Pearce *Comrades in Conscience; The Story of an English Community's Opposition to the Great War*, London 2001.

Pearce, Rae's conclusion is that the exemption rate on the grounds of conscience was about 80% of applications. Having examined the Huddersfield figures through the newspaper reports,⁴⁸ Pearce concludes that of the 110 men who applied for exemption from the Huddersfield tribunal on the grounds of conscience, concessions were made to 65 men, and the rest were refused, making 59% of the applications.⁴⁹ Pearce's research on Huddersfield reveals the importance of a local study, in its ability to modify and contextualise the national situation. Nevertheless, as a "model," generalisations are dangerous when dealing with such matters, and so each local area needs to be studied separately within the national context. Pearce and Durham have begun to fill this gap, by mapping the extent of dissent against conscription across the country, by using the data collected in the Pearce database.⁵⁰ Pearce's work notes the importance of the local context of war resistance and has informed the research for this study because, through a consideration of anti-war activism on a local scale, such as support for the CO's stance through a local or district branch, a wider range of war resisting activities carried out by women has emerged. This fresh approach to understanding the nature of war resistance has opened further opportunities for research.

The Home Front and dissent

The most recent literature that addresses the Home Front tends to comment on the nature of dissent and its effect on public order. Although they take a critical line against the CO and their radical supporters, they do place the CO into the wider context of the time, specifically the Home Front; this in contrast to the focus on the CO, in texts discussed elsewhere. The texts examined in this section are works by Adrian Gregory, Gerald De Groot, Brock Millman, Deian Hopkins and Adam Hochschild.⁵¹

⁴⁸ There are no original tribunal hearings paperwork available except for the Middlesex Tribunal, as the government had them all destroyed in the 1920s. Information about Tribunal hearings can be gleaned from newspaper reports, first-hand accounts from COs or in *The Tribunal*, the newspaper of the NCF.

⁴⁹ Eighty-six men from the Huddersfield area were conscientious objectors, most of them spent time in prison, or serving with the NCC, some went on the run. These events can be seen to be echoed across the country to a greater or a lesser degree. Other areas were involved in anti-war activity, such as Nelson in Lancashire and Glasgow, where syndicalism was the dominant force in union politics and where Helen Crawford found fertile ground for her Women's Peace Crusade. Pearce's work has been extended to the publication of a database of known COs (17,712 to date) and is live on the IWM.

⁵⁰ Cyril Pearce and Helen Durham 'Patterns of Dissent in Britain during the First World War' *War and Society*, 34:2, pp.140-159.

⁵¹ Adrian Gregory *The Last Great War, British Society and the First World War*, London and Cambridge 2008, Brock Millman *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain*, London 2000. Gerard De Groot *Blighty British Society in the Era of the Great War*, London 1996. This has been revised and updated as *Back in Blighty The British at Home in World War 1*, London 2014. Deian Hopkin 'Domestic Censorship in the First World War' *Journal of Contemporary History* 1970 5:4, pp.151-169. Adam Hochschild *To End All Wars; How the First World War divided Britain*, Basingstoke 2011.

Gregory integrates the experience of the COs and the tribunals with other contemporary issues, such as recruitment, employment and other forms of dissent. The issue of the CO is viewed in a much wider sense, and so enables a clearer understanding of the context in which they were forced to operate. Gregory points out that numbers of COs, although overall quite large, and possibly more than the government had anticipated, only took up a small proportion of the tribunals' time, compared to other applications for exemption. Gregory uses diaries and letters from ordinary people to illustrate public opinion and attitudes towards, not only COs and dissenters, but other aspects of the Home Front.⁵² Overall, Gregory's analysis is not sensitive or sympathetic towards the CO issue. His tone indicates that the time and attention paid to COs might have been better employed elsewhere, as it was disproportionate to their numbers, and the role of women in the anti-war and peace movement is completely ignored. Nevertheless, Gregory's analysis is useful, as he brings a fresh view of the Home Front which focuses on the attitudes of the British towards the war, which were not always negative, so offering a balance to the texts supporting the anti-war stance of the war resisters featured in this study.

De Groot is similarly dismissive of the efforts of COs to challenge government policy on conscription and militarism, and he concludes that "Bertrand Russell, Clifford Allen and their comrades did more for the cause of war than they ever achieved for the cause of peace."⁵³ He does make a link between women and the NCF's war resistance by citing a couple of well-known women; Sylvia Pankhurst, who supported the NCF work by speaking at some meetings (but did not work for it), and, of course, Marshall.⁵⁴ Interestingly he mentions Smith as editor of *The Tribunal*, who was not sent to prison, but there is no mention of Beauchamp or Tillard, who were also involved in producing *The Tribunal*, and who did spend time in prison to protect its ability to continue as a war resister's newspaper. His minimisation of the AWM is not confined to the contribution of women, as he does not mention Bertrand Russell's imprisonment because of his involvement with the NCF. De Groot's view of war resisters is that "the government preferred to show its contempt [of war resisters] by ignoring pacifists."⁵⁵ This statement is not altogether accurate, as he fails to consider that DORA was adapted to discourage seditious publications. Furthermore, from 1917 the government believed it necessary to be briefed regularly by the Head of MI5, Basil Thomson, on the activities of peace activists and the

⁵² Gregory *The Last Great War*, pp.216-217. Ethel Billsborough's diary is in the IWM.

⁵³ De Groot *Back in Blighty*, p.222.

⁵⁴ De Groot labels Marshall as a maternal feminist, not a label I think, she would have created for herself.

⁵⁵ De Groot *Back in Blighty* p.211.

AWM.⁵⁶ Although the NCF may have been only one of many pacifist organisations within the anti-war movement, to ignore the cost to people's liberty for supporting such a group is somewhat ingenuous, and marginalises not only the role of the women, but the group itself.

Millman's⁵⁷ approach is that of a broad consideration of how the government's attitude to war resistance and dissent shifted once Lloyd George's administration replaced Asquith's government in December 1916. This change led to increased repression and harassment of the anti-war movement from 1917 onwards, culminating in prosecutions of NCF and FSC personnel in 1918.⁵⁸ Millman's argument is that the Asquith government did not actively seek to repress dissent, it would have been against the foundations of Liberal thought to do so, but, on the other hand, they did little to prevent 'patriots' from disrupting pacifist meetings, or block the conservative and the 'patriotic' press from encouraging such tactics. Millman draws attention to the fact that at no time was any organisation banned, but the conditions under which they operated, particularly in publicity and propaganda, were severely limited through DORA and police harassment.⁵⁹ Millman's text does not acknowledge that women were involved in opposition to the war through political activism.

Hopkin's article⁶⁰, which focuses on printed propaganda, written earlier than Millman's, is more inclined to side with the pacifists, and praise their efforts at continued opposition to the war, although there is no acknowledgement that women were involved in war resistance through the production of printed publicity and propaganda. He argues that the only methods by which the government could retain any control, were by ruthless censorship and the destruction of how the dissenters communicated with their supporters, the written word. Only in 1918, once the government had finally set up a propaganda unit to coordinate publicity about war plans and impose censorship, were there serious inroads into the dissenters' campaigns,⁶¹ which coincided with the increased harassment of the NCF and FSC.

Although Hochschild examines the nature of opposition to the war, his recognition of the contribution of women is somewhat limited. The focus of the text is whether anti-war

⁵⁶ See Cabinet Papers series TNA CAB 24.

⁵⁷ Brock Millman 'HMG and the War Against Dissent,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 40, 3 2005.

⁵⁸ By this time, ED Morel Chairman of the UDC had already spent time in jail for exporting literature from the UK without an export licence. He spent 5 months in prison between September 1916 and February 1917. Millman claims that UDC activity declined during this time. Brock Millman *Managing Domestic Dissent*, p.424.

⁵⁹ For a full discussion of the conditions under which the NCF operated, see Chapters 4 and 5.

⁶⁰ Hopkin 'Domestic Censorship in the First World War.'

⁶¹ Lord Beaverbrook took over all government propaganda in January 1918.

activism created divisions throughout British society.⁶² To address the parts that women played in this opposition to the war, Hochschild cites two prominent activists from the time, both of whom had been closely involved with the suffragette movement before the war; feminist and pacifist Charlotte Despard and her relationship with her brother, General Sir John French, who was Chief of Staff of the British army, and Sylvia Pankhurst's pacifist and war resistant activities. These women, although prominent supporters of war resistance activity, focused much of their time and energy during the war on the welfare needs of women in Battersea and the East End of London respectively, and were not political activists on behalf of the NCF. The contribution the women of the NCF made to war resistance is restricted to one paragraph, even though Hochschild acknowledges that "women had become the organisation's backbone,"⁶³ an issue which is explored further in this study. In a similar vein to previous and subsequent studies, the narrative of the NCF and organised war resistance is conveyed through the dissenting tactics of Bertrand Russell and the imprisonment and suffering of the CO.

Even though the texts examined here recognise that there was anti-war activity, none acknowledge that women played significant roles in this war resistance, and therefore highlight the gaps which prompt the questions within this study relating to the nature and significance of the contribution to war resistance made by women. Nevertheless, they make an important contribution to the historiography for this thesis, as they assist in contextualising the environment in which the women featured in this study lived and carried out their war resistance.

Local examples of war resistance

Local studies of war resistance have made an important contribution to an understanding of the variety of dissenting responses to the war which contrasted with mainstream support for the conflict. One particularly influential study is Cyril Pearce's focus on the local experience, through concentration on the experiences of men in Huddersfield, which became "a virtual citadel for the anti-war cause."⁶⁴ Pearce's approach is that the local experiences of men from urban, radical, non-conformist, Liberal Huddersfield, who resisted the war, enables a wider contextualised view of attitudes to that war. *Comrades* has brought a serious challenge to the myth and belief that Britain was happy to go to war, and

⁶² Adam Hochschild *To End All Wars: How the First World War Divided Britain*, London 2011.

⁶³ Adam Hochschild *To End All Wars*, p.325.

⁶⁴ Pearce *Comrades in Conscience*, p.21.

that the anti-war and pacifist movements were confined to the South East, the middle class and genteel, educated groups like the Bloomsbury set.⁶⁵

Local studies, such as Pearce's, can begin to shed light on the issue of links between the development and radicalism of the CO, and the political dissent that had been very much apparent in the pre-war era. These themes are explored further in Clayton's article on Hyde, then in Cheshire, which outlines the various individuals from radical political and religious backgrounds, who came together to form a branch of the NCF.⁶⁶ As with most accounts of the NCF and COs, the article focuses on the experience of the COs at their tribunal hearings.⁶⁷ There is mention of the role that women took in the Hyde branch of the NCF, where the pattern of involvement seems to have followed that of HQ, in taking over duties as the men went to prison. Clayton's article traces the political and religious connections the COs had with each other, and her conclusion is that, out of thirty-two COs she had been able to research in some detail, twenty-one of them had socialist connections, many with the Hyde Socialist Church.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, her article follows the familiar line of putting the experience of the CO first, and relegating the role of women to a twelve-line paragraph. The contribution of the women is regarded as a side-line, and not integral to the ability of the NCF to support and keep track of the COs, often through the record keeping skills of women who worked for local branches. Alison Ronan's book on the role of women in the NCF and in other arenas of war resistance in Manchester goes some way to fill this gap. Her position is "that middle class radical women's involvement in anti-war activism was ... an irreversible position and led to a reconfigured pattern of association within the city."⁶⁹ Like Pearce, she makes correlations between the radical political networks and anti-war activism of a specific locality. The established networks that Ronan has identified were "important for the public activity of anti-war campaigning," particularly as "opposition to the war was a transgressive, unpopular

⁶⁵ The Bloomsbury Set were a group of middle and upper-class men and women, artists, writers and philosophers who declared themselves to be pacifists in the Great War. Bertrand Russell and his friend and mistress, Ottoline Morrell could be said to have led the group, whose centre was based at Morrell's house, Garsington Manor, near Oxford. See Jonathan Atkin *A War of Individuals Bloomsbury Attitudes to the Great War*, Manchester 2002.

⁶⁶ The groups mentioned as associated with the activities of the NCF in the article include: The Independent Labour Party, Manchester and Salford Women's Trade Council, The Quakers, The Socialist Sunday Movement, Hyde Socialist Church.

⁶⁷ Other examples of local history that focuses on the experience of the CO are: Malcom Elliot 'Opposition to the First World War: The Fate of Conscientious Objectors in Leicester,' *Leicestershire Archaeological and History Society*, 77 2003. Anthony Mor-O'Brien "'Conchie",' *Welsh History Review*, Vol 13 No 3, 1987. Cyril Pearce 'Re-thinking the British Anti-War Movement 1914-18: Notes from A Local Study,' *Quaker Studies*, 7:1, 2002.

⁶⁸ Christine Clayton 'Pacifism and Socialism in Hyde during the Great War,' *North West Labour History Journal*, Issue 35, 2010.

⁶⁹ Alison Ronan 'A Small Vital Flame'. *Anti-war Women in NW England 1914-1918*, Saarbrücken 2014 Saarbrücken 2014, p.5.

and minority position.”⁷⁰ This issue is discussed in more detail in chapters 6 and 7, where the study introduces wider issues of women’s war resistance, such as the methods used by women who protested against the war in public and domestic spaces, along with the significance of the administrative contribution made by the featured women at NCF HQ.

One local study which focuses on radical activity in London during the war is that of Ken Weller’s *Don’t Be a Soldier*,⁷¹ which examines in some detail the radical and anti-war movements in North London. Within the context of the activities of a set of overlapping radical groups, Weller considers the role, function and experience of local COs.⁷² This treatise is helpful, as the roles played by women in the North London radical movement are acknowledged and integrated into the narrative of radical opposition to the war. However, as Weller’s sources are restricted to newspaper reports, the evidence and evaluation of the contribution of specifically NCF women is substantially restricted. It does signal that women were involved in war resisting activity, with several of the women referenced by Weller involved in NCF campaigns, for example Nellie Best who was the subject of police prosecution and anti-war protests. These took place in public spaces such as singing outside prisons to give comfort to the COs inside, so demonstrating to the public that the men were not forgotten and without support.

These local histories are immensely valuable in their approach, as they explicitly begin to link the nature of the radical and dissenting environment of Britain before and during the war, with the development and endurance of the CO movement. The importance or significance of the involvement and influence of the women who were active in radical politics at the time, is a gap which Ronan has begun to close as far as Manchester is concerned

Women and resistance to the First World War

The understanding that some members of radical political and religious groups joined together as local networks in war resistance, is further explored by Ronan in an article on the Women’s Crusade in Manchester, in which she points out that “part of the attraction of the Crusade was its ability to encompass a number of ideologies and to work through an

⁷⁰ Ronan ‘A Small Vital Flame’ p.5.

⁷¹ Ken Weller *Don’t Be A Soldier: The Radical Anti-War Movement in North London*, London 1985.

⁷² Islington had about 119 COs, in that they applied for and were either granted a partial exemption for service in the Non-Combatant Corps (NCC) or to do Work of National Importance (WNI), PCOD.

existing network of local women campaigners.”⁷³ Ronan’s work is relevant to the questions raised by this thesis, as she “restores some of the women activists to a wider narrative of the First World War.”⁷⁴ The debates that were in the public domain, such as militarism, imperialism and capitalism, were publicly challenged by a variety of women activists, who were involved in local initiatives and who “were prepared to work across ...boundaries of class and political or religious affiliation.”⁷⁵ This agitation in Manchester, which attracted a cross section of women, was reflected in the contribution to war resistance made by the women featured in this study, at the head office of the NCF and its local branches. Even though Ronan’s research has focused on the WPC and other women’s organisations, and has not encompassed the anti-war activity of the local NCF in any detail, nevertheless her research has guided the approach of this study, because it sought to correlate the contribution to war resistance of a range of women who came together despite their differing perspectives, to oppose the war in a variety of actions. To highlight the significance of the gathering of disparate women in acts of war resistance, this thesis uses collective biography to highlight the impact that the links between the featured women, along with their shared positions on the war and the stance of the CO, had on the ability of the NCF to maintain its opposition to conscription.

A dearth of accounts by women who worked within the NCF has contributed to their invisibility within the historiography of the anti-war movement. Women’s existence and contribution to war resistance has been acknowledged in relation to others’ input, such as in Vellacott’s monograph on Bertrand Russell’s involvement with pacifists and the NCF.⁷⁶ Kennedy was the third historian to relate the narrative of the contribution of the NCF to anti-war activism during the First World War. This text began to integrate the work and contribution of women such as Marshall, Rinder, Beauchamp, Smith and Tillard into the narrative of the NCF’s war resistance, with Marshall’s key role considered in some detail in Kennedy’s text. He considered her to have been the fulcrum of the Fellowship, the individual who knew about every aspect of the NCF’s work. Nevertheless, only the involvement of these key women was considered, and the fact that many more women contributed to the Fellowship’s ability to sustain their position of war resistance at a

⁷³ Alison Ronan ‘The March of the Women: The Women’s Peace Crusade in Manchester 1916-1918,’ *North West Labour History Journal*, Issue 28, 2002, p.67.

⁷⁴ Ronan ‘The March of the Women’, p.59.

⁷⁵ Ronan ‘The March of the Women’, p.57.

⁷⁶ Jo Vellacott *Conscientious Objection, Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, Nottingham 2015. First published as *Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, Brighton, 1980.

national and local level was not considered in his book, resulting in the minimisation of the complexity and extent of their involvement in the workings of the Fellowship.

Feminism, pacifism and war resistance- The First World War and Greenham Common.

During the 1980s there was a resurgence of interest in the role of women in war resistance and pacifist activity, much of which was inspired by the Greenham Common protests, which took place in the mid-1980s. These protests reinvigorated a desire to discover the history of women's opposition to militarism, and the radical activity that accompanied it. Calvini-Lefebvre, as part of his historiography of the impact of the First World War on British feminism, goes so far to say that Greenham Common was the "intellectual backdrop for the (re) interrogation of the [First World War's] place in British feminism's history." So much so, that it "sparked a new research agenda" into the roles that women had played in peace activism in the past.⁷⁷

This is an interesting approach, but it does not draw attention to an article,⁷⁸ written by Jo Vellacott in 1977, which explored the links between pacifist women's campaigns for suffrage, peace and anti-war activities. One purpose of the article was to "destroy ...the legend that activist women all threw their weight behind the British government in its waging of war."⁷⁹ The focus in the paper is Marshall, and it is the first insight into the motivations, both ideological and political, that she had in moving towards the anti-war movement in 1915.⁸⁰ Vellacott's pioneering article has resonance for this study, as it is here that the impact and significance of the work that Marshall carried out for the NCF is evaluated for the first time: "[Marshall's role has] the major credit for the all-embracing plan which emerged for a wide and continuing pressure campaign."⁸¹ Although the contribution Marshall made to the NCF and its war resistance is acknowledged, there is no recognition that other women became involved in the maintenance of war resistance, as the contributions made by the men and women at the NCF, in late 1917 and 1918, have been summarised in a single sentence, as she claims the Fellowship's work was "reduced mainly to endurance."⁸² The article falls short of an appreciation of Marshall's leadership in the political activism of the NCF and therefore its "endurance." Nevertheless, it contributes

⁷⁷ Marc Calvini-Lefebvre 'The Great War in the History of British Feminism: Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the present,' *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique*, XX-1 2015, p.4.

⁷⁸ Jo Vellacott 'Anti-War Suffragists,' *History*, Vol 62 no 206 1977, pp.411-425.

⁷⁹ Vellacott 'Anti-War Suffragists', p.411.

⁸⁰ Vellacott 'Anti-War Suffragists', p.418. Vellacott's reference is 'Agenda' 4-5 February 1915, with annotations in Marshall's hand. This source is from the Marshall papers (CEMP). No file number is given.

⁸¹ Vellacott 'Anti-War Suffragists', p.421.

⁸² Vellacott 'Anti-War Suffragists', p.423.

an understanding of the significance of Marshall and, thereby, one women's contribution to war resistance.

Ten years later, in the post-Greenham era, Vellacott returned to the role that suffragists played in the anti-war movement. This time, Vellacott considered links that were forged in the war between pacifism, socialism, feminism, militarism and suffrage; possibly the first time anyone had considered connections between these various strands of ideological radical thought. The influence of pre-war thought on those radical women who became war resisters, such as Marshall, Swanwick and Royden,⁸³ is prominent, as well as the "dissident wing of the NUWSS," which developed a "sophisticated feminist view of the war."⁸⁴ The article focuses on activist women and their roles in the political/public arena, rather than the domestic sphere. She considers the "emergence of a new consciousness and a new theory," brought about through the advent of war. Vellacott draws together several crucial strands; the issue of feminism, how the women's view of suffrage changed, and that some women began to realise that opposition to militarism was very close to the demands for suffrage. This signalled a shift in the moral high ground as men could be blamed for the war and, as women did not have the vote, it meant that they could not have voted for a government that had the aggressive, militaristic policies that had taken Britain into war. Her conclusion about the impact of war is that it "provided a catalyst welding together feminism, anti-militarism and perhaps more tenuously socialism, in a ...closely-knit and coherent theory."⁸⁵ Furthermore, Vellacott emphasises the importance of the Hague Conference in 1915, because it moved feminist and pacifist women towards debates about the meaning of internationalism, and showed that their voices would bring a new set of values into negotiation and debate.⁸⁶

Vellacott's themes of feminism, pacifism and suffrage in the First World War, are reflected in considerations of the connections between women, anti-militarism and pacifism in other accounts that were written in response to the women's protests at Greenham Common.⁸⁷ These books focused on the historical background of the demonstrations at Greenham, by reflecting on the role played by pacifist women in international peace activism at the time of war. They highlight the Women's Peace Conference in The Hague that took place in April

⁸³ Other 'dissidents' were Margaret Ashton and Kathleen Courtney.

⁸⁴ Jo Vellacott 'Feminist Consciousness and The First World War', *History Workshop Journal*, 23, 1987, p.83.

⁸⁵ Vellacott 'Feminist Consciousness and The First World War', p.86.

⁸⁶ Vellacott 'Feminist Consciousness and The First World War', p.94.

⁸⁷ In the mid-1980s, as British foreign policy under Thatcher's government became increasingly linked to an agreement to site American Cruise missiles on American airbases in Britain, women led peace protests were triggered at Greenham Common, and other American air bases in Britain.

1915, as well as activity through WIL, the British branch of WILPF.⁸⁸ Jill Liddington's, *The Road to Greenham Common*,⁸⁹ was written at a time when the Greenham Common protest was still on-going, and it reflects on the role and vigour of women involved in peace activity and points out that women have been active in peace work for some time, particularly since the Quakers began to vocalise their opposition to war.⁹⁰

Liddington's reason for historians' lack of attention to women's peace activity in the First World War, is that the drama of CO resistance through personal witness statements, "allowed historians to shift attention away from feminist forms of resistance."⁹¹ These narratives allow the role of women in the peace movement, and in particular the NCF, to be minimalised, as only men could be COs. Liddington bases her view of the marginalisation of women activists on key texts, such as Peter Brock's *Pacifism in Europe*, and ACF Beales' *The History of Peace*, that fail to mention women's roles in peace movements.⁹² Her conclusion concerns the drawing out of links between feminism and anti-militarism and, as these histories ignore this link, they are therefore "inadequate and misleading," as is any history of suffrage or feminism that omits these ideas and campaigns.⁹³ Overall, Liddington sees this canon of literature as "a denial of women's peace history."⁹⁴ This research explores whether the marginalisation of the account of women's involvement in war resistance originated much earlier, with the *NCF Souvenir*, in 1920, and was perpetuated, as previously stated, by texts published subsequently and more recently.

⁸⁸ The importance of the development of WIL from The Hague Conference is discussed further in Lela B Costin 'Feminism, Pacifism, Internationalism and the 1915 International Congress of Women,' *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol 5 No 3/4, 1982 and Johanna Alberti *Beyond Suffrage: Feminists in War and Peace* London 1989. The internationalist view saw men and women working together towards societal change – a rather radical and modern stance for the time. This view of the role of internationalism in peace studies was explored in Richard J Evans' *Comrades and Sisters: Feminism, Socialism and Pacifism in Europe 1870-1945 Sussex 1987*, Sybil Oldfield's *Alternatives to Militarism: Women against the Iron Fist: 1900-1989*, Oxford 1989, Jean Bethke Elshain *Women and War*, New York 1987. All these texts take a broad and internationalist view of peace movements, rather than looking specifically at the peace movement in Britain during the First World War. They are therefore, somewhat limited in their use for this study, but give a broader contextual view of the activity that took place across Europe. R K S Taylor and Nigel Young (eds) *Campaigns for Peace: British Peace movements in the Twentieth Century*, Manchester 1987, looks more closely at specifically British campaign.

⁸⁹ Jill Liddington *The Road to Greenham Common: Feminism and Militarism in Britain since 1820*, London 1985.

⁹⁰ Margaret Fell, George Fox's co-founder of the Quaker church, wrote to Charles II explaining the peaceable nature of the Quakers. Quakers reject outward wars as a means of resolving disputes.

⁹¹ Liddington *The Road to Greenham Common*, p.4.

⁹² Peter Brock *Pacifism in Europe*, Princeton 1972, ACF Beales *The History of Peace: A short account of the organised movements for international peace*, New York 1931.

⁹³ Liddington *The Road to Greenham Common*, p.5. She points out that Ray Strachey in *The Cause: A Short History of the Women's Movement*, London 1928, and Sylvia Pankhurst in her writing about the war omits any mention of the Women's International League (WIL). This is hardly surprising with Strachey's work, as she was a firm supporter of Mrs Fawcett, who split with the founding members of the WIL in 1915.

⁹⁴ Liddington *The Road to Greenham Common*, p.4.

A further relevant text from the Greenham Common era is Anne Wiltsher's, *Most Dangerous Women*, which brings together the key ideologies of feminism, pacifism, suffrage and internationalism, as discussed by Liddington, and similarly considers them through the narrative of the Hague Conference of 1915.⁹⁵ Wiltsher reflects on the roles of the organisation in Britain after 1915, and deliberates on how the formation of the WIL contributed to division over the war in the NUWSS, which led prominent activists, such as Marshall, Swanwick and Royden to leave and focus their energies on NCF, WIL and FOR respectively. Wiltsher's narrative regards the attempts of the WIL to influence the peace process, and she is even-handed in including all women involved in these activities, as shown by an account of Mrs Pankhurst's visit to Russia.⁹⁶ Overall, the section on activity in the First World War is somewhat limited by its focus on the assessment of the impact made by WIL to peace campaigning. Wiltsher does not make any connections between these women and other radical anti-war and peace activity being undertaken by both women and men or, indeed, to the experiences the women had of suffrage campaigning and how that may have assisted in effective war resistance.⁹⁷

Sybil Oldfield's, 'England's Cassandras', is a further text that focuses on this same group of women as Wiltsher and reflects on these women's failure to affect the conduct of the war and the peace outcome, and focuses on the rhetoric and musings of a few pacifist women who were on the list of potential participants for the 1915 conference, such as Marian Ellis and Vernon Lee. There is no acknowledgement that there were women who became actively involved in opposing, not only the war, but its consequences in Britain. There is no mention of the contribution to war resistance of the dissent of Marshall, Swanwick and Royden, all of whom were involved in the international women's movement through WIL.⁹⁸ Sheila Rowbotham's account of the role of Alice Wheeldon⁹⁹ and her family in rebel networks during the First World War does give some insight into the contribution which Alice and her family made to war resistance. The wider role of women in anti-war activity is

⁹⁵ Anne Wiltsher, *Most Dangerous Women*. See also Jill Liddington 'The Women's Peace Crusade' in Dorothy Thompson(ed) *Over Our Dead Bodies: Women against the Bomb*, London 1983, pp.180-1981.

⁹⁶ Wiltsher, *Most Dangerous Women*, London 1985, p.178-9, for further details of this visit.

⁹⁷ See G Bussey and M Tims, *Pioneers for Peace: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*, Oxford 1980. See also Catherine Foster *The Story of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*, Georgia 1989.

⁹⁸ Sybil Oldfield 'England's Cassandras' in Sybil Oldfield (ed) *This Working Day World: Women's Lives and Cultures 1914-45*, London 2003, pp. 89-100.

⁹⁹ Sheila Rowbotham *Friends of Alice Wheeldon*, London 1986. Re-issued as *Friends of Alice Wheeldon: The Anti-War Activist Accused of Plotting to Kill Lloyd George*, London 2015.

not discussed, as the focus of the text is on the links between the Wheeldon's and the syndicalist movement based in Glasgow.

The link between feminism and pacifism was explored more fully by Pierson.¹⁰⁰ Micheline De Seves' essay considers how pacifists are trapped between the war as a logical consequence of the relations of force and a servitude to the aggressors, or winner. She states, as all the writers do, that feminists cannot ignore the dangers of militarism; a theme that feminists grappled with during, and after, the 1915 Hague Conference, and which ultimately caused a rift within the women's movement during the war.¹⁰¹ Sandi E Cooper points out that responses and attitudes to the prevention of war were varied, and that "there was something less than unanimity among the participants [at the Hague Conference of 1915.]"¹⁰² Her particular view of the difficulties that women peace activists have had is that of "suffer[ing] from historical amnesia, a product of discontinuity," which has been compounded by the issue of "peace movements [which] have not received attention from radical scholars." This has meant that "peace scholars have to re-invent the wheel each time an upsurge in peace activism occurs."¹⁰³ These articles could be regarded as instrumental in attempting to rectify this gap, by contextualising the anti-war activity before the First World War, and so enabling some continuity between the various women's peace movements with those that emerged in the war. This literature underlines the point that before the war women's organisations had linked suffrage, peace, and militarism, and that women had been interested in internationalism.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, the opportunities that were offered for international co-operation by the Hague Conference of 1915 were extremely attractive.¹⁰⁵ This focus on the Hague Conference exacerbates the limited coverage of women's roles in peace activism during the First World War, because it excludes local women, working women and those engaged in administration of war resistance in organisations such as the NCF.

This thesis aims to fill in gaps to the existing literature, where women are either not acknowledged as having a role in war resisting activity, or their contributions have been minimalised by the historian. Exceptions to this can be located in texts that were generated

¹⁰⁰ R Pierson (ed.), *Women and Peace: Theoretical, Historical and Practical Perspectives*, London 1987.

¹⁰¹ Micheline de Seves 'Feminism and Pacifism, or, the art of Tranquilly Playing Russian Roulette,' in Pierson (ed.), *Women and Peace*, pp.44-49.

¹⁰² Sandi E Cooper 'Women's participation in European Peace Movements: The Struggle to prevent World War One,' in Pierson (ed.), *Women and Peace*, p.53.

¹⁰³ Cooper 'Women's participation' p.52.

¹⁰⁴ Heloise Brown *Truest Form of Patriotism: Pacifist Feminism in Britain 1870-1902*, Manchester 2003.

¹⁰⁵ See Cooper 'Women's participation'.

by interest in the women's peace movement of the 1980s. Although these studies have recovered the role of women in the international peace movement of the First World War era, the contribution and activism of the women in the NCF has been barely acknowledged by historians of the Home Front. This thesis explores how the women who became involved with the NCF possessed authority, and made a significant impact on the ability of the Fellowship to maintain its war resistance. An appreciation of this contribution within the history of the Home Front renders it more complete and allows a more profound understanding of the importance of women's contributions to war resistance. These women worked alongside men, they were engaged in the work that needed to be carried out, and in some instances risked their liberty, just as the men did, as the government sought to silence any dissent against the war effort.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The literature discussed in the previous chapter highlights the central question of the thesis which has driven this research concerning the significance of the contribution made by radical, pacifist women to the maintenance of the NCF's war resistance throughout the First World War. A lack of recognition of the extent of the involvement of women in the war resistance of the NCF has meant that few women were mentioned in the contemporary accounts of the Fellowship, with this pattern of minimal attention continuing to the present. The Fellowship, as well as funding its own administrative staff, contributed staff to the COIB, created by Catherine Marshall, which was operated by women.¹ This raises the question of why the women (and some men) who ran the administrative side of the Fellowship have remained unknown or unacknowledged by historians of the period. As this was an organisation which was involved in war resistance, so challenging the authorities' attempts to suppress their campaigns to end conscription, then, out of necessity, there was some obfuscation by the workers at the Fellowship, such as offering false names, addresses and other personal details when they were interviewed by the police, thus rendering some of the women invisible. In addition, much documentation was seized by the police in various raids on the Fellowship's offices and not always returned. Nevertheless, there is surviving documentation, spread across several collections of papers, from which many of the women featured in this study have emerged.² These issues have contributed to the work carried out by women on behalf of the Fellowship becoming scattered, lost or destroyed, either at the time or subsequently. The research for this thesis has brought together evidence from across these collections to enable a fuller account of the activities of the women who became engaged in war resistance on behalf of the Fellowship. As the NCF survived the difficulties of being a dissenting organisation in a time of patriotism and government suppression of war resistance, the significance of the contributions of these "invisible" women needs to be considered. By investigating whether women played significant roles in the sustenance of the NCF's war resistance, the narrative of the NCF and the contribution of women to war resistance at this time, could modify and enrich the history of the Fellowship, anti-war activity during the First World War and the nature of women's war resistance in general.

¹ See Chapter 6.

² The collections consulted during this research include: The National Archives, the Catherine Marshall papers in Cumbria, the Friends Library collection.

This chapter firstly re-visits the questions that underpin this study. It then addresses theoretical positions that have informed the research, especially the issue of women's invisibility, and how Scott's work on this has been tapped to investigate the questions on which this study is based. The chapter continues in a reflection about the methodological approach used in the study, collective biography, which has been informed by Scott's work on Invisibility, and her theory of gender as a category of analysis. Further theoretical tools are then considered in relation to the research; feminist and gender theory, spatial theory and Social Networking Theory. The final section of the chapter offers an overview of the key sources which have been accessed during the research.

Problems of invisibility and how this study addresses them

The experiences of women who worked alongside men in war resistance activity have been obscured by the focus and, thereby, central narrative of the NCF; that of the Conscientious Objector (CO), the personal testaments of those men who chose to be COs in the First World War. Such testimonies are dominated by the experiences of the men involved in objection to conscription, such as tribunal hearings, experiences in barracks and male prisons, all spaces to which women would not ordinarily have been admitted, so they tend to exclude any contributions made by women to war resistance.

An additional issue that has rendered women invisible has been a tendency to view women's war resistance through the actions and words of the pacifist feminist women involved in the WIL, formed after the 1915 Hague Conference. The contributions of women who were not involved with this group have remained obscured.

This study focuses on the women who were not necessarily directly involved in the women's peace campaigns such as the internationalist campaign of the WIL or the WPC. The women featured in this study worked for the NCF, some in high profile posts, such as Marshall, Beauchamp, Smith, Rinder, and Tillard. However, most women worked in more low-key positions within administration, financial organisation, and in the production and distribution of publicity and propaganda. In addition, there were women whose participation in the war resistance of the Fellowship can only be detected through the small advertisements in *The Tribunal*.

Two further issues are those of reductionism and tokenism. The women who worked in the administration of the NCF are considered as being in the background, if considered at all, and have been treated in a reductive way. For example, within the narratives of the NCF,

the work of the Fellowship and its officers is described, but the several women who organised and administered the Conscientious Objectors Information Board (COIB) and its forerunners, the Records and Investigation Departments, are reduced to the work and role of one person, Gladys Rinder.³ Several women worked on the collation of information, such as Alice Graham and Margaret Morgan Jones. Although their names appear on COIB paperwork (of which only a little survives), they have not been acknowledged in any account of the anti-war movement.

This study is one of recovery and re-emergence informed by feminist theory and influenced by the gender theories of Joan Scott, her 'Theory of Invisibility', and is underpinned using collective biography as a supporting methodological approach. Other approaches that have influenced the analysis of the evidence are: Tarrow's social movement theory, which has assisted in examining whether the groups which opposed the war could be considered as an anti-war movement. Social networking theory (SNT) is used as a means of clarifying the formation of groups of radical women who worked within a war resistance setting, as well as consideration of how the women, during their campaigning, entered men's traditional spaces.

The central questions raised by this thesis concern the nature of women's war resistance during the First World War and the extent to which such anti-war activities enabled the NCF to maintain its opposition to conscription and the treatment of COs throughout, and beyond, the conflict. As such, this leads to considerations of the extent to which the accepted narrative of the NCF can be modified to accommodate the contribution made by women. Associated enquiries have been concerned with how an enhanced understanding of the contribution women made to war resistance adds to a wider understanding of their contribution to such resistance at this time, and whether this broadens the understanding of the nature of women's war resistance in a wider context.

A wide range of primary evidence has been consulted to address the questions that have directed this study. Printed sources are from three locations; official government sources located at the National Archives in Kew, the Catherine Marshall archive, in the Cumbria Record Office, which contains a very large amount of written and printed material that pertains to the period covered in the study, and the Friends Library (FL) in London. These have been fruitful providers of material on the contribution of the women featured. A

³ See Chapter 6.

further source has been *The Tribunal*, located at the FL, the official newspaper of the NCF, which has proved to hold a rich vein of evidence concerning the political activism of women who supported the Fellowship and the stance of the CO.

The selection of the women featured in the thesis has been driven by who was present in the available evidence, so more richly resourced and public individuals have tended to lead. This created some concern that this approach would compromise the collective nature of the work. For example, because of her large paper archive, Marshall is prominent throughout the study, as she dominated the acknowledged political activism and organisation of the NCF for nearly two years. The potential dominance of Marshall has been balanced using unpublished and little used archive material where the presence of lesser-known (or even previously unrecognised) individuals appears. These women include Margaret Morgan Jones, Mrs Wray, Marion Daunt, Simie Seruya, Nellie Best, and Kitty Read, all of whom feature in this study. Furthermore, the research has uncovered a significant number of other women who became involved in war resistance for a variety of motivations, religious, political, moral or personal. The presence of some women is sometimes fleeting, such as in a NCF organisational document or a letter to a worker at the HQ of the NCF. The presence of several women who are mentioned briefly indicates a collective sense of opposition to the war, influencing the choice of collective biography as the methodology chosen for this study, so that different voices could be heard and represented. Examples of women who make momentary appearances are; Mrs Fenner, a CO's wife who was a teacher seeking work, Mrs Wilson, who wanted to let out two rooms in her house to pacifists, and Miss Kyle, who was Marshall's secretary.⁴ All the women featured had strong roles within, or an attachment to, the Fellowship and supported, to varying degrees, the political activism of the NCF.

Joan Scott's Influence on the methodology applied in this thesis.

The methodology used to approach, analyse and evaluate the source material pertinent to this enquiry has been strongly underpinned by Joan Scott's theoretical approach to women's political history.⁵ Sources that have already been used extensively, by other historians, to investigate the history of the war resistance groups and individuals, have been read again, as suggested by Scott, so that the contribution the women made to the

⁴ Mrs Fenner *The Tribunal* 8 February 1918, Mrs Wilson *The Tribunal* 10 May 1917, Miss Kyle D/MAR 4/20 and D/MAR 4/11.

⁵ Joan Wallach Scott *Gender and the Politics of History*, Revised edition, New York 1999.

NCF can be brought into the history of the Fellowship and, thereby, of war resistance. This is regarded as vital by Scott as “the separate treatment of women could serve to confirm their marginal and particularized relationship to those (male) subjects already established as dominant and universal.”⁶

The prism through which Scott considered why women would be invisible, even though they must have been contributors to political actions, was gender. Scott commented that “inquiries into gender permit historians to raise critical questions that lead to the re-writing of history.”⁷ By using gender as a “signifier of power,” this thesis explores how both men and women were able, through their political action within the NCF, to maintain opposition to war. Scott’s most thought-provoking and apposite position for this study is the reflection that, “those absent from official accounts partook in the making of history.”⁸ In practical terms, this has resulted in a review of some of the sources used previously by historians of dissent during the First World War era. This re-reading and assessment was undertaken to explore whether women’s roles would not be an addition to the men’s narratives, but “insist that women were actors in the past”⁹ in their own right, such as Marshall, who was an elected member of the National Executive of the NCF, and Nellie Best and Kitty Read, who initiated singing outside London prisons in support of the COs inside. This re-reading and re-assessment further exposed the contribution to war resistance made by women, in dissenting political activity, thereby contributing a fuller picture of the NCF. The women are there, in plain sight, they have just not been seen. Scott’s position states that substituting women for men, “does not re-write (or challenge) conventional history,”¹⁰ adding women has much the same effect, because the way to re-write political history is to “challenge the narrative.”¹¹ So, for example, it needs to be explained, if there are no women, as “even those excluded [from the record] are defined by the [record].”¹²

For this study, the selected sources have been re-examined, with an explicit understanding and appreciation that the women who contributed to the work of the Fellowship may be

⁶ Scott *Gender and the Politics of History*, p.3.

⁷ Joan Wallach Scott ‘Women’s History and the Re-writing of History’ in Christine Farnham (ed) *The Impact of Feminist Research in the Academy*, Bloomington 1993, p.41. Other work by Scott that has been helpful in addressing the issues raised by this thesis are: *The Fantasy of Feminist History*, Durham 2011, *Feminism and History*, Oxford 1996.

⁸ Joan Wallach Scott ‘The Problem of Invisibility’ from S Jay Kleinberg (ed) *Retrieving Women’s History: Changing Perceptions of the Role of Women in Politics and Society*, Oxford 1988, p.9.

⁹ Scott ‘The Problem of Invisibility’, p.12.

¹⁰ Scott ‘Women’s History and the Re-writing of History’, p.39.

¹¹ Scott ‘Women’s History and the Re-writing of History’, p.39.

¹² Scott ‘Women’s History and the Re-writing of History’, p.42.

present but not obvious. The documents associated with the political functions of the NCF and the narrative of the CO, such as *The Tribunal*, reveal the resilient effect women had on the organisation and its success in maintaining a war resistant presence throughout and beyond the conflict. Further sources, previously consulted to understand the narrative of the CO, such as COIB paperwork, minutes of meetings between the FSC and NCF, and communications with government officials and ministers, have been used for this study, to reach a deeper understanding of the roles that women took in these organisations. Furthermore, the sources have assisted in reaching an awareness of the extent to which the women either had or were able to exercise authority in their administrative capacities and political activism.

Methodological Approaches

One concern of this study has been how to accommodate the myriad of women who were involved with the NCF, for which in some cases there is sparse information about their contribution to war resistance. A further consideration has been to acknowledge that the women came from a variety of social, political, economic and religious backgrounds yet they coalesced in their common objections to the war and the imposition of conscription. The selection of collective biography seemed apposite, and is defined for use here as “the investigation of the common background of a group of [people] in history, by means of a collective study of their lives.”¹³ It provides the methodological basis for this study of a set of women from different backgrounds, ages and social statuses, who came to work together because of their similar ideological positions and political beliefs regarding pacifism and militarism, at a particular moment in time, during the First World War. This methodology has enjoyed a resurgence in recent years, as political, socialist and feminist writers have found it useful to bring previously marginalised lives into focus, and to give recognition to their contributions to changes in society.¹⁴ One of the groups that have benefited most from this revival is women. In a modern context, Krista Cowman, a leading proponent of collective biography, is clear about distancing modern collective biography from the prosopographical studies about elites favoured by classicists, or social historians’ examination of the masses. Prosopography in a modern setting tends to focus on the quantitative analyses of an issue from the past, and often uses an individual as an

¹³ Lawrence Stone, ‘Prosopography,’ *Daedalus, Historical Studies Today*, Vol.100 No 1, winter 1971, p.46. Stone identified three types of collective biography: prosopography used initially by ancient historians, multiple career line analysis for social scientists or collective biography used principally by modern historians.

¹⁴ See Jane Martin ‘The hope of biography: the historical recovery of women educator activists,’ *History of Education* 32:2 2003, pp219-133, for consideration of the importance of recovery of women activists.

illustration of the collective, or what might be considered “normal” or “mainstream”. This type of research is likely to produce databases as well as text, and can be useful to the social scientist or historian as a tool for analysis, rather than a judgement in itself.¹⁵

Through the last century and into this, there have been further types of biography, such as group biographies, that focus on individuals joined by similar interests, connections or ideologies.¹⁶ This methodology can be taken further by the use of a group collective biography, where subjects are linked by family or political ties. This is only an extension of individual studies, as these people can be grouped together to make a collective whole, so giving a fuller picture of a movement or theme.¹⁷ All the women who feature in this study implicitly share one ideological position, their support for the stance of the CO, and came together in a variety of group settings; as workers with the NCF or its allies, as political activists or as family or friends of COs.

The choice of collective biography as the basis of the methodology developed for this study, is underpinned by Scott’s identification of power and gender hierarchies which has allowed an opportunity to appreciate and understand the positions that the featured women took politically, and to consider the extent to which their decisions may have been determined by gender roles.¹⁸ One way in which this has been useful has been in the need to address the issue of atypicality. This methodology has enabled a single case, such as in the example of Marshall as the ‘token’ woman, to be counteracted and relativised by the contributions of other women.¹⁹ A further reason for choosing collective biography as the foundation of the methodology was that it has allowed a fragmentary collation, focusing on a few years. It values the place in a study of a coherent (and chronological) narrative placed alongside assessment, analysis and understanding of the context in which the groups of individuals operated.²⁰

Furthermore, the flexibility of this methodology has allowed reflection upon one aspect, or extraordinary moment or period, in these women’s lives, rather than a consideration of their whole lives. It brought together a variety of people in their common aims; in another time or place they may not have worked together for a variety of reasons; class, ideology,

¹⁵ For example, Olive Banks *Becoming a Feminist: The Social Origins of “First Wave” Feminism*, Brighton 1986.

¹⁶ The *Dictionary of National Biography* has 250 themes. Ones that are of interest to this study are: the NUWSS, WFL and WSPU. The UDC has a section but not the NCF or the FSC.

¹⁷ Barbara Caine *Biography and History*, Basingstoke 2010.

¹⁸ This approach is taken by Clare Collins in an unpublished thesis ‘Women and Labour Politics in Britain, 1893-1932’ PhD, London School of Economics, 1991.

¹⁹ See Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 and Appendix B for information about the featured women’s motivations and backgrounds, where known.

²⁰ Advice on constructing collective biography from Krista Cowman ‘Collective Biography’, from Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire (eds), *Research Methods for History*, Edinburgh 2012, p.97.

gender, space. Cowman's collective biography of women who were organisers for the WSPU recognises the plausibility of this approach.²¹ Her assessment of her own motivation, in using collective biography as a methodology, was that she wanted to investigate the effect that embarking on political activism had on an individual, rather than considering how a group of individuals shaped a political organisation.²² This research explores how the converse might be equally as valid in that, the coming together of a group of diverse individuals with mixed aims and objectives, could influence the way an organisation developed, or have some reflection on the success enjoyed by that organisation or movement.

Cowman is interested in using the method of collective biography as a distinct and powerful methodological tool. "[It is] a means of investigating connections between individuals as well as considering personal motivations which might underpin collective actions."²³ This type of methodological approach has been strongly influenced by trends in social sciences which have renewed interest in the personal and individual experience. One text that has relevance for the women and men in my study is that of Hannam and Hunt's *Socialist Women*. The methodology the text uses interprets "the attitude and activities of individual women ...in order to explore the varied ways in which socialist women brought together their socialist and women-focused perspectives."²⁴ Their study's contribution to labour/socialist history, is the bringing of women in from the margins, and so "integrates this perspective into mainstream conceptual frameworks."²⁵ This is apposite, as often it was the individual motivation, or belief, that drove a person to become politically active in the AWM, through their support for war resisters.

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The primary question that has shaped this research has been the extent of the role and impact of women on the NCF's ability to maintain its war resistance throughout the conflict. This aspect of the research was influenced and informed, in part, by the scholastic energy and debate stimulated by the second wave of feminism, sometimes known as The Women's Liberation Movement, and feminist theory, the development of which has influenced the course of the research for this study. Both feminism, and the theories which

²¹ Krista Cowman *Women of the Right Spirit: Paid Organisers of the Women's Social and Political Union, 1904-1918*, Manchester 2007.

²² Krista Cowman 'Collective Biography', p.94.

²³ Krista Cowman, 'Collective Biography' p.89.

²⁴ June Hannam and Karen Hunt *Socialist Women Britain, 1880s to 1920s*, London 2002 p.12.

²⁵ Hannam and Hunt *Socialist Women*, p.12.

underpinned it, were driven by a belief in women's equality with men, which was denied to women by men who supported a system of patriarchy which ensured that women remained in subservient and domestic roles. The theory stated that women had been repressed and suppressed through capitalist, economic, racist and legal exploitation, a position taken further by some feminist historians who stated that men had deliberately hidden women from history, creating the conditions for women's continuing repression and suppression,²⁶ which stimulated feminist historians to show how women resisted such deliberate suppression.²⁷ This approach was attractive to historians influenced by Marxism, and those undertaking socialist inspired research, such as Sheila Rowbotham, who was a key pioneer of this approach.²⁸ The emphasis for much of her work was centred on the issue of patriarchy, which she believed was central to the interpretation and understanding of women's lives in the past.

Stimulated by the idea that women's history had been suppressed or ignored, the 1980s saw a series of reclamation and recovery histories which have been a useful impetus in the research for this study, especially those which have re-examined women's roles in peace activism in the first quarter of the twentieth century.²⁹ Some of this work was inspired by the emergence of anti-war activism, such as a resurgent Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the emergence of women's protests at US airbases, for example at Greenham Common in Berkshire. This approach has been influential in the development of the methodology for this study, as one of its key focal points is the recovery and re-integration of women into the narrative about war resistance. The central question of this study addresses the question about the extent to which the featured war resisting women, some of whom have been "recovered" during research for this study, have themselves been 'hidden from history'³⁰ and, despite the promotion of the importance of women's history from the 1960s, their contributions remained so until recently. Using a feminist

²⁶ Radical feminists see the basic division in all societies as that between men and women and clearly state that men are the oppressors of women, see for example Kate Millett *Sexual Politics*, London 1969 and Juliet Mitchell *Woman's Estate*, Harmondsworth 1974.

²⁷ For example, see Jill Liddington *Rebel Girls, How Votes for Women Changed Edwardian Lives*, London 2015, in which she explored the efforts of working class women in campaigning for the vote and Laura Oren 'Welfare of Women in Laboring Families,' *Feminist Studies*, 1 1973, about the effects of poverty on the diets of women who were without economic power within a household, so they and their children often suffered hunger.

²⁸ See Sheila Rowbotham's volumes: *Hidden from History*, London 1976, *Women's Consciousness, Man's World*, London 1973, *Women, Resistance and Revolution*, London 1972, *Women in Movement, Feminism and Social Action*, London 1992.

²⁹ See: Jill Liddington *The Road to Greenham Common: Feminism and Militarism in Britain since 1820*, London 1985, Anne Wiltsher *Most Dangerous Women, Feminist Peace Campaigners of the Great War*, London 1985, the re-publication by Virago press of Margaret Kamester and Jo Vellacott (eds) *Militarism versus Feminism*, London 1985.

³⁰ This was the title of Rowbotham's ground-breaking work *Hidden from History*.

approach of reclamation and rediscovery, several women have emerged from their invisibility and marginalisation.

In the 1990s, historians turned to considerations of how women's relationships with men could be investigated which, in turn, led to a re-thinking of central issues which are germane to this study, such as power, social structure and authority. As women and men worked together in the NCF, the methodological approach used in the study has considered the allocation of responsibilities, and the impact of the contributions made by women to the movement and the causes of war resistance, investigated through the question of gender. For example, if the women had responsibility or authority in the NCF, was it because their expertise made them a natural choice, or because there was no one else, as the men were in prison.

Gender and feminist theory

Although this study has been most strongly influenced by feminist theory and collective biography, a methodological and theoretical concern has been whether gender theory could also be employed to assist in reaching an understanding of the significance of the role that women played in the maintenance of war resistance during the First World War. Scott's work on gender, viewed as part of this critique of women's history, has been influential in the development of the methodology that underpins this thesis. She concluded that gender (not biological sex) should be used as a theoretical tool with which to interpret the past, a methodology that was based upon her interpretation of the way society is ordered. She saw this order based on knowledge of society, which consists of ideas, institutions, structures and everyday practices, as specialised rituals; gender is therefore the social organisation of sexual difference and a signifier of power. She found it "imperative" in the pursuit of history, that such theoretical questions be pursued, as she believed that there was a need to analyse how gender hierarchies are established and maintained. Scott's criticism of women's history was that it marginalised women and, if gender were not considered, then women would remain so marginalised. She advocated that women should be brought back into the past as part of the past and demanded that historians should consider gender concretely and in context, as an historical phenomenon produced, reproduced and transformed in different situations. This approach would be used to create a framework for the consultation of source materials, and this meant that

historians would be able to consider how gender identity had been (and continued to be) constructed, rather than assume “it’s always been this way.”³¹

Through the 1990s, inspired by Scott’s ideas, there was movement towards “[examining] the socially constructed and historically changing gender systems that divide masculine from feminine roles,”³² and whether this transition (if it has happened) enriches or diminishes women’s history? This debate has some relevance to the issues that have emerged from the research conducted for this study, as the featured women took on roles within the NCF that had initially been designed for men to undertake. However, as these men were incarcerated, it became necessary for others to take their place so that war resistance could continue, and in some cases, it was women who took these roles, such as publisher and editor of the newspaper, local and district branch responsibilities and as administrators of departments of the Fellowship.

The debate over this issue has been extensive and has been seen by some as potentially damaging to women’s history. Penelope Corfield, June Purvis and Amanda Weatherill engaged in this debate about the validity of gender history within the study of women’s history. Corfield stated that it is the great variety of factors that impinge upon personal identity that has “transformed women’s history into gender history” and, because gender roles were created and sustained through the past, then a discussion about masculinity is just as relevant as that about women.³³ She goes further and demands that “gender history at present should therefore ban all references to a singular “discourse” unless a specific argument has been made for its usage.”³⁴ Purvis and Weatherill refute Corfield’s positive support for women’s history mutating into gender history. They go so far as to comment that gender history is a “problematic term” implying “an equivalence of consideration” to men and women, and femininity and masculinity. Therefore, women will again become

³¹ Scott was writing in the 1990s and was influenced by French deconstructionist theory in which historians were directed to understand cultural knowledge through the language used in written documents and other forms of discourse, such as oral memories and interviews. French deconstructionist theory is a form of philosophical and literary analysis, derived mainly from work begun in the 1960s by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, that questions the fundamental conceptual distinctions, or “oppositions,” in Western philosophy through a close examination of the language and logic of philosophical and literary texts. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/deconstruction> accessed 23 June 2015.

³² Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz and Susan Stuard *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, London 1987, p.1.

³³ The factors that she discusses in her article: gender involves biological and psychological, philosophical, social and cultural expectations, a fluctuating combination of inheritance and adaptation and it can be fluid and mutable. Penelope J Corfield ‘History and the challenge of gender history,’ *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 1997 1:3, pp.241-258.

³⁴ Corfield ‘History and the challenge of gender history’, p.251.

marginalised or seen as “historically viable subjects only when placed alongside men [so] reinforcing their position as “other”.³⁵ They are so firm in their belief, that they argue that the advent of gender history has caused feminist history to have “gone underground”; they prefer the idea of “her-story,”³⁶ rather than support the incorporation of women’s history into gender history on the “anti-feminist terms she [Corfield] presents.”³⁷ They argue that women’s history can be written from a variety of perspectives and is not exclusively the preserve of feminists, but “feminist history is linked to the feminist movement in a way that is not necessarily so for women’s history.”³⁸

Scott’s view on “herstory” is that, although it does recognise women’s agency in the “making of history,” it does not challenge conventional history and the way it has been, and continues to be, written. Women remain embedded in the “separate spheres” debate,³⁹ and their story remains separate, and so they are not recognised as being important agents of change, or signifiers of power, and therefore the narrative does not change to acknowledge the role, power and authority that women have held in the past.⁴⁰ This has been a vital consideration for this study, as the promotion of the war resistance carried out by women across the AWM and within the NCF has enabled a reassessment of the narrative of the AWM and the NCF, and the Fellowship’s ability to maintain its war resistance in the face of government repression of anti-war activities, and the incarceration of its members.

A further influence for the theoretical base of this study has been Purvis’ definition of feminist women’s history as “that which finds out about women’s daily experiences and discovers the woman’s voice.”⁴¹ This has been valuable, for instance, in understanding the importance of *The Tribunal* in promoting the cause of the CO, while simultaneously offering

³⁵ June Purvis and Amanda Weatherill ‘Playing the Gender History Game: A Reply to Penelope J Corfield,’ *Rethinking History* 1999 3:3, p.335.

³⁶ Keith Jenkins *Rethinking History*, London 1991, pp.66-67. In discussing the changes in studying the past wrought by the post-modern age and thereby attempting to control the new interpretive flux, “the dominant practices attempt to recuperate/incorporate unwelcome histories into the mainstream, as in the attempts to re-domesticate feminist readings by allowing them a proper and respectable place within history per se rather than letting them remain her-story”. This is a controversial approach within women’s history as it could be seen to endorse marginalisation of women’s history from the mainstream narrative.

³⁷ Purvis and Weatherill ‘Playing the Gender History Game’, p.336.

³⁸ Purvis and Weatherill ‘Playing the Gender History Game’, p.334.

³⁹ See Amanda Vickery ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A review of the categories and chronology of English women’s history’ *The Historical Journal*, June 1993, vol 36, issue 2, pp.383-414.

⁴⁰ Scott ‘Women’s History and the Re-writing of History’, p.38.

⁴¹ June Purvis *Doing Feminist Women’s History: Researching the Lives of Women in the Suffragette Movement in Edwardian England* in Mary Maynard and June Purvis (eds) *Researching Women’s Lives*, p.16. See Jane Martin ‘Interpreting biography in the History of Education: past and present,’ *History of Education*, 41:1, 2012.

a portal into the political stance of the women who published, edited and read the newspaper. Women contributed to its pages, through letters, announcements, advertisements and articles. Johanna Alberti stresses that women's lives need to be central to a feminist history study, and that women's sharing, and networking, was important to women's responses to change and uncertainty.⁴² The women who worked for the NCF shared common goals and expectations centred on their positions as war resisters and as participants in the AWM. Their response to change and uncertainty can be seen in their abilities to substitute for men who went to prison and in their abilities to organise or be involved in feats of war resistance. Further to this has been Deborah Thom's perspective, which denies the value of using gender exclusively in writing about women, as her aim was to "get away from the naturalisation of gender relations involved in assuming either female subordination or a separate and distinct social life for women."⁴³ Her book on working women in the First World War gives prominence to women's contrasting experiences, and, therefore, the women never speak with one voice. This can be recognised as a recent feature of women's feminist history, in that women are not treated as an homogenous group, but as separate individuals, while at the same time understanding that there may be shared goals, knowledge and experiences, such as experienced by the women who were involved with the AWM. The analysis of the work of the women of the local and district branches has been influenced by Cowman's local dimension to this feminist approach in her book about the local paid organisers of the WSPU, in which she demonstrates that the strength of a political organisation is in its local branches.⁴⁴

Debates concerning gender history have informed this study, because they consider "the nature of relations among women and men as gendered beings" and, more crucially, because there can be a consideration of "the impact of gender on ...historically important events and processes,"⁴⁵ a relevant methodological tool here, as the women who were involved in war resistance, and contributed to anti-war activity, were in a gendered position; only men could be conscripted into the army and therefore identify themselves as COs (see below). Both men and women could, and did, contribute to anti-war activity. For women, therefore, their gender enabled them to find space within an organisation that

⁴² Alberti *Beyond Suffrage: Feminists in Peace and War 1914-1928*, Basingstoke 1989.

⁴³ Deborah Thom *Nice Girls and Rude Girls, Women Workers in World War One*, London 1998, p.22.

⁴⁴ Krista Cowman *Women of the Right Spirit*. Other modern collective biographies that have informed this study are: Anne Hillyer and Jane McDermid *Revolutionary Women in Russia: A Study in Collective Biography*, Manchester 2000, Hannam and Hunt *Socialist Women Britain*, Margaret Collins Weitz *Sisters of the Resistance How Women Fought to Free France 1940-45*, New York 1995.

⁴⁵ Sonya Rose *What is Gender History?* Cambridge 2010, p.2.

needed them to continue the work of the Fellowship once the original members had been sent to prison. The political actions of the NCF were organised by both men and women to resist and protest against conscription. Throughout the latter years of the war, as the men went to prison, a small number of women held varying levels of power and authority within the NCF, at HQ and at local level. Marshall, especially, through her knowledge of the parliamentary lobby system, her connections with MPs and government officials, and her aptitude for organisation, was a central figure. Her close personal and professional relationship with Clifford Allen may have added to this authority, and from their correspondence it is clear he trusted her judgement and political acumen.⁴⁶ Beauchamp and Smith took responsibility for *The Tribunal*, the weekly newspaper of the NCF, at a time when it was under most threat from government repression and, through their actions in defying government efforts to stop its production, an important symbol of the struggle against conscription was kept alive. Other women, such as Tillard, Rinder, Margaret Morgan Jones, and Miss Stewart, held positions of responsibility in the NCF and, in some instances, authority over male workers.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, if the war resisting women are to be understood as gendered beings, then so should the men, in order that the influences on their social actions, processes and events can be understood from a gendered perspective. The validity of studying masculinity through the lens of gender has enabled a recognition that masculinity and femininity do interact in relation to each other, and that the way forward could be to consider issues from the past in terms of integrated history, rather than history that only focuses on one gender. Gender history allows for an exploration of the consideration of the women's political activism, alongside that of the men's, so that their full contribution can be appreciated and understood. Toby L Ditz advocates caution in over emphasising the role of men, and male identity within histories of women, as there is a "risk [of] replicating the oppressive omissions of conventional history... [and] occluding women and down playing men's power over women."⁴⁸

Nevertheless, gender cannot be ignored but if, as Joan Hoff states, by focussing on gender, the experiences of women could be reduced and their stories lost, then the women in the narrative of the anti-war movement need to be placed at the core of this study.⁴⁹ The

⁴⁶ See Chapter 4.

⁴⁷ See Chapter 6.

⁴⁸ Toby L Ditz 'The New Men's History and the Peculiar Absence of Gendered Power: Some remedies from early American gender history' *Gender and History*, 16:1, 2004, p.2.

⁴⁹ Joan Hoff 'Gender as a post-modern category of paralysis', *Women's History Review*, 3.2, 1994.

forces that shaped their lives to the point of their involvement in war resistance and, as political activists, their experiences of being war resisters, are important, needing to be understood in the context of the time, alongside the “material discourses of the day.”⁵⁰ In the cases of the women featured in this study, these include women’s suffrage, women’s education, marital status and class and political and religious beliefs. In applying this position, the variety of roles that women took in the NCF can be considered in terms of gender, but also with an understanding that women did move into positions of power and authority within the NCF during the era of the First World War, reflecting similar positions that patriotic women, because of their gender, took in munitions factories, uniformed civilian posts and within the medical profession.⁵¹

Furthermore, gender theory has been a useful tool in considering the gendered nature of, not only the roles women were meant to take in the First World War but, relevantly to this study, the ones assumed by female war resisters, who had already “inhabited” radical and resistant identities in their previous militant or dissent activity.⁵² Indeed, Tillard served time in prison for her suffragette endeavours, and both she and Beauchamp served time in jail during the war, due to their determination to maintain protest against the war via printed propaganda. There were other women who engaged in anti-war activity who were prepared to jeopardise their liberty as a contribution to war resistance. In taking such positions, these women challenged and resisted both roles that British society allocated to women during the conflict; the expected role of mother and wife, staying in the domestic sphere, and supporting their male relatives in the army, or being involved in work of national importance which can only be fully understood through a consideration of gender as relational. The other role was that of woman war worker; a patriotic and potentially sacrificial role that society and the women understood to be “only for the duration”. As only men could be COs in war, the decision to resist involvement was by refusing to serve in the army, a distinctly gendered experience.⁵³ This non-negotiable situation made an impact on the type and extent of the contribution that women could make to war resistance and anti-war activity. A consideration that the experience, not only of war, but

⁵⁰ Maynard in introduction to Maynard and Purvis (eds) *Researching Women’s Lives from a Feminist Perspective*, London 1994, p.8.

⁵¹ See J F Geddes *The Women’s Hospital Corps: forgotten surgeons of the First World War*, *Journal of Medical Biography*, May 2006, 14.2. Thom *Nice Girls and Rude Girls: Women Workers in World War One*, London 1988.

⁵² Prominent women in the war resistance movement tended to have connections with pre-war groups who had a reputation for challenging the status quo such as the NUWSS, WSPU, ILP, and BSP. Marshall, Swanwick and Royden had been members of the NUWSS, Beauchamp, WSF and Tillard, the WFL.

⁵³ Conscription of women for work did not happen in the First World War.

of war resistance, could be viewed as a gendered experience, ensured that gender theory influenced the methodology used here, as it added to the understanding of the role of radical women in anti-war activity. The gendered role women played in the NCF may also go some way to account for their absence or marginalisation in the histories and accounts of the work of the Fellowship, which was, after all, essentially an organisation created to support the male CO, and therefore was not considered a women's cause by the members. Nevertheless, women willingly participated in the war resistance activities of the NCF and, in some instances, instigated their own versions of war resistance.

A middle path between feminist and gender theory suggested by Mary Cullen⁵⁴ emphasises that feminist history is important in its regard of gender as one of the essential methods of analysis, but not necessarily the only one. Although gender is a valuable concept and needs to be "used with precision within specific historical contexts,"⁵⁵ ensuring that women of the past were not treated as an homogenous group, sharing the same experiences of life, relationships with men and, therefore, history. It is important that their lives should be relativised, and not reduced to a history of repression, suppression and resistance. Gender theory allows an historian to consider where the women's power lay, in what manner it was achieved, and to what extent it was maintained.

As stated above, men's roles in the anti-war movement need to be acknowledged and not, themselves, marginalised. After all, without the CO to focus upon, it is very possible that the anti-war movement would have faded away, yet the danger of focusing on only one gender, Cullen states, can lead to descriptive social history, which might be useful, but does not deal with the key questions of how and why. For instance, one explanation for women's relative obscurity in the narrative of the NCF and its war resistance could be that the dominance of the experience of the CO in the story has overshadowed the contributions of women. Further, although highlighting the stance of the CO goes some way to assist in answering why there were COs, it does not address the issue of how he was able to maintain his opposition to war, the central question addressed by this thesis.

It has been through an acceptance that the war resistance activities undertaken by the women featured here were gendered that the questions Cullen raises of how and why can be addressed: some women used the NCF to demonstrate their opposition to the war, for

⁵⁴ Mary Cullen 'History Women and History Men: The Politics of Women's History,' *History Ireland*, 12.2, 1994, pp.31-36.

⁵⁵ Mary Cullen 'History Women and History Men', p.33.

an assortment of reasons; opposition to militarism, religious belief, pacifism, patriotism, support for the stance of COs, or a combination of these motivations. The importance of Cullen's paper for this study is that it asks, "How can a more embracingly human history be written?"⁵⁶ This has meant aiding the construction of a fairer study of the NCF, in which the roles of the women are acknowledged. Such a narrative could include Cullen's point that relationships between sexes needs to be an integral part of the history of society or, in this case, the NCF and its position in the war resistance movement.

The Influence of Social Theories

A further methodological and theoretical challenge raised by the research was how, and why, the featured women who came together into the NCF, remained working for, or supporting the organisation, as the war with its associated difficulties continued, which included the risk of attracting the attention of the authorities and possible imprisonment. The obvious reason was that they supported the stance of the CO, but their diversity of motivation and levels of commitment and contribution may indicate other motivations, such as loyalty via previously existing networks, such as those formed during the women's suffrage campaigns, or through shared religious or political beliefs. In addition, new networks were established through the creation of local and district branches and co-operation with other groups who took an anti-war position.⁵⁷ This links to a further issue for this study which was whether the women in the NCF operated in isolation or were part of a larger network of groups that constituted an AWM, an understanding of which would assist in addressing the question of whether women had a wider role in war resistance than has previously been acknowledged.

Two Social Theories have assisted in the consideration of how and why women became involved in the NCF; social movement theory (SMT), and social networking theory (SNT). The application of these theories in conjunction with the principal methodology of collective biography has enabled a broader appreciation of the "structures, networks and ideologies which connect [individuals]."⁵⁸ Charles Tilly identifies that "constituent units of claim making actors often consist of groups, organizations...social ties...and sites,"⁵⁹ while the actors may have "shared histories, cultures and collective communication with other

⁵⁶ Cullen 'History Women and History Men, p.33.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 3.

⁵⁸ Krista Cowman 'Collective Biography', p.88.

⁵⁹ Charles Tilly *Identities, Boundaries and Social Ties*, Boulder CO, 2005, p.61.

actors.”⁶⁰ In relation to the questions posed for this thesis, the most valuable approach in identifying the NCF and AWM with social movements has been that of Sidney Tarrow’s, who defined a social movement as one that had “collective challenges based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities.”⁶¹ Florence Passy and Gian-Andrea Monsch’s paper informs and assists an understanding of the creation of groups which engage in war resistance,⁶² as the authors explore the “impact of network ties upon decisions regarding participation in actions and movements.”⁶³ This has been informative, as many people featured in this thesis had either been in, or joined, networks which were engaged in political activism before the war, such as women’s suffrage, labour and socialist political networks, or through religious affiliation such as Quakerism. Nevertheless, Passy and Monsch advise caution, as membership of one network did not signal automatic involvement in another, as was experienced within the women’s movement for example. However, by using collective biography, it can be seen that the women worked and campaigned together within groups, and possessed strength of purpose, power and authority in the NCF and the AWM, rather than regarded as isolated individuals who were without influence.

Sarah Richardson’s use of spatial theory to inform her research into the political roles that women took in the nineteenth century has been helpful in the construction of this study’s use of collective biography as its methodology. Her approach revealed a rich vein of political activism in locations not necessarily acknowledged by historians of the era and enabled her to “re-envision of the role of women and consequently that of men in the political life of the period.”⁶⁴ Her findings and theoretical position identifies with the questions raised within this study and the methods used to address them, because she demonstrates that women were politically active during the time period she covers, but have often not been recognised in the narratives of the past. Richardson relates that women’s activities have been uncovered through a re-reading of sources, such as political party’s papers and documents, memoirs, and by re-examining women’s supplemental documentation, such as diaries, letters, novels, newspaper reports, pamphlets, and poems.

⁶⁰ Tilly *Identities, Boundaries and Social Ties*, p.61.

⁶¹ Sidney Tarrow *Power in Movement, Social Movements, Collective Action*, Cambridge 1998 (2nd edition), p.4. See Chapter 3 for an analysis of the AWM using this theory.

⁶² Florence Passy and Gian-Andrea Monsch ‘Do Social Networks Really Matter in Contentious Politics?’ *Social Movements and Social Networks: Introduction*, *Social Movement Studies*, 13:1.

⁶³ John Krinsky and Nick Crossley, ‘Social Movements and Social Networks: Introduction’, *Social Movement Studies*, 2014, 13:1, p.18.

⁶⁴ Sarah Richardson *The Political Worlds of Women, Gender and Politics in the Nineteenth Century*, Abingdon 2013, p.194.

Her conclusion, which resonates with the experience of researching for this project, is that through the adoption of a spatial analytical framework “it is possible to discover women performing collectively and collaboratively as actors in both established political sites as well as in less obvious places...”⁶⁵

Spatial theory has been helpful in highlighting the position that many of the women involved in war resistance found themselves working within male space, such as in courts martial, as visitors to male prisons and military barracks, and as people in authority within the offices of the NCF. Furthermore, a few women expressed their opposition to the war in public spaces, where they may have been subject to violence or ridicule, as they challenged gender boundaries.⁶⁶ The entry into the male spaces referenced here became an essential part of the NCF’s campaigns to support the CO and to end conscription. If women had not been prepared to undertake tasks that involved such activities, then the Fellowship’s impetus as a war resisting group may have been lost, or undermined by the authorities, but by women entering such space the NCF’s opposition to the war could be continued.

The adoption of the integrated methodology, as described, that underpins this study into the role of women, the extent of their contribution and political activism, along with their power and authority in the NCF, has augmented the understanding of the extent and nature of the women’s political activism as part of the Fellowship. This has been possible through the re-reading and re-analysis of the source material reviewed in this section, and those identified authors discussed in the previous chapter. Much of the material considered concerned men, or was written and collated by men, making women’s roles and presence obscure and marginalised. Furthermore, it has assisted in the location of relevant source material, and the subsequent organisation of the analysis of the findings, in order to respond to the question of the significance of the contribution of women’s war resistance to the maintenance of the NCF’s stance on conscription. One example of male space where women do appear, but has needed to be sought out, has been found in official government files, such as those kept by the Home Office (HO) and War Office (WO). These records were created, organised and read by men exclusively, as women were not senior civil servants, police officers or MPs at this time. Except for Beauchamp⁶⁷, none of the women featured in this study appear to have a file dedicated to their activities, a further example of women’s

⁶⁵ Richardson *The Political Worlds of Women*, p.14.

⁶⁶ See Chapter 7, pp.194-197.

⁶⁷ The file about Bertrand Russell’s war activities, TNA HO45/11012/314670, has a reference on the front to Joan Beauchamp, with a file number given as, TNA 356,695. Regrettably, despite the efforts of the TNA staff this file has not been found.

invisibility in the “traditional” archive and that their role in war resistance may not have been considered important by contemporaries.⁶⁸

Despite their utility in uncovering the participation and presence of women in anti-war activity, the official sources have limitations; many have been destroyed in the periodic culls of government material, the most egregious from the point of view of this study is the lack of any correspondence from Marshall in the WO files. There was considerable contact between the two agencies during 1916 and 1917, as evidenced by the drafts of letters to the WO in Marshall’s papers, with only unsubstantiated speculation accounting for such omissions.

Sources

The exception to the marginalisation of women’s contributions to the anti-war movement is that of Marshall, as all narratives about the anti-war movement reference her work for the NCF, without necessarily recognising that other women played vital roles in the Fellowship. Her role has been acknowledged as distinctive, public, and central to the campaigns of the NCF, particularly during 1916 and 1917.⁶⁹

It is unlikely that Marshall’s role would have been recognised without the vast archive of papers that she left at her parents’ house in Keswick, Cumbria. It was by happenstance that these papers were rescued when the house was to be sold and converted into a school in the 1960s. They were deposited, unorganised, in several boxes at the Cumbria Record Office. The archive is a complex mix of personal and political papers, which cover the whole of her life and political career.⁷⁰ The papers have been used extensively by historians of this period and by those who have an interest in the women’s suffrage campaign that took place before the First World War.⁷¹ Furthermore, the archive has been utilised by several

⁶⁸ There are individual files for Brockway, TNA HO 144/17490, which has not been available to view and Russell TNA HO45/11012/31460.

⁶⁹ See Kennedy *Hounds of Conscience, A History of the NO-Conscription Fellowship*, Arkansas, 1981, Jo Vellacott *Conscientious Objection, Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, Nottingham 2015, John Graham *Conscription and Conscience, A History 1916-1918*, London 1923.

⁷⁰ The papers were left in boxes at the record office probably when her parents’ house in Keswick was sold or maybe when she died and the circumstances of their arrival at the record office are obscure. They were organised by Jo Vellacott in 1969 and are available now in her date order at the Cumbria Record Office in Carlisle. This task was undertaken when Vellacott was undergoing research for her book *Bertrand Russell and The Pacifists in the First World War*, London 1980. She later wrote a book about Catherine Marshall, *From Liberal to Labour with Women’s Suffrage: The Story of Catherine E Marshall*, London 1993, which covered her early life and work for the NUWSS.

⁷¹ Examples of historians who have utilised the papers are: Cyril Pearce, Jill Liddington Anne Wiltsher and Jo Vellacott. Other historians of the time and the anti-war commentators do not refer to her archive or its utility, the most prominent of these is David Boulton in *Objection Overruled*, 2nd edition, London 2014. This book was first written in 1966, and published in 1967, before her papers were discovered in the Carlisle Record Office. The

historians to reveal her role in the organisation and activities of the NCF, throughout 1916 and much of 1917. Despite consensus about Marshall's importance to the NCF, little consideration has been given to her leadership or the nature of its political activism.⁷² These papers have proved to be a rich source of material for this study, as they contain much new evidence about the contributions made to the Fellowship by her and the women who worked alongside her at NCF Head Quarters and in the localities. The Marshall papers have been used extensively to help reveal the extent of local group activity, often led by women, in the NCF's overall campaigns on behalf of the CO.⁷³

Her papers confirm Marshall's importance to, and influence and authority within, the NCF, along with her involvement in most aspects of the political action that the Fellowship undertook in its campaigns against conscription, and the consequences of conscription. In addition, they have allowed new insights into the contributions made to the NCF's campaigns by other women who worked alongside her, and their involvement in her drive for a focus on the necessity for direct political activism, so that the stance and the welfare of the CO remained in the public domain.

*The Tribunal*⁷⁴, the official newspaper of the NCF, is one of the most comprehensive sources which offers an insight into the motivation and political actions of women in the NCF. Women, because of their support for the stance of the CO, are present throughout the newspaper: in articles, small advertisements, announcements, letters, and reports of local and district activities. The newspaper is a fund of information about the NCF and AWM, and has been a valuable source for insight into the variety of motivations, of both men and women, which led to their support for war resistance. More importantly for this thesis, its contents advance an enhanced comprehension of the roles that women took in the NCF in two important ways; through their contribution to the maintenance of this front-line publication in war resistance, along with evidence of other war resisting activity with which women became involved.

There are limitations in using this source in isolation from other primary sources and as a sole indicator for women's contributions to the NCF. This is particularly so as *The Tribunal*'s

re-published version offers little attention to her role or any other women's role in the NCF. No reference is made to her exceptional set of papers or use made of them to update the book to include an acknowledgement of the contribution made by women to the anti-war movement. See Chapter 2, the historiography, for further comment on this issue.

⁷² See Chapter 4.

⁷³ See Chapter 7.

⁷⁴ The complete set of the publication is available in the FL.

focus was that of the role and work of the NCF in publicising its position in relation to opposition to conscription, and the support of COs, so women's presence, certainly in its early days, was low-key. For example, despite her role as Parliamentary Secretary, Catherine Marshall's voice is surprisingly muted. Her work as a parliamentary lobbyist is often not made obvious and, although she is mentioned in this capacity, she remains anonymous as "our honorary parliamentary secretary." Whether this is her choice, or the newspaper's, is difficult to determine, and her papers do not offer any assistance. Certainly, if the extent of the work she carried out for the NCF could be judged by the extent of her archive pertaining to her involvement with the Fellowship, then this is not realised by her presence in the newspaper.

Despite its limitations, the newspaper provides a contextual understanding of women's contributions to war resistance, which are present in other sources, such as letters, newspaper articles and official government files. *The Tribunal* gives the view of the NCF, and this organisation was only one of several that might be said to have made up the anti-war movement.⁷⁵

A particularly valuable source of evidence about women's involvement in the NCF and its records on COs has been those files, within the FL, that contain correspondence and other ephemera that relate to the work of the COIB. It was within these papers, that the existence and contribution of Margaret Morgan Jones was uncovered, along with the influence and impact that the FSC, led by Edith Ellis, had on the operation of the COIB, and go some way to reveal the differences in approach to political activism carried out by the NCF on behalf of the CO, and has contributed to the decision to draw on collective biography as the methodology for this study.

The official sources consulted were government, police and judiciary documentation located in Home Office, and War office files at The National Archives (TNA). Most are concerned with the potential threat of the AWM and the NCF. They have, in the spirit of Scott, been re-read carefully to reveal the work, participation and contribution made by women to war resistance. Usually women's contributions are unacknowledged or obscured, but not always, as in the cases of Charlotte Drake and Lydia Smith, whose war resistance is present in the official files, but this aspect of their dissent has remained unacknowledged until now.

⁷⁵ See Chapter 5.

The primary research that has underpinned this study has focused on a small group of women who operated in isolation from those who supported the war and from other non-combatants. The methodology employed has embraced an approach to primary research which has encompassed the use of feminist and gender theoretical ideas through the central methodology of collective biography. The methods engaged have been influenced by Scott's theory on invisibility and the necessity of re-examining primary source material with the intention of uncovering the presence of women. Spatial theory has enabled an understanding of the significance of the nature of the war resistance engaged in by the featured women as they operated within traditional male space and challenged accepted mores of the time. Through reference to SNT, an appreciation that the women worked within a wider group of war resisters has been realised, which has enhanced a more comprehensive understanding of the wider implications of women's roles within the AWM, as well as a specific group, the NCF.

The employment of collective biography as the core methodology has allowed for recognition of the importance of this moment in time, the 1914-18 war. This time of crisis forced people to make choices, and although most chose (willingly or reluctantly) to follow the mainstream line of patriotism and support for the war and government, some (both men and women) chose not only one path, but many, in their opposition to the war. The diversity of these individuals, and their location in the anti-war movement, makes it impossible to generalise or surmise about their motivations or methods of contribution. It has been possible to loosely group the women together through their contributions to the NCF's war resistance, such as the women who published, printed and distributed *The Tribunal*, and the women who worked together for the NCF or COIB. Other groups have been identified as those women who were prepared to support the cause of the CO through other means, such as singing outside prisons, distributing propaganda, or covertly supporting the cause through donations or the offer of domestic assistance, such as work or accommodation.

In using collective biography as the leading methodology to address questions relating to the war resistance of women of the NCF, there is some requirement to understand the extent to which their opposition to the war "was shaped by the broader structures in which [their opposition] was situated."⁷⁶ The following chapter is influenced by characteristics of the methodology employed in this study, SMT and SNT, as it explores the question of

⁷⁶ Krista Cowman 'Collective Biography', p.97.

whether there was an AWM, the position that the NCF occupied within that movement and the role and impact of women's anti-war groups and their activities on war resistance.

Chapter 3: The Anti-War Movement and the NCF

“One is tempted to wonder whether all the fussing and fighting of majorities does a bit of good, but of course one has to do it anyway.”¹

The Anti-War Movement (AWM) of the First World War consisted of groups and individuals who, despite their differing approaches to war resistance, co-operated with each other. Such dissenters, a minority within British society, were criticised verbally, as reflected on by Violet Tillard in her comment to Catherine Marshall after the end of the war. On occasions war resisters were physically attacked, for expressing their view that the war was wrong and should be opposed. This chapter explores the challenges faced by war resisters, and the aims and objectives of the AWM, which were underpinned by shared interpretations of pacifism, patriotism and opposition to government policies, particularly conscription. Within this context there is consideration of the contribution made by women to anti-war activities, both independently, and as part of war resisting organisations, such as the NCF.

This chapter considers the variety of war resisting activities undertaken by women in a variety of organisations within the AWM, so contributing to a wider understanding of the significance of the contribution of women to war resistance. In addition, it reflects on the context of the AWM in which the central organisation featured in this thesis, the NCF, operated, and considers its positioning as the leading organisation within the AWM. The chapter analyses the extent to which the involvement of women in the war resistance of the NCF enabled it to maintain its opposition to the war. There is reflection on the complexion of the groups involved in war resistance, accompanied by a consideration of the goals, motivations and methods of dissent within these groups, and the extent to which they held a common ideology of war resistance.

The chapter first considers the nature of the AWM through an examination of the core set of anti-war activists: the UDC, NCAC, FSC, FOR, ILP, WPC, and WIL, with focus on the NCF.² Women were involved, to varying degrees, in the war resistance carried out by all these groups, as political activists, organisers, policy makers, publicists³, fundraisers, and as friends, family and supporters of those who were war resisters. The examination of the

¹ Letter from Violet Tillard to Marshall 14 December 1918, D MAR 4/30, CEMP.

² Smaller groups had connections either through anti-war ideology or personnel with this main set.

³ Publicist refers to activities such as speech making, appearance on public platforms, writing and publishing anti-war propaganda.

political activism by women within the AWM is accompanied by consideration of how this contributed towards the presence, maintenance and effectiveness of war resistance.

Using Tarrow's view of what constitutes a Social Movement⁴, there is some reflection on whether the collection of groups considered in this chapter can be considered to have been a movement. In investigating this question, there is an examination of common ideological issues, such as pacifism and patriotism, and the common challenge of persecution and suppression. This examination promotes further understanding of the nature of war resistance in which women participated, assisting in modifying the narrative of war resistance undertaken during the First World War. This chapter concludes with reflection on the roles and initiatives undertaken by the women featured in this study, in their sustained involvement in the AWM, particularly in the war resistance of the NCF, which enabled the war debate to remain in the public domain for the duration of the war.

War resisting groups of the First World War

The three types of anti-war groups discussed in this chapter are: firstly, women's peace groups, the WIL, and the WPC, then religious groups and associated religious consortiums, the FOR and FSC, and thirdly political organisations the NCF, NCAC, UDC. All these groups were created to oppose the war and aspects of wider government war policy.

The Women's International League (WIL)

A Women's Conference for Peace took place in Holland in April 1915, which was addressed by key internationalist feminists such as America's Jane Addams, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Hungarian Rosika Schwimmer. Although nearly 200 British women had applied to attend, only three, Kathleen Courtney, Chrystal Macmillan and Emmeline Pethwick-Lawrence, who travelled either from Europe or America, attended the conference, all the others were denied permission to cross the North Sea from the United Kingdom at a time of war.⁵ The idea that women would cross the sea in a time of war and consort with enemy women reveals how isolated these radical women were becoming from the rest of British society.⁶

Nevertheless, pacifist feminists in Britain were inspired by the conference and, in May 1915, they met to discuss its outcomes at a meeting chaired by Marshall and, at a further meeting two days later, chaired by Swanwick and addressed by Addams and Kathleen

⁴ See Chapter 2, p.75.

⁵ See Jill Liddington *Road to Greenham, Feminism and Militarism in Britain since 1820, London 1985*, pp101-6.

⁶ See Introduction, pp.22-27.

Courtney, it was decided to publish the account of the Hague Conference, *Towards Permanent Peace*.⁷ In September 1915 the name Women's International League (WIL) was adopted, and it was agreed that a negotiated peace settlement should be made on terms that would form continuing peace, that there should be democratic control of foreign policy, and that the league should work for change in public opinion towards support for international understanding.

The significance of the WIL is that it was important to democratic suffrage women, such as Marshall, who saw it as a way of connecting their peace work and the fight for women's emancipation.⁸ When the MSA came before Parliament in December 1915, the WIL demonstrated their opposition to conscription through a sponsored public meeting, which put forward the case for opposition to compulsion. Several prominent suffrage campaigners spoke at this meeting, including Marshall, Margaret Bondfield, Charlotte Despard, Emmeline Pethwick-Lawrence, and Maude Royden,⁹ demonstrating their appreciation of the urgency and immediacy of the situation, and the strong links they saw between suffrage and peace. Marshall attended the NCF's convention in November 1915, and decided to dedicate her working life to the Fellowship, although she remained in contact with the work of WIL through her network of NUWSS friends, such as Royden and Swanwick. Nevertheless, her loss was felt by the WIL, and caused some difficulty with these friends, as relayed in a letter from Swanwick to Marshall, in which she explained how she "regretted the loss of [your] genius to a primarily men's cause,"¹⁰ an indication that opposition to conscription, was a problem for men to deal with, and that Marshall should be devoting her time to women's campaigns for peace. Both she and Royden supported a position of what Royden called "constructive pacifism" where emphasis should be on the campaigns for peace rather than opposition to the consequences of militarism, such as conscription.¹¹ The WIL were committed to peace by negotiation as were the other group with which Royden was associated, the FOR. The radical, pacifist women featured in this study had to decide what was more important at this time and, for them, conscription, the challenge of militarism and the consequences of government war policies, took precedence over the suffrage campaign, which had brought many of them to political action before the

⁷ Liddington *Road to Greenham*, pp.105-106.

⁸ The WIL opposed the war throughout the conflict and at the end of the war became part of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

⁹ Jo Vellacott *Patriots, Pacifists and The Vote: The Erosion of Democratic Suffragism in Britain in the First World War*, Basingstoke 2007, p.125.

¹⁰ Quoted in Vellacott *Patriots, Pacifists and The Vote*, p.126. FMP (Frank Marshall Papers, Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle).

¹¹ Letter to Marshall from Maude Royden 10 August 1916, D MAR 2/34, CEMP.

war. Nevertheless, this did not mean that they became uninterested, or that their belief in women's suffrage diminished.¹²

The Women's Peace Crusade

Further female led opposition to the war came from the WPC, "pacifist, pure and simple,"¹³ which was started in June 1916 by two radical socialist women in Glasgow, Helen Crawford and Agnes Dollan.¹⁴ They had already formed a branch of WIL, so bringing together "radical anti-war women at grassroots level."¹⁵ A Home Office report described the WPC as "very active in Glasgow" with Crawford, "an able speaker, acquiring a large following ...her speeches are said to be very mischievous."¹⁶ Other prominent women speakers, such as Helena Swanwick, Ethel Snowden, Margaret Ashton, and Muriel Matters, travelled to Glasgow to address the crowds. Crawford felt that the WIL work was "valuable but constitutional" and found that the women were anti-war, but not necessarily socialist, a political position with which she had been associated for some years. The WPC widened the appeal of peace activism for women, while its "greatest strength seems to [have] lain in industrial towns...too small to have a League branch of their own."¹⁷

However, it was no easier campaigning for the WPC, than for other peace groups, as its first publication, *Casualties*, was seized by the police. The authorities in Manchester banned a meeting to be held in Stevenson Square and, at a meeting in Nelson in Lancashire, the women who tried to speak were howled down by a rowdy singing of 'Rule Britannia' and 'God Save The King,'¹⁸ a clear indication that the crowd felt that the women, by talking peace, were unpatriotic and therefore had no right to speak. By the end of the war, a police report to Cabinet confirms that canvassing for peace had become difficult for the WPC as, according to a woman "in close touch with the directors of the WPC," they were often "subject to abuse" and "[were] very despondent."¹⁹ This gives some indication that the

¹² See Laura E. Nym Mayhall *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain 1860-1930*, Oxford 2003, Chapter 7 'At War with, and for the State 1914-18', pp.117-134, for the continued campaign for women's suffrage during the war. See Nicoletta Gullace "*The Blood of Our Sons, Men, Women and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship During the Great War*, Basingstoke 2002, for an appraisal of the continued campaign for citizenship that women carried out during the war. Marshall continued to be interested in the campaign for suffrage as revealed by papers in her archive.

¹³ TNA 'Report to Cabinet of George Roberts, Minister of Labour', CAB 24/28/74, 10 October 1917.

¹⁴ Helen Crawford Unpublished autobiography, Marx Library, London, p.150.

¹⁵ Jill Liddington 'The Women's Peace Crusade. The History of a Forgotten Campaign' in Dorothy Thompson (ed.) *Over Our Dead Bodies: Women against The Bomb*, London, Virago 1983, p.190.

¹⁶ TNA Further report on Pacifism by Thomson circulated by Sir George Cave (Home Secretary) CAB 24/40/24, 22 January 1918.

¹⁷ Liddington 'The Women's Peace Crusade', p.190.

¹⁸ Liddington 'The Women's Peace Crusade', p.191.

¹⁹ TNA Basil Thomson Fortnightly Report on Pacifism and Revolutionary organisations in the United Kingdom, 21 October 1918, CAB 24/67/79.

government was concerned about pacifist and other revolutionary propaganda on the population, and that they took the campaigning of the WPC as seriously as that of other anti-war groups discussed in this chapter.

Religious Groups

Religious motivation for war resistance was complex, because how an individual felt about killing another human being was, and still is, considered to be a matter of conscience. Several responses to the issue of support for, or opposition to, the war were found within the faith groups within Britain. Focus here is on the position that some Quakers²⁰ took, with their willingness and desire to engage in political protest against government war policies, through the creation of the FSC.²¹ This group had been created specifically to support Friends whose conscience had led them to become COs, and there was a strong Quaker presence in the ecumenical FOR; both groups came together with the more politically active NCF, to form the JAC, which co-ordinated the various activities of these groups.

The Quaker Peace Testimony required that no Friends should use force, but should “strive for peace, to remove the occasion of war; the political divisions, the misunderstandings... from which wars spring.”²² Nevertheless, at the time of the First World War, not all Quakers interpreted the Peace Testimony in a similar way, as the Quaker objector was “inspired by his belief in the authority of the Inner Light²³, not by his adherence to a pacifist tenet.”²⁴ The Society of Friends’ own statistics show that only 45.4% of members of military age became COs, and that 33.6 % enlisted in the armed forces,²⁵ demonstrating a varied response to conscription. Some Quakers of conscription age, who had applied for and been refused absolute exemption from combatant service, agreed to undertake WNI or be consigned to the NCC.²⁶

²⁰ Known as the Society of Friends or just Friends.

²¹ Members of other non-conformist religious groups applied to be COs. For example, the Christadelphians [had] been conscientious objectors since the start of the movement. The objection is to participation, not the value of pacifism, or the unjustness of fighting any side in battle. That means they will not join the military of any country, even if they are commanded to by the authorities, and those who do join would be dis-fellowshipped.

²² Geoffrey Hubbard *Quaker by Convincement*, London 1985, p.130.

²³ The Inner Light gives clarity to conscience and is related to the Quakers relationship with God.

²⁴ John Rae *Conscience and Politics: The British Government and the Conscientious Objection to Military Service*, London 1970, p.73.

²⁵ Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of the London Yearly Meeting of Friends, London 1923, pp231-2. Quoted in Rae *Conscience and Politics*, p.73.

²⁶ Some Quakers served with the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU).

The FSC's position was that there should be no conscription at all, and therefore partial exemptions or agreements to do WNI were not always viewed favourably by Quakers, who believed that if a man chose a particular path then he should suffer the consequences, even if it meant he came into conflict with the authorities. This demonstrated a fundamental difference between the FSC and the NCF. To the former, the CO was in prison to suffer because of his decision to be a CO, and to be punished by the state for refusing to fight by losing his freedom. They believed that through co-operation with the government, which had imposed conscription, then that law was legitimised. The NCF wished to campaign for absolute exemption for the CO through the justification of his conscience at tribunals, and against the sufferings that resulted from the CO's incarceration, and, indeed, wished to improve the conditions in which he was kept.

One example of an episode in the narrative of the AWM where the groups demonstrated that they could come together in support of each other, was when the FSC, not a group known for its confrontational style of activism, provoked government authorities over the suppression of propaganda and publicity. The subject they addressed was militarism²⁷ and their action was championed by its war-resisting ally, the NCF, through its publication, *The Tribunal*.²⁸ In November 1917, a new DORA regulation, 27(c), meant that all leaflets and pamphlets had to bear the name and address of the author and printer, and the publications had to be submitted to the Press Bureau for approval at least 72 hours before being made public.²⁹ The FSC publicly flouted this regulation by publishing a pamphlet called *A Challenge to Militarism*. Three officers from the Committee, Edith Ellis, Harrison Barrow and Arthur Watts, were prosecuted for their role in the publication of the material. The charge of publishing a pamphlet that had not been submitted to the censor was quickly proved at the uncontested trial of Ellis, Barrow and Watts in May 1918. The two men were sentenced to six months imprisonment and Ellis given a £100 fine with 50 guineas costs, which she refused to pay and, subsequently, went to prison for three months.³⁰

Another group that became an ally of the NCF, was the FOR, a group which promoted Christian objections to war, and reached its decisions, not by discussion or resolutions, but through prayer and meditation. At its inaugural meeting in December 1914, the FOR

²⁷ "The belief that a country should maintain a strong military capability and be prepared to use it aggressively to defend or promote national interests." <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/militarism>. Accessed 26 January 2018.

²⁸ 'Making History' *The Tribunal* 30 May 1918, 'The FSC Appeal' *The Tribunal* 11 July 1918.

²⁹ Two women who worked for the NCF, Miss Simie Seruya and Miss Stewart, were arrested for distributing the leaflet. Their arrest prompted the Friends to admit their role in the publication of the leaflet.

³⁰ *The Tribunal* 18 July 1918.

established that it would “state its message of reconciliation ‘positively and constructively’ and not ‘spend its time in mere protest’.”³¹ The group thus differentiated itself from those who engaged in political protest, such as the NCF and the UDC, as it preferred to “proclaim [its] conviction in a spirit of humility, honour and love, exercise forbearance in argument and to guard against the danger of controversial methods.”³² Although the FOR had a role on the JAC and worked in tandem with the FSC and NCF on behalf of the CO, it “remained primarily a spiritual body...rather than being an organisation of political activism.”³³ Nevertheless, its work and co-operation with other groups in the AWM gave a certain spiritual gravitas to the efforts to promote the cause of the CO.

Political Groups

The existing political groups on the left that supported war resistance were the ILP, the British Socialist Party (BSP), some members of the Social Democratic Federation (SDF), and various anarchist groups or individuals, such as Guy Aldred³⁴ and Henry Sara³⁵. The Labour Party and Liberal party were split over how they should respond to the war, with Trade Union leaders within the Labour movement tending to be more interested in how the war would affect their member’s jobs, rather than opposing it. The Labour Party was divided, with a pro-war group within Parliament refusing to endorse a Labour Parliamentary statement, which demanded that the war should be ended immediately, and peace secured. The Party leader, Ramsay MacDonald, resigned, and Arthur Henderson took his place, arguing that “the iron fact of war made the apportionment of blame irrelevant in the face of vital contributions of national unity and safety.”³⁶ Certainly, the invasion of Belgium by Germany, and the consequent progress of the conflict, along with a public blaming of Germany for the war, solidified the pro-war position of previously reluctant politicians and civilians as to the “rightness” of the war and Britain’s involvement in the conflict.

The ILP, on disassociating itself from the Labour Party’s position on the war, became the political mainstay of the AWM. Its response to the outbreak of war was to condemn the capitalists and the “powerful armaments interests” and that it “hail[ed] our working class comrades...across the roar of the guns”³⁷ and “send sympathy and greeting to German

³¹ Joan M Fry *General Principles of Propaganda*, 1, p.106. Quoted in Clive Barrett *Subversive Peacemakers, War Resistance 1914-18: An Anglican Perspective*, p.48.

³² Fry quoted in Clive Barrett, *Subversive Peacemakers*, p.49.

³³ Barrett *Subversive Peacemakers*, p.147.

³⁴ Guy Aldred was the editor of *The Spur*, an anarchist newspaper which opposed the war and capitalism.

³⁵ Henry Sara was an absolutist CO from North London who spent much of the war in prison.

³⁶ Quoted in David Boulton *Objection Overruled*, 2nd ed. London 2014, p.37.

³⁷ WC Anderson in *Labour Leader* (newspaper of the ILP) 13 August 1914. Quoted in Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.44.

socialists...our cause is holy and imperishable.”³⁸ The *Labour Leader*, the ILP newspaper, edited by CO and co-founder of the NCF, Fenner Brockway, eventually achieved “national notoriety for its outspoken attitude to the war,”³⁹ so much so, that the government attempted to close the newspaper down, and harassed its printers to the point where they agreed not to print the newspaper.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the newspaper continued to be printed elsewhere and to criticise government war policies.

The No-Conscription Fellowship

The NCF was unique in its political positioning within this set, as it welcomed men and women who held a variety of political and religious outlooks, and therefore crossed the boundaries of the types of anti-war groups identified. The Fellowship was democratic in nature, with an elected National Committee and annual national and district meetings, at which members were invited to express their opinions on the campaigns of the NCF. The offices were organised and run largely by salaried individuals. It is likely that many of the individuals in the NCF were not of independent means, although they had work or professional experience, such as Marion Daunt, who had been a school teacher before working for the Fellowship. This contrasted with the FSC, for example, which was a group of unelected volunteers, subject to the rules of the Quakers. Some activists were members of several different groups; for example, Catherine Marshall spent most of her time in 1916 and 1917 working for the NCF, as well as being a member of WIL and the PNC.⁴¹ This gave her an understanding of, and access to, the motivations of other war resisters, and a broad knowledge of their activism and positions on various issues within the movement, such as peace negotiation and the role of international co-operation in pursuing a lasting peace. Nevertheless, her priority remained that of the immediate difficulties encountered by COs in their attempts to maintain their stance against conscription. Other members of the NCF were involved with groups within the movement; Clifford Allen and Fenner Brockway were on the NCAC’s committee and members of the UDC, as was Bertrand Russell. This cross-group affiliation was noted by the intelligence groups that gathered information on pacifists and other revolutionary groups. Basil Thomson, Head of the Criminal Intelligence

³⁸ WC Anderson in *Labour Leader* (newspaper of the ILP) 13 August 1914. Quoted in Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.44.

³⁹ Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.45.

⁴⁰ TNA HO45/10817/316469.

⁴¹ Marshall was involved with other groups; as a member of the NCCL executive and women’s Committee, the National Peace Council as WIL representative, a joint by-election committee, the Honorary Secretary of the International Information Bureau and a member of the Women’s International Committee for Permanent Peace. Notes for Mr Hunter May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

Department (CID) at the Metropolitan Police, commented that “it has long been known that personages forming the committees and supporters of pacifist and revolutionary organisations are interchangeable.”⁴²

The NCF, as argued by this thesis, was the ‘leading light’ in the war resistance movement, with Bibbings suitably noting its prominence, as she comments it was “the most notable [pacifist, anti-war and anti-conscriptionist] group in terms of its focus upon resisting conscription and supporting objectors.”⁴³ Further than this, its welcome to COs of varying political and religious views, and its inclusion of women in its activism and decision making processes, contributed to its central role amongst war resisting groups and its authority within the AWM.

Initially, the membership and its leaders consisted of those members of the labour movement, particularly the ILP, that were against the war and who opposed the possibility of conscription. At first, the new Fellowship was based in Brockway’s home in Derbyshire, but was moved to London in 1915, as its membership increased. These men, who would be prepared to resist government attempts to compel them to participate in what Allen had termed a “capitalist imbroglio,” were urged to “take what appears to be an unpatriotic line now so that we may be sure of exercising some influence over future policies.”⁴⁴ By 1917, the NCF had a national network of 7 districts and 150 local branches.⁴⁵ It was initially based at Merton House on the Strand, expanding into several additional offices which included York Buildings at Adelphi on Fleet Street.

The organisation of the NCF allows insight into the reasons why they were able to become the leading war resistance group. One was the large number of associate members who were prepared to undertake a variety of administrative and investigative tasks on behalf of the Fellowship and its members, the COs. Furthermore, the group’s shadow system enabled imprisoned men to be replaced by older men or women associate members.

The original members of the Fellowship formed the first National Committee. They were Clifford Allen, who became Chairman, A Fenner Brockway, Honorary Secretary, William

⁴² TNA CAB 24/60/01 ‘Fortnightly Report on Pacifism and Revolutionary Activity’, November 1918.

⁴³ Bibbings *Telling Tales About Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objection to Military Service During the First World War*, Manchester 2009, p.40.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Arthur Marwick *Clifford Allen The Open Conspirator*, London 1964 p.22. Originally from a speech by Allen delivered to Nelson ILP branch in October 1914. Later published as *Clifford Allen Is Germany Right and Britain Wrong?* London 1914.

⁴⁵ Thomas C. Kennedy *Hound of Conscience, A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship*, Arkansas 1981, p.294 from a list at Friends Library in FSC files.

Chamberlain, Organising Secretary and original editor of *The Tribunal*, the Fellowship's newspaper, and C.H. Norman. Two Quakers joined the National Committee in the summer of 1915, John Fletcher and Barrett Brown, both of whom, once conscription had been imposed, found the NCF's political activism and support of COs in prison difficult to reconcile with their own spiritual approach to conscience. Later both men "were major figures in a series of disputes that troubled the Fellowship."⁴⁶

The chief officers of the NCF were: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and membership Secretary. There were divisional representatives and sub-committees of the National Committee, the most prominent of which was the Associates Parliamentary Committee, organised by Catherine Marshall, as its Honorary Secretary, who was elected onto the National Committee at the April 1916 Convention. Initially, Marshall was the only woman on the National Committee but, as the men were imprisoned or left due to ill health, women and older men took their places in this democratically elected group. If a man went to prison between elections, then a substitute was appointed. By September 1916, the workload of the political committee had become such that changes had to be made in the organisation of the Fellowship. The political committee was divided into 7 departments, all of which had a head of department who reported to Marshall.⁴⁷ This increased authority within the organisation, along with her knowledge of every aspect of the Fellowship's political campaigns, made her one of the most influential and powerful people in the NCF. In addition, she headed the COIB, became responsible for Allen's and Brockway's work when they were in prison, and drove the political campaigns and activism of the Fellowship.⁴⁸

Shadow or substitute officers were used by the Fellowship to undertake the administrative and political activities of men who were sent to prison. This was possible because there were enough women who were politically able and personally willing to play vital campaigning roles in the organisation. The NCF were able to tap into a rich vein of motivated and experienced women, who possessed relevant administrative and organisational skills gained from working outside the home, or through involvement in pre-war radical activities. Kennedy explains the organisation of the shadow system as a grid system which was created from the network of branches through which messages could be sent, and substitutes appointed and be ready to take over duties as soon as a man was

⁴⁶ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.61. Also see Chapter 4 p.119-121.

⁴⁷ The departments were: organisation and propaganda, records, investigation, parliamentary, legal, publicity and literature.

⁴⁸ See Chapter 4 for analysis of Marshall's contribution to the NCF.

arrested; hundreds of people would have had to be arrested to ensure the collapse of the Fellowship.⁴⁹ The use of this method of replacement is one of the key reasons why the NCF was able to maintain its central position in the AWM and sustain its opposition to conscription throughout the conflict. Some of the more prominent women in this study replaced male officers at the highest level of the organisation. For example, Marshall became shadow honorary secretary after Brockway's arrest in 1917.⁵⁰ Joan Beauchamp and Lydia Smith took over as editors of *The Tribunal* after Basil Boothroyd's imprisonment in October 1917, and on one occasion substituted for each other when Beauchamp temporarily replaced Tillard as General Secretary when she was sent to prison for refusing to name the location of the Fellowship's secret printer.⁵¹ The system of substitute appointments was used to cover campaigners who became ill. Violet Tillard became General Secretary of the Fellowship in late 1917, in addition to her role as Publications Secretary, on the resignation of JH Harrop due to illness. Charles Ammon took over Marshall's work when she covered Allen's work and during her periodic bouts of illness.⁵² This method was used throughout the organisation. For instance, by 1917 out of seven divisions, six were headed by women and, out of 129 branches, 29 had women as local secretaries as the point of contact, most of whom would have been shadow replacements.⁵³

A strong feature of NCF's contribution to anti-war dissent was their output of dissident printed material, which challenged the policies of conscription, repressive domestic policy under the aegis of DORA, and the government's failure to end the war through negotiated peace.⁵⁴ By July 1916, five of the thirty leaflets that had been the subject of successful

⁴⁹ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.65. See also John Graham *Conscription and Conscience, A History 1916-1918*, London 1923, pp.175-176. The WSPU had used this form of substitution during their militant years before the war. See Krista Cowman *Women of the Right Spirit: Paid Organisers of the Women's Social and Political Union, 1904-1914*, Manchester 2007, p.6.

⁵⁰ Throughout her time as a political activist, Marshall was afflicted with, probably a form of emotional and physical exhaustion. Letters in her papers show that she was periodically ill in 1916 and 1917 and then took some time to recover once she had finally left the NCF. A letter from Edith Ellis of the FSC dated July 1918, seven months after she left London, says she is "glad to hear you are getting stronger again." D MAR 2/36, CEMP.

⁵¹ For example, letter to NCF Secretaries from Joan Beauchamp, Acting General Secretary 29 August 1918, National Committee Papers, WCML, British Online Archives War Resisters 1914-18, FL, accessed 3 October 2017.

⁵² For example, letter to Ammon from Marshall (draft) 7 June 1917, D MAR 4/20, CEMP. In this letter, she gives Ammon notes for his political work. His reply to ran to four pages, letter to Marshall from Ammon 8 June 1917, D MAR 4/20, CEMP.

⁵³ There is further examination of the contributions these women made in Chapter 7. This method of substitution was used successfully by the WSPU, to cover for women who were imprisoned. See Cowman *Women of the Right Spirit*, p.6.

⁵⁴ See Chapters 3 and 4 for further details on the use of printed material as propaganda by the anti-war movement. Other dissident publications that challenged the government's position on the war included, *The*

prosecutions by the Home Office, were published by the NCF.⁵⁵ Examples of leaflets suppressed by the courts are Clifford Allen's *Conscience and Conscription* and *Is Germany Right?*⁵⁶ The newspaper of the Fellowship, *The Tribunal*, became a source of strength and encouragement for COs and their supporters, and, as more COs were imprisoned and re-imprisoned, the rhetoric and political positioning of the newspaper became more strident and challenging to government policy.⁵⁷ *The Tribunal* was not the only dissident newspaper that was distributed to war resisters. A sample of the variety of anti-war propaganda that was to be found in London, for example, can be found in a collection held at the University of London Library.⁵⁸ The police surveillance of the NCF, and other anti-war and conscription groups had increased in intensity by the middle of 1917, reflecting the determination of the government to both monitor and disrupt war resistance activity.⁵⁹

The Union of Democratic Control

The UDC (or Union)⁶⁰ and the NCF worked together as war resisters despite their differing approaches to the conduct of the war. The UDC campaigned for a negotiated, just and fair peace agreement, while the NCF demanded an immediate end to the fighting. A few prominent women were associated with the group, such as Helena Swanwick, Maude Royden and Muriel Matters,⁶¹ all of whom had been involved in the campaign for women's suffrage before the war. Swanwick was the woman who held the most influence in the UDC, writing its official history in the decade after the war.⁶²

Like the NCF, the UDC, produced literature that promoted their ideas and aims. The most controversial publications were, *How the War Began* and *Truth and War*, which appeared to endorse and seek sympathy for Germany's position before the war. They criticised Britain's position before the conflict in supporting the belief that a balance of power between the Central Powers (Germany, Austria Hungary and Turkey), and the Entente powers (Britain, France and Russia) would be a guarantee of peace.

Spur edited by Guy Aldred, a CO; *Satire, The Plough*, a Society of Friends Publication and *The Labour Leader*, the official newspaper of the ILP, edited by A. Fenner Brockway.

⁵⁵ 'Leaflets successfully prosecuted,' 20 July 1916, TNA HO144/1579/316160.

⁵⁶ Clifford Allen *Conscience and Conscription*, London 1915, and *Is Germany Right?* Also published and suppressed was the transcript of Bertrand Russell's defence at his trial in May 1918, *Rex V Bertrand Russell*, London 1916. MS 1152 University of London Library.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 5.

⁵⁸ MS 1152 Boxes 1-4, University of London Library.

⁵⁹ See Chapter 3, pp.101-104, and Chapter 5 pp.137-152.

⁶⁰ E.D. Morel, a fellow radical liberal, was the Secretary, and the UDC would be strongly associated with Morel and his beliefs throughout the war.

⁶¹ Muriel Matters had been a member and activist with the WFL and Maude Royden with the NUWSS.

⁶² Helena Swanwick *Builders of Peace: The Years of the Union of Democratic Control*, London 1930.

There is an assumption, by historians such as De Groot, that the UDC was the “most successful at uniting the diverse disaffected,”⁶³ and that “its existence ensured that political protest [was] kept alive, despite prohibition against spreading dissent.”⁶⁴ At the time, *The Morning Post*’s opinion, expressed across a number of articles throughout 1915, was that the UDC was, “the most dangerous organization opposed to the government and the war effort.”⁶⁵ The group did not reflect the diversity of political, religious or moral reasons for opposing the war that existed throughout the AWM, as it focussed on an irrelevance, the cause of the war. Furthermore, a substantial group not represented were young men, of military age, who held a conscientious objection to war and fighting, whose immediate focus were the implications of the MSA with its conscience clause. It would be through the NCF, and its immediate allies, that advice and assistance could be sought and found, making it a more attractive option to join and support.

The issue of conscription exposed the differences between the UDC and other anti-war groups. The NCF and the Quaker based groups, the FSC and FOR, were opposed to conscription and, indeed, the whole point of the NCF was to initially oppose conscription, and then later, once it had been introduced, challenge the results of this military compulsion. The Secretary of the UDC, ED Morel, disagreed that the UDC should oppose conscription and endorsed an ambiguous stance on the matter of conscientious objection,⁶⁶ isolating the group from the coalescence of agitation that became centred on the NCF.

Unlike the NCF and their allies the FSC and FOR, the UDC only paid “lip service” to the inclusion of women in their organisation,⁶⁷ even though they believed that “democracy must be based on the equal citizenship of men and women.”⁶⁸ The co-operation of women was invited through a Women’s Committee which, “help[ed] the UDC’s image as the promoter of equality and integration between the sexes in the political sphere.”⁶⁹ Nevertheless, despite Swanwick being a member of the executive of the UDC, no women’s committee was set up. In her account, a “...conference of women for women” was

⁶³ Gerald De Groot *Blighty. British Society in the Era of the Great War*, (1st Edition), p.143.

⁶⁴ Donald Mitchell *The Politics of Dissent. Biography of E.D. Morel*, Bristol 2104, p.120.

⁶⁵ Swartz’s summary in Marvin Swartz *The UDC in British Politics in First World War*, Oxford 1971, pp.114-115.

⁶⁶ Swartz *The UDC in British Politics*, p.284.

⁶⁷ See Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 for consideration of the role of women in the NCF. The FSC had several women who worked within for the committee; these included the Ellis sisters and Joan Fry. The FOR had several women who worked within the organisation and promoted its values, the most prominent was Maude Royden; see Barritt *Subversive Peacemakers* Chapter 5.

⁶⁸ Sally Harris *Out of Control: British Foreign Policy and the Union of Democratic Control 1914-18*, Hull University Press 2011, p.67.

⁶⁹ Sally Harris *Out of Control*, p.67.

organised by a “special committee” led by Muriel Matters.⁷⁰ Women’s roles in UDC matters has no further mention in her book or any other about the UDC, even though women were members of the Union. Women were actively involved in the NCF, FSC and FOR, and Swanwick herself would become deeply involved in the peace activities of WIL later in 1915 and, by the end of 1916, with the WPC. This indicates that when considered on an individual level, the presence of women might be seen, but the significance of their participation in war resistance can easily be overlooked or underestimated. Once the women are drawn together using collective biography, their common commitment to an anti-war position through co-operative action, such as through the NCF, the impact of their contribution to the maintenance war resistance can be assessed more completely.

Was there an Anti -War Movement (AWM)?

The assortment of groups that contributed to anti-war activity possessed the characteristics of a social movement as defined by Tarrow’s view that “contentious politics” occurred within political networks, when “collective actors join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents around their claims or the claims of those they claim to represent.”⁷¹ In applying Tarrow’s definition to the AWM, it is evident that groups and individuals worked together towards common goals, such as the modification of government war aims, domestic, military, or diplomatic. This included the repeal of certain statutes, such as the MSAs, which created conscription. Furthermore, to achieve these goals, the groups had to confront the elites, that is, the government of the day and the authorities, such as the police and government officials in the War and Home Offices, using methods of resistance, such as printed propaganda and publicity, parliamentary lobbying and public demonstrations. The movement had to face other opponents such as the press, the public and other groups that supported the war, including the armed services and individuals such as Mrs Pankhurst, who promoted women’s war work. As a collective, the AWM supported the claims of their members who were in dispute with Government policies, in particular, conscription. These campaigns were underpinned by a common ideology of resistance to this specific war. The elements of the common ideology concerned pacifism, patriotism and a willingness to risk persecution because of war resistance activity.⁷² Tarrow’s model of political contention assists in understanding that there was a collective complexion to the AWM and that the women who were involved in

⁷⁰ This conference was the National Conference of Women, held at the Central Hall in Westminster.

⁷¹ Sidney G. Tarrow *Power in Movement, Social Movement, Collective Action*, 2nd ed. Cambridge 2004, p.4.

⁷² See Chapter 3, pp.98-104.

war resisting activities as part of the NCF became engaged in the wider context of anti-war dissent. The ability of the Fellowship to maintain its opposition to the war throughout the conflict could be considered in the context of the relatively high level of women's activity in the Fellowship compared to other mixed groups, such as the UDC.⁷³

Women adopted active roles in their contribution to the common ideology of war resistance, which required acknowledgement of a set of values and beliefs that anti-war groups, and individuals, held in common. All groups were subject to monitoring by the elites, as the government believed that "there was evidence that the Pacifist societies were closely inter-related and that the names of the same persons recurred either as subscribers or members of the committees,"⁷⁴ signalling a contemporary confirmation that the authorities regarded the groups investigated as being part of an AWM.

To monitor the extent of anti-war sentiment and activity, the HO kept a watching brief on the activities of peace activists and other dissenters. Information was gathered at various points in the war, as the officials attempted to keep control of the dissenters, initially through knowledge of them, and then later through persecution and suppression. The war resistance of one working class women, Charlotte Drake, offers an example of a working-class woman, disclosed for the first time here, who engaged in acts of war resistance over a period of 18 months. Her activity can be realised because her actions made her the subject of an official police investigation, which reported to the HO that she spoke at two anti-war meetings, one in January 1915 organised by the WFL, and another in 1916, at Victoria Park in East London.⁷⁵ The police officer identified her as having been involved in other activities "connect[ed] with Stop The War agitation," which included "posting sticky labels on post boxes in ...Millwall," for which she was arrested.⁷⁶

Through the police report, evidence of a small network of war resisting women can be observed. Drake was arrested with an Emily Kiley and a Lily Watts for sticking the Stop The War (STW) labels on the post boxes. These women have not, yet, re-appeared in any other source, but the woman with whom she had previously been seen, handing out leaflets at a Trades Union Congress (TUC) meeting in Bristol, Nora Smyth, was a friend of Clara Cole, also a member of the STW, who, in her personal account of war resistance, has described

⁷³ See Chapter 3, pp.93-95.

⁷⁴ TNA CAB 24/34/9 November 1917, Pacifism A Report by Basil Thomson to Cabinet.

⁷⁵ TNA HO 45/10741/263275 Metropolitan Police Report on Charlotte Drake 31 March 1916.

⁷⁶ TNA HO 45/10741/263275 Metropolitan Police Report on Charlotte Drake 31 March 1916.

Smyth as “wealthy and well -educated”⁷⁷ and dedicated to “mothering great movements in a momentous time.”⁷⁸ The police report says that Drake supported Nellie Best, a prominent local worker for the NCF, and featured later in this study, when Best was imprisoned for republishing, as a leaflet, an appeal on behalf of starving and broken men discharged from the War.⁷⁹ The East London Federation (ELF) organised a procession from Tower Hill to Holloway to protest against Best’s sentence⁸⁰, revealing a connection between Sylvia Pankhurst’s political group’s war resistance activities and other war resisting groups and individuals.

A further reason to consider these contrasting anti-war groups as an AWM, is because they cut across divisions of focus and ideology. The UDC concentrated on opposing the government’s diplomatic policies, the NCF on issues concerned with conscription, while the WIL focused on women and international co-operation. The different concerns and priorities that the groups brought to the AWM was clearly attractive to some campaigners. Helena Swanwick, for example, was particularly dynamic; she was a member of the WIL, spoke on behalf of the NCF, and was active with the WPC. For the group with which she is most associated, the UDC, she was a member of the General Committee, and wrote the first official history of their work in opposing government diplomatic policy.⁸¹ Swanwick spoke at anti-war meetings across the country, attracting the attention of the authorities. When she addressed a meeting at Abernau in Wales in 1916, the content of her speech was forwarded to the Competent Military Authority (CMA),⁸² which advised, “prosecution not advisable, although it is a mischievous speech.”⁸³ Such a report indicates that Swanwick was considered to be important and influential in the AWM and, therefore, required monitoring, although not necessarily prosecuted. A court appearance would allow such an articulate and prominent war resister a platform for their views, which the authorities were reluctant to indulge.

⁷⁷ Clara Cole *They Did Not Fight A Record of British Objectors to War 1914-18. How they were man handled, imprisoned, starved and why they objected*, Manchester 1938, p.57.

⁷⁸ Clara Cole, *They Did Not Fight*, p.57.

⁷⁹ ‘A Warning to those who are about to be conscripted! This is how your King and Country are treating you’ E. Sylvia Pankhurst *Home Front* London 1916, p.292.

⁸⁰ E. Sylvia Pankhurst *Home Front*, p.292.

⁸¹ Helena Swanwick *Builders of Peace, The Years of the Union of Democratic Control*, London 1930.

⁸² The UK was divided up into Competent Military Authority (CMA) areas during the war. A senior army officer oversaw military and security matters in each area.

⁸³ TNA HO 45/10742/263275. List of proceedings recommended by Chief Constable for prosecution against several speakers under DORA section 27, probably early 1917 as the latest reported meeting date on the list is 7 January 1917.

Pacifism, Patriotism and Persecution

The groups and individuals that constituted the AWM, as described by Tarrow's model, shared broad ideological beliefs in pacifism and patriotism, two areas of contention that demonstrated their discord with mainstream thought. Indeed, within the AWM there was a range of beliefs concerning these ideologies, which on occasion caused rift and debate within and between the groups.⁸⁴

Pacifism

Pacifism is a belief that encompassed both political and religious war resisters and put them at odds with mainstream thought during the conflict. Martin Ceadel defines pacifism as "the personal conviction that it is wrong to take part in war, or even, in an extreme version to resist evil in any way."⁸⁵ However, another term, pacificism; "an assumption that war ...is always an inhumane and irrational way to solve disputes ... prevention should be [a] ... political priority,"⁸⁶ was a position taken by those who disliked war but "did not rule out the need for some warstolerated only those fought for genuine self-defence against aggressors."⁸⁷ It can be regarded as an ethic of responsibility, and those who follow its tenets would see the prevention of war as a main duty. This is helpful in accessing an appreciation of the variety of approaches taken by war resisters and anti- war activists in opposing the war, because there were some war resisters who were against this war, but who were not necessarily pacifists, and who might now be considered pacifist. For example, Swanwick was a pacifist; whereas Morel believed that this war was wrong for its diplomatic causes. Therefore, by Ceadel's definition, both could be considered to have been pacifist. The socialists who dominated the NCF, such as Marshall, Allen and Brockway, were pacifists, as they were against war for any reason, whereas others in the NCF were against the war because of its links to capitalism and may have been prepared to take up arms to bring about a socialist revolution.

Ceadel sees pacifists as dynamic because their role as citizen was marked, either by withdrawal from the demands of the state (for example a declaration by a sectarian group that they will not endorse the war), or to choose to take a collaborative stance by

⁸⁴ See Chapter 4, pp.119-121.

⁸⁵ Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain 1914-45: The Defining of a Faith*, Oxford 1980 p.4. Ceadel's work on pacifism has been used as the standard work and definition by several historians of this period, such as Adrian Gregory in *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War*, London and Cambridge 2008, and Lois Bibbings in *Telling Tales About Men*.

⁸⁶ Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain 1914-45*, p.4.

⁸⁷ Martin Ceadel 'Pacifism', *Modern History Review*, September 1991, p.26.

supporting pacifist campaigns. Certainly, most pacifists applied a policy of non-violence immediately, in their refusal to join the armed forces, either as a volunteer or a conscript. Ceadel went further, and defined absolute pacifism, embodied by the CO, who took action that “dramatised a stricter, more absolutist meaning on the term pacifist and pacifist.”⁸⁸ They embodied everything mistrustful about pacifists as they refused to fight for their country, criticised the government and undermined the war effort. James Millar, a socialist CO, summed up the hostility that was a common thread in many COs accounts of their war time experiences, “COs got very few kind words during the war years... how one longed for friendly company...in place of the hatred and contempt that the ordinary citizen showered on us.”⁸⁹

Pacifist feminism

The small but significant group of war resisting women, who identified themselves as pacifists and feminists, found themselves outside the women’s movement, which had generally decided to support the war. These pacifist feminists are defined, for the purposes of this thesis, as women who took a pacifist or non-violent position on the war, and who had been involved in feminist activity before the war, such as the campaigns for women’s suffrage.

Heloise Brown’s discussion on pacifist feminists before the First World War explains that this political perspective developed during the nineteenth century, when “ideas evolved which encompassed ...the claim that women had the desire to renounce war and establish alternative models of conflict resolution.”⁹⁰ This position was taken by women who were opposed to the First World War, and who identified themselves as pacifist feminists, building on the work of earlier women, such as Priscilla Peckover,⁹¹ who wrote, that “the truest form of patriotism [was that] to do our utmost to save our country from the crime and shame of an unjust war.”⁹² This view came to its fruition in some radical women’s war resistance during the 1914-18 conflict.

⁸⁸ Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain 1914-1945*, pp.3-4.

⁸⁹ James Millar ‘A Socialist in Wartime’ from Julian Bell (ed) *We Did Not Fight*, London 1935, pp259-60, quoted in Lois Bibbings *Telling Tales About Men*, p.70.

⁹⁰ Heloise Brown *Truest Form of Patriotism: Pacifist Feminism in Britain 1870-1902*, Manchester 2003, p.4. The term pacifist feminist has generally been used by historians of the period to describe the pacifist stance of the women who are the focus of his study and for others who thought in a similar vein.

⁹¹ See Heloise Brown *Truest Form of Patriotism*, Chapter 5 ‘Priscilla Peckover and the “truest form of Patriotism.”’

⁹² Priscilla Peckover in *Peace and Goodwill: A Sequel to the Olive Leaf*, 16 October 1899. Quoted in Heloise Brown *Truest Form of Patriotism*, p.1.

The pacifist feminists of the era of the First World War were more concerned with opposing militarism and bringing about peace, than trying to “fit in” with the mainstream accepted role of patriotism, adopted by some feminists, such as Christabel and Emmeline Pankhurst, formerly of the WSPU, and Mrs Fawcett of the NUWSS. Swanwick, a prominent member of the NUWSS executive before the war, reflected that the dissenting position taken by women during the war meant that they had to consider “the ethical and political propriety of actively opposing the government of one’s own country in war-time.”⁹³ Such views separated the women of this study, from women who complied with mainstream patriotic beliefs, and from radical women who chose to support the war effort. During the war, the pacifist feminist women of the NCF embraced the concept of peace through their positive contribution to anti-war activities, which had an impact on the organisation of opposition to the war. Their ability to participate in anti-war activity was strengthened by their political knowledge, previous campaigning experience, and an understanding of how to organise opposition and, therefore, they did not need to conform to the expected stereotypical roles, such as nurse or munitions worker, played by mainstream women for the war effort.⁹⁴

Patriotism

Individuals found their approach to patriotism during the war was influenced by their political positions on other issues important to them, such as suffrage, citizenship, their attitude to the war, and for some their religious beliefs. War resisters came into conflict with mainstream thought over patriotism and its connotation of “vigorous support for one’s country.”⁹⁵ This belief can be expanded during times of war, to an unquestioning and unconditional support for one’s country, which might manifest itself in fighting to defend or promote a country’s aims and ideals, a position which provokes intensely personal emotions and reactions. In peacetime, any differences or nuances in belief may be regarded as points of debate, rather than serious areas of disagreement, but the advent of war, and its demand that people make their position clear, may create divisions where there had been none in peacetime. During the First World War, this belief in an unquestioning and unconditional support for the government’s war aims was challenged by male and female members of war resistance groups; this, even though those involved in anti-war agitation also claimed to be patriotic. “COs saw themselves as patriots and

⁹³ Helena Swanwick *I have Been Young*, London 1935, p.241.

⁹⁴ See Introduction, pp.24-25.

⁹⁵ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/patriotism> accessed 24.10.2016.

heroes” and “conceived themselves as fighting for the good of the nation.”⁹⁶ This bravery of the COs was seen by their supporters as the equivalent of the suffering of martyrs and the men at the Front.

War resisters’ alternative view of patriotism was always going to be a problem area for those involved in anti-war activity, as can be evinced from NCF Chairman Clifford Allen’s justification for his refusal to be conscripted. In being pushed by the Battersea tribunal panel about the reason for his application for exemption, he considered that the “best service I can render [to my country] is to use all my strength and energy in advocating peace.”⁹⁷

Such views on patriotism and pacifism contributed to an experience, shared by anti-war groups and individuals, of public ire and official persecution because of these views. The harassment, which individuals of the UDC experienced, illustrates negative public comment concerning their perceived pro-German position. Morel was accused of being paid by the German Emperor for “your dirty work,” while the District Council of Elland in the Chairman, Charles Trevelyan’s constituency, recommended that he be “taken out and shot.”⁹⁸ Swanwick was publicly accused in *John Bull*⁹⁹ of being unpatriotic, and she was repeatedly accused of being German. To refute these accusations, she wrote to the newspapers explaining that she was British and that her father was Danish, but “scarcely any of the [news]papers ...published this plain refutation.”¹⁰⁰

Some dissenters suffered physical violence, encouraged and condoned by the newspapers. In April 1915 Arthur Ponsonby, a pacifist MP and member of the UDC, was physically assaulted at a meeting in Kingston, South London. The violence was such that Trevelyan advised that “it might be better to co-operate more definitely with the ILP...the Brotherhoods and other such meetings,”¹⁰¹ in the hope that by joining forces with other

⁹⁶ Bibbings *Telling Tales About Men*, p.195.

⁹⁷ Clifford Allen appearance before Battersea Tribunal 14 March 1916. Quoted in Gilbert *Plough My Own Furrow, The Story of Lord Allen of Hurtwood as told through his writings and correspondence*, London, 1965, pp.48-50. Allen appealed against the dismissal of his application for exemption so remained out of prison until 6 August 1916 when he was arrested and taken to Warley Barracks in Essex.

⁹⁸ H Brock postcard to Morel, 3 April 1915, Morel Papers. Comments by the District Council of Elland reported in *Daily Express*, 3 December 1915.

⁹⁹ *John Bull* was a newspaper published by Herbert Bottomley, a “failed business man, disgrace politician and one of the greatest con artists of modern political history.” His newspaper, *John Bull*, was “xenophobic, rabble rousing and militantly anti-religious.” Adrian Gregory ‘A Clash of Cultures: The British Press and the Opening of the Great War’ in Troy RE Paddock (ed.) *A Call to Arms: Propaganda and Public Opinion and Newspapers in the Great War*, Westport 2004, pp.15-16.

¹⁰⁰ Helena Swanwick *I Have Been Young*, London, 1935 p.36.

¹⁰¹ Letter to Ponsonby from Trevelyan 24 July 1915. Ponsonby Papers.

anti-war groups, they would not be singled out for abuse and violence. The newspapers grouped all pacifists and dissenters together, inferring to the public that there was an AWM and that they were attempting to undermine the authority of the Empire. One expression of this was in *The Daily Express*, which printed a double-page spread with the pictures of Morel and Trevelyan, leaders of the UDC, alongside those of Allen and Brockway of the NCF and ILP, and asked “Londoners, What Do You Think of them? Is Germany to hear the wail of the peace cranks from the city of Empire?”¹⁰²

In addition to fears about physical assault at anti-war meetings, dissenting groups were subject to attention from the police, such as at the Birmingham Branch of the WPC, which had permission to meet, despite the Chief Constable’s concern, as “no disorder was anticipated.” The HO advised that he had “no authority to prohibit the meeting.”¹⁰³ The HO’s position hardened when a Miss Haley, known by the police as “formerly secretary to militant suffragettes in this district,” applied for permission for a further meeting. In response to the Chief Constable’s view that this “was likely to be a series of meetings,” the HO gave authority to the Lord Mayor and the Chief Constable to prohibit the meeting,¹⁰⁴ with an official notice that the meeting was not to take place, illustrating that, although there may have been lenience for one meeting,¹⁰⁵ the idea there could be a number of anti-war gatherings would not be tolerated by the authorities. The decision may have been influenced by the nature of previous activism associated with Miss Haley. The group of women notified of the cancellation of the meeting included Charlotte Despard, another well-known militant suffragist, who was leader of the Women’s Freedom League and associated with protests in Parliament, a refusal to pay taxes and complete the 1911 census form.¹⁰⁶ This decision by the police indicates how the presence of an individual or a set within a group might influence how an organisation was able to promote and organise its war resistance.¹⁰⁷

Women’s willingness to engage in war resisting activity as individuals enhanced their involvement in anti-war campaigns. One such approach was to attend and speak at anti-

¹⁰² *Daily Express* 29 November 1915. The meeting was broken up by soldiers on leave who seized the platform causing the speakers to flee. There was no police action taken and no complaint received according to the Home Office. HO 45/10742/263275. Quoted in Swartz *The UDC in British Politics*, p.110.

¹⁰³ TNA HO 45/10744/263275.

¹⁰⁴ TNA HO 45/10744/263275. Folder noting the authorization had been sent 31 May 1918.

¹⁰⁵ TNA HO 45/10744/263275: the people who were given notice that the meeting could not take place were: Mrs Wilson, Mrs Haley, Mrs Despard, Mr Rudland, and Miss Somers. E Fortune of the Caxton Press was given notice as printer of the accompanying handbill which was advertising the meeting.

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 5, p.149, fn 88.

¹⁰⁷ See Chapter 3, pp.85-86.

war meetings. Such contributions feature in the reports made by police officers. One such gathering was organised by the ILP on 21 July 1916 in the City of London, where former suffragette, pacifist feminist, member of the UDC, with connections to the NCF, Muriel Matters, spoke alongside other orators. The police officer wrote an account of what was said at the meeting, reducing Matters' contribution to a single comment that she "also spoke in the same strain [as her fellow speakers]." ¹⁰⁸ Muriel Matters would have been known to the police, and possibly to the HO, as she had a criminal record. ¹⁰⁹ Later that year she became of interest to the police, because she repeated what Sir William Byles had said at the above meeting about there "not being much difference between the two cousins [King George V and Kaiser Wilhelm]," in a personal letter to a relative, ¹¹⁰ confiscated by MI5. ¹¹¹

The report recommended that Matters should be prosecuted under DORA and that "strong action should be taken against speakers of this sort, who owing to their position, carry a good deal of weight to a certain class of listener." ¹¹² Its alarm can be appreciated, as her relative was a journalist in a neutral State, she had prominent rebel friends, ¹¹³ and was extraordinarily derogatory of Asquith, the PM, as well as commenting that the King is no better than the Kaiser. ¹¹⁴ She was proud of her and her friend "Tille's" (probably Violet Tillard) involvement in the pacifist movement. It reveals that Matters had a role in the anti-war movement, as she was active in the UDC and WIL, a part of her political campaigning which has not been previously acknowledged by societies or films created to celebrate Matters' role in the suffrage campaign in Britain. ¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ TNA HO 45/10742/263275.

¹⁰⁹ A criminal record that was in connection with her activities as a militant suffragette. See Chapter 5, p150, fn86.

¹¹⁰ TNA HO 45/10742/263275. Copy of letter from Muriel Matters to Leonard W Matters, Buenos Aires Herald, 672, Corrientes, Buenos Aires. 22 July 1916.

¹¹¹ There is no indication in the HO file of how MI5 came by the letter. An assumption could be that officers were intercepting the letters of known militants and dissenters.

¹¹² TNA HO 45/10742/263275. Letter to Sir Edward Troup from George Cockerill, MI5, 19 August 1916.

¹¹³ Mrs Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, an Irish pacifist who had supported the rebels of the Easter rising, was staying with Matters at the time she wrote this letter. Her husband, a journalist, was shot by British forces during the uprising. Later in 1916 Mrs Sheehy Skeffington went to America to try to meet President Wilson in an attempt to persuade him to support Irish Independence. She had to travel under an assumed name as the British authorities would not grant her a passport. <http://www.storiesfrom1916.com/1916-easter-rising/hanna-sheehy-skeffington/> Accessed 21.11.2016.

¹¹⁴ Matters was insulting about Asquith, who she called the "King of Foxes" TNA HO 45/10742/263275. Copy of letter from Muriel Matters to Leonard W Matters, Buenos Aires Herald, 672, Corrientes, Buenos Aires. 22 July 1916.

¹¹⁵ E.g. <https://murielmatterssociety.com.au/>, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/matters-muriel-lilah-7522>, There is no mention of her peace activities in her entry in the ODNB, with only a few pages dedicated to her anti-war activities in the latest biography, Robert Wainwright *Miss Muriel Matters. The Fearless Suffragette Who Fought for Equality*, London 2017.

Conclusion

In using Tarrow's definition of a social movement,¹¹⁶ the set of groups and individuals that comprised the AWM can be labelled a political or social movement, because it consisted of collective actors who were involved as part of a group, such as the UDC or NCF. These groupings joined forces to oppose government war aims and to undertake anti-war activity. Such co-operation led to a range of dissenting activities, such as collaborative formal work on the JAC, or through mutual support at rallies and publication of printed propaganda. Some of this co-operation stemmed from personal and political links forged before the war, such as with Matters and Tillard. All the groups in the AWM confronted elites, either through direct action, such as contesting the MSA at tribunal hearings, or challenging government policy through propaganda or through the organisation of petitions and rallies, all of which publicised their claims that government war policies were wrong, repressive and militaristic. They represented the claims of their members, whether it was the CO, who was supported by the groups within the JAC, women's opposition to the war via the WPC and WIL, or a campaign by UDC affiliated MPs to encourage the government to end the war by negotiation and work towards a just peace.

Women were more active in the AWM than has previously been believed. Up to now, the emphasis has been on the war resisting women associated with campaigns for international peace and co-operation through WIL, with emphasis on one or two prominent individuals, such as Marshall of the NCF and Swanwick. Through an appreciation that women were interested and active within subsets of war resisting groups, enables a sharper vision of their involvement, giving the movement more coherence, and demonstrating that women's interests in war resistance overlapped across these groups, and their episodes of activism. Furthermore, the array of anti-war activities of radical suffragist women, which have either not been known about, briefly referenced or ignored by historians of the period, broadens the understanding of the extent of radical women's contributions and involvement in war resistance. This multiple membership of war resisting groups was not restricted to women, as men had varying anti-war interests, as it seems that no one group encompassed every aspect of war resistance. The focus for historians considering the pacifist activities of feminist women has been dominated by consideration of the work of the WIL and WPC. This emphasis has shrouded the contribution that women made to war resistance through the NCF, essentially an organisation set up to support men.

¹¹⁶ See Chapter 2, p.74.

Although, the women of the NCF may have been interested in the campaigns of the WIL and WPC, it was probably the immediacy of the needs of the CO that attracted them to the Fellowship, particularly if a family member or loved one was a CO.

The NCF's dynamic political presence in London, along with its political activism in most towns and cities in mainland Britain, was a key reason for its leading role within the AWM. District and local branches sent delegates to the National Convention where they were able to vote annually for a new National Executive Committee. There were opportunities to make suggestions to the officers of the Fellowship regarding the action and direction the NCF should take. Further reasons why the NCF was the main group in opposition to the war were the diverse nature of the membership (full and associate) and the shadow system that the group had employed from early on in its existence. It accommodated a variety of positions on conscience and attracted those who had political, religious and moral objections to war.¹¹⁷ It provided the diverse nature of the AWM with a platform for men and women, young and old, working class and middle class, intellectuals and those with spiritual and religious reasons for opposing the war: in other words a multiplicity of opinion, approach and motivation that the other prominent group, the UDC, was not able to embrace. The Fellowship did this because they had clear aims, firstly to stop conscription; then, once it had been passed via the MSA, to campaign for its repeal and to protest against the consequences of conscription such as militarism, suppression of free speech and the ill-treatment of the COs. Through this focus, they found allies in other groups, and so made the Fellowship the central and most important of the anti-war groups. Nevertheless, it has been claimed that the NCF "failed in each of its declared goals."¹¹⁸ There is some truth in this evaluation, as the Fellowship did fail to prevent the conscription act or any of its successors. The absolutist exemption demanded by the CO did not happen for the majority, and the alternative option gained ground, as men found the conditions of incarceration in prison increasingly difficult to live with and opted to take WNI or join the NCC. Despite these "failures," the NCF can be considered a success, not just because divisions in the Fellowship failed to signal its end, but because the war resisters of the NCF did not yield, and most (but not all) did find a way of enduring the government's sentences on their conscience, without joining the army, and so the Fellowship survived.¹¹⁹ A further

¹¹⁷ See Appendix A.

¹¹⁸ Caroline Moorehead *Troublesome People, Enemies of War*, London 1987, p.79.

¹¹⁹ 10 men died in prison as result of their incarceration, 61 died because of the hardships of their imprisonment, John Graham *Conscription and Conscience, A History 1916-1918*, London 1923, p.323. Allen and Chamberlain were physically wrecked by the experience of prison; Allen developed TB and Chamberlain's eyesight was permanently affected by the poor diet and light in the prisons.

reason for its endurance, and thereby contributing to its success, was the number of women who became involved in its anti-war political activism, enabling it to maintain its presence within the AWM as the leading dissenting group.

Additionally, the NCF had branches across mainland Britain making it a “coherent, large-scale, long-standing and [organised] nationwide resistance against ... [a] war accepted as necessary by ... [the] majority of [the] population.”¹²⁰ Combined with the unique and vital contribution made by the women in the local and district branches of the NCF, this appraisal asserts that it was the most prominent and important of the war resistance groups, not least because it maintained its presence as a war resisting organisation throughout and beyond the conflict. This achievement was realised by the presence of men and women who used every means, along with every “legal device provided by a Liberal society”¹²¹ to maintain their campaigns against war policy, primarily conscription. This opposition was extended to the restrictions and perceived militarism of DORA, and latterly in the war, criticism of the government’s refusal to negotiate for peace. Women played central roles in these accomplishments, particularly as it was unlikely that the Fellowship would have been able to maintain its opposition to the war without the involvement of women. This was because as the men of military age went to prison, gaps in the administrative and organisation structure of the NCF were exposed and then filled by women and some older men. Therefore, the narrative of the NCF needs to be modified to take account of the contribution made by women to its survival as a war resisting organisation.

The focus of the following chapter is on the extent to which Catherine Marshall’s work within the NCF, specifically her contribution to the breadth of its political activism, contributed to the sustained nature of the Fellowship’s unremitting war resistance. This aspect of her involvement and influence has not been specifically highlighted by previous commentators. As an experienced suffrage campaigner, she took a critical set of skills to the NCF as an organiser, motivator and accomplished political activist, and she made a profound and critical impact on the NCF, and its ability to maintain its war resistance.

¹²⁰ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.56. See Cyril Pearce and Helen Durham ‘Patterns of Dissent in Britain during the First World War’, *War and Society*, 34:2.

¹²¹ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.56.

Chapter 4: Catherine Marshall and The No-Conscription Fellowship.

We have no doubt ...we are going to win out, and while we know you [Miss Marshall] have no desire for any personal distinction, it will remain nevertheless true that the honours of the victory will belong to you more than anyone else.¹

The NCF were the pre-eminent anti-war group of the First World War era. One of the aims of this thesis is to explore the significance of Catherine Marshall within the Fellowship. This thesis argues that a primary reason for the Fellowship's prominent position within the AWM was because of the work, commitment and contribution brought to the cause of the CO by Marshall. She possessed extraordinary organisational vision, and used her shrewd political sensibilities to promote the Fellowship and its cause on behalf of the CO. Her influence on the ability of the NCF to maintain its war resistance is reflected in the above personal endorsement from one of the leaders of the FOR, the ecumenical peace organisation which was an ally and supporter of the anti-war activities of the Fellowship. Marshall brought with her to the NCF, and the AWM, considerable experience of campaigning within a political environment. She had been involved in the campaign for women's suffrage since 1908 and with Parliamentary work since January 1912.² Marshall was from a wealthy middle-class background, supported in her political ideals by her parents and, as when engaged in NUWSS campaigns, worked as an honorary officer for the NCF.

The focus of this research concerns the impact of women's war resistance on the ability of the NCF in maintaining its opposition to the war. This chapter considers the nature and impact of Marshall's involvement with the Fellowship, the effect of her political experience which she brought to the workings of the organisation, and the impact that her personal principles of political activism had on how the NCF organised its political activity. Together these contributions went some way to enable the maintenance of the Fellowship's opposition to conscription and support the stance of the CO. However, Marshall's methods of political activism, most notably her insistence that good relationships be maintained with government departments who were responsible for COs, caused tension within the AWM, particularly with the NCF's allies, the FSC and FOR. These stresses led eventually to

¹ Letter to Marshall from Richard Roberts, General Secretary of the FOR, 9 June 1916 CEMP D MAR 4/6.

² Jo Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour with Women's Suffrage The Story of Catherine Marshall*, 2nd edition Nottingham 2016, p.146.

Marshall's political role in the NCF being truncated and contributed to her withdrawal from Fellowship work by the end of 1917. Even though her political methods caused some controversy and antagonism with the NCF's allies, their war resistance, was maintained, due to the efforts of others who worked for the Fellowship. Marshall's legacy for the NCF and its war resistance, was of an organisation set up to challenge government policy on COs and to support the CO and his family.

This chapter considers the principles of political activism promoted by Marshall and introduced by her to the campaigning methods of the NCF. Her contribution to the war resistance of the Fellowship is considered in the context of the variety of tasks she undertook on behalf of the CO and the NCF. There is an analysis of her campaign methods and reflection on the extent of the impact which Marshall had on the sustenance of the Fellowship's war resistance. This is followed by consideration of the implications of the recognition of Marshall's principles of political activism on the narrative of the NCF as well as deliberation on the extent of the impact she had on the war resistance of the Fellowship.

The role, influence and value of Catherine Marshall's principles of political activism, which she brought to the campaigns of the Fellowship in their support of the CO, have not been subject to extensive analysis by other historians of the era. The research undertaken, influenced by Scott's theory of invisibility, confirms the necessity of an acknowledgement of these principles and an appreciation of their application throughout the work of the Fellowship. It has strengthened the interpretation here, that Marshall's role in the NCF was more essential and wider ranging than has previously been recognised by historians of war resistance. Marshall and the women she worked alongside within the NCF, brought together through collective biography, indicates why the Fellowship should be considered as the pre-eminent anti-war group, and how it was able to maintain its war resistance in the face of challenges such as loss of key personnel and persecution from the authorities.



FIGURE 2: PICTURE OF CATHERINE MARSHALL

Picture taken from. <https://www.suffrage-pioneers.net/the-list/catherine-elizabeth-marshall/>

This picture of Catherine Marshall may have been the one used for her permit to visit COs in prisons and military barracks.

At the NCF National Convention in April 1916, Marshall revealed her principles of political activism.³ Her brief handwritten note allows an insight into her understanding of how to make a political campaign successful. The doctrines she shared with the convention were:

Create, Organize, Apply,” with advice for activists that they would be expected to “act promptly, keep records, local workers keep us posted...at headquarters, and headquarters to keep local workers fully informed of all developments as they arise.⁴

These principles can be traced through the work and organization of the NCF from this point in time, demonstrating how centrally embedded her ideals were with those of the NCF. Even when Marshall took sabbaticals from the Fellowship, due to over-work and exhaustion, these values remained in place, echoed throughout the NCF’s campaigns against conscription and in support of the CO, as can be gleaned from the detailed record keeping, instructions to colleagues and the impressive levels of agitation that were sustained throughout and beyond the war.

³ This was her first public appearance in her capacity as Secretary to the Associates Political Committee. Part of this role was to report their activities, intentions and successes to the Convention which represented the Fellowship’s membership.

⁴ Notes on Report to Convention of 8 April 1916 CEMP D/MAR 4/3.

Although Marshall's influence and authority within the NCF has been considered previously by Vellacott, Bibbings and Liddington, there has not been an analysis of whether the adoption of her principles of political activism into the campaign work of the Fellowship enabled it to sustain its war resistance throughout the years of the conflict, and whether these principles enabled the Fellowship to continue with its war resistance. Through the chapter's examination of the practical applications of these principles, a richer and more profound appreciation of Marshall's contribution to the NCF can be considered and encourages a re-assessment of how the NCF maintained its war resistance throughout the conflict. Furthermore, this extends the understanding of the broader nature of the contribution that Marshall made to war resistance activities.

Marshall and her principles of political activism

Marshall's three pillars of her activism were: articulate what exists and create more, explain publicly what is happening, and then create more activity. She believed that, to be successful, the group had to "seize the psychological initiative" with effective action and above all "organize." The three essentials here being to "act promptly, keep records," value local workers and the relationship between local and central office.⁵ The initiation of political activities, such as relationships with the CO and his supporters, the role and importance of local organisation and activity, and parliamentary and governmental lobbying, were driven by her principles of political activism. The extension of this action meant that large amounts of publicity were written and published for the cause. This written material consisted of publications and propaganda, which was distributed at meetings and sent to interested or potentially helpful parties, such as MPs, Councillors, or members of sympathetic organisations.

Marshall quickly realised that, if the Fellowship was to support the COs, knowledge of their location was vital if "effective action" was to be taken on their behalf. To carry out these intentions, she instituted a central collection point for accumulated intelligence, based at NCF HQ, the COIB (or Bureau).⁶ This system of organisation, alongside the drive to seize the psychological initiative, became increasingly important to the NCF's ability to challenge the government, and its agencies, about the poor treatment that many COs suffered. The Bureau's strong point was its knowledge about its CO members; who they were, where

⁵ Draft notes of summary to NCF National Convention 8 April 1916, D MAR 4/3, CEMP.

⁶ See Chapter 6.

they were, the conditions in which they were incarcerated and the state of their health. The administrators at the COIB were reliant on information sent to them about COs from family, friends and comrades.⁷

This chapter emphasises the extent of Marshall's contribution to the campaigns of the NCF, along with an analysis of the reach and the range of political activism carried out by the NCF in the pursuit of justice for the CO. She had strong links and political ideas in common with the other women who are featured in this study, either through being a colleague in the NCF, through recognition of her work with the NUWSS, WIL, or through membership of political parties such as the ILP. Such networks and acquaintanceships situate her with the other women who were involved in war resistance activities at this specific moment in time. The use of collective biography enables her to be linked with women with whom she had previously been connected, and with those with whom she became acquainted as a result of their common position on conscription and the stance of the CO.

The political groups, both women's and mixed sex, with which she became associated, recognised links between the principles of pacifism, socialism and feminism, and it was at the first NCF National Convention in November 1915, that Marshall, a delegate for the WIL, engaged with the policies and motives of the Fellowship. It may have been the combination of pacifism, socialism, and activism which came together in a clear anti-war and pacifist cause that attracted her to work for the fellowship full time.⁸ Marshall's decision to resign from the NUWSS and dedicate her time to the NCF could partly be explained by the divisions that occurred during 1915 within the women's suffrage movement, and was illustrative of the difficulties the women's movement had in reconciling pacifism and patriotism.⁹ Marshall's political position on the stance of the CO situates her with the other women featured in this collective biography who worked within the NCF, and whose readiness to be involved in war resistance led them to the cause of the CO and, therefore, to the NCF, the only anti-war group that was dedicated to challenging conscription.

⁷ See Chapter 6, pp.167-171.

⁸ The term 'work' is used in the context of Marshall and many of the National Committee as spending their lives working for the causes of the NCF. Marshall, Brockway and Allen worked in honorary capacities, without salaries.

⁹ See Introduction, pp.22-24. Marshall was not the only woman to resign from the NU, Helena Swanwick, Maude Royden and Kathleen Courtney resigned as they wanted suffragists to move towards securing peace.

The need for action was immediate and urgent, and one where Marshall may have felt she could make a measurable difference, both politically and on a personal level, with individual COs. By March 1916, she had committed herself to working for the Fellowship, initiated the creation of the COIB, and had formed an Associates Parliamentary Committee, for which she was Honorary Secretary. These obligations were mutually beneficial, as Marshall had found an organisation that embraced her opposition to the war, which enabled and encouraged her to use her considerable political experience to promote their cause of anti-conscriptionism. The Fellowship gained a practised and capable political campaigner who was prepared to dedicate her working time and life to their cause.

Marshall was a feminist, a suffragist, pacifist and a socialist, and her writings in the first part of the war demonstrated her engagement with the links between these political ideologies with which she identified, and gives some indication of her approach to political activism. She believed “in the deep horror of war which has entered for the first time into the soul of the women’s movement,” called for an end to militarism so that “the sacrifices our men are making shall not have been made in vain.”¹⁰ At this time, it would have been important for her to reference the men’s sacrifices so she was not labelled as unpatriotic, a risk taken by all those who questioned Britain's role in the war.¹¹

Marshall, authority and leadership within the NCF

Marshall’s decision to dedicate her working time to the Fellowship was crucial for the organisation, as she brought a wealth of campaign experience to the NCF and, as a result, became one of the key organising figures of the NCF during 1916, and throughout much of 1917.¹² Marshall’s political experience had been gained as an organiser and campaigner for women’s suffrage. Her initial involvement had been in her home county of Cumbria where she opened the Keswick Branch of the NUWSS with her parents; by 1908, she was working full-time for women’s suffrage, locally, regionally and nationally.¹³ Within the NUWSS on a national level, her noted achievement had been as head of the Election Fighting Fund (EFF),

¹⁰ Talk prepared for ‘Collegium Meeting’ Central Hall, Westminster, 22 March 1915. Marshall was ill, so Royden delivered the speech. Mary Sargent Florence, Catherine Marshall, and C.K. Ogden *Militarism versus Feminism: Writings on Women and War*, edited by Margaret Kamester and Jo Vellacott, London 1987, pp.37-52, fn1 p.166.

¹¹ See Chapter 3, p.100, for arguments surrounding patriotism.

¹² See Chapter 3, pp.89-92, for an outline of the organisation of the NCF.

¹³ Catherine Marshall was from Keswick in the Lake District. She was one of two children of the Reverend Frank Marshall and his wife Caroline. She seemed to have had a close and loving relationship with her parents who had been keen for her to have a good education. She was educated privately in Harrow as her father was a housemaster at Harrow Boys School and at St Leonards School in St Andrews. She did not attend Oxford or Cambridge. For a full account of her early life and work with NUWSS up to 1914, see Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour*.

set up in 1913 to support Labour politicians in by-elections, through the provision of assistance in their funding, campaigning and electioneering.¹⁴ Marshall acted as the NUWSS' parliamentary secretary and, through this role, she became acquainted with many high-ranking politicians of the time. This cultivation of working relationships with politicians was a skill that she was able to put to good use later in negotiations with ministers and government officials over CO issues.¹⁵ For instance, letters in her archive show that she was in contact with MPs, such as Sir John Simon, who had been Home Secretary at the outbreak of the war and been the only member of the Cabinet to resign over the introduction of Conscription.¹⁶ Marshall fostered good working relationships with government ministers, such as Major General Wyndham Childs, who was responsible for COs at the WO.

By the spring of 1916, little happened in the Fellowship, at national or local level, that she did not know about, authorise or "influence and inspire."¹⁷ It can be agreed that she was a "skilled and dedicated worker, willing to devote ...energy and ingenuity to ... [the] cause."¹⁸ One of the difficulties with the usual narrative of the NCF is that Marshall has been used as a token woman in the success of the NCF. This has allowed the contribution made by other women to be hidden and minimalised, yet the research for this thesis has revealed that there were many other women and men, previously unacknowledged, and highlighted elsewhere in this study, who worked alongside Marshall and were as devoted and committed to the cause of the CO.¹⁹ Much of the work of these officers of the Fellowship was shaped by the systems and political activities instigated by Marshall, and she held considerable influence within the NCF. Her contribution to the Fellowship was significant, particularly in her creation of several organisational structures within the NCF, such as the COIB and the political department, which enabled the Fellowship to sustain its war

¹⁴ The NUWSS offered its conditional support for Labour Party candidates in by-elections. The Labour Party had been the only political party prepared to commit itself to women's suffrage. The fund was to encourage the Labour Party to have candidates in elections where there may only have been Liberal and Conservative candidates. Jo Vellacott Newberry 'Anti-War Suffragists' *History*, Vol 62, No.206, 1977 p.412.

¹⁵ For her working relationships with ministers see Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour*, Chapters 10 to 15. For examples of her relationship with ministers during the war see pp.117-119.

¹⁶ See John Rae *Conscience and Politics, The British Government and Conscientious Objection to Military Service*, London 1970, p 26-27. Marshall wrote in July 1916, to the former Home Secretary Sir John Simon to complain about detectives from Scotland Yard, who had been to her address three times that week and "made enquiries about me to other inmates of the house." She was sure that a detective had been asked "to spy upon my movements." Letter to Sir John Simon from Marshall, 4 July 1916, D MAR 4/8 CEMP.

¹⁷ Thomas C. Kennedy *Hound of Conscience, A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1919*, Arkansas 1981, p.72.

¹⁸ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.72.

¹⁹ See Chapters 6 and 7.

resistance. Her authority within these structures made her one of the most influential and important officers of the Fellowship.

Marshall's responsibilities included organisation of the Associates Political Committee, of which she was secretary, and then, from September 1916, following the re-structure of the political work of the NCF she became head of the political department, in addition to responsibility for the COIB. Marshall's value and authority within the NCF was fully recognised when she was made Honorary Secretary, on Brockway's imprisonment at the end of 1916. In this role, Marshall became accountable for the appointment and dismissal of staff, and cognisant of the work across all the departments of the NCF.

By autumn 1916, it had become clear that the government were not going to agree to absolute exemptions for those COs who had established their determination to refuse conscription by undergoing a sentence of imprisonment. Soon after their release, these men were being brought again before tribunals, and given further sentences of imprisonment, if they continued their request for absolute exemption on the grounds of conscience. In the meantime, additional men were being called up for the first time and were appearing before tribunals, when claiming exemption. There were ongoing issues with incidents of brutality, and the NCF had already been deeply involved in efforts to bring COs who had been sent to France back to Britain. The COs were moved around without knowledge of their families, and the Fellowship attempted to gather as much information about them as possible, record it, and then use it to further their campaigns on behalf of the COs.

Through a consideration of the Marshall papers from one month, September 1916, when "work [came] pouring in with every post,"²⁰ the scope of her workload and responsibilities can be appreciated. An appraisal of the paperwork which has survived in her archive, for this busy month, signals that Marshall already possessed considerable authority in dealing with the "urgent work" she, the political committee and her administrative support team faced.²¹ She liaised with the JAC, composed, with Brockway and Treasurer, Edward Grubb, a nine page report to supporters that was accompanied by an appeal for funds, and corresponded with General Childs at the War Office (WO) over an issue in which he agreed

²⁰ Letter to F B Meyer from Marshall, 15 September 1916, DMAR 4/10, CEMP.

²¹ Such was the extent of the work of the political department that a re-organisation of the Fellowship took place in September 1916, when the political department was split into seven sections.

to ask the HO to “permit any conscientious objector to write a special letter as soon as the decision of the tribunal is known.”²² This last item was a victory for Marshall, who had been encouraging families to write to the WO asking for information about the whereabouts of their sons or husbands. Childs suspected that “instructions had been issued that enquiries should be addressed to me.” He clearly believed Marshall to be behind this campaign, as he requests help in the matter, “in case she is able to prevent people from writing to me.”²³ Her instructions to Gladys Rinder, her administrative assistant, were that a note that this information would go into the weekly information sheet to Branch Secretaries, and to “ask leave from the HO to put a statement in the press.”²⁴ Despite this heavy paper workload, Marshall found time to attend fellow national committee member, Barry Runham Brown’s court martial as a watcher, and take copious contemporaneous notes. She also visited James Scott Duckers in prison at Minister, near Sheerness.²⁵

A further insight into her general workload is highlighted in a document she began to compose in May 1917, in preparation for her resignation from political work, which offers an indication of the extension of Marshall’s responsibilities and authority within the Fellowship. Furthermore, it illustrates how she wanted her principles of political activism to continue to be practised, once she was absent from the Offices of the Fellowship.²⁶ The leading section of the document, possibly indicating the method of campaigning she most valued, and the one she seemed most concerned would be neglected in her absence, was of seizing the initiative in “looking for new opportunities” and then making sure that any planned activities are carried out “in a carefully thought out sequence.”²⁷ She directed that important people needed to be contacted and informed of the situation regarding COs, and she points out that “more might be done,” particularly regarding, for example, the Churches, Trade Unions and Universities. This tactic of Marshall’s was not always successful, as prominent people did not necessarily wish to be approached by war resisters to intervene on behalf of COs. For example, a Mrs Brewster wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury about COs, and the reply from his private secretary said that “it is impossible for the Archbishop to enter into...correspondence...owing to ...the utterly impracticable attitude taken by Conscientious Objectors...to the...obligations of citizenship.”²⁸ This view

²² Letter to Marshall from General B Wyndham Childs 3 September 1916, DMAR 4/10, CEMP.

²³ Letter to Marshall from General B Wyndham Childs 3 September 1916, DMAR 4/10, CEMP.

²⁴ Letter to Miss Rinder (extract) from Marshall 5 September 1916, DMAR 4/10, CEMP.

²⁵ DMAR 4/10 CEMP.

²⁶ ‘CEM’s work Notes for Mr Hunter’ May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

²⁷ ‘CEM’s work Notes for Mr Hunter’ May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

²⁸ Letter to Mrs Brewster from Arthur Sheppard, 10 July 1917, DMAR 4/21, CEMP.

was reflected in the CO's disenfranchisement for five years in the 1918 Representation of the People Act.²⁹

A further element of the political activism she advocated was the need to "keep in touch with other political movements" and that it should be understood that it was "very important to have feelers out to hear at once... [about the] treatment of COs."³⁰ One method she used to keep in touch with developments in the AWM, and to promote the campaigns and position of the NCF, was to join other groups; in the notes, she states that she was a member of eight other bodies associated with the AWM and Peace negotiations.³¹

Marshall's relationship with Government Ministers and Officials.

Marshall worked hard to cultivate good relationships with government ministers who were responsible for the oversight of COs, such as the Prison Commissioners, headed by a Colonel Winn, who "will deal with me personally but not with NCF officially."³² Additionally, she developed a good working relationship with Major-General Sir Wyndham Childs of the War Office,³³ who had been appointed as Director of Personal Services in 1916, the discipline branch of the WO. This meant that he was responsible for problems that arose amongst conscripts as they came under military law. Marshall's papers reveal that she communicated regularly with this official by letter, telephone and in pre-arranged meetings.

An issue in which she became involved and which is illustrative of her emphasis on the importance of dealing properly with government officials, concerned a CO, T Arthur, who had been convicted for non-cooperation with the military authorities. In a letter to his relatives, she tried to confirm his details, as he had not sent these when he had written to the NCF after his court martial. Within the letter she refers to the close relationship which she had cultivated with the WO, with whom she "is in almost daily communication," and

²⁹ "There was intense dislike of the COs amongst elements of the public and media who viewed them as being unpatriotic and by 209 votes to 171 MPs (on a free vote) they were deprived of the franchise for five years in the Representation of the People Bill 1917-18." www.parliament.uk/.../duty-and-democracy-parliament-and-the-first-world-war.pdf.

³⁰ 'CEM's work Notes for Mr Hunter' May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

³¹ These groups were: NCCL as a member of the executive committee and the women's committee, the PNC as the NCF representative, the Joint By-elections Committee for the NCF, WIL executive council, the National Peace Council for the WIL, Co-ordination Group, Honorary Secretary for International Information Bureau, Women's International Committee for Permanent Peace. 'CEM's work Notes for Mr Hunter' May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

³² 'CEM's Work Notes to EE Hunter' May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

³³ See Rae *Conscience and Politics*, Chapter 7 for an overview of Wyndham Childs work connected with COs at the War Office.

that she understands that the WO is keen to put a stop to COs being placed in military custody. Her trust that the WO will comply with her, is such that she feels able to inform the recipient of the letter that he can “rest assured that Mr Arthur will be transferred to civil custody.”³⁴

A further example of how she promoted the positive aspects of her relationship with General Wyndham Childs, can be seen in a letter written later that month to Dr Meyer, an associate member, in which she stated that Childs “takes infinite trouble to ensure that his provisions for COs should be carried out.”³⁵ Further evidence that Marshall was keen to maintain a good working relationship with Wyndham Childs, can be gleaned from a letter of apology she sent to him in October regarding the letters he had received concerning COs that did not “properly come within your jurisdiction.”³⁶ She had been away due to illness and re-assured him that she had left instructions about the case studies, for her substitute, Mr Ammon, “a man of considerable political experience.”³⁷ As well as demonstrating Marshall’s understanding that Wyndham Childs’ co-operation needed careful attention, she acknowledged that he was “taking a great deal of trouble to deal fairly with that part of the conscientious objectors problem that comes within your jurisdiction,” and this particular letter offers further insight into the level of co-operation between Marshall and the WO, as she promises to try to fulfil their request for particulars of ill treatment of COs whilst in military custody.³⁸ No letters from Marshall or the NCF have been found to have been saved in the relevant WO files, an intriguing circumstance that may suggest that the WO may not have been so keen to advertise its relationship with war resisters. The WO focused on the provision of advice on the future treatment of COs, should there have been further conflict.³⁹

According to his memoirs, Childs held little sympathy for COs and the NCF, as he believed that the NCF should have been dealt with under the ‘Incitement to Mutiny Act’ and that “there would not have been half so many [COs] had it not been for the encouragement

³⁴ Letter to Mr Arthur from Marshall, 3 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

³⁵ Letter (copy) to Dr Meyer from Marshall, 16 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

³⁶ General Wyndham Childs was the official at the WO who had been given the responsibility for those COs who had “actually breached the Army Act, the Kings Regulations, the Military Service Acts or War Office instructions.” Marshall is careful to let him know that she understands his area of responsibility. Letter to Wyndham Childs from Marshall (draft) 9 October 1916, D MAR 4/11, CEMP.

³⁷ Letter to Wyndham Childs from Marshall (draft) 9 October 1916, D MAR 4/11, CEMP. Ammon’s secretary was blamed for the letters being sent to the WO.

³⁸ Letter to Wyndham Childs from Marshall (draft) 9 October 1916, D MAR 4/11, CEMP.

³⁹ See ‘The Conscientious Objector form a War Office perspective, guidance to War office’ TNA WO162/334.

they received from MPs.”⁴⁰ These MPs, such as Philip Snowden, Tom Richardson, Colonel Josiah Wedgewood and T.E. Harvey, were lobbied regularly by the Fellowship to raise issues concerning COs in the House of Commons. Childs concedes that he had to deal with cases of ill treatment that were brought to his attention and that “he formed a liaison with the NCF in order to take immediate action.”⁴¹ Such action included in September 1916 a letter to all district commanders that “any special treatment in the way of coercion....is strictly prohibited.”⁴²

These methods of co-operation with the WO and other government officials were not universally accepted within the JAC, and Marshall was criticised by the FSC, the Fellowship’s closest allies in war resistance. The main reason for this uneasiness with co-operation with governmental officials was that many Quakers believed that to deal with the government was to accept their right to conscript men into the Army against their conscience. Quakers did not think that the government had any right to question a man’s conscience or how he should follow it. This difference in belief between the NCF and its allies caused divisions, and eventually contributed to Marshall’s surrender of her political work.

Marshall and divisions within the NCF and with its allies.

Marshall’s principles of political activism created some disquiet and, eventually, division within the NCF, and with its allies on the JAC. The uneasiness was caused by the relationships she developed with Government ministers, particularly those at the WO as described above. Marshall wrote to members in August 1916 to explain the difficulties the NCF was experiencing with its war resisting colleagues, as “it has been apparent on several occasions that the three bodies[in JAC] differ somewhat in their views as to how far there should be any direct dealing with government departments or members of the government.”⁴³ Within the NCF itself, concern about Marshall’s methods was raised by a Quaker member of the National Committee, Barrett Brown, in October 1916. He felt that the “Fellowship had become involved in method and detail and lost sight of its spiritual purpose and sense of mission.”⁴⁴ At the same meeting Chamberlain, a socialist, agreed with

⁴⁰ Major General Sir Wyndham Childs *Episodes and Reflections. Being some records from the life of Major-General Sir Wyndham Childs K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B., one time Second Lieut. 2nd Volunteer Battalion The Duke of Cornwall’s Light Infantry*, London 1930, p.154.

⁴¹ Major General Sir Wyndham Childs *Episodes and Reflections*, p.151.

⁴² The text of the letter was given by Macpherson in 5 HC 96, col873, 23 July 1917. Quoted in Rae *Conscience and Politics*, p.143.

⁴³ Letter to Comrades from Marshall, 8 August 1916, D MAR 4/9, CEMP.

⁴⁴ Minutes of National Committee Meeting October 1916, DMAR 3/10, CEMP.

Brown and went further, stating that “the Fellowship has degenerated into [an] entertainment for cabinet ministers.” He was concerned about the “direct communication with the War Office” and the fact that “it [the National Committee and the office] were able to get what it wants done so easily,” an allusion to worries that the NCF, and Marshall had developed close relationships with government ministers and officials. Such was his concern that he said he would not be able to continue to serve the NCF except in an administrative capacity.⁴⁵ Marshall had been following a campaign line of political action which had been approved by the leading political members of the NCF; herself, Allen, Brockway and Russell, and communicated later that summer via *The Tribunal* to members. The article stated that “the Fellowship should make every... effort to secure by political or other means...those forms of exemptions which [COs]...can consciously accept.”⁴⁶

When Brown resigned in June 1917, the reasons he gave were, that he believed that the Fellowship had become “a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Conscientious Objectors rather than a No-Conscription Fellowship as ... [it has] adopted methods of political action involving association with War Office Officials... [which] compromise our witness,”⁴⁷ and that such policies relaxed the NCF’s “uncompromising opposition to conscription.”⁴⁸ An understandable reaction, but one which meant that the Fellowship, guided by Marshall’s commitment to political action and drive for better prison and work scheme conditions for the CO, meant they would be in disagreement with their allies on the JAC, many of whom believed that there should be no co-operation with a government which imposed conscription.

A letter to Hunter, in the late summer of 1917, to whom she had relinquished her political work, after pressure from the FSC, expressed Marshall’s frustration at the position that the Quakers took on her methods. They made accusations of “wire pulling” or “helping to administer the Act,” all of which made her position untenable, as she believed the only way to assist the CO was to bring “public opinion to bear directly on the political machine.”⁴⁹ Political activism gave the NCF “its distinctive characteristic” with its “direct practical expression” to idealism, and so created a “new quality of pacifism” which was consistent

⁴⁵ Minutes of National Committee Meeting October 1916, DMAR 3/10, CEMP.

⁴⁶ *The Tribunal* 3 August 1916.

⁴⁷ Brown and Fletcher were Quakers, their belief being that their and fellow COs suffering would compromise their witness. This means “Those things we collectively do and say outside of worship to live that truth which has been tested by Quaker discernment - is our Quaker witness.”

[www.friendsmedia.org/printables/Witness vs Ministry_12032010.pdf](http://www.friendsmedia.org/printables/Witness_vs_Ministry_12032010.pdf).

⁴⁸ *The Tribunal*, 21 June 1917.

⁴⁹ Letter to Hunter from Marshall 27 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

with “vigour and valour” and would ensure that the NCF made a “special contribution to history.”⁵⁰ Nevertheless, despite such resistance within the Fellowship and amongst their allies to her methods, Marshall gained further concessions from the HO. This concerned second and third prison sentences received concurrently, where the man would be able to “carry over” his earned privileges from previous sentences. This would make an enormous difference to such men, as the prison system usually insisted that a man should start the process of accruing privileges, such as a mattress and letters home, only due to good behaviour, and the tariff re-started at the beginning of each sentence.

Marshall and Parliamentary lobbying as a method of political activism

Although the Fellowship failed to stop the imposition of conscription, involvement in extensive parliamentary lobbying on behalf of the CO was deemed to be a vital component in the NCF’s ability to continue to campaign for the exemption of COs from military service and, ideally, for the end of conscription. This central strand of the NCF’s political work was driven by Marshall’s belief that political lobbying was necessary to keep sympathetic MPs informed about issues that concerned COs’ and to encourage them to raise questions in the House of Commons. These interjections and questions about COs would require an answer from a government minister, be recorded in Hansard and in the national press. This method was considered so crucial that the NCF publications department produced a CO’s Hansard for its supporters. At first, the political committee’s objective was to induce Parliament to stop conscription or, at the very least, stop its extension. Despite Kennedy’s views that the political committee failed because neither of these objectives were realised,⁵¹ this approach by the Fellowship enjoyed some success in keeping the CO and his stance in the public eye, through the consistent and persistent nature of their lobbying campaign.

Marshall possessed an appreciation and understanding of the parliamentary lobby system, which she had skilfully navigated as parliamentary secretary with the NUWSS.⁵² It was during the years before the war, that she “honed her extraordinary inborn talent for political work and learnt all there was to know of the skills necessary and means open to a political pressure group.”⁵³ Marshall’s work within the NUWSS can be regarded as an

⁵⁰ Letter to Hunter from Marshall 27 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

⁵¹ The Military Service Act 1916(session 2) (6 and 7 GEO 5, CH15, 25 May 1916) extended liability of service for all men between 18 and 41; the Military Service (No. 2) Act 1918 (8 GEO 5, Ch5, 18 April 1918) raised the upper age limit to 51.

⁵² See Chapters 9-12 in Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour*.

⁵³ Vellacott ‘Anti-War Suffragists’, *History*, 62, 206, 1977, p.412.

“apprenticeship” which led to her ability to assume a central role in the NCF and contributed to her extensive influence within the Fellowship and the AWM as a whole.

She understood that to seize the “psychological initiative,” immediate lobbying needed to be undertaken, as it played a crucial role in maintaining pressure on governments. The issue of conscription and the CO did not fade away once conscription became law, and it continued to take up time in Parliament, the arena in which the Fellowship believed that the CO’s point of view should be heard. Through the questions in Parliament of sympathetic MPs, such as Philip Snowden, and Lord Courtney of Penwith, and the lobbying of government ministers by war resisters, the NCF was able to be persistent in its aims, and ensure that issues concerning conscription and COs remained on the political agenda of domestic war policy.

A further form of lobbying was a form of mass communication, which involved the despatch of propaganda and information about COs to large groups of MPs all at once. One such instance was in March 1917, when Marshall organised for 200 MPs, 50 members of the Houses of Lords and “the chief members of the government” to be sent a letter from herself explaining why they had been sent such a large dossier, which comprised case studies of COs in custody, two propaganda leaflets, a letter from Brockway and extracts from Allen’s letters.⁵⁴ The point of this campaign was to explain to the recipients that, despite the introduction of the HO Scheme of civil work for COs as an alternative to prison, “the problem has by no means been solved in a way which can satisfy anyone who believes in the liberty of conscience.”⁵⁵ Marshall pointed out to the recipients that she believed that there were 800 men “who are doomed to go through unending series of imprisonments...for persisting in their refusal to do what they believe is wrong.”⁵⁶ Her demand to the readers was that “this persecution of men who have proved their sincerity must not be allowed to continue.”⁵⁷ The dossier is a good example of how her principles of political activism operated, as this method “seize[ed] the psychological initiative” and articulated the information the NCF had collated through the organised records of the Fellowship and the COIB, to a variety of politicians and government ministers. These men were then unable to deny that were not in full possession of the position of the NCF

⁵⁴ Regrettably, the list of addressees is not in the Marshall papers.

⁵⁵ ‘Conscientious Objectors in Prison’ letter to recipients from Marshall 30 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP. The propaganda leaflets enclosed with the dossier were: ‘Conscientious Objectors The “Absolutists” and the “Ungenuines” ‘and ‘Some Figures and a Moral’. (The latter leaflet not with the other papers).

⁵⁶ ‘Conscientious Objectors in Prison’ letter from to recipients from Marshall 30 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

⁵⁷ Conscientious Objectors in Prison’ letter to recipients from Marshall 30 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

towards COs, their application of conscience and the Fellowship's justifications for their release.

This dossier included part of a letter previously sent to the PM and signed by prominent persons, such as Arnold Bennett, the author. The use of prominent people to speak, campaign or sign letters, petitions or memorials, was another of Marshall's ways of "seizing the psychological initiative."⁵⁸ A further element of her campaigning method was to use individuals to lobby MPs and Lords. One prominent associate member whom she asked to lobby for the NCF was Bertrand Russell. However, despite his fame, he was not always successful in gaining the attention of MPs. In one letter to Marshall he reported as having "a record of failure and incompetence to report to you," as he had only seen Anderson,⁵⁹ "who was most unsatisfactory."⁶⁰ He asks her to ascertain the addresses of MPs so that he can contact them directly; the implication here was that she would possess such information. There is an air of frustration about the letter, and this reflects the difficult and often random nature of lobbying MPs,⁶¹ which was organised by Marshall, centrally from Head Office via the political committee, and through local branches.⁶² Marshall persisted with this method of campaigning throughout her time at the Fellowship and it was continued after she relinquished her political work in the summer of 1917, when Ernest Hunter took over. This was despite the irritation of one potentially sympathetic MP, Richard Lambert, at the beginning of her tenure at the NCF, who wrote to her to warn that he was "not able to put all the questions she wanted" and that there were "hostile feelings in the house on the subject [of COs]." He goes on to warn her that she was "asking too much of my group."⁶³

Marshall and the use of printed propaganda

One method by which the Fellowship followed Marshall's principle of "articulate what exists and create more" was through the production of quality printed propaganda and information, which became one of the Fellowship's strongest areas of political activism. The leading propagandists and writers of the Fellowship were Allen, Brockway and Chamberlain, who had been journalists before the war. However, all these men were in

⁵⁸ Notes on Report to Convention of 8 April 1916, D/MAR 4/3, CEMP.

⁵⁹ W C Anderson MP was a socialist MP who was a member of the ILP. He had been member for Sheffield Attercliffe since the 1914 General Election.

⁶⁰ Letter to Marshall from Russell, 11 April 1916, D MAR 4/3, CEMP.

⁶¹ Letter to Marshall from Russell, 11 April 1916, D MAR 4/3, CEMP.

⁶² See Chapter 6.

⁶³ Letter to Marshall from Richard C Lambert MP 5 March 1916, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

prison by the end of 1916, and the role of informing the public about the stance of the CO and the NCF fell to the older men and women in the Fellowship, such as Russell, Marshall, Tillard, Grubb, Beauchamp, and Smith. Other women, such as Mrs Jenkinson and Miss Stewart, organised the distribution of the literature.⁶⁴

The NCF produced politically provocative literature to promote and gain attention for their rationale in opposing compulsion and its accompanying militarism. Such “mischievous” literature provoked the government to act and, in May 1916, Russell accepted responsibility for the leaflet,⁶⁵ *Two Years Hard Labour*, which was the story of one CO, Ernest F. Everett, a teacher from St Helens, who had been badly treated by the army authorities. The NCF’s intention was to draw the public’s attention to how COs were treated by the authorities.⁶⁶ Although the leaflet was initially anonymous, several people were arrested⁶⁷ and charged with distributing the leaflet, as it had been “held judicially, to contravene Regulation No 27 of the DORA.”⁶⁸ Russell told the authorities he was the author of the leaflet and decided to conduct his own defence when charged, which was then used by the NCF as an opportunity to publicise his and their position via a pamphlet, *Rex v Bertrand Russell*. He was found guilty and fined, with an appeal against the sentence launched. At the appeal hearing on 28 June, the conviction was upheld and, although he refused to pay the fine, the court ordered his goods to be distrained upon, rather than impose the prison sentence of 61 days imprisonment from 5 June. This exercise and the positive support that Russell received from sympathisers and friends “proved it had indeed been an effective means of propaganda.”⁶⁹ However, by the following spring Marshall was lamenting that the propaganda department, for which she felt “especially responsible” along with the literature committee, had not had many “new ideas” and that there was a need for one person to “[get] material collected and written up,” and to “think of ideas for distribution.”⁷⁰ One reason why the NCF were no longer able to produce the required new ideas was that the police were actively engaged in disrupting the production of printed

⁶⁴ See Chapter 6, p.162.

⁶⁵ TNA HO 45/10801/30742. Letter from Aylmer Rose Organising Secretary of the NCF to MPs, 31 May 1916. The letter accepting responsibility for the leaflet was published as ‘Adsum Qui Feci’, *The Times*, 17 May 1916. The Home Office subsequently refused to issue a passport to Russell who wished to go on a lecture tour of the USA. TNA HO45/11012/314670.

⁶⁶ TNA HO 45/10801/30742.

⁶⁷ TNA HO 45/10801/30742. Letter to MPs from Aylmer Rose Organising Secretary of the NCF, 31 May 1916.

⁶⁸ Home Office Hostile Leaflets Circular No3, 14 June 1916, TNA HO 45/10801/30742. Under DORA Regulation 27, it was illegal to spread false reports likely to cause disaffection.

⁶⁹ Jo Vellacott, *Conscientious Objection Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, Nottingham 2015, p.83. Also, *The Tribunal*, 29 June 1916 where Russell expressed his thanks to supporters.

⁷⁰ ‘CEM’s work notes for Mr Hunter’ May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP. Marshall headed her notes with her initials.

propaganda and publicity of the Fellowship and other war resisting groups. Marshall would have been aware of these increasing difficulties, and in her advice to her successor Ernest Hunter, she warned that the Fellowship was “not nearly enterprising or inventive enough [about ideas for distribution].”⁷¹

Nevertheless, the NCF did continue to produce material that provoked the authorities, and the primary tool that satisfied Marshall’s principle of “articulate what exists and create more,” was *The Tribunal*, the official newspaper of the NCF, described by the Director of Public Prosecutions Office (DPP) office as an “extremely mischievous journal.”⁷² This was an instrument of propaganda for which she admitted she had no responsibility except “to pass on ...any suitable material that comes my way.”⁷³ She was somewhat misleading in this respect, as in October 1917 Mr Moss of the National Labour Press claimed that “all instructions for the printing of [*The Tribunal*] were received from Miss Marshall.”⁷⁴ This possibly indicated that she had some authority in ordering the printing of the newspaper, once she had seen proofs, but not necessarily its content.

Despite her perceived authority in sending *The Tribunal* to the printers, the newspaper was the domain of other women, Beauchamp and Smith, and was a central part of the NCF’s maintenance of its dissent and its ability to “articulate what exists” and to “seize the psychological initiative.” *The Tribunal* was printed weekly throughout the war, was sent by post to individual supporters and delivered to, and distributed by local branches. These methods were to become problematic as the authorities attempted to stop the distribution of potentially “mischievous” literature by seizing any material they could from distribution centres; they could see what the publication was because it was usual practice to put a brown paper sleeve around the rolled-up newspaper. The Fellowship’s solution was to post their literature in brown envelopes.

Marshall’s emphasis on the creation of publicity and propaganda was one of the ways in which the CO and his stance could be kept in the public eye and, more importantly, in the purview of government authorities and administrators. It was important that the CO was not forgotten and that the NCF’s political position in opposition to the war was clear and

⁷¹ ‘CEM’s work notes for Mr Hunter’ May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

⁷² TNA Letter from DPP to Sir Edward Troup, 6 July 1916, HO 45/10817/316469.

⁷³ ‘CEM’s work Notes for Mr Hunter’ May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

⁷⁴ TNA Police Report on raid on *The Tribunal* and The National Labour Press, the printers for the NCF and the ILP 19 October 1917, HO 45/10817/316469. Mr Moss agreed not to print any further copies of *The Tribunal* as the police threatened to dismantle his machines. See Chapter 5 for how this affected the production of *The Tribunal*.

uncompromising. The women involved with the Fellowship enabled this principle of political activism to flourish through their commitment to the publication of *The Tribunal* under increasingly difficult circumstances, their willingness to take the risks which became associated with the distribution of the newspaper and other propaganda, and to ensure that supporters were kept informed of the Fellowships anti-war activities, through their work as administrators at HQ and in the localities.⁷⁵

Marshall and local political activity

Another of Marshall's tactics in the sustenance of anti-war activity was as a conduit between the centre (HQ) and the local branches of the Fellowship. Marshall encouraged local groups to be increasingly politically active in the NCF's political campaigning and, as a result, she became a crucial link between central and local action.⁷⁶

Her presence at conventions, urging branch members to keep peace and anti-war activity in the public gaze, and memos to branch secretaries about political activity that needed to be carried out by the district and branches, ensured that NCF activity was maintained throughout the country. She encouraged local branches to keep accurate records and pass on information to HQ, as this would enable her to report a full picture of the campaigns to the National Committee, to the conventions, and to supporters. One such instance was Marshall's report on the Associate Political Committee's activities to the NCF National Convention in April 1916.⁷⁷ Several topics were reported to the convention, and each of them had tasks and suggestions for local groups to undertake.⁷⁸ These actions included; "get [ting] influential local people to write letters to ...members of the government," and to organise petitions locally from the men "who have been rejected by the tribunals...demand a committee of enquiry into the administration of the [MSA] act." Local branches should "keep prominent people...supplied regularly with lists of their members arrested."⁷⁹

Marshall, Record Keeping and the COIB

One central tenet of Marshall's principles of political action was the emphasis she placed on the value of keeping records, and for her need to be "kept informed of all important

⁷⁵ See Chapter 5 for the contribution of *The Tribunal* women and Chapters 6 and 7 for other ways in which women were involved in the dissemination of printed propaganda, and as administrators and organisers.

⁷⁶ Marshall had had significant experience as a local organiser for the NUWSS before the war. See Chapters 2 and 3 in Jo Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour with Women's Suffrage: The Story of Catherine E Marshall*, London 1993

⁷⁷ She introduced her principles of political activism at this same convention.

⁷⁸ 'Report to National Convention Agitation on behalf of prisoners' 8 April 1916, D MAR 4/3, CEMP. The topics were: memorial to government, petition to the King.

⁷⁹ 'Report to National Convention Agitation on behalf of prisoners' 8 April 1916, D MAR 4/3, CEMP.

business.”⁸⁰ The HQ of the NCF initially had a Records and Investigation department, from which little paperwork has survived, possibly because much was destroyed in the early part of the war to protect the COs. However, once the value of information in the campaigns on behalf of the CO was realised, information was retained and the hub of record keeping was centred at the COIB, which had been initiated by Marshall, funded by the NCF and situated in the John Street offices. It was here that several women, and a few men, collated and organised the vast quantity of intelligence about COs and their circumstances, which was sent to the Bureau from a variety of sources, which included the NCF itself via its system of watchers and local officials. Other anti-war groups, such as the NCCL, FSC and FOR, supplied information about their members, while there was some dependence upon family and friends of COs to pass on pertinent information to either the Fellowship or the Bureau. The difference between the NCF and the other groups was that they assembled dossiers of collated evidence about COs, much of which they had collected themselves, and supplemented by other groups’ information. Furthermore, the COIB was prepared to share information with these groups, such as the FSC. This emphasis on knowledge is power was led by Marshall and permeated both the NCF and its off-shoot, the COIB.

Marshall and her assistant Gladys Rinder led a group of women who collated and filed the information collected, and maintained contact with COs, and their families and supporters.⁸¹ Much of the intelligence about each CO was gathered from information collected from watchers at tribunals as well as from his friends and relatives, all of which was recorded on cards. This information would have included the outcome of courts martial, the place and conditions of confinement, the CO’ health, whether part of an alternative scheme, and release dates.⁸² There are many examples of letters and messages about the circumstances of the COs within Marshall’s archive, which contains several dozen case files which hold information collated by the COIB, and was used to assist the NCF in their attempts to have men released from prison, usually on health grounds.

The creation of the COIB, and the organisation of information about COs, can be attributed to Marshall and her determination that, through the use of intelligence gathered about COs from a large number of sources, the NCF would be able to “act promptly” and “seize the

⁸⁰ ‘CEM’s work Notes for Mr Hunter’ May 1917, D MAR4/19, CEMP.

⁸¹ For the COIB and its women administrators see Chapter 6, pp.167-176.

⁸² There is further consideration of the COIB in Chapter 6.

psychological initiative”⁸³ when trying to achieve better prison and working conditions for COs. Despite the best efforts of Marshall and her team of administrators, a commission of enquiry directed by the JAC found that the COIB was disorganised and that the Index of information about COs needed to “be over-hauled,” as it “was out of date and incomplete.”⁸⁴ It was unsurprising that the Bureau struggled with the weight of information they had to collate and duplicate, and there is little evidence available to confirm that new procedures were put in place that overcame the problems of keeping information up-to-date. A further report on the work of the COIB gave an insight into the use the information was put to by interested parties, as “statistics and information from the Bureau were supplied “to two branch secretaries and a doctor for the “purposes of ... proposed deputation[s].”⁸⁵

A key to the NCF’s success in maintaining its war resistance was the contribution to the Fellowship made by Catherine Marshall. Her principles of political activism, examined for the first time in this study, underpinned by her commitment to pacifism, became central to the ability of the NCF to support the stance of the CO. As she had influence and authority within several departments within the NCF, her principles of organisation, and the importance of record keeping, were introduced into the working practices of the Fellowship. Moreover, they became central to the success of the political departments and the COIB, so creating a sound organisational basis for the Fellowship, secured during her tenure, and which enabled the Fellowship’s continued existence and activism throughout the war.

Her unwavering support for, and sympathy with, the stance of the CO, can be seen within her initiatives, which were driven by her principles of political activism, which included the development of the record keeping COIB. A further initiative involved relentless correspondence with the War and Home Offices, in attempts to improve the standards of incarceration and working standards under which the COs were held.⁸⁶ To further the Fellowship’s ability to maintain the momentum of its opposition to conscription, Marshall advocated and promoted liaison with other anti-war groups, even though it caused

⁸³ Notes on Report to Convention of 8 April 1916 CEMP D/MAR 4/3.

⁸⁴ Report on the work of the Record Department [COIB] June 1917, Reports/Staff SERV 4/8, FL.

⁸⁵ COIB Report 7 May 1918, Rowntree Gillett Papers, COIB Correspondence, FL.

⁸⁶ Copies of this correspondence exists within her archive but very little, if any, has survived within the HO and WO files in the TNA which were concerned with these departments dealings with the CO issue and anti-war groups.

difficulties within the Fellowship's membership and direct challenges to her methods of political campaigning. Nevertheless, she persevered with cross-group relationships and, through some compromise, which included the surrender of her political work, she enabled an accommodation of the differing viewpoints of the NCF and their allies on the JAC, the FSC and FOR, which concerned the use of COIB material in the Fellowship's campaigns against the government's war policies.

Marshall's contribution to the NCF, and the application of her principles of political activism, assisted in its ability to become the most significant and successful war resistance organisation of the war. Furthermore, through providing the opportunity for co-operation between differing approaches to war resistance, the Fellowship became the focal point for anti-war agitation for many individuals, both men and women, who participated in such action. Many of the concessions made to COs by the government and their dependent authorities could be credited to the persistence of activity by the NCF, at the centre and in the localities. This political activism of the Fellowship, directed by Marshall, included attendance at tribunals, and advice to COs on what to say at these hearings, along with promotion of the cause through the lobbying of sympathetic MPs in Parliament. Additionally, Marshall encouraged the NCF to be prodigious in their output of printed material, which enabled them to conduct an effective and persistent propaganda campaign throughout and beyond the war.⁸⁷

The foregrounding of Marshall's contribution to the political activism of the NCF within this chapter, points to a new understanding of the impact that the NCF made on the AWM and, therefore, notes that an adjustment needs to be made to the narrative of the NCF, to include fully the contribution made by Marshall as a political activist, and to include the women who worked alongside her.

The following chapters examine the crucial roles that the women who worked alongside Marshall took in the maintenance of the Fellowship's war resistance. One means was through the promotion and articulation of the Fellowship's political stance against Conscription that was to be found in the pages of *The Tribunal*, which was published and edited by a group of war resisters headed by Joan Beauchamp and Lydia Smith. Further chapters consider the contributions made by women at the HQ of the NCF, and those

⁸⁷ From 1916, the NCF produced a weekly information newsheet for local branch secretaries. As well as the weekly newspaper, the NCF published several pamphlets that explained their position. Pamphlets could be easily distributed at rallies and meetings and put through sympathisers' doors.

women associate members who chose to be politically active on behalf of the CO in their localities.

Chapter 5: *The Tribunal* Women

We are not daunted. We shall go on with the message which we believe it is our duty to deliver... we have no fear of the ultimate result of the conflict between the spirit of violence and the ideal for which we stand.¹

The Tribunal newspaper was the key source of propaganda for the NCF which transmitted the Fellowship's policies, aims and objectives to its supporters, as well as being an instrument through which the officers of the Fellowship could disseminate information and communicate with each other through announcements and small advertisements which appeared at the back of the newspaper. The articles in the newspaper were inspirational and motivational in tone. Its existence was imperative to the Fellowship, and it became a symbol of its persistent opposition to the war and other government wartime policies, particularly DORA. The statement at the head of this chapter was made by Joan Beauchamp and Lydia Smith, the women who had been editing and publishing the newspaper for nearly a year. Their defiance was a response to a police raid on their printers, which was intended to close the newspaper. The women were not to be deterred, and *The Tribunal* continued to be printed every week until January 1920.

This chapter argues that distinct roles played by three women, Joan Beauchamp, Lydia Smith and Violet Tillard, enabled the NCF to maintain the effectiveness of its war resistance. This was because they were successful in their efforts to ensure that the NCF's newspaper, *The Tribunal*, was published weekly, and distributed throughout the war, despite interference from government authorities, who attempted to hinder the publication of much other anti-war literature, as well as *The Tribunal*.² Such was the determination of these three women to keep the newspaper in production, they were prepared to risk prosecution and imprisonment by running a secret printing press hidden in a house in Islington. The focus of this chapter is from the spring of 1917, when Beauchamp and Smith became more fully involved in the production of the newspaper, to April 1919, when Headley Press became the printer and the NCF took over the publisher's name from Beauchamp. The new editor, Ernest E. Hunter, had been the political secretary of the Fellowship during the latter part of the war. The use of collective biography as the methodology which supports this study, has assisted in explaining why these women, of

¹ *The Tribunal* 25 April 1918. Probably written by Joan Beauchamp and Lydia Smith.

² See Introduction for a discussion of these challenges, pp.28-29.

varying political, professional and religious backgrounds, came together in acts of war resistance to promote the cause of the CO and defy government authorities who attempted to terminate the instrument of war resistance they controlled, *The Tribunal* newspaper. They have left little evidence of their motivation in becoming involved in the anti-war activities of the Fellowship, and there is scant indication in the available records of how the women came to be working together specifically on *The Tribunal*, but they had all been working for the NCF prior to the spring of 1917, so already shared a common motivation to engage in war resistance. Until this time, a group of experienced male journalists had overseen the production of *The Tribunal*; Chamberlain was editor until July 1916, according to the masthead of the newspaper, then B.J. Boothroyd took over as editor until October 1917, when Smith took this position. However, a police report dated 13 October 1917 states that Boothroyd ceased to be editor in May 1917, as he was an absentee and effectively on the run from the police, and that Smith took over then, although her name was not added to the masthead until a later edition.³

Beauchamp and Smith take responsibility for The Tribunal.

In the spring of 1917,⁴ Beauchamp and Smith became the central figures in the NCF's sustained resistance to conscription through their efforts to ensure that *The Tribunal* was published. One reader explained the newspaper's importance and function; "we have...news of our movement, choice extracts of prose and poetry and ...articles from the pens of many comrades...of incalculable worth."⁵ Violet Tillard became involved when the newspaper had to be printed clandestinely; she refused to tell the police, or a magistrate, the name of the printer, or the secret location of the equipment. Tillard was fined and sent to prison in August 1918 for 63 days for this act of loyalty to the Fellowship and its campaign of war resistance.

These women's duties, after the spring of 1917, seem to have been dominated by *The Tribunal*, and the production and distribution of other publications such as *The NCF News Sheet*, a private monthly information sheet. During their time in charge of the newspaper

³ Report by Inspector Edward Parker on B.J. Boothroyd and *The Tribunal* newspaper for director of Public Prosecutions on behalf of the Home Office dated 13 October 1917, TNA HO45/10817/316469. It is possible that the Fellowship deliberately created some confusion over responsibilities relating to *The Tribunal* and its production to protect their staff.

⁴ *The Tribunal* was first published in June 1916 and edited by William Chamberlain. This role was taken by BJ Boothroyd on Chamberlain's imprisonment, and the women took charge in the spring of 1917 when Boothroyd was on the run from the military authorities as an absentee.

⁵ Extract from letter to the *Tribunal* 22 November 1917 from HT Turland, Hon. Sec. Northampton Branch dated 16 November 1917.

several articles were printed, which were concerned with government war policy and considered for prosecution. The last of the court cases that involved these women was only completed in January 1920; an outstanding appeal, brought by the Attorney General, in the matter of whether Beauchamp had been the printer or publisher of *The Tribunal*.⁶

The newspaper's importance to the anti-war movement can be seen through the variety of articles and news items that were printed within its pages. One example is that of the edition of 3 January 1918, published by Beauchamp, which offers a good example of the nature of the journalism within its pages. This edition has been chosen because articles within it became the subject of several prosecutions, which led to the imprisonment of Beauchamp and Bertrand Russell. Along with a lead editorial by Russell, 'The German Peace Offer,' there is news about released COs, treatment of the men in prison, and a report about a successful sale of work in Street, Somerset.⁷ These articles were published alongside news from the work camps where COs were being held, an update from the Australian referendum on conscription, and 'The Guard Room Message,' an account of a CO's encounter with soldiers. On the back page is a letter to the editor from Catherine Marshall, outlining the latest concessions from the government for CO prisoners held in work camps.⁸ Sometimes there was a religious text or homily,⁹ but not in this edition. The emphasis, deliberate or otherwise, seems to be on the prison experience of the CO.

In October 1917, Beauchamp became responsible for the publication and printing of *The Tribunal*, and remained as publisher, and as named printer, until April 1919.¹⁰ Her early responsibilities within the NCF are obscure, and it has not been possible (so far) to evaluate her role in the NCF before she became involved with *The Tribunal*, because her name does not feature in the newspaper or any other available source, until she becomes publisher/printer.¹¹ In addition to her duties as publisher of the newspaper, from August to

⁶ See Chapter 5, pp.151-152.

⁷ A 'sale of work' was an occasion when items such as needlework and woodwork would be sold to the public to raise funds. The items would be made by supporters and donated to the event. *The Tribunal* 3 January 1917.

⁸ Despite Marshall being at home in Keswick at this time recuperating from an illness probably caused by overwork at the NCF, she was still interested in the work of the Fellowship See Chapter 4.

⁹ Occasionally speeches made by COs at their tribunal or Courts Martial hearings were printed in *The Tribunal*. One example from the 11 April 1918 edition was the oration of a CO who refused to join the Army after three terms of imprisonment. His justification for taking the stance of a CO was related to his religious beliefs. He told the Court Martial that he believed that "war would become impossible when the people of all nations, realising their brotherhood, will refuse to be led to the shambles of mass slaughter." He was prepared to spend the rest of his life in prison for his beliefs.

¹⁰ The first reference to Beauchamp as publisher of *The Tribunal* is No 80 25 October 1917.

¹¹ R Arnot Page in the preface to *Poems of Revolt An Anthology chosen by Joan Beauchamp* London 1926, does mention that Beauchamp, a committed socialist who had been a member of the University Socialist Federation, "devoted more and more time ... [to] anti-war work." He suggests that she had been involved in anti-war work with the Labour Research Department and the National Guilds League along with other anti-war socialists, p vi.

October 1918 she became Acting General Secretary, while Tillard was in prison for refusing to name the location of the NCF's secret printer. This promotion, although temporary, indicates that Beauchamp was considered to be of some status in the Fellowship, and that she was trusted to oversee the running of the NCF on a day to day basis as Tillard had done before her.¹²



FIGURE 5: JOAN BEAUCHAMP (ABOUT 1920).¹³

The picture of Beauchamp has been sourced from the history of Thompsons, the legal firm which was founded by her husband, William Thompson, who had been a CO. As the pair married in 1921, when she was 31, this may have been an engagement photograph.

As publisher, Beauchamp was pro-active in the endeavours to keep the newspaper sustainable; she wrote for *The Tribunal* and was involved in the raising of funds for the newspaper and for the legal expenses of outstanding court cases. The prosecutions *The Tribunal* faced placed it under financial pressure so, in the weeks after her court appearance in August 1918, Beauchamp wrote a personal appeal for funds to keep *The Tribunal* functioning, because, "...in the War Office our pages are read week by week."¹⁴ She urged supporters to fund the newspaper, "in our struggle against the forces of tyranny."¹⁵ These tactics worked, as in the 10 October 1918 edition there was a list of

¹² Letters from Beauchamp to NCF Secretaries 29 August, 11 and 25 September 1918. NCF National Committee papers WCML ORG/NCF/1/B/1. Accessed via British Online Archive at Friends Library 3.10.17.

¹³ Steve Allen Thompsons. *A personal history of the firm and its founder*, Pontypool 2012, p.42.

¹⁴ *The Tribunal* was monitored by the HO as potentially seditious articles were pasted into the HO file HO 45/10817/316469, which was the file dedicated to *The Tribunal*.

¹⁵ *The Tribunal* 5 September 1918.

financial contributions from individuals and groups to *The Tribunal* fund.¹⁶ This appeal and the response indicates the importance of the newspaper to the campaigning methods of the group as a public location for the Fellowship's propaganda, and a source of information and inspiration for the CO and his supporters.¹⁷

Lydia Smith's involvement in the work of the NCF was acknowledged briefly in the post war *NCF Souvenir*,¹⁸ as having "worked in the press department," and that "very few people can have any idea of the extent to which the publicity of the CO movement was due to her work and that of her colleagues."¹⁹ This assessment is inadequate, and underestimates the contribution she made to the NCF's political campaign through her connection with *The Tribunal* and other forms of political activism. Smith's depth of involvement with the Fellowship is addressed for the first time in this thesis. She became the editor of *The Tribunal* from about October 1917 and participated in the organisation of the secret press from April 1918.

Focused reading of the sources used during research for this thesis has indicated that once Smith and her female colleagues are included in the narrative, the Fellowship becomes more than an organisation looking after the interests of COs, and one that monitored government policy, challenged mainstream belief and the accepted gender roles for both men and women of the time. Smith's diverse activities illustrate the wide variety of war resistance activity in which the women of the Fellowship took part; political propaganda, intelligence gathering, political education and information for supporters, and investigations into conditions in which COs were kept at places such as work camps. One task Smith undertook was an investigation into Work of National Importance (WNI) that was undertaken by COs, at Princeton Work Camp in Cornwall. Her highly critical report, when published in *The Tribunal*, stated that most work performed there was of "little use to anyone." The conditions were designed "to discourage and exhaust the men."²⁰ Such research was an important contribution to the work that the NCF was doing to improve the conditions in which COs were kept at work camps.

A further responsibility was to compile for *The Tribunal* a weekly list of interesting articles, featured in the press. This was much valued by Marshall, as she "[relied] on the press

¹⁶ The contributors included Charlotte Despard, a donation from Hackney NFC, while the press department at the NCF had a "whip-round," and contributed 2/6 (half a crown).

¹⁷ See Chapters 6 and 7 for further analysis of the role *The Tribunal* played in the campaigns of the NCF.

¹⁸ See Chapter 1, p.37, for analysis of this primary source and its influence on the narrative of the NCF.

¹⁹ *NCF Souvenir*, London 1920, p.83.

²⁰ *The Tribunal* 17 May 1918.

department to call my attention to any important developments in the press....I am sure it [is] useful to branches.”²¹ Other tasks Smith undertook for the NCF included serving as its representative on the JAC, and as an accredited “watcher” for the Fellowship, which entailed travelling to tribunal hearings and reporting on verdicts and the health and welfare of COs who had been in court.²²

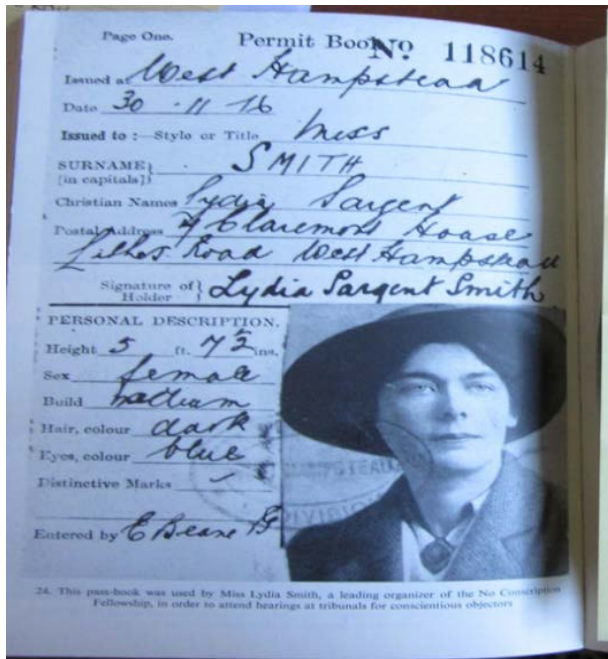


FIGURE 6: LYDIA SMITH’S PASSBOOK TO HEAR TRIBUNALS ON BEHALF OF THE NCF.²³

Violet Tillard’s commitment and worth to the NCF was recognised when she was appointed as the NCF General Secretary in January 1918, taking over from J. A. Harrop.²⁴ Her responsibilities included heading the maintenance organisation for relatives of COs, as Head of the Publications Department, ensuring that *The Tribunal* and other NCF publications were produced and distributed to readers, such as the *NCF News Sheet*, which branched and district secretaries sent out to members. As a member of the post war general purposes committee she was involved in negotiations over a joint Christmas Manifesto with the FSC and FOR, during December 1918, which was to be published in the press and printed as leaflets.²⁵ Her strength of belief in “the upholding of the ideals of this time when there is such a manifesto of hatred and revenge,” is made clear in an enclosed letter to other signatories of the manifesto.²⁶ In her obituary, fellow Quaker and war resister, A.

²¹ Notes for Mr Hunter May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

²² See Chapters 4, 6 and 7 for further examples of Smith’s wide contribution to the work of the NCF.

²³ David Mitchell *Women on the Warpath: The Story of the Women of the First World War*, London 1966.

²⁴ J. A. Harrop resigned his post as Acting General Secretary due to ill health *The Tribunal* 17 January 1918.

²⁵ Letter to Mr Harris (FSC) from Tillard, 10 December 1918, SER 1 Christmas Manifesto, Friends Library.

²⁶ Letter to Mr Harris (FSC) from Tillard, 10 December 1918, SER 1 Christmas Manifesto, Friends Library.

Barrett Brown, wrote that “on the committee for the NCF, she had a wonderful way of asserting her influence while effacing herself.”²⁷ Quaker and CO Corder Catchpole, remembered her as having “strong, quiet leadership...ability and courage.”²⁸ Such comments reflect certain gender characteristics and attributes, such as quietness, being self-effacing and having strong beliefs, all of which are associated with femininity and its quiet approach to leadership and authority.



FIGURE 7: VIOLET TILLARD²⁹

Persecution and Repression

Through 1917 and 1918, a central concern for the three women considered in this chapter, was the heightened persecution and repression of the anti-war movement by the government, which was a threat to the existence of the NCF, and to its publishing and propaganda activities. In addition, the effects of the MSA meant that by spring 1917, all the male founding members of conscription age were either in prison, recovering from or about to return to prison, or otherwise too ill to work. Marshall’s organisational abilities

²⁷ ‘Obituary for Violet Tillard’ *The Friend*, 10 March 1922, p.173. Tillard went to the Ukraine after the war to assist in Friends Famine Relief. She died there of Typhoid fever.

²⁸ ‘Obituary for Violet Tillard’ *The Friend*, 10 March 1922, p.173.

²⁹ ‘Obituary for Violet Tillard’ *The Friend*, 10 March 1922.

had been lost from the COIB, at the beginning of 1918, also because of ill health. Differences in approach within the Fellowship over the stance of absolutists and alternativists had taken its toll with key campaigners, such as John Fletcher and Chamberlain, resigning from the work of the NC.³⁰ *The Tribunal* became ever more important in bridging the gaps between activists, and the COs and their supporters, even though its existence was threatened by government measures under DORA. It was the older men and women who were left to ensure that the Fellowship continued to maintain its war resistance. Several competent individuals, most of whom appear to be women, came together and offered an environment of consistency and stability to the NCF and its members, who were becoming increasingly reliant on the support offered by the organisation.

During the last two years of the war, the government introduced regulations designed to keep pacifist organisations and their propaganda under control.³¹ *The Tribunal* was potentially threatened under DORA, by Regulation 27, under which it was illegal to spread “false reports” likely to cause disaffection, and Regulation 51, which enabled the authorities to enter premises suspected of being used to publish or distribute dissident material. From November 1917, a new regulation, 27(c), meant that all leaflets and pamphlets had to bear the name and address of the author and printer, and publications had to be submitted to the Press Bureau for approval at least 72 hours before being made public. This had “considerable effect on the tone and content of much pacifist propaganda,”³² with several prosecutions in 1918 stemming from anti-war groups deliberately flouting this regulation.³³ Some groups stamped their leaflets ‘Passed by the Press Censor’ in, “an attempt to boost sales by associating their propaganda with

³⁰ Absolutists believed that Work of National Importance (WNI) or any other form of alternative service, was contrary to their beliefs, whether they were based on political or religious motivations, as their position was to refuse to co-operate with the military and then the prison authorities in any way. As second and third custodial sentences were handed down, some COs decided that they would take more extreme measures against the war effort, such as work striking and, later, undertaking a hunger strike.

The alternativists chose to take the choices offered by the tribunals and then later the government; these options were to serve in the NCC (Non-Combatant Corps), to undertake WNI as directed by the tribunal or, later, under the Home Office Scheme to complete a prison sentence at a government work camp. Some within the Fellowship felt that to accept alternative service was to compromise the integrity of the NCF, whose aim was to have all COs granted an absolute exemption from military service by the tribunals. If the CO suffered because of his decision not to adhere to the tribunal’s insistence on him accepting alternative service, then that was his choice. The difficulties and suffering the COs faced in prison were, some believed, as nothing to that of the soldier at the Front.

³¹ See Introduction p.28 for an explanation of DORA.

³² Deian Hopkin ‘Domestic Censorship in the First World War’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1970, 5.4, p.163.

³³ For example, the FSC immediately challenged these new regulations by publishing a pamphlet called “A Challenge to Militarism” for which the writers were prosecuted and, found guilty and sent to prison. The trial was reported in *The Tribunal* 30 May 1918.

government approval.”³⁴ As many of the pamphlets were not sold, but handed out at meetings and sent to supporters, it was more likely to have been a rather sarcastic acknowledgement for their readers at the interference of the Press Bureau.

Potentially, this regulation meant that, if an organisation engaged in anti-war dissent was to continue questioning government policies in print, then there would be a risk of imprisonment. This put pressure onto the war resisters as, should they choose not to publish challenging material, then their whole reason for existence was undermined and neutralised. The FSC publicly confronted this regulation by publishing a pamphlet called *A Challenge to Militarism*. Three officers from the Committee, Edith Ellis, Harrison Barrow and Arthur Watts, were sent to prison for their role in the publication of the material. Despite this prosecution, the NCF continued to produce propaganda, through the pages of *The Tribunal*, which was never submitted to the Press Bureau for approval; it never became a banned newspaper, nor did it ever fail to be printed because of the interference from the authorities. Instead of directly banning *The Tribunal*, the authorities chose to try and close it down through raids and then intimidation of its printers and personnel.

The introduction of the Press Bureau regulations underpinned by DORA meant that working conditions for war resisters became increasingly hostile through 1917 and into 1918. There were several raids on pacifist organisations carried out under the authority of DORA regulations. *The Daily Express*, on 16 November 1917, reported on seven raids that took place on organisations, including the NCF, which had been labelled as a “pestilential and subterranean influence” by Sir Edward Carson, the Home Secretary, who promised that there would be “determined action to check the pacifist plague.”³⁵ After a heated debate in the Commons over the new regulations, “the peace cranks” lost the vote to stop the imposition of censorship.³⁶ Despite the raid on the NCF offices, *The Tribunal* reported that there was “no cessation of activity... that there was a great demand for pamphlets ...from sympathisers and... people curious to learn the nature of the Fellowship’s literature.”³⁷ It seemed that the debate in the House, reported in the press immediately afterwards, had

³⁴ Deian Hopkin ‘Domestic Censorship in the First World War’, p.163.

³⁵ Press cuttings from *Daily Express* in TNA HO45 10801 30742.

³⁶ Press cuttings from *Daily Express* in TNA HO45 10801 30742. The “peace cranks” were the MPs who supported the propaganda activities of the NCF and other anti-war groups, such Philip Snowden, Arthur Ponsonby and T Edmund Harvey.

³⁷ *The Daily Express* 16 November 1917. As well as the offices of the NCF, the following premises were raided on the same day: the printing offices of T Keeley in Hackney, offices of the Women’s Peace Crusade in Grays Inn Road, Fellowship of Reconciliation in Red Lion Square, International Free Trade League in Victoria Street, the private address of Benjamin Zusman of the International Free Trade League, and the private offices and flat of Arnold Lupton MP at Victoria Street.

had the effect of stimulating interest in the work of the Fellowship: not necessarily what the Home Secretary would have desired.

One challenge which the women at *The Tribunal* faced in maintaining their presence in the debates about the war, was the authorities' interest in printers prepared to produce their literature. When it became clear that the NCF, and other pacifist and anti-war groups, were not going to stop producing their propaganda, the authorities focused upon an effective way they could hinder the work of the pacifist groups; stop the printing of material through harassment of sympathetic printers. This tactic was especially effective through threats to destroy machinery. The National Labour Press (NLP), which had produced much of the NCF's printed material, was raided on 14 October, and through a written agreement was forced, "not to print any further issue of *The Tribunal* pending the expiration date of the Defence of the Realm regulations."³⁸ The printers gave the officers all manuscripts and proofs they had in their possession. Despite this agreement, after the 25 October edition, the NLP continued to print *The Tribunal* according to the imprint on the newspaper, until February 1918. The women were then forced to find another printer at short notice, making the survival of *The Tribunal* look somewhat extraordinary.

Despite government reluctance to prosecute the publications directly, they used the police to harass the dissident press through regular raids on pacifist and anti-war newspapers. One instance was reported in *Satire*, which took an anti-war and anti-government position on the war. As the editor reported, it was all a mystery, as the office was not broken into, yet letters and six quires³⁹ of *Satire* were taken; he surmised that the police "obviously came in through the window."⁴⁰ Machinery was damaged and printed material removed or scattered across the premises where the "imprint of ...official feet" was left.⁴¹

Effect of persecution and repression on *The Tribunal*

Printers' shops and premises damaged or raided by the police, in the latter part of 1917, meant that much of the work published by the NCF had to be anonymous. This entailed the police and authorities being misinformed about individuals who worked at the newspaper; the 25 October 1917 edition appeared without a named editor, although Beauchamp's

³⁸ The report of DI McLean of the City of London Police relates the "deal" made and there is a copy of the agreement in the file. TNA HO45/10817/316469/26.

³⁹ A quire: 25 (formerly 24) sheets of paper; one twentieth of a ream.
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/quire> accessed 02.12.2015

⁴⁰ *Satire* December 1917, MS1152/Box 1/file 9 1-4, University of London Library.

⁴¹ *Satire* December 1917, MS1152/Box 1/file 9 1-4, University of London Library.

name does appear (for the first time) as named publisher. This tactic was pursued to enable the Fellowship to maintain its position on the war, while minimising the danger to an individual's freedom. Smith's role in keeping the authorities ignorant of the contributors to *The Tribunal* can be seen in an interview she gave during a police investigation into the newspaper and its editor, B.J. Boothroyd. The police interviewed Smith on 12 October 1917 at the offices of *The Tribunal*, when she admitted she had been editress of the newspaper since the National Committee appointed her on 26 May 1917.⁴² She pretended it had been her error that the printer's name had not been corrected. She stated that Boothroyd had not been seen at the newspaper for some time, even though, in Smith's words, as recorded by the police, "he communicates regularly with her and assisted her in the conduct of the newspaper by contributing articles."⁴³ She was keen to deflect attention from Boothroyd, who was at this time evading the military authorities, and was about to be reported as an absentee.⁴⁴

The police report reveals how important and significant *The Tribunal* women's contribution was to the war resistance of the NCF. Boothroyd was very likely editor at this point, and relinquished the reins once he went to prison in November 1917. Nevertheless, after the police interest, Smith's name appears on the masthead as editor for the first time on the 1 November edition, to comply with DORA. The report, if accurate, shows that she had no qualms about admitting her position as editor, even though she may have had to take responsibility for a seditious article that could result in court appearances and possibly a prison sentence. There is no suggestion that her role as editress was questioned or that a prosecution did not happen because of Smith's gender. The tactics used by the NCF in evading police and Special Branch attention, seem to be well understood by Smith. The role she played in these complex efforts to maintain the production of *The Tribunal* have not been previously acknowledged by contemporaries or historians. She continued to be actively involved in the production of the newspaper, and was a co-defendant with Beauchamp, in Bertrand Russell's trial over 'The German Offer' article, published on 3 January 1918 in *The Tribunal*.

⁴² The term editress is one that is used in the Home Office documents. Minutes for this meeting or memorandum has not been located in the available evidence.

⁴³ Report by Inspector Edward Parker on B.J. Boothroyd and *The Tribunal* newspaper for director of Public Prosecutions on behalf of the Home Office dated 13 October 1917, TNA HO45/10817/316469.

⁴⁴ In an interview on the file, Boothroyd's father denied any knowledge of his whereabouts. TNA HO45/10817/316469.

Further evasive tactics are revealed by this police report. The authorities had some concern over the contents of an article printed in *The Tribunal* on 27 September 1917, entitled 'Pro Patria.' There are several sentences which may have caused the Home Office some unease, such as "We need unbelievers in the popular religion patriotism," and "we must reserve to ourselves the right to refuse to join in the silly, futile business of war...if it appears to us distasteful."⁴⁵ Although the article was considered for prosecution, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Sir Guy Stephenson, decided not to proceed.⁴⁶ Smith, a salaried employee, had taken full responsibility as "nominal editress for everything in the [news]paper... and that she did not want to shirk this responsibility."⁴⁷ She refused to "disclose the name of the person who [wrote the article]," nor would she reveal the name of the person who covered for her in her absence during September when she had been on holiday. This encounter with the police reveals that Lydia Smith had a far more involved and responsible role in the production of the Fellowship's printed propaganda. Her willingness to confront the police, and risk arrest, demonstrates her commitment to the cause, and to her fellow war resisters. Her role in the Fellowship's ability to maintain such defiance in the face of police harassment has been overlooked in previous narratives of the Fellowship, and her role in this ruse was uncovered through the re-assessment of documents, which had previously read by historians of the First World War, as recommended by Scott, to overcome women's invisibility in political history.⁴⁸ Collective biography has been a useful methodological tool in the incorporation of Smith's contribution to the maintenance of the NCF's war resistance, despite the source material revealing little of the rest of her life. A consideration of Smith's involvement in these anti-war activities, alongside the contributions of other women at this juncture in time, has assisted in bringing together their contributions as a group, and therefore demonstrating that together they conducted effective acts of war resistance within a reliable group undertaking.

A further misdirection given by Smith to the police, in order to protect the group and the Fellowship's need to publish its propaganda, was the address she gave; Chalk Pit Cottage,

⁴⁵ *The Tribunal* 27 September 1918. The views expressed in the article were contested by Marshall in a letter to The Editor. *The Tribunal* 8 November 1917.

⁴⁶ TNA HO45/10817/316469/26, 15 October 1917. A note signed CRJ in which Stephenson's view is reported to the Home Office. "It was impossible to prosecute the article Pro Patria." He advised that "the [news]paper and printing plant should be seized under DRR [DORA] 51." The file does not give a reason for why a prosecution did not take place.

⁴⁷ TNA HO45/10817/316469. It may have been that Boothroyd was still editor at this point and only really relinquished the reins once he went to prison in November.

⁴⁸ Joan Wallach Scott 'Women's History and the Re-Writing of History' in Christine Farnham (ed) *The Impact of Feminist Research in the Academy*, Bloomington 1993.

Norbury Park, Leatherhead in Surrey.⁴⁹ This address was used as a cover several times by the women of the NCF; Beauchamp used it as her address as printer, and had it on the imprint of the newspaper for the whole time the printing was carried out in a secret location.⁵⁰ When Beauchamp and Smith took responsibility for publishing *The Tribunal*, possibly with assistance from Tillard, in the latter part of 1917, they became some of the most prominent women in the NCF.⁵¹ They operated within a public publishing environment, and their names appear in national newspapers and court accounts as editors, publishers and printers of *The Tribunal*, along with other propaganda material. As government policy increasingly turned to attempts at stifling (if not silencing) opposition to their war policies, these women, through their responsibilities to *The Tribunal*, became increasingly in danger of prosecution and imprisonment.

The personnel changes made to the newspaper in late 1917, and into 1918, indicate that it had, by force of circumstances described, become a more collaborative exercise: after November 1917 the name of the editor no longer appeared regularly on the newspaper, although Chamberlain, in his account of the time, acknowledges that Smith became editor,⁵² and Beauchamp publisher.⁵³ From the 25 April 1918 edition, the typeface changed, and the newspaper was reduced to four pages, from eight, until the end of the war. The pressure from the police authorities, combined with paper shortages, lack of funds, and the increasingly straitened circumstances under which the newspaper was produced, must have been contributory factors in the newspaper's reduced size.⁵⁴ The normal format of the newspaper had been to have a leading article, possibly by the editor, or by some other luminary in the anti-war movement.⁵⁵ Even if nothing new was available

⁴⁹ On her permit to attend tribunal hearings, she had given her address as 7 Claremont House, Lister Road, West Hampstead.

⁵⁰ In the preface of *Poems of Revolt* R. Page Arnot tells the story of the police finally tracking down Beauchamp at Chalk Pit Cottage, Norbury Common, Dorking. They had a conversation with her about the printing press which she assured them was not on the premises. She would not tell them where the printer was, the police issued a summons and withdrew. It has not been possible to corroborate this story through police or HO files at TNA.

⁵¹ Marshall had been suffering from ill health for some time by the autumn of 1917. She returned to her parents' home in Keswick in December 1917 and remained away from the NCF until the spring of 1918 when she became involved in the COIB. Much of her time in the winter of 1918 had been spent with Clifford Allen with whom she had a close friendship.

⁵² The position of Smith is somewhat confusing as she has been acknowledged as editor in narratives of the NCF, occasionally by the masthead on the newspaper and by the HO. Yet in the minutes of the National Committee meeting of 11 December 1917 one of the points reports that "Lydia Smith's position as editor of *The Tribunal* be terminated forthwith." No reason for this has been found yet. Smith continued to work alongside Beauchamp in ensuring that *The Tribunal* was produced every week. D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

⁵³ William J. Chamberlain *Fighting for Peace, The Story of the War Resistance Movement*, London 1928, p.70.

⁵⁴ In 1916, The Board of Trade set up a Royal Commission on paper because of the difficulties in manufacturing good quality paper. TNA T1/11975/27221.

⁵⁵ Contributions to the front page of *The Tribunal* included: ME Ellis 'The Real Force,' 18 October 1917, Bertrand Russell 'What We Stand For,' 12 October 1916, RH (probably Rosa Hobhouse) 'To Women,' 22 March 1917.

to print, the priority of the workers at the newspaper was clearly to publish something, rather than not go to press.⁵⁶ For example, the 1 November 1917 edition of *The Tribunal* led with a reprint of an article from *The Times* on the front page, suggesting that there had been no time to write or commission a leader article. This may have been due to the harassment experienced from the police, as explained above, and the difficulties Boothroyd had in writing while on the run. Even so, the determination to publish *The Tribunal*, now the responsibility of Beauchamp and Smith, indicates its importance as a symbol of war resistance, and a manifestation of the NCF's continuing determination to confront the government, its war policies, and the increased repression under DORA.

Printing presses, prosecutions and imprisonment.

Intensification of government repression of the war resistance movement, alongside pressure on the NCF to keep publishing *The Tribunal*, resulted in the Fellowship's printer having his equipment dismantled by the police, and the prosecution and imprisonment of several war resisters in connection with the publication of propaganda during 1917 and 1918. Beauchamp and Smith had been responsible for the content of the newspaper for about nine months, by the time an article called 'The German Peace Offer', which had been written by Russell, was published in January 1918. It made a claim that, should American troops be in England, then the government might use them to intimidate strikers.⁵⁷ In early February 1918, the police confirmed with Russell that he had written the piece, and requested he reveal the name of the editor of *The Tribunal*, which he did not do.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, within a week, both Russell and Beauchamp were on trial for publishing an article that could have had, according to the prosecutor, "a diabolical effect on the morale of allied armies."⁵⁹ One issue not appreciated by commentators is that Beauchamp was summoned on a further charge, for publishing a letter entitled 'Guard Room Message.' This article made allegations that, on release from prison, the writer of the letter encountered several soldiers at Waterloo station, whom he had previously met whilst in military custody. The conversation he had, led him to believe that these soldiers had "great respect for COs who defy the authorities, they trust us a great deal and admire our stand...all of

⁵⁶ *The Tribunal* did on occasions not go to press, but these times were planned and always coincided with holidays: Christmas, Easter and Whitsun.

⁵⁷ The passage which caused the prosecution to be brought was: "The American garrison which by that time will be occupying England and France, whether or not they will prove efficient against the German, will no doubt be capable of intimidating strikers, an occupation that the American army is accustomed to when at home." Re printed in *The Tribunal* 14 February 1918. Originally printed in *The Tribunal* 3 January 1918.

⁵⁸ Letter to Clifford Allen from Bertrand Russell 2 February 1918, quoted in Jo Vellacott *Conscientious Objector: Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, Nottingham 2015, p.225.

⁵⁹ *The Tribunal* 14 February 1914.

them do not hide their opposition to the war.”⁶⁰ The case could not be proceeded with, as Beauchamp wished to call the writer of the letter as a defence witness, but he was in prison. As the case rested on a question of fact (were the allegations in the letter true?), the prosecution had to prove its falsehood. Beauchamp also indicated that other witnesses would be called to confirm the issues raised in the piece. The magistrate adjourned the case *sine die*,⁶¹ and it never came to court again. It would have been most embarrassing for the government if the CO had given evidence in court regarding the veracity of his conversations and the sentiments of the soldiers, and, even more so, if any of the soldiers could have been traced and brought to court to give evidence in Beauchamp’s defence.⁶² This indicates that the women had some knowledge of the law, or at least were able to research effectively for legal precedents. From June 1917, Smith had been made responsible for advising on civil legal points,⁶³ and the Fellowship may have had access to free legal advice from supporters and COs who had some legal training.

As Russell and Beauchamp had already been sentenced for the first offence, they were led away to the cells,⁶⁴ although, as they had indicated they would appeal against their sentences, bail was secured and, on leaving the court, “a hearty cheer went up.”⁶⁵ Despite her pending appeal on both charges, Beauchamp published a confrontational article, ‘The Moral Aspects of Conscription,’ which concerned the opening of brothels in France for the use of British soldiers.⁶⁶ The article linked the decision to open these brothels with the military authorities’ encouragement of vice. The following day, the offices of the NCF were raided, and lists of subscribers and copies of *The Tribunal* seized. The printing press that the NCF used, the National Labour Press, was dismantled at its London offices. Despite these setbacks, the women found another printer, Mr Samuel Howells Street, and continued to produce the newspaper under somewhat straitened circumstances.

On 22 April 1918, the police raided these new printers used by *The Tribunal*, and seized equipment belonging to Mr Street.⁶⁷ In his statement, printed in *The Tribunal*, Street

⁶⁰ *The Tribunal* 3 January 1918.

⁶¹ *Sine die* means: without any future date being designated. Beauchamp did not face this charge again.

⁶² From June 1917, Smith had been responsible for advising on civil legal points. She had taken this post as all the previous holders had been sent to prison.

⁶³ ‘Confidential for Members of National Committee Only’ ‘Outline of Work and Office Arrangements’ CEM, June 1917, DMAR 4/19, CEMP.

⁶⁴ Russell was sentenced to 6 months in the second division (conditions of imprisonment) with no option of a fine and Beauchamp £60 fine with £15 15s costs.

⁶⁵ *The Tribunal* 14 February 1914.

⁶⁶ *The Tribunal* 14 February 1914.

⁶⁷ S Howells of Streatham had been printing *The Tribunal* from 21 February 1918 edition. From 25 April 1918, it was printed and published by J. Beauchamp. Two different printing addresses were used while Beauchamp the publisher: 4 July 1918 Chalk Pit Cottage, Norbury Park, Dorking was used until 3 October 1919 when the

claimed that the police broke some of the equipment, and seized items that belonged to a Mrs Love. The issue of the newspaper that caused this raid on the printers and, on the same day, one at the publishing office of *The Tribunal* at York Place, was the edition of 11 April. The newspaper had an announcement asking for action to 'Stop The War.'

Beauchamp declined to give the name of the printer to the police, who then seized copies of the article written by Beauchamp, 'Moral Aspect of Conscription,' published in the week following her prosecution for publishing 'The German Peace Offer.' Despite the destruction of the printing press, the story of the raid was relayed in the single page 25 April 1918 edition of *The Tribunal*, which had the rather mischievous headline, 'Here We Are Again!!'



FIGURE 8: THE TRIBUNAL FRONT PAGE, 25 APRIL 1918

Clearly determined to be undaunted by police activity, the staff of *The Tribunal* promised "to go on with the message we believe it is our duty to deliver." They made their defiance clear in stating that "we have no fear of the ultimate resolution of the conflict between the spirit of violence and the ideal for which we stand."⁶⁸

The story of the survival of *The Tribunal* against the forces of repression is one relayed in several primary sources. The establishment of a secret printing press, the women's refusal to give the name of the printer or the location of the press became an important element

printer's address changed to 7 South Square, Grays Inn Road, WC. This address was used until Beauchamp stepped down as publisher in April 1919. The new printers were Headley Brothers until the last edition, 8 January 1920.

⁶⁸ *The Tribunal* 25 April 1918.

of the narrative of the Fellowship and its persistent war resistance. The role of Beauchamp has been acknowledged by the NCF *Souvenir*⁶⁹, and NCF historians, Graham and Kennedy⁷⁰, yet the achievement of the women in enabling the publication to be produced weekly needs to be placed in the wider context of war resistance. It may have been easier to let the newspaper fail, but the women understood and appreciated its value as propaganda and as a space for COs and their supporters to offer opinion and support. Furthermore, its significance lay in the connection it enabled between the disparate groups of people which entailed the Fellowship.

Despite their bravado, the loss of the printer must have been a serious blow. The NCF found that they were running out of printers willing to take the risk of having their equipment seized or worse, destroyed by the police. To keep their people safe, the NCF resorted to confusing the authorities through obfuscation of responsibilities and the location of key personnel and functionaries, including printers. In spite of the constraints brought about by government interference and harassment, the newspaper continued, and the story of how this happened reveals the determination and ingenuity of the women responsible for publishing *The Tribunal*.⁷¹ Smith, at some point, had bought a small hand type, a press and a stock of paper, which had been put into hiding should the need arise. This equipment, hidden in a sympathetic printer's house, was used after Street's equipment was dismantled.⁷² For nearly a year, this printer, and another supporter, produced the newspaper in a back street in Islington.⁷³ The secret printing press, and its success in keeping *The Tribunal* on the streets and in supporters' homes, is mentioned in several accounts of NCF war resistance and acknowledged in the *Souvenir* published at the end of the war; it became a vital part of the narrative of the comradeship of dissent.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ B Runham Brown *No-Conscription Fellowship, A Souvenir of its work during the years 1914-1919*, London 1920.

⁷⁰ John Graham *Conscription and Conscience A History 1916-1918*, London 1923, Thomas C. Kennedy *The Hound of Conscience A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship 1914-1919*, Arkansas 1981.

⁷¹ The "story" of the secret printing press told here has been collected from various sources, regrettably all of them second hand. The people who knew the complete story of the secret printing press, Beauchamp, Tillard and Smith, did not commit a detailed version to paper.

⁷² B Runham Brown *No-Conscription Fellowship, A Souvenir of its work during the years 1914-1919*, London 1920, p.85.

⁷³ R. Page Arnot reveals a little more about the secret printing press in his forward to *Poems of Revolt*. He writes that that press was "in the back room of a bye-street in Islington." p. vii. Robin Page Arnot had been a CO in Wakefield prison and in 1920 became one of the founders of the Communist Party of Great Britain of which Beauchamp was a member after the war.

⁷⁴ A related narrative is that of the clandestine newspapers that were produced in prison by COs. They were written on toilet paper and the contributors used ink saved from letter writing that they kept hidden in wax inkwells. Needles stolen from the mailbag department (prisoners made mailbags) substituted for pens. Brockway edited such a paper whilst in Walton jail called *The Walton Leader*. The only surviving copy of a clandestine newspaper or a *samizdat* produced by COs is *The Winchester Whisperer*. There is a fragile copy of this newspaper in The Friends Library in London.

On the first anniversary of the founding of the secret press, Beauchamp and Smith co-authored and published in *The Tribunal*, an article, 'Ave Atque Vale,' in which they briefly told the story of the printing press, and its compositor and machinist that worked in secret for a year.⁷⁵ Subscribers are told "of the difficulties... [of which] our readers can have no idea." The press was kept very secret; so much so, that "the whereabouts of our press is still unknown to Scotland Yard." When Smith and Beauchamp were being "followed about all day long," the printers were "obliged to remain indoors for weeks at a time in our tiny printing press."⁷⁶ Although Beauchamp claimed, to her cost, to be the printer, and Tillard was imprisoned for refusing to reveal the name of the actual printer, no one has ever divulged the actual names of these people.⁷⁷ Brockway, in his biography, references "two skilled comrades" who gave their whole time to the task of producing *The Tribunal*, "sometimes moving from place to place."⁷⁸ He knows of the press and the printers that worked it, yet he does not reveal their names.⁷⁹ As related in the article, 'Ave Atque Vale', the women were harassed by the police and found it difficult to move around freely, and were unable to visit the printing shop. The women apologised to their subscribers for "errors which have appeared in our pages... impossible to correct the proofsand for [their] patient endurance of late publishing dates."⁸⁰ Their tone is somewhat diffident and almost jocular as they suggest names, such as 'Paper Smuggling in Wartime' and 'How to Keep Your Printing Press a Secret from the Neighbours,' for their account of the campaign to keep *The Tribunal* in print. Despite these constraints and challenges, the newspaper was produced every week.

Beauchamp and Russell's appeal against their sentences over 'The German Peace Offer' case was heard at Clerkenwell on 1 May 1918. The appeal was dismissed, and both were taken to complete the sentences imposed previously at Bow Street in February,⁸¹ and Beauchamp was taken to prison because she refused to pay the fine.⁸² Russell was released

⁷⁵ 'Ave Atque Vale' ('Hail and Farewell') in *The Tribunal* 10 April 1919.

⁷⁶ 'Ave Atque Vale' ('Hail and Farewell') in *The Tribunal* 10 April 1919.

⁷⁷ Thomas C. Kennedy *Hound of Conscience A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1919*, Arkansas 1981, p.249.

⁷⁸ A Fenner Brockway *Inside the Left*, London 1942, pp70-71. Brockway's account is in direct opposition to that of Arnot Page's. The harassment of the police may have led to the press being moved several times within Islington.

⁷⁹ A suggestion for one of the loyal and skilled comrades could be James Middleton, a trained printer and compositor, who had been involved with the political work of the NCF since 1916.

⁸⁰ 'Ave Atque Vale' ('Hail and Farewell') in *The Tribunal* 10 April 1919, p.2.

⁸¹ Russell was sentenced to six months in the Second Division originally without the option of a fine. Beauchamp was fined £60 and costs.

⁸² There are several accounts of Russell's imprisonment including one in Vellacott *Conscientious Objection*, pp223-240. Beauchamp did not write about her experience in prison.

on 14 September 1918 and Beauchamp released a month after her imprisonment. The women's willingness to serve time in prison enables further understanding of the nature of war resistance which some women in the NCF were prepared to undertake in solidarity with the CO, and as a mark of their determination to be seen to publicly resist the war.

Beauchamp continued, despite her spell in prison, to be confrontational towards the authorities in her determination to "defend...the hard-won liberties of the Press." Her attitude, "no secret to the authorities," is summed up in an article entitled 'Joan Beauchamp-Printer'.

I have a valuable printing press, and in view of the destructive propensities of this freedom-loving Government (sic), I think it advisable not to say where that press is situated. I am the printer of *The Tribunal*; if I break the law as a printer, prosecute me: you have my imprint and know where I am to be found.⁸³

The police and government were equally determined to find and probably destroy the press and maintained their pressure on the women to reveal the name of their printer. On Wednesday 8 May 1918 at Bow Street Magistrates Court, Violet Tillard and Lydia Smith were charged with refusing to give the name of the printer of the March edition of the *NCF News Sheet* to the police.⁸⁴ Tillard stated to the magistrates that the *NCF News Sheet* was a private document, and which neither she, nor the printer, believed an imprint to be necessary.⁸⁵ She stated the responsibility was hers, but she declined to give the name of the printer. The magistrates found that there was no problem with the leaflet printed, but she should have had the name of the printer on the leaflet. Tillard received a fine of £100 and 10 guineas⁸⁶ costs, whereupon she gave notice of appeal. The charge against Smith was dismissed under the Probation of Offenders Act.⁸⁷

⁸³ "Joan Beauchamp-Printer," *The Tribunal* 29 August 1918, front page.

⁸⁴ Tillard was charged under Regulation 53 of DORA, the object of which was assisting His Majesty in Council "to issue regulations for securing the public safety and defence of the Realm." *The Tribunal's* view of this regulation was that Regulation 53 was "drawn up with the object of obtaining information, the refusal of which would endanger the Realm." *The Tribunal* 25 July 1918.

⁸⁵ The imprint is the name of the printer and a requirement under Regulation 53 of DORA. *The Tribunal* pointed out that it was necessary according to DORA to have the imprint of the printer on any printed circular or newspaper (which it was on *The Tribunal*) "it has long been the custom in the trade to omit it on circulars only intended for private circulation." *The Tribunal* 25 July 1918.

⁸⁶ A guinea was worth £1 1shilling.

⁸⁷ As reported in *The Tribunal* 16 May 1918. The Probation of Offenders Act 1907 allowed the release on probation of certain offenders on the grounds of character, age, antecedents, age or mental condition. The court could dismiss the charge or discharge the offender conditionally to behave for a period of three years. This leniency could have been because of Smith's religion: she was a Quaker and had been of previous good character, and the charge it turns out was quite trivial. Tillard went to prison, on a charge related to a refusal to name the printer. She had previously spent time in prison in 1908 after the "grille incident" in the Palace of Westminster, when accompanied fellow suffragettes, Muriel Matters and Helen Fox of the WFL she chained

At Tillard's appeal hearing on 16 July 1918, the prosecution brought a new point suggesting that some of the passages in the *NCF News Sheet* would be damaging to recruitment, as well as citing interviews that Tillard had undergone with two officers of the law, in which she refused to give the name of the printer. There seemed a determination to punish those involved in producing anti-war literature. Tillard again refused to give the name of the printer to the court, and was fined, but was given 14 days to pay the fine, as the presiding magistrate had been told she would not pay. Tillard did not pay the fine and was taken to Holloway Prison on 6 August 1918 to serve 61 days. She had made it clear before her arrival that she would not obey prison rules, "...which she felt to be immoral and enforced with the object of degrading prisoners."⁸⁸ *The Tribunal* paid tribute to her stance on behalf of "helping those often too crushed to lift a finger for themselves."⁸⁹ Tillard was effectively jailed for contempt of court. With so many men spending time in prison for their beliefs, it would have been inconceivable for any of the women to have paid the fines to avoid jail, a fact that the magistrate failed to appreciate.

The Tribunal's conclusion was that Scotland Yard did not like printing to be done by anyone to whom they did not have access. If a printer produced something to which the police objected, they could close down his press.⁹⁰ The NCF were uneasy about the widening of DORA, as the Tillard case showed that "this was the first time it has been openly admitted that it [DORA] can be used to force people to give away private information with no bearing ... on the Defence of the Realm."⁹¹ Despite the risks that Tillard's imprisonment had exposed, Beauchamp, Smith and the others involved in the publication of *The Tribunal*, continued to produce the newspaper.

The pressure on *The Tribunal* continued into the summer of 1918, with the women at the forefront of this confrontation with the authorities. On Monday 19 August, Beauchamp, as publisher, attended Bow Street Magistrates Court to answer four summonses under the Newspapers, Printers, and Reading Rooms Repeal Act 1869, for the publication of *The Tribunal*, issues, 114, 115, 116, and 117 (4-25 July editions). This was again to do with a failure to state the name and address of the printer (the imprint) for these editions.

herself to the grille in the Ladies Gallery. Tillard threw down leaflets onto the floor of the House of Commons shouting, "Votes for Women." Laura E. Nym Mayhall *The Militant Suffrage Movement Citizenship and Resistance in Britain, 1860-1930*, Oxford 2003, p.49.

⁸⁸ *The Tribunal*, 15 August 1918.

⁸⁹ *The Tribunal*, 15 August 1918.

⁹⁰ The NLP had had its printing equipment shut down in February 1918.

⁹¹ *The Tribunal* 25 July 1918. This edition of *The Tribunal* has J. Beauchamp as the printer with an address of Chalk Pit Cottage, Norbury Park, near Dorking.

Beauchamp admitted she was the printer, but the prosecution refused to accept her confession.⁹² The magistrates believed her actions were a deliberate attempt to conceal the name of the printer and, as acknowledged later by the NCF, she was concealing the name of individuals involved in the printing of *The Tribunal*. Beauchamp was fined £200 with 25 guineas costs. As she appealed against the sentence, *The Tribunal*, under pressure for copy, only offered a simple statement in its headline that week “But – *The Tribunal* still comes out.”⁹³

Much of the persecution of *The Tribunal* seemed to be on the basis that the authorities could not believe that Beauchamp was the printer. She claimed to be the master printer, and so could contract out work to other printers, but the magistrates did not accept this either.⁹⁴ Was this a gender issue? The male magistrates clearly believed that women just could not be printers and, therefore, Beauchamp was lying. Or, did they truly believe that she was protecting the actual printer? She was under surveillance, and certainly had other duties as publisher and co-editor of *The Tribunal*, so being able to spend many hours engaged in printing activity, the authorities knew, was just not feasible.⁹⁵

This case against Beauchamp was not concluded until after the end of the war, when she was summoned to appear before a magistrate at The London Sessions Court in January 1920. One reason it had taken so long was that there was a legal loophole, which had been exposed because of her trial. In court, she declared herself both publisher and printer and, as a master printer, she could contract out work. Neither the court, nor the police, had accepted that she was the printer of *The Tribunal*, or that she was a Master Printer and able to sub-contract out work, even though they had no evidence that she was not the printer, as she claimed, nor offer evidence of who actually was the printer. The only charge they could make against her was being publisher, for which, up until this time, she could not be prosecuted under British law, as this was not an offence. To change the law so she

⁹² Beauchamp had been the admitted printer and publisher of *The Tribunal* since edition of 25 April 1918.

⁹³ *The Tribunal* 29 August 1918.

⁹⁴ Women were employed in the printing industry in London, but it was unlikely at the beginning of the twentieth Century that there were many, if any, who could have been labelled Master Printers. This was so because in 1894 the London Society of Compositors drew up an agreement with London newspaper proprietors that all skilled operators should be members of the London Society of Compositors. Women could not be members of the Society unless they agreed to unionised rates, and as women were non-unionised, they were effectively excluded. One exception to this was Mrs Jane Pyne of William Morris’s Kelmscott Press in Hammersmith who joined the London Society in 1892. Felicity Hunt ‘Opportunities Lost and Gained: Mechanization and Women’s work in the London Bookbinding and Printing Trades’ in Angela V John (ed.) *Unequal Opportunities: Women’s Employment in England 1800-1918*, Oxford 1986, pp.85-86.

⁹⁵ Beauchamp’s and Smith’s brief account of the printing press is in their farewell article in *The Tribunal* 10 April 1919 entitled ‘Ave Atque Vale’ (Hail and Farewell), see p.148.

could be prosecuted required an amendment to an Act of Parliament, or for case law to find her guilty; for that to happen she had to be charged by the Attorney General, who duly charged her for publishing *The Tribunal*. The prosecuting counsel proved, to the satisfaction of the magistrate, that there was a case to answer and that the case was proved, even though she had always admitted she was the publisher. There was no examination of the content of the newspaper, or whether it broke DORA regulations, except for not having been approved by the censor at The Press Bureau, but then no NCF material had been. Beauchamp was sentenced to 61 days in the Second Division.⁹⁶ The Attorney General's representative intervened at this point and demanded that Beauchamp be imprisoned as a political prisoner, in the First Division, "...thus admonished, the old savage on the bench (Sir Robert Wallace KC) changed the sentence to First Division."⁹⁷ and she was released a few days later, after intervention from her solicitor, William Thompson, and George Lansbury MP. Beauchamp's leadership in the war resistance of the NCF extends the narrative of the Fellowship to include defiant and hazardous acts of resistance by women who had ensured that the anti-war activism of the organisation continued throughout and beyond the years of the conflict.

Although contemporaries and historians of war resistance have acknowledged the presence of Beauchamp, Tillard, and Smith in this confrontation between the authorities and *The Tribunal*, the narrative of their prosecutions has often been conflated with that of Russell's prosecution in February 1918. Russell walked away from the NCF in January 1918 to return to his academic studies and had little further contact with the organisation or involvement in the day-to-day running of the newspaper for the rest of the war. Not only have the contributions of the women to the stance and persistence of the NCF been lost in the narrative about Russell, but their continued resistance, defiance and ingenuity in the continued publication of *The Tribunal* throughout 1918 has been seriously underestimated, and its significance to the maintenance of war resistance undermined and minimalised. If the newspaper is studied as a source for understanding, interpreting and appreciating the role of women in the NCF, *The Tribunal* is revealed as containing a rich fund of intelligence

⁹⁶ At this time prisoners were divided into three divisions of incarceration. The First Division meant that the conditions of their confinement would be better than in the Second Division, where they would have had to work maybe eight or nine hours a day. Although they would have been able to have books and writing materials, in the Second Division, the time to use them would have been limited because of work commitments. COs tended to be kept in the Third Division which meant that privileges had to be earned through good behaviour and working.

⁹⁷ R Page Arnot *Poems of Revolt* p. ix. The account of Beauchamp's trial in 1920 is taken from Arnot.

that illustrates the contribution of these women to the work of the Fellowship, and the consistent, albeit small, presence of anti-war agitation throughout 1914-18.

Although *The Tribunal* was the fulcrum of the Fellowship's political campaigning and publicity, much of its ability to continue to inform and galvanise the membership and their supporters was dependent upon the political and administrative work undertaken at Head Quarters and within local branches. The following chapters examine the roles that women took in these arenas and the importance of their contribution to the NCF's struggle to continuously promote and support the stance of the CO. Women played crucial roles in the Fellowship's determination to bring the position of the CO to the attention of the public and those in authority. Many of these workers and supporters have not been recognised or acknowledged as essential to the continuous campaigning of the NCF. The following chapters interrogate the extent and significance of the contributions to the campaign work of the Fellowship that were made in a variety of ways by women across the country.

Chapter 6: The Disregarded Women of the NCF: “a very rarefied, elevated atmosphere.”¹

This chapter focuses on the women who worked in the NCF’s administrative departments at NCF Head Quarters (HQ) in London,² and the COIB, which was founded by Marshall in March 1916, and funded and staffed by the NCF. Malleson’s comment offers some insight into the seriousness with which the Fellowship operated and the seriousness with which the workers took their contribution to war resistance. Previous historians of the period have neglected, ignored or not known about the presence and activities of women, eighty-six to date, who were involved at all levels of organisational affairs at NCF HQ. This chapter fills in the gaps left by these historians and focuses on the groups of women who contributed significantly to the campaigns of the NCF, made a profound impact on the Fellowship’s ability to maintain its war resistance throughout the conflict, and are an important element in the narrative of the NCF.

The term “disregarded” is used in the title, because many of the women in this chapter have been left out of the histories of the NCF and the AWM, even though they played key roles in the Fellowship’s war resistance. Some women’s contributions are revealed for the first time in this chapter, such as Margaret Morgan Jones. The women who feature more prominently, such as Marshall, Tillard, Gladys Rinder and Smith, have been acknowledged elsewhere as having contributed to war resistance, but their roles have often been simplified within the narrative of opposition to the war.³ The research undertaken for this study, influenced by Scott’s theory of invisibility,⁴ has indicated that their involvement in the Fellowship, and their war resistance, in association with female colleagues throughout the NCF, was more wide-ranging than has previously been understood. Within this chapter, there is reflection on the challenges that some women at HQ faced because of their decision to become involved in war resistance, such as estrangement from their families, and issues related to independent living, such as wages, employment and accommodation. Several of the women featured in this chapter dedicated all their working time to war

¹ Constance Malleson *After Ten Years, A Personal Record*, London 1931, p.124.

² They called this collection Head Office, but as this may be confused with Home Office (HO) so, in this thesis, the term HQ (Head Quarters) is used to describe the various offices that the NCF used in London.

³ See for instance, Thomas C. Kennedy *Hound of Conscience, A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1919*, Arkansas 1981, John Graham *Conscription and Conscience, A History 1916-1818*, London 1923, Jo Vellacott *Conscientious Objection: Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists, Nottingham 2015*, Bibbings *Telling Tales About Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service in the First World War, Manchester 2009*.

⁴ Joan Wallach Scott ‘The Problem of Invisibility’ from S Jay Kleinberg(ed) *Retrieving Women’s History: Changing Perceptions of the Role of Women in Politics and Society*, Oxford 1988.

resistance activities, which was not as well recorded as Marshall's, mainly due to the sporadic nature of the source material available. By bringing these women together, in a collective biography, their contribution to war resistance can be brought into a sharper focus than would have been possible if their actions were considered on an individual basis. This chapter addresses the motivations that drove women to work for the NCF, along with a case study of a disregarded woman, Margaret Morgan Jones, which demonstrates the potential of collective biography in enabling links between women and between the women workers and the organisation to be made. Her war resistance has been identified through the examination of disparate source material across several archive collections. The central section of the chapter examines the significance of the roles played by several women within the Fellowship and the COIB at HQ in London. This is followed by a consideration of the social and economic position of a few women and considers the responsibilities and authority held by some of the women at HQ.

The women featured within this chapter, held complex reasons for supporting and working for the NCF, an organisation which embraced war resistance as its prime motivation. Their work roles became central to the existence of the Fellowship, and its ability to carry out its anti-war activities. Furthermore, their willingness to participate in potentially hazardous activities in addition to membership of the NCF, a dissident organisation, which involved the production or distribution of its propaganda and the collection of intelligence about COs, placed the women in the frontline of anti-war activity.

The motivations for the war resistance displayed by the women featured in this chapter were a mixture of religious, political and moral beliefs about war generally, or just this war, and the militarism that accompanied Britain's participation in the conflict. The impetus for Tillard and Marion Daunt was religious, as they were Quakers. Lydia Smith was also a Quaker but, additionally, had a fiancée, Royle Richmond, a CO who died in December 1916 whom she nursed.⁵ In addition, her brother, Henry, was a CO.⁶ For Beauchamp and Marshall, the drive to resist the war came from their political beliefs, as both women were

⁵ Royle Richmond was an artist from Hove near Brighton. He had a heart condition and he could have applied for exemption from conscription for health reasons, instead "he demanded Absolute Exemption as a Conscientious Objector." The tribunal decided that he did not have a conscientious objection to armed service and he was "arrested in bed" and subsequently "he was certified as a fit man and sent in a dying condition to Northampton." He was eventually sent home as unfit but "the strain had been too much for him" and he died on 29 December 1916 aged 26. '*Royle Richmond*' NCF Pamphlet. Smith married another CO artist after the war, Percy Horton.

⁶ Harry Smith IWM Sound recording, No. 762, recorded 30 March 1976, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80000758>.

socialists, and Marshall was a member of the ILP. The impetus for other women, such as Margaret Morgan Jones, Miss Jenkins, Gladys Rinder, Miss Mackenzie, and others referenced in this chapter, are not so well defined, as there is little information about their incentives for involvement in war resistance except in letters to work colleagues. None of the women featured in this chapter wrote a surviving diary, journal or any personal letters directly pertinent to this enquiry. Marshall is the exception to this gap in personal evidence, as her archive contains material that outlines her political and personal position on many aspects of the NCF's work.⁷

The sources consulted during the research for this study have been gathered from scattered and, in some cases, poorly catalogued archives and libraries. Many of the sources that have revealed the names of 'forgotten' women have been located within papers, letters and official NCF documentation that lie within the Marshall Archive. These have included her incomplete collection of COIB paper records, correspondence between her and other members of the NCF and government officials and ministers, and memos and reports that concerned HQ organisation and staffing. Some surviving records regarding the work of the COIB have been located at the Friends Library,⁸ with some additional digital sources at British History Online.⁹ Apart from correspondence and administrative documentation in the Marshall papers, little remains of the records of the Investigation and Record departments of the NCF before it was incorporated into the COIB. Nevertheless, the documentation that does exist reveals that more women were closely involved in the administration and organisation of the political and recording activities at NCF HQ than previously acknowledged or appreciated.¹⁰ In some instances, *The Tribunal* has been able to fill in gaps in source material, such as provision of information about the investigative work of the COIB.

In addition to high profile individuals, such as Marshall, Tillard, Smith, Beauchamp and Rinder, there were a number of other women, at least a further eighty-one, identified to date, who worked at HQ and in the COIB, in various capacities. Their contributions have been lifted from obscurity because of research for this thesis, and one method used, as directed by Scott,¹¹ has been through re-examination of the available surviving

⁷ See Chapter 2, pp.77-78.

⁸ The papers that concern the work of the COIB, housed at Friends Library, have only recently been loosely catalogued, and can only be regarded as a sample of the paperwork that was created by the work of the COIB.

⁹ <http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/digital/british-history-online>.

¹⁰ See Chapter 1 pp.37 and 54 for comments on the *NCF Souvenir* and its influence on subsequent narratives about the women's contribution to the Fellowship.

¹¹ See Chapter 2, pp.61-63.

correspondence and administrative forms of the NCF and COIB with the express purpose of finding women. For instance, Miss Jenkins and Alice Graham's names appear in papers that constituted the bureaucracy of the COIB and NCF, such as letters, reports and memos,¹² while Miss Morgan Jones has been located in letters that pertained to COIB accounts.¹³ Other women, such as typists hired from local agencies¹⁴ or via *The Tribunal*,¹⁵ regrettably remain anonymous, yet their willingness to work for a group that clearly opposed the war, might give some insight into their political or religious beliefs, or tolerance for the position on conscription taken by their employers.

Margaret Morgan Jones – a case of a “Disregarded Woman”

Margaret Morgan Jones, whose contribution to anti-war activities has been unrecognised by historians of the AWM, was a woman who had some influence within the COIB. Indeed, in a letter to the FSC's Edith Ellis, she calls the Bureau her “one ewe lamb,”¹⁶ suggesting that she was at the “birth” of the COIB in the spring of 1916 and nourished the Bureau as best she could. Despite her emotional attachment to Records and the COIB, and the influence she held at Adam Street, she has all but disappeared from the narratives of war resistance, or accounts of women's contributions to the anti-war movement. Up to now, the only reference found that concerns the contribution made by Miss Morgan Jones to the sustained campaigns of the NCF and the Bureau, is a brief one made by Quaker John Graham where, in his history of the Fellowship, he acknowledges that the cause “was deeply indebted” to her contribution, and that of Gladys Rinder.¹⁷ There is no mention of Miss Morgan Jones in the NCF *Souvenir* published soon after the end of the war, or in Chamberlain's history of the Fellowship, and none in either Kennedy's or Boulton's more recent narratives.¹⁸ No reference to Miss Morgan Jones has been found in any account of any aspect of women's resistance to the First World War. It has only been through the primary sources held at the Friends Library, that this woman's extensive involvement in the COIB and the NCF has been identified. She does not feature in the other sources used for this study, such as *The Tribunal*, or official government documentation. She appears only

¹² For example, a memorandum ‘Head Office York Buildings’, 1916, D MAR 4/11, D MAR 4/22 August 1917 CEMP.

¹³ COIB SERV 4/8 Reports/staff, FL.

¹⁴ Wallace's Letter and typewriting bureau of 4 Duke Street, Adelphi, were paid 10s for typing up 5 copies of Hansard, 13 March 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

¹⁵ See small advertisement for “Good Shorthand Typist” *The Tribunal* 8 March 1917, 13 January 1918.

¹⁶ Letter to Edith Ellis from Miss Morgan Jones 15 April 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL. Margaret Morgan Jones is referred to as Miss Morgan Jones within this chapter to distinguish her from a CO called Gwyndyr Morgan Jones who was a member of the National Committee. There was no relationship between them that I can discern.

¹⁷ Graham *Conscription and Conscience*, p.186.

¹⁸ Kennedy, *Hound of Conscience*, David Boulton *Objection Overruled*, 2nd edition, London 2015.

fleetingly in the Marshall papers, where she is mentioned in relation to her father, the Reverend John Morgan Jones. The letter writer mentions that a colleague of his wished to be mentioned to her as he “remembers with gratitude some words of cheer she addressed to him ...as he left for the military and gaol.”¹⁹

It is not clear whether she was an associate member of the NCF²⁰ or belonged to one of the other groups that worked within the COIB, such as FOR or FSC, and there is little indication in the few COIB business letters that survive, of her motivation for involvement with the AWM. Her father was a clergyman in Wales and was involved in supporting COs, and she sent him some information about a local man asking him to “enquire about his people’s circumstances.”²¹

Miss Morgan Jones worked alongside the COIB secretary, Gladys Rinder, in offices at Adam Street, signed letters on Rinder’s behalf in her absence,²² and covered for her when she moved from that office to “V” (visitors) department. From March 1918 onwards, she sent the weekly Statement of Expenditure to the Honorary Secretary of the COIB, Edith Ellis.²³ From the small sample of available paperwork, which covers the period February to July 1918, some understanding of Miss Morgan Jones’ impact on the contribution made by the COIB to war resistance can be assembled.²⁴ The paperwork for this time is not complete, but does offer some insight into the workings of the COIB, and the role and influence exerted by Miss Morgan Jones.²⁵ These letters typically contained requests for “cheque for ...salaries” and contained a statement of expenditure for the previous week.²⁶ The letters indicate that by the spring of 1918, the COIB had little autonomy over the workings of its own office, as it was deemed necessary to phone Miss Ellis for “advice about securing temporary [typists],”²⁷ a common challenge for the Bureau, and one which would incur extra costs. This situation reflected difficulties that the COIB experienced in late 1917 and into 1918 over how the information that they had accumulated was to be used. This difficulty was linked to the challenge that Marshall faced from the NCF’s partners on the

¹⁹ Letter to Marshall from Gwyndyr Morgan Jones, March 1917, D/MAR 4/17, CEMP.

²⁰ The location of the associate members’ information is not known. It is likely that it no longer exists.

²¹ Letter to Ellis from Miss Morgan Jones, 31 May 1916, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

²² See Letter to Mary Fox from Rinder 17 February 1918 where Miss Morgan Jones has “pp’d” the letter, and letter to Ellis from Rinder 5 April 1918.

²³ First instance, letter to Ellis from Miss Morgan Jones, 16 March 1918, SERV4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

²⁴ The file referred to is SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL. This file contains surviving letters, statements of expenditure, and invoices for the dates 21 January 1918 to 7 June 1918.

²⁵ Five of these letters that bear Miss Morgan Jones signature have survived. SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL,

²⁶ Letts to Ellis from Miss Morgan Jones 16 March 1918, 21 March 1918, 5 April 1918, 12 April 1918, 26 April 1918, 3 May 1918, 16 May 1918, 24 May 1918, 31 May 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

²⁷ Letter to Ellis from Miss Morgan Jones 16 March 1918, SERV4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

JAC, the FSC and the FOR, both of which were unhappy with her methods and principles of political activism.²⁸

Miss Morgan Jones' authority within the office included the allocation of her staff's time, as Tillard, a prominent worker at HQ, asked her permission to take Miss Stevens, a short-hand typist with the bureau, to Scotland Yard to take notes during an interview she was to have with the police.²⁹ As well as authority within the office, she had an assistant Indexer, Mr Savage, who earned £2.0s, in comparison to her salary of £2.15s.³⁰ Her profound understanding of the work of the COIB is acutely displayed in the set of recommendations compiled for joint control of the COIB committee meeting in April 1918. The issues that she considered, ranged from indexing and filing to the expansion of the "V" (Visitors) Department, because an extension to conscription "would result in the arrest of still more men unattached to any pacifist body."³¹

Her most difficult challenge was the management of the accumulation of intelligence that arrived daily at the office. Marshall, the Head of COIB, commented in September 1916, that she "can hardly cope with the mass of urgent work that comes in hour by hour."³² Indeed, there was so much information that, in Miss Morgan Jones' opinion, it was too difficult to access it for "it to be of any use."³³ She suggested it be organised into categories that would enable an analysis of the material to be undertaken, which included hunger and work striking, effects on imprisonment and views on alternative service, and Miss Morgan Jones was particularly concerned with the "post war use of information accumulated by the COIB."³⁴ Two particular uses to which she felt it could be put, were to assist in penal reform³⁵ and to set up, with the FSC, an employment bureau, which happened at the end of the war. This memorandum demonstrates that Miss Morgan Jones held a deep belief in the

²⁸ See Chapter 4 pp.119-121.

²⁹ Letter to Ellis from Miss Morgan Jones 12 April 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL. This interview concerned the "secret" printer for the NCF, the name of whom "she refused to divulge." The notes of the meeting with the police have not been found.

³⁰ Staff Employed at the COIB, Arthur Rowntree Papers nd, TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL. A Mr E Brown earned £1.15s as he was learning Mr. Savage's job as he was likely to be taken into custody in the near future.

³¹ Document titled 'COIB' 15 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

³² Letter to Rev. Richard Roberts of the FOR from CEM 1 September 1916, DMAR 4/10, CEMP.

³³ Document titled 'COIB' 15 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

³⁴ Document titled 'COIB' 15 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

³⁵ Document titled 'COIB' 15 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL. Stephen Hobhouse, A Quaker CO and Fenner Brockway of the NCF were commissioned by the first Labour Government to write a review of the prison system and to give recommendations. Whether information from the COIB was used in the compilation of this report is not clear. Brockway makes no mention of its use in either of his autobiographies. Stephen Hobhouse and A Fenner Brockway *English Prisons Today: Being the Report of the Prison System Enquiry Committee*, London 1922.

work that she had undertaken on behalf of the CO. Her contribution to the administrative effectiveness of the bureau, as it moved into a new era of supervision by the JAC, in the autumn of 1917, became integral to its ability to maintain its position as the foremost source of information about COs. She took the initiative through her suggestions for rationalisation of the organisation and developed a deep understanding of the workings of the Bureau, along with an appreciation of its challenges and shortcomings. She was sufficiently well informed and authoritative to suggest and implement workable solutions for an organisation that was under constant scrutiny from its pacifist partners.³⁶

It is in her suggestions for the use of the records, and her respectful, yet business like relationship with Ellis, which went a considerable way to enable the COIB to continue its vital work, as the Bureau was dependent upon financial contributions from the FSC and FOR via the JAC. Ellis and other members of the FSC had expressed reservations about the use of information about COs in 1917 and, therefore, there was a requirement for harmonious relationships between the women of the NCF who worked for the Bureau, such as Miss Morgan Jones and Rinder, and the FSC representatives on the JAC, Ellis and Rowntree Gillett. Disagreements about the nature and form of political action that the NCF chose to take on behalf of COs rumbled on throughout the war, and the COIB had to walk a very careful line after December 1917, when it became dependent on the Control Committee of the COIB, supervised by the JAC, in its allocation of finances.³⁷ Despite these challenges, the COIB continued its work throughout, and beyond, the end of the war, issuing its last report on the 31 March 1919.³⁸

The discovery of the presence of Miss Morgan Jones, a central and influential administrator in the COIB, is significant for the questions driving this study. Her addition to the narrative enables an understanding that women were involved in a wide variety of aspects of war resistance, all of which enabled the COIB to continue its contribution to the anti-war work of the NCF and its allies. The unearthing of the extent of her involvement, responsibility and authority, enables a broader appreciation of the impact that women made to the COIB and is illustrative of the way, as explained by Scott, that women can disappear from the narrative, when their role is not regarded by the narrator as relevant or significant.

³⁶ See Chapter 4, pp.119-121.

³⁷ See Chapter 6, p.167.

³⁸ 'Report of the COIB', British History Online, accessed via Friends Library, 3 October 2017.

Women's presence at NCF Head Quarters (HQ)

Miss Morgan Jones worked alongside both men and women at Adam Street, one of several offices that the NCF maintained during the war. The NCF's first HQ was four rooms in Merton House on Fleet Street. A memorandum was distributed to those who worked at HQ and to local and district branch offices, explaining the changes that had taken place at the end of the summer of 1916. New premises had been found as the work of the Fellowship had expanded, due to the imposition of conscription and, therefore, the number of men who wished to be considered as COs. The new offices were in York Buildings, located off The Strand, with Brockway's office in nearby Duke Street.

Within York Buildings, there were four floors dedicated to propaganda, correspondence and branch organisation, with most of the offices occupied by women. There were a few men who worked in this mainly female workspace. J.A. Harrop³⁹ was responsible for organisation and propaganda on the ground floor, which was where correspondence was opened, and the work of "circularizing national committee and branches [about] National Committee policy and advice" happened.⁴⁰ A further male co-worker was Mr Bryce Leicester, whose job was "general supervision of finance....and business organization."⁴¹ The memorandum states that Lydia Smith's brief included, "the press department, *The Tribunal* and legal advice,"⁴² whilst working alongside Basil Boothroyd, head of publicity and propaganda.⁴³ The increasingly busy and influential Tillard's role at this time included the organisation of publicity and "despatching and addressing circulars and literature to individuals." She acted as a substitute for Boothroyd, and was given the "responsibility for seeing visitors" when he was "too busy."⁴⁴ The document reveals that the involvement of these women was already extensive before their responsibilities increased in 1917, when Smith became editor of *The Tribunal*, taking over from Boothroyd on his arrest⁴⁵, and Tillard had, by the autumn of 1917, taken responsibility for information and propaganda concerning the Home Office camps, along with work for the Maintenance Committee.

³⁹ J A Harrop had moved to London from Manchester to work at HQ. He resigned from the NCF in 1917 due to ill health. His work as was taken over by Violet Tillard.

⁴⁰ Memo concerning organization at HQ, probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

⁴¹ Memo concerning organization at HQ, probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

⁴² Memo concerning organization at HQ, probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

⁴³ See Chapters 4 and 5 for further details of Smith's activities with *The Tribunal* and other NCF work with COs.

⁴⁴ Letter to Brockway from Marshall 27 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁴⁵ See Chapter 5, pp.140-144.

This memorandum is a significant piece of primary evidence, as it outlines the responsibilities of named women who worked at HQ, within one of the NCF's primary departments, propaganda and publicity, whose production was largely organised, and carried out by women. Furthermore, the document introduces three additional women, whose work within the NCF has not been previously recognised; Mrs Glidden who worked alongside Tillard in the despatching of literature to individual supporters, Mrs Jenkinson who carried out a similar task, possibly to groups, and Miss Stewart, who took orders for literature, and then "gives instructions to Mrs Jenkinson" for their despatch, indicating a hierarchy within the office.⁴⁶ By August 1917, Miss Stewart had become the Financial Secretary for the Fellowship with an assistant, Miss Neal.⁴⁷ These women are not mentioned in any narrative of war resistance, and their contributions have only been uncovered by the re-assessment and careful re-reading as laid in the methodology for this study, of previously consulted NCF correspondence from the Marshall papers.

Women at HQ were represented at all levels of the organisation. At the top, Marshall was an elected member of the National Committee in her own right and, from January 1918, Ada Salter⁴⁸ was elected as Barrett Brown's substitute on the committee. A re-organisation in September 1916 saw Tillard put in charge of stencilling and despatching, while Smith was given responsibility for publicity, working alongside Boothroyd. The following year, Marshall recommended Smith to take on responsibility "for anything that needs technical research, she would be very good."⁴⁹ Two women, Miss Kimball and Miss Kyle, worked as secretaries to prominent members of the Fellowship as secretary/typist.⁵⁰ Miss Kyle also worked for Gladys Rinder, who may have worked from time to time as Russell's personal secretary while he was working for the NCF. In the summer of 1916 Rinder was working for Marshall as an assistant, which involved the organisation of case papers for MPs who were prepared to raise CO issues in the House of Commons.⁵¹ Later, she became secretary of the COIB from September 1917, and then in 1918 was made responsible for the Visitors ("V")

⁴⁶ Memo concerning Organization at HQ probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

⁴⁷ 'Work at HQ' August 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

⁴⁸ Ada Salter's full name is used in the text so as not to confuse her with her husband, Dr Alfred Salter who was shadow chairman of the NCF for much of 1918 until Allen was fit enough to resume the Chairman ship. Ada Salter later became Head of the Maintenance Committee.

⁴⁹ Letter to Isaac Goss from Marshall 7 March 1917, D MAR 4/7, CEMP.

⁵⁰ Miss Kimball later married Aylmer Rose who was Organizing Secretary at the NCF. Tape 350, Liddle Collection, Brotherton Library, University of Leeds.

⁵¹ See for example, letter to Marshall from R.L. Lambert, 10 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP. "Miss Rinder sent me particulars of bad cases." Miss Rinder's attendance was required by Marshall at a meeting with Mr Bryce Leicester, letter to Bryce Leicester from Marshall 17 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP.

department. In January 1918, Tillard was appointed General Secretary to the Fellowship, a role she retained until after the end of the war.

Despite attempts to uncover the names of the women who worked at HQ or in the COIB, several women remain anonymous, who were probably typists who responded to advertisements in *The Tribunal*⁵², or who were sent to work for the Fellowship by an agency.⁵³ One memorandum, dated October 1916, noted that two typists worked on the first floor of the building, but their names were not recorded. The difficulty of these posts was acknowledged by those involved in recruitment for the NCF, as they were of a “temporary and precarious [nature].”⁵⁴ Another woman, who remains unnamed to date, is the housekeeper of the offices of the COIB in Adam Street. Her presence is recorded in the only weekly accounts available, which relate to the early summer of 1918, compiled by Miss Morgan Jones, in which it is recorded that she was paid weekly, 9s 5d, from the petty cash.⁵⁵

These sources offer valuable insights into the central roles that women took in the administration of the NCF operation. Clearly, the NCF faced huge administrative challenges, particularly when it expanded in a short period because of the need to respond to the crisis of conscription. HQ’s reorganisation of September 1916 was to ensure the continuation of the Fellowship’s war resistance, so Marshall, and her colleagues, needed to bring direction into the ordering of the mass of information that the NCF received every day. This was partially achieved through the division of the political work between seven departments, a recognition that the primary goals of the Fellowship, publicity and the support of the CO, needed structure and order. A letter to district and branch secretaries about the reorganisation does not give names of the people who head the newly created departments, possibly indicating that personnel shifted, as men were arrested or other departments took priority. Tillard, as previously stated, held several responsibilities across departments, as did Marshall herself. Sensitive work, such as that dictated by Chairman Allen, until his arrest, or Marshall, was carried out by women who were committed to the cause, like Miss Kimball, whereas mundane typing was carried out by agency typists.⁵⁶

⁵² *The Tribunal* 8 June 1916, 8 March 1917, 31 January 1918.

⁵³ Invoice from Wallace’s typing Bureau to 4 Duke Street, Adelphi, nd, SERV 4/8, FL.

⁵⁴ Letter to Peet from Rose 12 February 1916, Peet Correspondence 21/22, FL. The NCF used at least one typing bureau to produce copies of publicity and propaganda literature. Invoice from Wallace’s typing Bureau to 4 Duke Street, Adelphi, nd, SERV 4/8, FL.

⁵⁵ COIB Weekly accounts from 3 May 1918 to 7 June 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

⁵⁶ Memo concerning Organization at HQ probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

These changes to the structure of the organisation indicates that in order to maintain the production of publicity and propaganda there needed to be clear areas of responsibility in conjunction with the collation of information vital to the fulfilment of the Fellowship's aims. Despite the changes, the workers at the offices of the NCF and COIB were tested by these organisational challenges.⁵⁷

Women's contribution to the work of HQ

One aspect of the women's work was the relationships that were built between them, COs and their families. The available sources reveal that some of the women who worked at HQ were known to the COs and their families by name, either personally or through reputation. Tillard's name was well known to COs, as demonstrated in a letter, from April 1918, from 'Portsmouth College' (prison), in which COs outlined their expectations of the role of the NCF and how it could be improved. The CO who has written the letter makes the point that he, and others who think like him, believe that the NCF should "remain a Society whose whole work is to fight conscription... [it should be] solid and uncompromising." The men do not want concessions as "they do us individually moral harm."⁵⁸ The frustration of the men in the prison is clear, and they think that if they were able to participate in the political activism of the Fellowship, then their cause would be strengthened, as they "want to help all we can and you can rely on support ...from the boys in Portsmouth College."⁵⁹ Their appeal is directly to Tillard, as she "is in the know," and they believe that their suggestions will be carefully considered, as they would "do anything to help the cause."⁶⁰ The significance of this document is that Tillard's name was known and trusted by the writer who believes she holds influence with the NCF. She and some of the other women who worked at the NCF and the COIB appeared as important and approachable figures to the men in prison, because their names were on letters, and known through the local networks and branches that the COs and their families were encouraged to create by HQ. For example, Tillard was approached by letter by Mrs Greener, who wanted her to investigate the food situation at Durham prison.⁶¹

Women fulfilled a variety of other tasks that contributed to the policies of war resistance that defined the work of the NCF, such as: report writing, the relaying of instructions to

⁵⁷ See Chapter 4, pp.127-128.

⁵⁸ Opinions of men in Portsmouth Prison regarding the work of the NCF, 27 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

⁵⁹ Opinions of men in Portsmouth Prison regarding the work of the NCF, 27 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

⁶⁰ Opinions of men in Portsmouth Prison regarding the work of the NCF, 27 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

⁶¹ Letter to Tillard from Mrs Greener of Newcastle, 14 March 1918, SERV 4/7 COIB General, FL.

local branches, and the production of propaganda and publicity. One vital aspect of the NCF's propaganda campaign was to visit Home Office Camps, military barracks and prisons. Although both men and women were assigned to such tasks through the Visitors Department, this section will focus on the input made by women to this element of the Fellowship's work. Such visits may have been regarded as a challenging task for some of the women, as they entered male space as representatives of the NCF. The information gathered via these visits was written up and filed for future reference, and the experiences of the women varied. One such report was recalled by Miss Wedgewood, a worker at HQ, who visited COs at Lichfield barracks. Her memory of that visit was that there was no ill treatment of COs at this place.⁶² A more thorough report was made by Miss Hughes who, at the request of one of the COs' father, visited Llannion Reservoir, where COs were engaged on Home Office work. Once there she found the conditions "intolerable," particularly as the "bunks and beds were wet." The agent used "abusive language to the men" and was "making what rules he thinks fit." Miss Hughes sent details of her finding to Mr Snowden MP and to Mr Brace the government official responsible for the HO scheme, insisting that a Home Office representative be "immediately sent down to remedy the existing evils." Her investigation was rigorous, as she interviewed local people whom she reported as being "disgusted with the unjust treatment of these men."⁶³

When Smith paid a visit to Princeton work camp in May 1917, as a substitute for Marshall, who had been unable to visit, she did not have a congenial experience, and some of the challenges she faced could be accounted for by the general view of women at this time. Smith reported to Marshall about the conference amongst the COs that took place while she was there. She raised concerns about the political situation in the work camp and offered Marshall advice for her own forthcoming visit.⁶⁴ Smith recommended that "the ... man I want you see is Waterson of the BSP...an uncertain quantity and will carry about a 100 men with him."⁶⁵ This information related to the possibility of a work strike which, if it happened, would be led by C.H. Norman, one of the original National Committee members of the NCF. The NCF did not, at this stage, approve of work striking, or "slacking", in work camps, as any such action may have reflected badly on the Fellowship, and its leadership of COs. Smith makes it clear in her letter that she did not trust Norman, as she thought he

⁶² Helen Pease Brown (nee Wedgewood) Tape 559, Liddle Collection, Brotherton Library, Leeds University. She would have written a report for the Visitors Department, but this does seem to be in the available papers.

⁶³ Report on Conditions at Llannion Reservoir. Extract from letter to Marshall from Miss A Hughes, March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

⁶⁴ It is not clear in the surviving papers whether Marshall did go to Princeton.

⁶⁵ Letter to Marshall from Smith, 25 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

might “give all sorts of twists to [her] report” or because “he may have thought me too small fry to notice.”⁶⁶ A vote of census against her was “suggested in the NCF [meeting]” and “nearly carried,” but she found the men friendly by the end of the Conference.⁶⁷ This source uncovers further evidence about the substantial position that Smith held within the Fellowship. It demonstrates that she was trusted as a worthy representative of the NCF by Marshall and deemed sufficiently competent as her substitute. The question of work striking was a sensitive one and, although she had not been personally invited to the conference, whether because she was a woman, or seen as a political threat, is not clear. However, she was able to report that the COs were sufficiently confident in her and seemed happy to pass on important and relevant information. Nevertheless, the prominent radical leader at the camp, Norman, either resented or ignored her presence, an indication possibly, that he was annoyed that Marshall had not attended the conference herself on this occasion.⁶⁸ Furthermore, this incident signals the difficulty that some of the women may have encountered during their investigative work for the Fellowship. Smith herself does not state that she was ignored because of her gender, but rather because Norman, the leader of the NCF at the camp, did not recognise her as a person with authority at the Fellowship.

The women who entered, what was considered at the time traditional male space, contested gender norms of the time, which expected women to remain non-confrontational and compliant with male judgement. Such activities challenged male authority over for example, the conditions in which COs were kept and, in Smith’s instance, tested the authority of male war resisters. Furthermore, the actions of the women in entering such space relatively uncontested opened new possibilities for the furtherance of the NCF’s activities, as fewer areas could remain closed to scrutiny from war resisters.

Women and the COIB

The COIB (or Bureau) was devised, organised and run by women, and it is here that the presence of women can be seen most frequently and in the largest numbers, so an appreciation of the role and work of the COIB is central to an understanding of women’s roles in the maintenance of the NCF’s resistance to war and militarism. Additionally,

⁶⁶ Letter to Marshall from Smith 25 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

⁶⁷ Letter to Marshall from Smith 25 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

⁶⁸ Marshall had been advised to go to Princeton Work Camp by Russell in May 1917, but it is not clear from the available evidence whether she went. Letter to Marshall from BR 7 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP. Early in June 1917, she returned to Keswick for a rest and a holiday.

women such as Marshall, Rinder, and Miss Morgan Jones, were important as officers in their own right, not as substitutes for men.⁶⁹

Marshall started the COIB as a section of the NCF in March 1916 and, until June 1917, it was controlled and financed by the Fellowship, with some assistance in funding from the FSC.⁷⁰ After a series of difficulties over the use of the information collected by the COIB with their JAC partners (the FSC and FOR), its management was, in December 1917, devolved to a subcommittee⁷¹ of the JAC, away from the complete control of the NCF,⁷² which consisted of two representatives from each group. The FSC representatives were Edith Ellis and Rowntree Gillett, the NCF's were Catherine Marshall and Bertrand Russell, while the FOR was represented by a Miss Glaisyer and a Reverend Stanley James, with funding for the COIB, from February 1918, split between the three groups.⁷³ The FSC pairing of Ellis and Rowntree Gillett took over the financial control of the bureau.⁷⁴ This form of the Bureau worked until after the end of the war, when it merged with the group that found employment for COs.

The COIB worked alongside the Records and Investigations departments of the NCF and became based in Adam Street near HQ's York Building offices, and much of the work described in this section of the chapter would have been carried out by female workers. Information about COs, and their location, was collated from every source possible that concerned these men, such as watchers reports of courts martial (CM), press cuttings, relatives' letters, and information gathered by district and local branch secretaries and from COs released from prison. A regular report was compiled to show as much information as possible about the whereabouts and status of each CO with whom the Bureau had contact.⁷⁵

Once convicted COs became prisoners, initially of the military, it became difficult for the men's movements to be tracked. One reason for this was that they were not permitted to

⁶⁹ The substitute system, see Chapter 3 pp.91-92.

⁷⁰ £25 was granted to Marshall for "information work and a bi-weekly report." COIB and Visitation and Investigation department. Handwritten notes, Arnold Rowntree Papers, FL, TEMP MSS 977/1/5.

⁷¹ Called the Joint Control Committee of the COIB.

⁷² See Chapter 4, pp.119-121, for the disagreements over the use of the information used by the COIB.

⁷³ Letter to Ellis from Hunter 5 June 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL. Hunter thought that the COIB needed £1300; initially the NCF were liable for £800 but Hunter disputes that this would be necessary and his re-calculated reduced the NCF liability to £600 per year, the FSC £400 and FOR £200 with private donations coming in at £100.

⁷⁴ See Chapter 4 for the reasons why the organisation and funding of the COIB was changed. See pp.171-172 in this chapter for reasons and implications of this delegated responsibility.

⁷⁵ These reports were always weekly but could be more frequent depending on the amount of intelligence that had been gathered. British Online Archives have an incomplete set of these reports, as do the CEMP.

write a personal letter to their family informing them of the outcome of their CM or their whereabouts until after a fortnight had passed in military custody, and only then if the “soldier” behaved himself,⁷⁶ leaving families and friends anxious and afraid for their loved one. The work of keeping track of the COs was extremely challenging, as men were moved about randomly and quickly, and had no time or method by which to inform families of their whereabouts. By the time the first letter home had been allowed, posted and delivered, the man may have been moved again, and movement between prisons was relatively common during a period of sentence. As one of the COIB’s purposes was to ensure that the location of every CO was known to the Fellowship, they relied on COs who had been released to let them know of new arrivals and of any other news about fellow COs health and cases of brutality or punishment. A letter from CO Frank Bertoli, at Winchester prison, to Miss Stevens, informs her that three other COs are in the punishment cells, “for refusing to work outside [their] cells after 5 O’clock.” Bertoli wants Miss Stevens to “tell their people...as they [may] not hear from them for 14 days.”⁷⁷

Another method used by the NCF to minimise the chances of a man “disappearing” into the system, was the institution of watchers at tribunal hearings. These individuals reported to HQ any information about the intended destination of COs which they could glean from the hearing. Some women involved in anti-war activity acted as “watchers” for the NCF; Smith was an official watcher for the NCF, as shown by her permit.⁷⁸ Marshall attended several hearings for COs, including Clifford Allen’s at Newhaven and Salisbury Plain,⁷⁹ and visited Runham Brown at Wandsworth Prison.⁸⁰ The details of any men who ever applied for exemption on the grounds of conscience would be available for the administrators to follow a man’s “journey” through the military system, a process that might have involved the individual in several moves in location. Initially, the military authorities were under no obligation to inform the family of his whereabouts or allow the man to inform them himself, but the NCF, at Marshall’s initiative, lobbied the War Office to persuade the HO to allow men to write to their families.⁸¹

⁷⁶ TNA, WO32/5491.

⁷⁷ The reason these men, Nimmo, Legg and Ruderman were being punished was because (sic) after 5 o’clock, the evening is “devoted to reading.” Extract from a letter from Frank Bertoli to Miss Stevens, sent to the address for the NCF local group in Clapton in East London. Forwarded by Miss Stevens to COIB 18 March 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

⁷⁸ See Chapter 5, p.136.

⁷⁹ D/MAR 4/13, CEMP.

⁸⁰ Notes of Prison letters and Visits, August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

⁸¹ See Chapter 4, pp.117-119.

The knowledge of the whereabouts of every man, and the circumstances under which he was kept, enabled the NCF to make it difficult for the Army and the prison authorities to dismiss any health or discipline problems that COs encountered. It gave them some potency with the HO and the WO, which alongside the relationships and reputations that the women had built with COs and their families, assisted in this intelligence gathering, as released men would make the effort to contact the women directly, by telephone or letter, to give information about COs they had left behind in prison. Marshall, as Acting Secretary to the Fellowship, wrote to released prisoners asking them for information about conditions in the prison from which they had been released and news of any other COs held there.⁸² Any replies would be sent to administrators in the COIB who would pass on such knowledge as case files to sympathetic MPs, who would in turn raise questions in Parliament about such matters.⁸³

The large amount of intelligence amassed by the COIB was recorded on cards and updated as necessary.⁸⁴ Each entry was duplicated in case of accident to the first card index,⁸⁵ according to Constance Malleson who worked in Records; a pragmatic reason was that duplication was necessary in case the first set was seized by the authorities in a raid. Lack of information from branch secretaries about local men was a frustration and drew complaints from HQ.⁸⁶ This was particularly so in cases of brutality, as stated in an announcement in *The Tribunal* in July 1917, “that the Record Office must receive all available information.” This was a reference to the case of CO Brightmore, who had been put into a pit by the Army, and the Office believed that knowing about other cases “would have been useful” when dealing with the Brightmore case.⁸⁷

The Tribunal was used to appeal for “information concerning the following men: Tannahill of Glasgow, last heard of 28/5/17 taken to Wormwood Scrubs.”⁸⁸ This CO from Scotland and the other three men in the advertisement had all been “missing” in the system for some time, demonstrating a need for a method to track, and maintain watch, on the

⁸² Letter to released prisoners from Marshall, August 1917, D MAR 3/23, CEMP.

⁸³ <https://parlipapers-proquest/> accessed 17.11.2017. Between 1916 and 1919 there were 409 debates in the Houses of Parliaments and 220 written answers to MPs about COs.

⁸⁴ The cards no longer seem to exist.

⁸⁵ Malleson *After Ten Years, A Personal Record, London 1931*, p.101.

⁸⁶ For example, Note on ‘Branch Activities’ 29 June 1916, D/MAR 4/7.

⁸⁷ *The Tribunal* 26 July 1917.

⁸⁸ There were four men named in this request for information, Sidney Taverner, 13/11/16, taken back to unit at Teignmouth: Taylor of Kirkcaldy, 14/1/17, taken to Wormwood Scrubs: Thompson, 19/1/17, Wormwood Scrubs. *The Tribunal* 10 October 1918. The same small announcement was in the 24 October 1918 edition of *The Tribunal*.

whereabouts of such men. It also reveals that the authorities were unable, and probably unwilling, to keep family and friends of these men informed of their location, allowing justification for the existence of such an intelligence-gathering organisation. The COIB's women workers gathered and managed accurate and timely information, kept in touch with the CO's family, and made sure that case notes for individual COs, who may be the subject of questions in Parliament, were up to date and accurate, thus performing vital work for the NCF.

The case of Spencer Lambert has added lustre to the mythology that the COIB knew where every man was incarcerated. Lambert was technically "lost" as the HO was "unable to trace him" and as the Worcester Appeal Tribunal wished to see him "could Miss Smith get the name of the man missing."⁸⁹ Three days later, she had traced him to Winson Green Prison in Birmingham⁹⁰ and informed the HO. The Worcester Appeal Tribunal were "very much obliged" and in a thinly disguised criticism of the government department, they stated that they believed it was "desirable on every account to get the information from the Home Office ... if they do not produce the man ...the matter [should] be brought before the House of Commons."⁹¹ This was perfect propaganda and publicity for the Fellowship, and the Appeal tribunals' statement was forwarded to the press and *Pall Mall* magazine.⁹² For once, the tribunals and the NCF were on the same side in their belief that the HO really should know where all COs were incarcerated.

Re-organisation: The COIB and the JAC

By 1917, a "large mass of information" had been collected, creating a serious challenge for the NCF in its management and collation⁹³ and, by April 1918, intelligence was being kept in "an extremely inaccessible form."⁹⁴ The conclusion of the report into the administration of the COIB, was that the utility of this mass of information could be compromised, particularly as it was "difficult to assist enquiries,"⁹⁵ one of the primary reasons for the

⁸⁹ 'Points of Interest' 15 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁹⁰ 'Points of Importance' (from Duke Street where Brockway had his office) 18 September 1916, DMAR/4/10, CEMP.

⁹¹ 'Points of Importance' 18 September 1916, MAR/4/10, CEMP.

⁹² 'Points of Importance' 18 September 1916, DMAR/4/10, CEMP. *The Pall Mall Magazine* began in 1893, as a literary spinoff of the Pall Mall Gazette. In 1914 it merged with Nash's Magazine to become Nash's and Pall Mall Magazine. <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=pallmallmag>. Accessed 4.12.2017.

⁹³ 'COIB' 15 April 1918, author unknown, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

⁹⁴ 'COIB' 15 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/7, FL.

⁹⁵ Although Marshall left the NCF at the end of 1917 due to exhaustion, the financial records that exist of the COIB show that by February 1918 her name was still associated with office management as her name was on the utility bills such as gas and electric and the rent. Receipt for rent for 11 Adam Street 10 April 1918, Receipt for window cleaning, 30 March 1918, receipt for electricity bill paid 27 February 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

existence of the Bureau. A JAC Commission, appointed in September 1917 to investigate the workings and organisation of the COIB, attempted to address these problems. One suggested improvement was “to get the records up to date” using two census forms, one “for the present position of the all men who have reached the arrest stage” and then another for “all men working under a Tribunal (sic) decision.”⁹⁶ There was to be “a weekly report of members whose condition has changed” and this information distributed to the groups working with COs.⁹⁷ Both of these suggestions were implemented, although Marshall expressed reservations about the proposed changes, unless they were “practicable (sic) or effective.”⁹⁸ Yet by April 1918, amongst other problems, there was “delay in indexing and filing,”⁹⁹ showing that managing the intelligence gathered seemed insurmountable.

A further difficulty that directly affected the women at the NCF and COIB concerned the use that the politically active NCF made of the information collected and shared with their partners on the JAC. Marshall led the use of such evidence as material to campaign for better conditions and the release of COs. She was criticised by the FSC for the use of this intelligence to publicise the treatment of COs and for lobbying purposes in Parliament.¹⁰⁰ This disagreement was compounded by the different approach to conscientious objection of the FSC and the NCF. Ellis, of the FSC, expressed this in a letter to Grubb, a fellow Quaker, and the NCF Treasurer, “We [FSC] [believe] that an organisation [NCF] founded to protest against conscription weakens its own position...if it takes on the role of intermediary between the men who have accepted these schemes and the government when they prove unsatisfactory.”¹⁰¹ This reflected the view of some fellow Quakers, such as John Fletcher, a member of the NCF National Committee and whose position was that those who chose to go to prison for their beliefs should not complain about conditions they had to endure; organisations should not intervene to make these conditions more humane.¹⁰² Russell, as substitute chairman to the NCF in 1917, pointed out that this approach “was not right for our membership...as ... many of our people have come with

⁹⁶ Further Report of the JAC by the Commission Appointed to Investigate the Work of Records.” 5 September 1917, FL.

⁹⁷ Further Report of the JAC by the Commission Appointed to Investigate the Work of Records.” 5 September 1917, FL. Those closely interested were listed as: “NCF, FOR, FSC, NCCL, branch secretaries’ correspondents and committee, the Chaplains and others.”

⁹⁸ Further Report of the JAC by the Commission Appointed to Investigate the Work of Records.” 5 September 1917, FL.

⁹⁹ ‘COIB’, 15 April 1918, General SERV 4/7, FL.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter 4, pp.121-123.

¹⁰¹ Letter to Grubb from Ellis 18 June 1917, FSC Correspondence 1917, FL.

¹⁰² This is linked to the absolutist /alternativist debate in the NCF, see p.138, fn 32.

difficulty to pacifism... [and] need friendly support.” He was concerned that by ignoring the suffering of the CO “that we are...developing the cruelty of fanaticism...the very spirit that supports the war.”¹⁰³ This exchange, in Kennedy’s opinion, shows that the Friends had a “blind spot “concerning the diversity of the NCF, and particularly that the Fellowship’s “support in time of need [should]...supersede unity of belief.”¹⁰⁴ Such difference in approach created tension within the NCF, and between them and their allies, culminating in Marshall resigning her political work and the FSC representatives on the JAC taking control of the COIB’s funding , with Ellis assuming scrutiny of the spending carried out at Adam Street.¹⁰⁵

Although women from a variety of social and economic backgrounds worked for the NCF, all the women featured in this study had received a good standard of education, as the written material that survives demonstrates. This indicates that the women may have benefitted from the provisions of the 1870 Education Act, and for some there may have been an opportunity to attend university. What is known about some of the women’s education, gives some indication of the variety of educational experience; Marshall was privately educated, but did not go to university. Beauchamp, who came from a farming background went to Royal Holloway at the University of London, and Marion Daunt and Lydia Smith had been school teachers before they worked for the NCF.¹⁰⁶

The sources available indicate there were women from a variety of social backgrounds who decided, because of their religious or political beliefs, to come together in their commitment to the political cause of the CO. This decision may have brought some level of hardship, but also offered opportunities to be independent and gain useful work experience for future careers. This section offers a brief insight into the financial position of some of the women who worked for the Fellowship and COIB, such as Miss Morgan Jones who, as she was not from a wealthy background like Marshall, received a wage, as did a number of other women who worked for the organisations.¹⁰⁷ This issue has not been considered at any level or depth before now, and opens questions for future research.

¹⁰³ Letter to Ellis from Russell 11 September 1917, FSC Files, FL. Quoted in Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.213.

¹⁰⁴ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.213.

¹⁰⁵ Letter to Ellis from Rowntree Gillett 1 February 1918, SERV 4/8 Reports to Staff, FL.

¹⁰⁶ For Marshall see From Jo Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour with Women’s Suffrage: The Story of Catherine Marshall*, London 1993, Chapter 1. For Beauchamp see Steve Allen *Thompsons A personal history of the firm and its founder*, Pontypool 2012, Chapter 5. For Daunt see Letter from Divisional Secretary to Allen, 27 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP.

¹⁰⁷ See below p.174.

From the financial evidence available, it can be surmised that most of the women who worked for the NCF and COIB earned a salary and, at the same time, it reveals a set of complex issues that arose from women who wished to work for war resistance.¹⁰⁸ A memorandum about the staff employed for COIB indicates that the salaries earned were associated with responsibility and work, not gender,¹⁰⁹ as men who were available because of their age, infirmity or exemption status, carried out administrative tasks similar to the women in the office. For instance, Miss Morgan Jones as Head Indexer earned £2 15s a week. Her assistant Mr Savage was paid £2 a week and because “he will become liable to arrest in the near future,”¹¹⁰ his substitute Mr Brown, earned £1 15s while learning Savage’s work,¹¹¹ suggesting that the salary was indicated by the complexity of work involved and the responsibility the job entailed. Mr Bryce Leicester was paid £2 a week, but this was half a salary, and he was responsible for all financial matters at the Bureau, while Rinder, as a fulltime supervisor of the clerical workers and in charge of research at COIB, was paid £3 10s a week. Mrs Zusman earned £2 10 for being responsible for “V” department, while Miss Morris only earned £1 5s for errands and filing.¹¹²

This memorandum allows a glimpse into the workload and responsibilities of one employee at COIB, Miss Jenkins, who earned £2.10s a week, and who had been involved with Indexing while Miss Morgan Jones had been away. She impressed those responsible for engagement of staff, as the memo suggested that she be retained permanently, given responsibility for the temporary staff engaged to work under her, and “would be responsible for the results.”¹¹³ The duties she would supervise were wide ranging and included “taking charge of geographical index and ...Index of Absolutists...special research under supervision of the Secretary.” In addition, she was to be a “special emergencies” visitor attached to “V” department.¹¹⁴ This evidence goes some way to support the argument in this thesis that although the contribution made to war resistance by women at NCF HQ has been marginalised by historians, there were clearly a significant number of women directly involved in critical aspects of the NCF’s campaigns on behalf of the CO, yet their roles have been ignored. Through exposure of the crucial parts that women played in

¹⁰⁸ One exception to this was Catherine Marshall who relied upon an allowance and an income from her parents.

¹⁰⁹ ‘Staff Employed at the COIB’, Arthur Rowntree Papers nd, TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL.

¹¹⁰ ‘Staff Employed at the COIB’, Arthur Rowntree Papers nd, TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL.

¹¹¹ ‘Staff Employed at the COIB’, Arthur Rowntree Papers nd, TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL. Mrs Zusman was head of “V” department at this time.

¹¹² ‘Staff Employed at the COIB’, Arthur Rowntree Papers, nd TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL.

¹¹³ ‘Staff Employed at COIB’, Rowntree Gillett papers, nd TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL.

¹¹⁴ ‘Staff Employed at COIB’, Rowntree Gillett papers, nd TEMP MSS 977/5/1, COIB Correspondence, FL.

the sustained campaign against conscription, a broader analysis can be made of the significance of the Fellowship in war resistance.

Salaries and wages for those who were employed by the NCF and its allies allow some consideration of the issue of the class of woman involved in the NCF. This could be signified by whether she was paid for her work at the Fellowship or the COIB. If she did not require payment then there may be an assumption that she was from a privileged middle-class background, such as Marshall, whose roles in the organisation were honorary. Marshall could afford to do this as she had a generous allowance from her father and she had always been supported in her suffrage and pacifist work by her family.¹¹⁵ Other streams of income allowed some women to be volunteers, such as Constance Malleeson, who was an actress in the theatre and had a husband who was a writer (Miles Malleeson).¹¹⁶ Some of the men who were associated with the Fellowship worked in honorary capacities, such as Allen and Brockway, who both earned money through their journalism. Nevertheless, other women and men who worked within HQ were paid a salary, although it would have been unlikely that the men and women who managed the district and local branches were paid in any form, and no evidence has been found to contradict this assumption, except for the picketing of prisons.¹¹⁷ Many of the women who worked at the NCF or COIB needed a wage to live, because they came from a background without private income or allowances, or they had lost their jobs due to the war or their political stance, or even because their families did not support the work they chose to do and withdrew financial support. Marion Daunt “lost her school owing to [legal] action against her [distributing *The Tribunal*],” and was at the end of her resources, when a friend approached Allen and asked for work for her at the NCF, as the writer felt “she would make a good interviewer.”¹¹⁸ Miss Daunt became active at HQ and later substituted as District Secretary for the Home Counties on the National Committee for Joan Fry.¹¹⁹

For some women, living independently while working for a war resisting group made life challenging. Dorothy Mackenzie tried to “be. ... independent of outside help” and found working for the COIB on a salary of £2 a week, the same as that earned by women who

¹¹⁵ See Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour*.

¹¹⁶ Colette O’Neil stage name. Her sister Lady Clare Annesley also volunteered for at the NCF.

¹¹⁷ Mrs Best was paid for her picketing duties at Wandsworth Prison. Letter to Marshall from Harrop 12 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP. The purpose of this activity was to draw attention to the COs held there, offer support to families and friends, and to greet the men when they were released. No indication given as to how much she was paid.

¹¹⁸ Letter to Allen from Divisional Secretary, 27 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP.

¹¹⁹ *The Tribunal*, 18 Jan 1918.

were employed by the WSPU before the war,¹²⁰ very difficult, despite that she “had tried hard” to do so since Christmas but had “failed.” Her difficulties were compounded by the fact that her “people ... would be very distressed if they knew [that] I was doing [socialist work].”¹²¹ To give some context to Miss Mackenzie’s concerns, the wages of women clerical workers in the private sector before the war were 10-15s a week, with “only the best educated commanding £100 a year.”¹²² Other professional women such as women clerks in the civil service were paid £45 per annum, with staff nurses earning £60. In 1914, a certified teaching assistant earned £96 a year, with public secondary schools at £130 per annum.¹²³ The women’s wages at the NCF were in line with wages in clerical work elsewhere. The men who undertook clerical work at the Fellowship, were paid the same rate, and it would have been difficult to increase payments, as the NCF/COIB, were on tight budgets. Most of the women (but not all) were single and wished to be independent, and they may have struggled with paying rent,¹²⁴ food and travel expenses. The women who chose to work for a pacifist organisation were doing so because of belief and conviction in the cause and because they would not have taken a job that released a man for the trenches, they were unable to follow the road that many poorly paid domestic workers took by working in munitions factories,¹²⁵ or in any occupation that supported the war effort.

That the women office workers earned a decent salary in line with the men who were doing similar work, allows an insight into the development of working practices that affected women at this point in the century. These women were well educated, as the letters they wrote clearly indicate and, although some came from wealthy families, others benefited from the increased availability of state education.¹²⁶ They systemised vast quantities of data and were involved in writing and collating complex case studies for MPs and other influential people. Their roles in publishing and distributing printed propaganda

¹²⁰ Krista Cowman *Women of the Right Spirit: Paid Organisers of the Women’s Social and Political Union 1904-1918* Manchester 2007, p.20.

¹²¹ Letter to Ellis from Dorothy Mackenzie 30 April 1918, COIB General SERV 4/, FL.

¹²² Alison Oram *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-1939*, Manchester 1996, pp.24-25.

¹²³ Alison Oram *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, pp.24-25.

¹²⁴ An advertisement in *The Tribunal* gives an indication of the cost of accommodation, as a small advertisement offered a room for 11s a week, partial board on the edge of Epping Forest. Such a cost would have left Miss Mackenzie and those other earning £2 a week £1 9s to pay for everything else. *The Tribunal* 29 March 1917. See Chapter 7 for other ways in which women earned money at this time.

¹²⁵ The average wage of a housemaid in 1909 was £20 13s 4d *per annum*. <https://www.chatsworth.org/news-media/news-blogs-press-releases/from-servants-to-staff-how-much/>. Accessed 2 February 2018. Women munitions workers were paid 18-20s a week, which was the subject of an equal pay for equal work argument that ran throughout the war as men earned 26s a week. <http://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/blog/equal-pay-equal-work-female-munitions-workers/>. Accessed 2 February 2018.

¹²⁶ If elementary school educated since 1870 Act. Some might have had grammar school education post 1902 Education Act.

were central to the campaigns of the Fellowship, and they developed professional and trusted relationships with the CO and his supporters. These skills were vital for the NCF/COIB and contributed immensely to the Fellowship's ability to maintain its opposition to the war.

This thesis has identified eighty-six women who worked at HQ for the NCF/COIB, including seventy-nine who have never been previously identified as having worked for the Fellowship or as war resisters.¹²⁷ This indicates that there was a high level of female activity within the Fellowship and the COIB, and most, but not all, of the administrative work was carried out by women. Marshall was the dominant woman at HQ, and within the COIB, and alongside her there were several women who gained roles of responsibility and authority within the NCF. Three of these women, Smith, Tillard and Rinder, have previously been acknowledged as having had roles within the organisation, and the use of collective biography has brought to light the extent and complexity of their roles, which had not been fully recognised until now.

This chapter has identified further women who held key roles and responsibilities within the NCF and its associate organisation the COIB. Miss Morgan Jones, head indexer of the COIB, with at least one man, Mr Savage, working for her, is illustrative of the importance of this study in the uncovering of the responsibilities and impact of women who have been overlooked by historians of war resistance. Furthermore, some women, such as Marshall and Miss Morgan Jones, held authority over men's work, an unusual work situation at this time, indicating that in this time of crisis that women were enabled by the Fellowship to take such roles, demonstrating their capabilities as organisers and administrators. A further example, Miss Jenkins, held several roles of importance and responsibility within the COIB, yet her presence in the history of the Bureau has been completely overlooked. The available sources show that women dominated the workspace of the NCF/COIB, entered public male space to carry out their duties and responsibilities, and some became central figures in the Fellowship's campaigns in war resistance, while several dozen women were involved in high levels of activity in the compilation and collation of records for the COIB, and political activism of the NCF. Therefore, the active roles that these women adopted in their war resistance need to be understood so that the perseverance of the Fellowship in its anti-war activity can be recognised and located within the AWM as a whole. The use of

¹²⁷ The women who had already been identified are: Marshall, Rinder, Tillard, Smith, Beauchamp, and Miss Morgan Jones and Ada Salter in Graham's work.

collective biography as the dominant methodology has encouraged such fragments of information, collected from the various sources referenced, to be collated and then related, to the extent of the involvement in the organisation of war resistance activity. The evidence points to war resistance activity having been undertaken by more women than had previously been acknowledged, encouraging a view that women possessed power and authority within the Fellowship due to their numbers as much as their abilities.

The belief, held by groups within the AWM and government authorities, that the NCF was aware of the location of every one of their members, became part of the mythology that came to surround the NCF. Their contemporary, and first historian of the war resistance group, Graham, commented that “to the bewilderment of the authorities, the friends of the COs knew more about the prisoners than their gaolers.”¹²⁸ This claim has been refuted by Kennedy, as he states that the “NCF record office either lost track of or was never informed about a considerable [number] of COs.”¹²⁹ The NCF was aware of about 5000 men who claimed to be COs,¹³⁰ but subsequent research by historians has revealed the actual number to be nearer 17,500,¹³¹ supporting Kennedy’s scepticism. Nevertheless, despite these criticisms and the rationalisation of its operation, the Bureau became an effective organisation, achieved through perseverance and serious attempts to keep a track of every man they could, alongside knowledge recorded about every CO of whom they became aware. The officers of the COIB gained a full appreciation of the prison system and HO scheme, which gave the NCF and the Bureau some authority to question those who kept COs incarcerated.

As at HQ, women became increasingly active in the community branches of the Fellowship, as the men went to prison. The Fellowship remained resolute throughout the conflict in emphasizing that local groups were central to its ability to maintain its support for the CO. This local contribution to the work of the NCF has been overlooked, which has meant that women’s involvement and contribution to this arena of anti-war political activism has been unobserved or undervalued. The following chapter begins to examine the impact that women made in their local communities in the varieties of active war resistance advocated

¹²⁸ Graham *Conscription and Conscience*, p.185. Boulton in his account of the socialist COs repeats this assertion, Boulton *Objection Overruled*, p.178.

¹²⁹ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, p.152, fn 63.

¹³⁰ Figure published in *The Tribunal* 20 June 1918.

¹³¹ See PCOD.

by the NCF, and the contributions that this brought to the abilities of the Fellowship to maintain its war resistance.

Chapter 7: The NCF: local political activism.

When conscription came, as I was not conscripted, I felt duty bound to stand by, comfort and back up the only man who was going to be the means of abolishing war- the Conscientious Objector.¹

The focus of this chapter is on the involvement of women at a district and local level, and the impact this had on the Fellowship's ability to maintain its war resistance. An omission in local histories of war resistance in the First World War, has been the significant role that women played in local and district anti-war activities. Clara Cole's comment above enables some insight into the motivation of the women who worked and campaigned for the CO, at NCF HQ and in the local and district branches. Furthermore, it illustrates the gendered nature of conscription, a potential further motive for women to join the NCF, as a way of proclaiming their own war resistance. Although there have been some studies of localised war resistance,² research into the importance of the relationship between the locality and the centre of the NCF's campaigns in London, and therefore the impact and extent of specifically NCF war resistance activity across the country, remains to be carried out.³ Marshall's principles of political activism⁴ were intended to guide local campaigners, as well as those at HQ, who worked for the cause. Much of the political activity carried out by women in their own areas was guided by these principles, which involved the distribution of political propaganda, and involvement in anti-war agitation, while ensuring that records were kept, and groups organised.

This chapter considers the nature of women's war resistance at the local or district branch level. There is a consideration of the opportunities women were afforded, due to their involvement with the Fellowship, for political activism, examined through examples of women who enjoyed positions of responsibility and influence within the London Divisional Group (LDG), and other local groups, both overt and covert.

¹ Clara Cole, *They did Not Fight. A Record of British Objectors to War 1914-18. How they were man handled, imprisoned, starved and why they objected*, Manchester 1936.

² See Christine Clayton, 'Pacifism and Socialism in Hyde during The Great War', *North West Labour History Journal*, 35, 2010, Malcolm Elliot 'Opposition to the World War: The Fate of Conscientious Objectors in Leicester' *Leicestershire Archaeological and History Society*, 77, 2003, Cyril Pearce *Comrades in Conscience. The Story of an English Community's Opposition to the Great War*, London 2002, Alison Ronan, *A Small Vital Flame, Anti-War Women in NW England*, Saarbrücken 2002.

³ Cyril Pearce and Helen Durham, 'Patterns of Dissent in Britain during the First World War', *War and Society*, 34:2, pp.140-59. It should be noted that not all COs were members of the NCF.

⁴ See Chapter 4, pp.11-113.

As leaders and members of local groups, women were involved in a variety of activities associated with the Fellowship, which included secretarial work, intelligence gathering about COs for Head Office, distribution of propaganda, publicity, moral and financial support for the CO and his family, and fundraising for their local group, all of which were organised at local and district level.⁵ Some women became pro-active in organising outdoor events, such as singing outside prisons, and picketing the gates of prisons to welcome COs on their release.⁶ These publicly visible occasions advertised the cause of the CO and, which overtly announced the participants' interest and belief in the CO and war resistance. This newly recognised feature of women's involvement in war resistance allows a broader view of anti-war activity that occurred during the First World War. This aspect of women's resistance to war took the campaign against conscription and militarism into public spaces, such as the street or parks, where some women were prepared to express their sponsorship and commitment to the CO. This feature of overt war resistance was initiated and organised by women, and within spaces open to men as well as women.⁷ The WSF, led by Sylvia Pankhurst, organised weekly 'Peace Pickets' throughout 1917 and 1918. These meetings took place in public parks, such as Finsbury Park and at Highbury Corner in Islington, bringing women together in their opposition to the war; in September 1917, three women spoke at the meeting in Islington; Mrs Nellie Best, Miss Lynch and Miss O'Callaghan. Mrs Best was an activist for the NCF,⁸ and the other women associated with the WSF.⁹

The lives and efforts of the politically active women directly involved with COs has been largely ignored or minimalised by commentators on anti-war activity, and there has been little examination of the consequences of the men's willingness to be labelled as a CO, on the women who surrounded him. The gendered narrative of the CO himself has dominated research, not in any small measure because there is a lack of immediate and obvious evidence to enlighten historians about the challenges faced by female associates of a CO. The CO's story was considered, at the time, to be important and urgent, and modern historians have been enthusiastic for his tale to be told.¹⁰ No woman has written of her direct

⁵ The NCF used the terms Head Quarters and Head Office to describe their activities in London, initially at Merton House and then later in York Buildings. In this chapter the terms Head Office and the centre, will be used to in association with work and campaigning carried out in London.

⁶ Mr Parker was responsible for organising picketing in London in 1917. Agenda National Committee Meeting 7 and 8 December 1917, D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

⁷ See below, pp.193-197.

⁸ She had also been involved with the Anti-Conscription League at the beginning of the war.

⁹ *The Daily Herald* 1 September 1917.

¹⁰ See Chapter 1, pp.33-42.

experience, yet the small advertisements in *The Tribunal*, which were largely concerned with domestic issues such as accommodation and work, afford a rich vein of evidence of the domestic, social and economic difficulties that female relatives of COs encountered during the war. These advertisements are discussed in this chapter in the context of these difficulties, and in relation to the contribution made by some women who wished to remain anonymous or discreet in their covert support for the CO and his stance.

In reflecting on the different types of support given by the women involved in the overt outdoor demonstrations, and those who offered covert assistance via the small advertisements in *The Tribunal*, a more refined understanding of the contribution women made to the anti-war efforts of the Fellowship can be reached. It indicates that a woman's political activity may have been determined by her domestic circumstances, and certainly by her relative's decision to apply for exemption from combat on the grounds of conscience. This opens a fresh approach to an understanding of the extent to which women were prepared to undertake radical activity. Further, it offers possibilities for women who disagreed with the war, especially conscription, to have access to opportunities to express that opposition, other than through formal involvement with political organisations such as the NCF.

The work of local and district branches

In his history of the NCF, Chamberlain does not comment on the contribution made by local groups, a factor which was to become so important to the success of the NCF in maintaining war resistance. This omission is significant, because much of the vital work that made the NCF the leading and most influential anti-war group was carried out by supporters operating in the local areas. Furthermore, as the war continued, and those men who had founded the local branches went to prison, the associate members, the older men and women, had to become involved in the organisation and administration of the local anti-war activities of the Fellowship, if it were to survive. To ensure continuity, active recruitment of associate members in the localities was encouraged in the September 1916 via a circular to local branches, "to keep up the strength and efficiency of our organisation."¹¹

The local network expanded considerably to cover the whole country, with 8 Divisions and 150 branches by 1917, with the Home Counties and London accounting for one third of this

¹¹ Circular to Branch Secretaries from H Runham Brown, 2 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

number.¹² In 1915, there was one woman who was a district secretary, Mrs Mann, of West Hampstead, and one branch secretary, Miss Hattrill of the Portsmouth branch, both of whom carried out their duties for much of the war.¹³ By 1917, as the men went to prison, the picture had changed; of the 150 branches, 29 had women as secretaries and, of the seven divisions, six had women as secretaries.¹⁴ The adjustments in personnel within the local and district branches reflects the changes the NCF had to face, as their male members were refused exemption from military service, and were conveyed to jail. Women, and men, who were too old or infirm to serve in the Army, were left to take over the increasingly extensive duties and demands of the local branches. The women who stepped forward assumed the duties that had previously been carried out by men, such as the secretarial duties of the branch. This role was crucial to the Fellowship, as the branch or district secretary was the link between HQ and the people most affected by conscription; the COs, and their supporters.

Whereas the war had created opportunities for women in other areas of work,¹⁵ involvement with the NCF opened up opportunities for women who supported the stance of the CO, to engage in war resisting activities, which included, for some, paid employment.¹⁶ Some of these women had been implicated in political activism before the war, such as Simie Seruya, a member of the Actresses Franchise League, who became the District Chairman of the London Divisional Group (LDG). Other women, who became involved with war resistance, may not have been concerned with politics, but their religious or moral beliefs may have brought them into contact with pacifists and COs, eliciting sympathy with their cause. Some women relinquished their roles of responsibility, such as Mrs Wray from Yorkshire, who resigned her public political position as District Secretary to return to her domestic environment to care for her husband, Jack, a CO, on his release from jail.¹⁷ One reason why women became more prominent at local and district level, as

¹² Thomas C. Kennedy *The Hound of Conscience, A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1919*, Arkansas 1981 Appendix A, pp.294-301, copy of list found at FL.

¹³ List of branch secretaries enclosed with Letter to Peet from Rose, 13 December 1917. Miss Hattrill was replaced by Miss Poole in August 1917.No reason is apparent from the correspondence. Letter to Marshall from Miss Poole, August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

¹⁴ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, Appendix A. This list is not complete as division 8, the South West is missing from Appendix A. The original document has not, yet, been found in the FL archive of the FSC.

¹⁵ Women worked in a large variety of occupations during the war. There is a large body of work concerned with this aspect of the Home Front, see for instance: Gail Braybon *Women Workers in the First World War*, London 1981: Susan Grayzl *Women and The First World War*, London 2002: Arthur Marwick *Women and War 1914-18*, London 1977: Susan Pyecroft 'British Working Women and the First World War', *The Historian*, 56:4, 1994: Deborah Thom *Nice Girls and Rude Girls: Women Workers in World War One*, London 1998.

¹⁶ See Chapter 6 pp.174-175.

¹⁷ Minutes of National Committee Meeting 31 August 1917, D/MAR 4/24, CEMP.

they had done at HQ, was because men went to prison. The women moved into the vacant positions so that the campaigns of the Fellowship might continue. Although women substituted for men, the burden of duties and responsibilities were not reduced due to their gender. The role of branch or district secretary was the same for both men and women. Indeed, when communicating with the local branches, Marshall used the gender-neutral term 'Comrades', a term associated with inclusivity and solidarity.

In not acknowledging the contribution of district and local groups to the success of the NCF in maintaining its war resistance, Chamberlain marginalises and, therefore, minimises the local work of the NCF, and so the work of the associate members, many of whom were women, has been discarded.¹⁸ This, despite the fact that HQ, in London, urged local groups to work for the values of the Fellowship and promote the cause of the CO, through instructions and memoranda issued on a weekly basis to these volunteers.¹⁹ The importance of local activity was reflected in the encouragement from HQ for all members to inform the central office of all their activities and to have these publicised via *The Tribunal*.²⁰ One example is from July 1917, when branches were urged to produce their own locally focused pamphlets, "as public interest can be more easily aroused [by] accounts of ...local people." This suggestion was prompted by the Dulwich branch's publication of three pamphlets, one of which included statements to military tribunals by members from that branch.²¹

There was no specific order to the setting up of a branch; it seemed to depend on local people coming together for support, which meant that some areas like London had many active branches, whereas in other areas, such as Cumbria and the South West, there was less activity.²² The ability of a local group to participate in the NCF's campaigns would depend on the energy and commitment of the people who joined. Although women in the branches became involved and active in the same work as the men, there were some changes, and this may have been due to the influence of the women members. For instance, as the war drew on, pursuits that might be seen as acceptable for women appeared more frequently in the columns of *The Tribunal's* small advertisement section,

¹⁸ William J Chamberlain *Fighting for Peace: The Story of the War Resistance Movement*, London 1928.

¹⁹ For example, 'Branch Activities' document from Runham Brown of the Political Committee, 29 July 1916, CEMP, D MAR 4/8. Instruction document to local members from Runham Brown, 5 September 1916, CEMP, D MAR 4/10.

²⁰ See Chapter 5 for an account of the newspaper's role in NCF war resistance.

²¹ *The Tribunal* 12 July 1917.

²² No research has been carried out linking levels of CO activity with that of anti-war activity by women or within localities. Pearce and Durham's work on location of CO activity/presence has identified 'hotspots' of CO activity. Pearce and Durham 'Patterns of Dissent in Britain During the First World War'.

such as invitations to fund-raising garden parties,²³ the creation of a study group,²⁴ or the organisation of a social occasion.²⁵ *The Tribunal* is a rich source of evidence, as it reported on the activities of local groups, and so it offers some record of the undertakings of people who became involved in war resistance across the capital and the country.

London was the centre of activity for the NCF and had a relatively large number of women members who were prepared to hold responsibilities within the local organisational structure. In 1917, out of thirty-one branches, ten local secretaries were women, as was their divisional secretary. In contrast, Wales had a woman as divisional secretary in 1917, with only one woman as branch secretary out of twenty groups.²⁶ The high level of war resistance activity in the capital city enabled and necessitated the participation of women in the Fellowship. Such was the importance of organised local activity in London, that the London Divisional Group (LDG) of branches were provided with office space at NCF headquarters in Merton House and then, later, at York Place, where they would have had had access to NCF resources and intelligence.

Divisional meetings grew in importance as the war continued, and a first tranche of divisional meetings occurred in the autumn of 1916, so “mark[ing] a distinct stage in the development of the NCF.”²⁷ The primary purpose of such gatherings was to promote the values and aims of the Fellowship, in “acclaiming the message of anti-militarism and peace,”²⁸ and to unite those who took differing approaches to debates within the NCF, such as the absolutist/alternativist debate.²⁹ National Committee members, officers and their substitutes were elected at divisional meetings by proportional representation. All members, full (including prisoners) and associates, could stand for election, but only women, or discharged and older men, could be substitutes.³⁰ To harness the potential impact of widespread political activity, HQ issued regular circulars of information and

²³ A garden party was desired for the London Members of the NCF. Any suggestions for its location were to be sent to the Organising Secretary at York Buildings. *The Tribunal* 5 July 1917. Streatham and Croydon branch of the NCF organised a garden party after the war at 4, The Park in Mitcham. *The Tribunal* 19 June 1919.

²⁴ A study group scheme was started by Marshall and those local groups who had chosen to join the scheme were not only expected to disseminate the reading lists, but to report on progress to Marshall. *The Tribunal* 26 July 1917.

²⁵ Wood Green NCF organised a ‘social’ for NCF members and sympathisers for 25 November 1917. *The Tribunal* 23 November 1917.

²⁶ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, Appendix A, copy of list found at FL.

²⁷ ‘The Rallying Call of the Conventions’, *The Tribunal* 26 October 1916.

²⁸ ‘The Rallying Call of the Conventions’, *The Tribunal* 26 October 1916.

²⁹ See Chapter 5, p.138, fn31.

³⁰ Hand written explanation on agenda for National Committee meeting 22, 23, 24 September 1916, D MAR4/10, CEMP. It is unclear whether CEM’s or BR’s handwriting as the comments are scribbled.

instructions for action to district and local branch secretaries,³¹ who would be expected to pass on these directives to their members, and thereby formulate plans for direct or indirect political action.³²

The LDG was the most politically active and influential of the divisional branches. It comprised of all the local branches in Division 6a of the eight divisions across the country.³³ It seems likely that the Divisional Group was given a permanent office within the Head Office of the Fellowship because of the importance of the role of local branches in London in the diffusion of the NCF's propaganda and publicity.³⁴ When there was re-organisation in September 1916, this group was accommodated, even though this meant additional costs to the organisation in renting other office space.³⁵ It is probable that some of the women worked or attended regularly, such as Miss Harvey, the secretary of the Walthamstow branch, whose contact address in 1917 was that of Merton House, Salisbury Court, one of the Fellowship's central offices.³⁶

The LDG, from September 1916, was led by Miss Simie Seruya and Mrs Kathleen Attlee, who have not previously featured in any narrative of war resistance.³⁷ At the London Divisional Convention in September 1916, Miss Seruya and Mrs Attlee reported directly to the conference. Items on the agenda included an evening debate designed to show an appreciation of the wider "possibilities of our movement as a moral and political factor in the national reconstruction after the war," with a "pledge...to continue the struggle until the fabric of militarism is shattered." These resolutions, as advertised, demonstrate the local political activism of the Fellowship and members' belief they could "secure a measure of solidarity amongst anti- militarists the world over."³⁸ Furthermore, this convention gave an opportunity to anti-war activists to confirm their defiance and opposition to militarism and conscription in London, where the conduct of the war was being directed. Women not

³¹ See for example: 'Branch Activities' from Runham Brown, 29 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP, Circular from Runham Brown, 5 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

³² The terms direct political action is used here to mean such activities as, political lobbying, the collection of signatures for petitions and for memorials to influential people, attendance at NCF local, district or national meetings, and involvement in other anti-war campaigns. Indirect political action might include signing a petition, donating money to war resistance campaigns anonymously, and, collecting and reading anti-war literature.

³³ See Kennedy, *Hound of Conscience*, Appendix A for list of Division 6a groups.

³⁴ No other divisional group had permanent HQ.

³⁵ 'Chief Points Arising out of Staff Meeting' 26 September 1916, D MAR4/10, CEMP.

³⁶ Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, Appendix A.

³⁷ Other female branch secretaries in 1917 were, Mrs Cahill at Dulwich, Mrs Best of Kennington, Miss Read of Forest Gate, Miss Graham at Golders Green, Miss Harvey for Walthamstow, Miss Jones of Kennington, Miss Peppercorn for West Central, Miss Serpel of Hackney and Miss Ward for Wandsworth. See Kennedy *Hound of Conscience*, Appendix A.

³⁸ Agenda for Divisional Convention 23 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

only facilitated the opportunity to discuss these political issues related to the war but, in some instances, they organised the lectures and study groups to which local members and the local community were invited.³⁹

Other women took positions of authority during the autumn 1916 Divisional Conventions. Catherine Marshall spoke on behalf of the National Committee at the Scottish Convention,⁴⁰ Miss M Palliser presided over the Sunday evening session of the South West and Wales Convention,⁴¹ and Dr Ethel Williams presided over “a remarkably successful conference” in the north east of England, attended by fifty-five organisations.⁴² The women did not comment on their contributions, or even leave drafts of their speeches, so their voices are, to date, lost. Nevertheless, their presence and authority has been acknowledged within publicity for the conventions and in *The Tribunal* reports.

Local Branches’ War Resistance Work

A local group’s most important task was the distribution of publicity and propaganda, which included printed promotions of the Fellowship’s work and its political pamphlets, along with any other material that HQ thought should be given to supporters, such as literature produced by other anti-war groups. This task had the potential to draw the attention of the police, which resulted in prosecutions for distributing *The Tribunal* and other literature, with women featuring amongst these court actions. Marion Daunt appeared before Brighton Magistrates in June 1916 and was charged with interfering with the success of His Majesty’s forces through the distribution of pacifist material, which included *The Tribunal*.⁴³ In February 1918, Simie Seruya (in her married name of Williams) and Miss Gertrude Stewart, a typist, were charged with distributing an uncensored leaflet, *A Challenge to Militarism*, which had been published by the FSC. The case was adjourned in May, as proceedings were to be taken against the publishers of the leaflet.⁴⁴

As HQ was keen that local members were kept abreast of all the work and campaigning that was taking place in London on behalf of the CO, the distribution of *The Tribunal* at

³⁹ Simie Seruya organised the study group and lectures for the London West Central branch. See letter to Marshall from Simie Seruya, 22 November 1916, D/MAR 2/34, CEMP.

⁴⁰ List of speakers at conventions in CEMP, nd, D MAR 4/10. Other papers in the folder are dated September 1916 and the dates on the list match with the dates of the Conventions in the autumn 1916.

⁴¹ *The Tribunal* 2 November 1916.

⁴² *The Tribunal* 5 October 1916. The organisations that attended were the NCF, ILP, FOR WIL, Women’s Labour League (WLL), and the Peace Society.

⁴³ *The Tribunal* 30 June 1916. As the dates on the order for prosecution were incorrect, the case was dismissed.

⁴⁴ There was a report of this case in *The Birmingham Gazette*, under the title; ‘Action against Two Ladies for Distribution.’ 14 April 1918. See Chapter 3.

local meetings, was “essential [and] every member of the NCF should read [it].”⁴⁵ There was a demand that “every branch secretary immediately to [get] *The Tribunal* into the hands of every public man in the locality.”⁴⁶ Other recommendations were that opportunities could be sought to distribute literature in public spaces to specific audiences, such as leaflet filmgoers outside cinemas showing war films, or to stage public events outside churches and at meetings of sympathetic organisations, such as those of the Mission of Peace and Hope.⁴⁷ The Organisation Department suggested which leaflets might be used in these endeavours, with an emphasis generally on the Peace Negotiation Committee’s (PNC), “excellent series.”⁴⁸

An example of a woman who was reported to the police for distributing peace propaganda in public spaces was a Miss Loolah, who was reported to the Home Office in June 1916, by the Devon Constabulary, for issuing a pamphlet, ‘Peace by Negotiation’, published by the PNC.⁴⁹ She had been asking people to sign a petition to the PM, requesting he start peace negotiations.⁵⁰ In response to the police action in seizing the leaflets, the PNC requested that the HO confirm whether the leaflets contravened DORA. The HO response can only be found in advice to the Home Secretary, as the copy of any letter written to the PNC is not in the file. The advice was that Regulation 27 of DORA prohibits the circulation of leaflets “likely to interfere with relations with foreign powers or success of HM Forces.” There was concern expressed by the HO official that such propaganda “would weaken this country in carrying on the war.”⁵¹ There is no evidence on the file that would suggest a prosecution took place, but this incident is illustrative of the hostility of some members of the public to anti-war propaganda and the role that the police were expected to take in reporting such incidents to government departments, alongside the HO’s reluctance at this stage to take legal action. Furthermore, it shows that women took risks in using public spaces to disseminate pacifist and anti-war sentiments.⁵² There may have been some vestige of liberal views left in the HO, at this time, which would allow dissenting literature to be

⁴⁵ First five editions of *The Tribunal* had this instruction on the front page. The message was clear, and *The Tribunal* became the primary method by which HQ communicated with its members.

⁴⁶ *The Tribunal* 15 March 1916. The term “public man” meant those men who had influence or standing in a community such as clergymen, local politicians, businessmen. The term indicates that such people were likely to be men.

⁴⁷ Organisation Department Circular 21 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁴⁸ Organisation Department Circular 21 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁴⁹ The Peace Negotiations Committee had links with UDC as its President, Helena Swanwick and Treasurer, Charles Roden Buxton were members of both groups. Marshall was a member of the PNC.

⁵⁰ TNA HO45/10742/263275. Petitions were called memorials. This memorial called for the PM, “at the earliest opportunity [to promote] negotiations with the object of securing a just and lasting peace.”

⁵¹ TNA HO45/10742/263275. Notes on the file.

⁵² See Chapter 3 pp.85 and 101.

published and distributed.⁵³ However, as the war progressed, this light approach changed, and both men and women of the AWM found themselves subject to prosecutions under several DORA regulations.⁵⁴

One challenge in the localities that concerned HQ, was the belief that “in all branches only a percentage of the members are really active.”⁵⁵ This reality was revealed in a letter to Marshall from Miss Waid, the Penrith branch secretary, who explained that she regretfully had had her fine paid for distributing anti-war literature, “because there is nobody else to take on the work.”⁵⁶ A further challenge was the need for funding to finance HQ to produce the printed publicity which was at the heart of its campaign methodology and maintain an anti-war stance in the capital.⁵⁷ This difficulty meant that local groups were expected to raise funds for their own use, through regular collection of subscriptions via the Maintenance Secretary as HQ could not provide any money. To take the financial strain away from a small number of committed supporters, one unnamed branch made a “levy of two pence a week in place of taking a collection from attending members.”⁵⁸ As full members went into prison, lost their jobs or, when released were too weak to work, the funding crisis at local level must have increased.

Local groups were the hubs of information about local members, and one of their key functions was to pass information gleaned from watchers, relatives and friends, onto the people at HQ who worked for the COIB.⁵⁹ Women played a significant role in this task of gathering and recording information about their local COs, so enabling the work of the NCF and the COIB to continue. The transfer of such information, such as from Mrs Cahill, the Dulwich Branch Secretary, who sent HQ information regarding a local man, A Allen, who had been released from Wormwood Scrubs and taken back to his regiment, would be used

⁵³ See Brock Millman *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain*, London 2000.

⁵⁴ See Chapters 5 pp.137-140.

⁵⁵ ‘Branch Activities’ Circular, 29 July 1916, CEMP.

⁵⁶ The letter is apologetic in tone as Miss Waid wanted to refuse to pay the fine, so she would have been sent to prison. Letter to Marshall from Mary Waid, June 1916, D MAR/4/6, CEMP.

⁵⁷ Example: A Report and An Appeal to members. This long letter of nine pages and “urgent appeal” was sent out to potential and existing supporters on 1 September 1916. Funds were needed to ensure that the Fellowship [was] not hindered by lack of resources.” There is a comprehensive outline of the work of the various departments of the NCF and its successes to date. The amount required to carry on the work was £3 500, so that members of the Fellowship can “make their witness effective.” The use of the term witness and continual reference to friends (albeit in lower case) may have meant that the request was worded to appeal to Quakers.

⁵⁸ ‘Branch Activities’ Runham Brown, 29 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP.

⁵⁹ See Chapters 4 and 6.

to inform his family of his location and would enable the COIB to update their own card index.⁶⁰

One of the most effective methods of political activism advocated by Marshall and the political departments of the NCF, was for supporters to attempt to meet sympathetic MPs and Lords at Westminster, with requests that they ask questions about COs in their respective Houses. A six-page letter of instruction was sent out to District and Branch secretaries in July 1916 from the Political Committee at HQ, outlining how to organise a deputation to their MPs “to put the true position of the Conscientious Objector...before them.” This was considered by the Committee to be “important and critical work,” and there was specific instruction to “get the right people” and that they should “never repeat mere rumour.” Branches needed to ensure that “the most able and well-equipped persons should be selected.”⁶¹ The directions issued by the Fellowship in July 1916 emphasised the use of local examples to inform the MP how their constituents had been treated under the tribunal system, in the army, and within the alternative service options, such as the NCC. There is explicit advice, “not [to] make too much of mere discomfort ...the soldier...has many hardships.”⁶² HQ expected that the local branches should keep them informed of their progress.

Marshall’s influence can be detected in the method, content and thoroughness of the instructions, as her name was on the letter, and she became strongly associated with the method of lobbying. From previous political experience, Marshall held an excellent understanding of how critical it was to keep the “cause” in the public eye.⁶³ The guidelines recommended that “most of the [lobbyists] should be electors” and, therefore, men, and there is an explicit instruction that “the deputation should not be confined to men.” A mixed deputation from East Dulwich had already enjoyed success in seeing MPs John Burns and Albion Richardson “on their first deputation,” in May 1916, even though the women who accompanied the group of 16-20, Mrs Beswick and Mrs Parkes, “quite disconcerted [Richardson].” The MPs were generally re-assuring and told the group they “could rest assured that none of our men will be shot.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Typed note from Mrs E Cahill, dates on note are for September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁶¹ Letter regarding Deputations to Parliament 10 July 1916, DMAR 4/8, CEMP.

⁶² Letter regarding Deputations to Parliament 10 July 1916, DMAR 4/8, CEMP. Other examples of instructions to local branches are: Suggestions and Instructions to Visitors Autumn 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁶³ Marshall was an experience political lobbyist for the NUWSS before the war. See Chapter 4 and Jo Vellacott *From Liberal to Labour with Women’s Suffrage: The Story of Catherine E Marshall*, London 1993.

⁶⁴ Letter to Marshall from ME Hoggins, 18 May 1916, D MAR 4/5, CEMP.

In the lobbying of MPs, women used exclusively male space to campaign for the release of COs. This space had been used before, during the campaigns for women's suffrage, but now they were using the space on behalf of men, showing that some women were becoming more confident and knowledgeable about how to use the Parliamentary system. Albion Richardson MP was sufficiently uncomfortable at the women's presence at his meeting with them in May 1916 for it to be mentioned in Mr Hoggins letter to well-known suffragist and lobbyist, Marshall.⁶⁵ Whether this discomfort was due to the presence of women in the lobby, or the nature of their intention to campaign for COs, is unclear. Nevertheless, using this form of political activism and, by expressly asking for able people, the NCF brought women's contributions to war resisting political activism into public focus, through the common procedure of political lobbying.⁶⁶ By using women to lobby MPs the NCF could indicate that women were as interested in the issue of conscription and the CO as men, and that they were prepared to engage in war resistance activity in order to promote those causes.

Apart from Marshall herself, and the example of Dulwich's visit to the Commons, there is little in the available source material that refers to women becoming active in lobbying MPs directly, on behalf of COs, in the Houses of Parliament. There are references to protests outside the Palace of Westminster, and one meeting after the vote had been granted to women, possibly indicating that women were more comfortable in the conduct of their protests in other places than Parliament from where, until 1918, they were disenfranchised.⁶⁷ Women became involved in lobbying MPs in the NCF's effort to get CO absolutist prisoners released from their sentences after the war.⁶⁸ One such instance was when Mrs Cole organised a deputation of 30 people, on the 19th November 1919, to raise the issue of COs who were still in prison a year after the Armistice but, regrettably, the only official available from the HO was an undersecretary.⁶⁹

Gathering Information for HQ.

Collecting information for HQ was a key task for local branches, as the marshalling of intelligence was a vital part of the NCF and COIB's contribution to maintenance of the

⁶⁵ Letter to Marshall from ME Hoggins, 18 May 1916, D MAR 4/5, CEMP.

⁶⁶ Apart from Marshall herself there is little in the available source material that refers to women becoming active in lobbying MPs directly in the Houses of Parliament.

⁶⁷ See Clara Cole in Appendix B.

⁶⁸ Absolutist COs were not released from custody at the end of the war. Some remained in prison until well into 1919 so they could complete their sentences.

⁶⁹ Clara Cole *They Did Not Fight A Record of British Objectors to War 1914-18*, Manchester 1936, p.57.

Fellowship's war resistance, and one of its strengths.⁷⁰ Included in intelligence gathering were visits from local branches to where COs were working on the Home Office Scheme and reporting on their living and working conditions to HQ. Some women were involved in compiling these reports, as Miss F Mary Over reported in September 1916⁷¹ "in response to your letter I visited COs on Milton Hill today." She gave a full outline of the working and living conditions of the men, paid 8d a day with 11s per head for food for a week." They live in a "four roomed ...dry cottage....and appear to wear their own clothes to work in."⁷² Further to the practical issues of the men's circumstances, she gave a report of their feelings about the HO scheme, as "some of them are not quite clear that they have done the wisest thing." They felt that the harsh conditions of the first month of the prison regime encouraged them to volunteer for alternative service, so "it was a difficult thing for them to make a clear decision."⁷³ This report gave HQ a fuller picture of the conditions in which men were held under the civil authority of the Home Office, and so enabled them to campaign, with some certainty and knowledge, for better working and living conditions for the men.

Even though HQ and the localities were campaigning on behalf of the CO, the centre's constant need for information from local branches became a source of tension. Papers in Marshall's archive reveal that, throughout 1916 and 1917, there was an endless stream of instructions to local branches from London. The month of September 1916, for example, included information about re-organisation at Head Office, with instructions for communication with the officers, along with a questionnaire about the COs in each local area.⁷⁴ The weekly circulars contained a large quantity of information that needed to be passed onto local members, along with a reminder that "we are in urgent need of funds" and that garden parties should be held to raise money.⁷⁵ Information requested from the branch secretaries was extensive, with the circular at the beginning of September 1916, asking for details of men who had opted for alternative service. This would have been an onerous task, involving much research and questioning of dependents. Alongside all this, information was required about tribunal decisions, courts martial, arrests and sentences, to be forwarded to HQ. If every branch had been dedicated in sending this information, then

⁷⁰ See Chapter 6, pp.167-171.

⁷¹ Report from Miss F Mary Over to Isaac Goss, 29 September, report on COs at Milton Hill. 29 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁷² Report from Miss F Mary Over to Isaac Goss, 29 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁷³ Report from Miss F Mary Over to Isaac Goss, 29 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁷⁴ Various documents in D MAR 4/10 and see Chapter 4.

⁷⁵ Circular from Runham Brown, 5 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

the administrative task at the centre must have been enormous. The information that arrived at HQ was organised and recorded by the Records and Investigations Department and then passed onto the COIB. This impressive administrative task was designed to ensure, in theory, that no man was lost in the system for long.⁷⁶

Women were involved at a local level in all the political activities of the NCF which were prescribed from HQ. They undertook secretarial work, organised study circles and fundraising activities, as well as direct political action, which involved parliamentary lobbying and the distribution of printed publicity and propaganda. Additionally, women were willing to undertake political activity within traditional male space, such as the attendance of court martials, tribunals, as pickets outside prisons, and as visitors to CO prisoners in jail and Home Office Camps. Some women engaged with politicians directly as lobbyists at the Houses of Parliament.

Further women became involved in activities more associated with the domestic sphere, such as the organisation of Sales of Work, albeit in public space. The Street branch organised such an event, in December 1917, with “the associate members undertaking tea and refreshments ...men members...entertainment and produce stall;” the Maintenance Fund was sent £33 4s from the profits of the day.⁷⁷

There was some recognition by HQ that women left at home by the imprisoned COs had “in many ways the hardest battle.”⁷⁸ One branch, it was reported, held a weekly wives meeting.⁷⁹ This gathering had two main goals, one to enable the branch to exchange news of the men, and the other to offer a mutual support network. All the information thus collected was passed on to the Associates Committee and “proved very valuable indeed.”⁸⁰ The circular suggests that this work, and collation of such information could, in future, be “undertaken, where thought well, by a special Women’s Committee,” a suggestion that is “strongly recommended [as an] idea.”⁸¹ That the situation of women was considered by HQ and disseminated to local branches indicates that women’s concerns were considered and treated considerately by the Fellowship, a feature that has been lost in the narratives and

⁷⁶ See the story of Spencer Lambert, Chapter 6, p.170.

⁷⁷ *The Tribunal* 3 January 1918.

⁷⁸ Circular from Organisation department, 21 September 1916, D MAR4/10, CEMP.

⁷⁹ This overarching term included mothers and sweethearts. The circular does not mention which branch it was that held this club and no further mention has been found about this exclusively female group, who were its members and if it enjoyed any success.

⁸⁰ Circular from Organisation department, 21 September 1916, D MAR4/10, CEMP.

⁸¹ Circular from Organisation department, 21 September 1916, D MAR4/10, CEMP. No evidence has, to date, been found that a women’s committee was formed.

stories of the NCF's sustained presence in war resistance, suggesting that women had particular interests that the Fellowship's usual work did not necessarily meet; there is no surviving documentation to confirm whether any of these proposed groups met.

Examples of women's overt and covert support for the CO, as revealed in *The Tribunal*.

In addition to activities prescribed and organised by HQ, some women became involved in self-initiated pursuits. Some of these were overtly political in nature and took place in public spaces, such as singing outside prisons where COs were incarcerated. Other, more covert support can be observed within the small advertisements of *The Tribunal* newspaper, an illustration of how some women's war resistance activity has remained invisible until now. Their contribution has been in plain sight, but not recognised as a form of resistance, probably because of its domestic and therefore gendered nature. Women, who were linked in some way to COs as family, or their cause as supporters, used this public, yet simultaneously private space, to request domestic or financial assistance, to offer work, support or accommodation to COs families, along with offers of employment for readers who would be assumed to sympathise with the CO.

The examples of local activity examined in the section below were initiated and organised by women, who held autonomy and authority in the organisation of the outdoor, public events, such as singing outside prisons, attendance at peace and anti-war demonstrations, and banner parades at Westminster, both during the war and once it had ended.⁸² Mrs Nellie Best was a leader of these demonstrations in the name of peace, and she advertised for "London women" to get themselves involved in "active open air" work.⁸³ These contributions to war resistance activity have not been recognised, either within the general accounts of opposition to the war, or as part of women's roles in anti-war activity. Through consideration of these activities, as "an exclusive focus on female agency"⁸⁴ which are highlighted in *The Tribunal*, a broader understanding of the contribution made by women to war resistance can be reached, especially as the women who organised these events did so under their own initiative. By recognising that these public activities took place revises the narrative about war resistance. The pressure from the NCF on the government to change its policies on conscription and the CO can now be seen as not only being brought about through the political activism of prominent men such as Allen and Russell, and by a

⁸² *The Tribunal* 19 December 1918, 6 February 1919, 27 February 1919.

⁸³ *The Tribunal* July 1917.

⁸⁴ Joan Wallach Scott 'History and the Re-writing of History' in Christine Farnham (ed) *The Impact of Feminist Research in the Academy*, Bloomington 1993, p.93.

few women at HQ, but was also carried out in public spaces by women who were willing to engage in war resistance activity that could have resulted in confrontation with the authorities and local people.

Open air demonstrations emulated the outdoor activities which were a feature of the pre-war women's suffrage movement. There were consistent attempts to hold and participate in marches and demonstrations, to draw attention to the CO, and to canvass for peace. *The Tribunal* was used by other women's peace groups, such as the WPC and women of the ILP, to promote the need for "as many outdoor meetings as possible."⁸⁵ This plea was directed at women in London and "in the provinces."

Singing as overt support for COs.

A distinctive method of support for CO prisoners, initiated by women associate members of the NCF, was the organisation of singing outside three London civilian prisons where convicted COs were held; Wormwood Scrubs, Wandsworth and Pentonville prisons.⁸⁶ From March 1917, announcements appeared in *The Tribunal* asking volunteers to sing outside Wandsworth Prison. The authors of the announcements were two women who were already prominent in the Fellowship's local political activity; Mrs Nellie Best, of the Kennington Branch, and Miss Kitty Read, of the Forest Gate Branch.⁸⁷

Requests for supporters to join the "Scrubs Choir," or that which sang outside the other prisons, continued throughout and beyond the war.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Letter to *The Tribunal* from Ethel Snowden, 26 July 1917.

⁸⁶ The propaganda technique of singing outside prison to boost the morale of those inside was used in 1908 while Mary Leigh, a suffragette from Birmingham was held in Winson Green Prison. The prison was featured in the WSPU publication *Forcible Feeding in Winson Green*, so the women "did what they could to capitalize on the prison's notoriety ... the women singing to offer encouragement to individuals." Elizabeth Crawford *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain and Ireland A Regional Survey*, London, 2013, p.115.

⁸⁷ See *The Tribunal* 15 March 1917, 29 March 1917.

⁸⁸ *The Tribunal* 26 April 1917, 10 May 1917.



FIGURE 9: *THE TRIBUNAL* 26 APRIL 1917⁸⁹

The activity of singing outside prisons was used, both as a propaganda tactic, and as a consolation to the men inside.⁹⁰ In spite of this activity's overt and public support for CO prisoners, the women who had initiated and then continued to organise the singing, Nellie Best and Kitty Read, had to work hard to sustain its existence. By May 1917, enthusiasm from supporters had clearly waned, and Read pleaded with them in an announcement in *The Tribunal* to attend singing events.⁹¹

Part of the problem was that the singing had attracted the attention of local people, and that "a large number gather on the Scrubs in the evening," not to sing, but to observe and possibly heckle, although no details are given about the nature of the heckling. She hoped "that friends, especially women" would attend a special rally on Whit Sunday (last Sunday in May), so that the singing might "be rendered a success rather than a farce."⁹² This direct appeal to women suggests that they would be readers of *The Tribunal*, and be willing to turn out to sing, and possibly endure the ire of local people. Women may also have been considered a less threatening presence to a crowd who may have been irritated by the attendance of male supporters of COs, particularly those of military age. Nevertheless, the appeal for Whit Sunday singers did not work, and Read's tactics to attract support for the singing became more strongly worded in the next advertisement, as she pointed out that it is "impossible now for singers at "the Scrubs" to meet any success unless more friends support us." She asked local branch secretaries "to bring the matter before their branches." Her particular concern was that the movement itself was being undermined, as she points

⁸⁹ There is an error in the address here, as it should say Clapham, an indication that the publisher, Beauchamp and her team did not always have an opportunity to proof read the newspaper. She and Smith mentioned this difficulty in their final article 'Ave Atque Vale' *The Tribunal* 19 April 1919.

⁹⁰ NCF comrades sang outside the prison at Plymouth each Sunday night between 5.30 and 6.30, reported Kitty Read. *The Tribunal* 27 February 1919.

⁹¹ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

⁹² *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

out that “it is necessary for enthusiasm to be shown where there are many spectators.”⁹³ The NCF could not afford to be the object of ridicule to the public, as this would weaken the cause of the CO and demoralise the men inside the prison. Read’s attempts to encourage singers continued, this time with some humour, as the following edition of *The Tribunal* sees a request that “more members are wanted for Work of National Importance,” a reference to the stipulation often attached to conditional exemption certificates issued to COs.⁹⁴

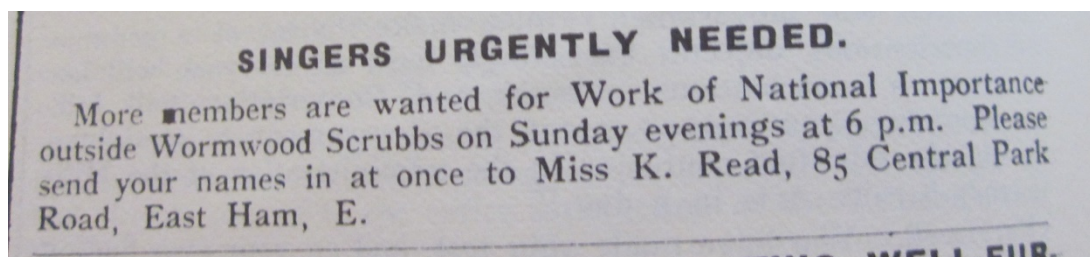


FIGURE 10: THE TRIBUNAL 14 JUNE 1917

Read’s persistence, (and failure), in trying to encourage attendance at a public display of support for the CO, offers some insight into the difficulties that lay in the path of those who wished to support the stance of the CO. Public ire for the CO, and his supporters, was never likely to be far away, and it may be surmised that friends and fellow supporters may not have wished to be publicly recognised as overtly supporting the cause of the CO. These pleas for singers continued once the war had ended, as Read spurred on supporters to recognise “how important this work is.”⁹⁵ More importantly, women were participating in a female organised activity, as well as a supportive, nurturing and caring role, that would likely to be viewed as in line with acceptable female roles of the time.

The pursuance of this tactic was necessary, as although the war was over, many COs remained in prison, and the singing was one way of re-assuring them that they were not forgotten. Additionally, it was a visual reminder to local people that COs were still incarcerated, and that they should not be overlooked, so requests for singers went on into 1919.⁹⁶ Certainly the Christmas singing of 1918, outside one unspecified London prison, was successful, as a prisoner describes the singing in a letter shared with *The Tribunal* by its recipient, and he was able to hear “better than I done before”, intimating that the singing was a normal event. As usual, there was a plea for others to join the event “to relieve the

⁹³ *The Tribunal* 7 June 1917.

⁹⁴ *The Tribunal* 14 June 1917.

⁹⁵ *The Tribunal* 5 December 1918.

⁹⁶ *The Tribunal* 19 December 1918.

awful monotony of prison life.”⁹⁷ Chairman Clifford Allen joined in the praise for the singing, and “took courage from the knowledge that we were not forgotten.”⁹⁸ Mrs Margaret Tritton took time to write to *The Tribunal* on behalf of her brother to “thank the friends who sing outside the prison” as it is “greatly appreciated.”⁹⁹ Furthermore, despite some difficulties in recruitment for singing outside prisons, the women persisted in their commitment to overt public support for the CO prisoners, and this continued after the war, as some COs were kept in prison to complete their sentences.¹⁰⁰

The addition of singing to the narrative of the Fellowship is pertinent, as it allowed the women of the NCF to carve out their own campaign space, which they initiated, controlled and organised for three years.¹⁰¹ Women found that they could make a difference to the prisoners, draw attention to their cause, and simultaneously make their own voices heard in the NCF’s campaigns against the war. There is no evidence that, unlike prison picketing,¹⁰² HQ had any involvement in the singing of the women, apart from tacit acceptance of the activity through the agreement for the placement of announcements in *The Tribunal*.

Covert support for COs families.

In contrast to the overt support of outdoor demonstrations, there were women who demonstrated their connection to COs, or support for their cause, in a more discreet or covert manner, through domestic or financial means. One method by which women could subtly support the cause of the CO was through a donation to the Fellowship, such as by Kathleen Walker, who sent a pound to “contribute to the CO fund.”¹⁰³ Further measures that sympathetic women took to demonstrate their support for the CO’s cause, and the needs of his family, were through financial and domestic assistance. *The Tribunal* was the means through which connections could be made between these two groups, and a place where women who needed to find work or accommodation could find friendly employers, landlords or even tenants.

⁹⁷ *The Tribunal* 16 January 1919.

⁹⁸ *The Tribunal* 4 January 1917. Miss Margaret Tritton wrote to *The Tribunal*, on behalf of her brother, to let it be known that the singing was greatly appreciated. *The Tribunal* 30 November 1916.

⁹⁹ *The Tribunal* 30 November 1918. Mrs Tritton’s brother was at Wormwood Scrubs.

¹⁰⁰ According to *The Tribunal* 35 prisoners were court-martialled since the Armistice. *The Tribunal* 19 December 1918. *The Tribunal* 27 February 1917 reported 147 COs had been court-martialled since the Armistice.

¹⁰¹ See Chapter 2 pp.75-76 for how Richardson’s work on spatial theory and women’s political activism has influenced this study.

¹⁰² See p.174 fn117.

¹⁰³ Letter to Marshall from Kathleen Walker, 27 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

The nature of these connections and support can be appreciated through an examination of small advertisements placed on the back page of *The Tribunal*. These are an eclectic mix, which included announcements of political events, such as demonstrations,¹⁰⁴ holiday camp accommodation,¹⁰⁵ jobs for COs,¹⁰⁶ and those advertisements, studied in the section below, that were either posted by women or directed at women. *The Tribunal*, although sold to members and sympathisers, was also made available for distribution in certain public places, such as at demonstrations and, as it was distributed via local branches across the country, the small advertisements would have reached a significant number of readers.

The relevance of these advertisements to an understanding of the work and significance of the NCF in war resistance has not previously been considered by historians of the period. Yet, by taking notice of the presence of women in these advertisements, a fuller understanding of the impact that the cause had on women related to COs can be appreciated. Furthermore, through the recognition of the advertisements as a source that reveals women's involvement in the NCF's war resistance, as supporters and sympathisers of the CO's stance, it signals that a larger number of women were concerned with war resistance than has been previously acknowledged, and provides some insight into the nature of women's covert involvement in the narrative of the CO.

The postings reveal some of the anxieties and difficulties that the female relatives of COs faced due to the man's decision to apply for exemption on the grounds of conscience. Only a few women appear in the advertisements but, as over 17,500 men applied for exemption, then the women represent a large community. Some of the featured advertisements are anonymous, and respondents were asked to apply to NCF HQ, indicating a reluctance to be known publicly, either as a wife or as a supporter of the CO's cause, because of public approbation.

The purpose and nature of the advertisements posted by, or directed at, women, focused upon here indicate a need for support at a time of uncertainty. One lonely CO's wife advertised for a companion "during her husbands enforced absence."¹⁰⁷ Another anonymous woman wanted "an educated lady to share cottage in Norfolk on mutual

¹⁰⁴ For example, Women's Peace Demonstration, Birmingham, *The Tribunal* 26 July 1917, "Great Peace Demonstration on Palm Sunday" *The Tribunal* 8 February 1917, South London International Labour Demonstration, *The Tribunal* 19 April 1917.

¹⁰⁵ For example: Holiday Camp, Newdigate Surrey *The Tribunal* 6 September 1917.

¹⁰⁶ For example: "Cutter for good gent's bespoke trade wanted at once to save CO's business." *The Tribunal* 9 November 1916.

¹⁰⁷ *The Tribunal* 19 October 1916.

terms.”¹⁰⁸ This individual was not necessarily a CO’s wife or relative, but the advertiser knows that the newspaper would have readers who were sympathetic to the cause of the CO, and who may be suitably educated.¹⁰⁹ Some CO’s wives decided to leave their hometowns when their husbands were convicted,¹¹⁰ and would be keen to respond to an advertisement that offered accommodation and maybe some paid work, such as the mother of a CO who advertised for a “domestic help” who was “sufficiently educated to be a companion.”¹¹¹

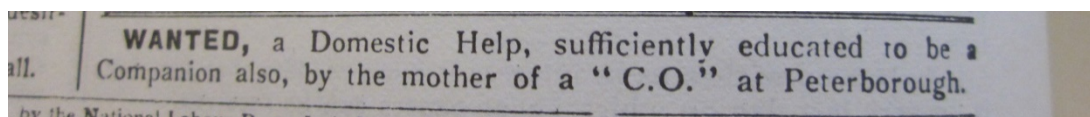


FIGURE 11: THE TRIBUNAL 21 DECEMBER 1916

The presence of such women, who were not necessarily prominently engaged in the political activism of the NCF, but who were involved with the cause of the CO through their familial connection, shows that the involvement of women, voluntarily or reluctantly, in the issues surrounding the CO, goes much deeper than previously recognised. As few women have written or spoken of their experiences, such concerns and difficulties experienced as the relative of a CO have been marginalised by the narratives of the CO himself, and their politically active sisters involved in peace work.

Moreover, the advertisements offer some insight into the financial difficulties that were experienced by relatives of COs, as there are several women who entered advertisements in the newspaper to earn money.¹¹² A CO’s wife, on her husband’s incarceration, would have been left without a salary or wage to support her and any children. Even if she worked herself, the loss of a salary would have made her life difficult and lonely, as she may have

¹⁰⁸ *The Tribunal* 19 October 1916.

¹⁰⁹ Many COs were from professional and educated backgrounds, such as lawyers, teachers, journalists, and civil servants. There is an assumption in the advertisement that such a man would marry a woman with education.

¹¹⁰ The wartime diaries of Sybil White illustrate the difficulties that CO wives and families experienced. She moved away from her hometown, Kilmarnock in Scotland. Her husband Albert White was an absolutist CO and she kept a diary for him of her activities while he was in prison. Sybil White moved to London in January 1917 and then to York in March where she took a post as a nanny from which she was dismissed after only 2 days. She remained in York for a short time then moved to London where she remained for much of the war. She does not say explicitly why she moved to London but refers frequently to the work she undertook as a Quaker. She moved several times and became embroiled in a potential assault case brought against her by a woman who had protested about a children’s party Sybil had organised. ‘The Wartime diaries of Sybil White’, Brotherton Special Collections, Leeds University Library.

¹¹¹ *The Tribunal* 21 December 1916.

¹¹² The NCF were aware of the difficulties that women faced once their husband had been imprisoned as some contacted the Fellowship to tell them of these challenges. Marshall received a letter from a woman in Penrith, Mrs Brown, whose husband had gone to a work camp. She informs Marshall that “I am left under rather difficult circumstances and have to arrange to make a living... I am thinking of furnishing [the house] to let... and try to take in a few visitors.” Letter to Marshall from M Brown 22 May 1916, D Mar 4/5, CEMP.

been faced with uncertainty about her husband's location and state of health and may have had to face hostility from her relatives, friends and neighbours.

One woman, Mrs N, in a "pleasant Birmingham suburb," not only wanted a companion, but "help with her child,"¹¹³ while an advertisement for a "live in" in Colchester to "take charge of the house and two small children," was to help a CO's wife, who was a teacher. This advertisement was placed by a Mrs Fenner, who lived in Clapton, North East London, possibly a relative or friend of a CO.¹¹⁴ A more pragmatic advertisement, not offering accommodation or companionship, came from a reader in Totnes, who just asked for a "woman for general work and cooking of 4-roomed (sic) country cottage."¹¹⁵

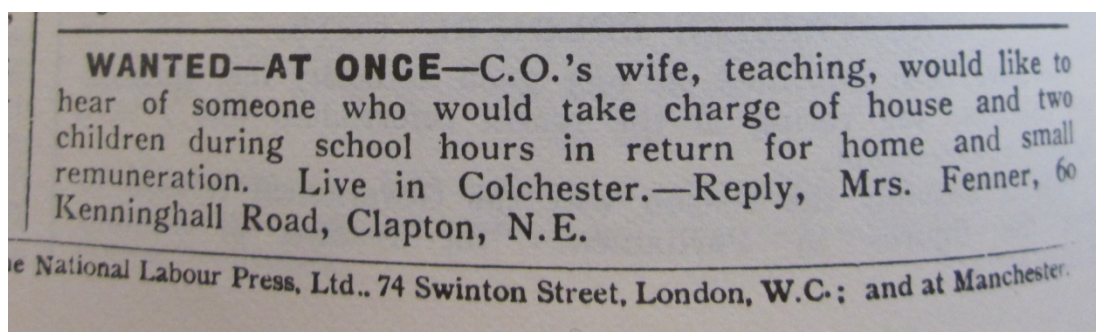


FIGURE 12: THE TRIBUNAL 23 NOVEMBER 1916

These advertisements reflect the social and economic backgrounds of some CO's families, as these women seem to live in relatively comfortable circumstances; they had professional lives, and could pay for household assistance and childcare, while they worked to make up for the loss of their husband's wage. Such women were able to take advantage of their properties, which offered a potential income stream for women left on their own. One solution to the loss of a man's salary was to rent out rooms, such as the "CO's wife who desires to let the upper half of the house," at an address in North London, to a "sympathiser."¹¹⁶ The house was large, and the letting of the rooms may indicate financial pressure, rather than a willingness to let the rooms to a sympathiser for welfare reasons. Mrs L Connor of Shepherds Bush, a CO's wife, wished to let a "well-furnished bed-room and sitting room," with access to a bath and a piano, indicating a comfortable house, probably that of a professional couple.¹¹⁷ There were exceptions to this wish to remain anonymous

¹¹³ *The Tribunal* 10 October 1918.

¹¹⁴ *The Tribunal* 23 November 1916.

¹¹⁵ *The Tribunal* 8 February 1917.

¹¹⁶ *The Tribunal* 16 August 1917.

¹¹⁷ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917 with further examples in *The Tribunal* 14 June 1917. A further advertisement from Mrs L Connor also states that her home has a bath and a piano, pre-requisites for comfortable living in the Edwardian era.

in such a public space as *The Tribunal*, and some advertisers may have not been related to a CO, but showed an understanding of the difficulties that wives of COs may encounter, such as Mrs Wilson in Hampstead who had “two large, unfurnished rooms...socialist or wife of CO preferred.”¹¹⁸

An additional method of dealing with the loss of a salary would be for the wife of a CO to work in someone else’s household. Realising that this might be a way of helping a CO’s wife and getting domestic assistance, Dora Head placed an advertisement in *The Tribunal* asking for “a reliable housekeeper to take charge of small household and two school children.”¹¹⁹ A Mrs Luttrell in Bere Alston, Devon wanted a “mothers help.... [someone to do] light housework.”¹²⁰ Emily Hobhouse, a pacifist and sympathiser with the cause of the CO, advertised in *The Tribunal* for domestic help, “for simple cooking and housework.”¹²¹ A CO’s wife may have been restricted in her choice of employment, as she would be unlikely to work in a munitions factory or other job that would release a man for the trenches. It is not clear whether Dora Head was a CO’s wife, or just content with having someone to undertake domestic and companion duties, but the fact that she has advertised in *The Tribunal* does indicate some knowledge of the nature and purpose of the newspaper and its likely readership.

None of the women who gave their names in advertisements for companions, domestic help or to let accommodation in their homes, have been found (to date) to have been involved in overt political action in support of the NCF’s campaigns. Nevertheless, the offers of work, accommodation and companionship were practices that demonstrated sympathy and support for the stance of the CO, his wife and family. They may have been the only method in which these women felt able to offer their support and sympathy, as direct political action may not have been an option for them, or even desirable. Feelings about COs ran high in British society, and an individual would only offer support, even tacitly, if they were in sympathy with the stance of the CO and the activism of the NCF.

By studying the small advertisements and understanding the context in which they were placed in *The Tribunal*, a wider understanding of the extent of women’s involvement in the issues that surrounded the CO can be appreciated. It has raised awareness that women’s experiences of support for the CO and his cause were varied, as some women were eager

¹¹⁸ *The Tribunal* 10 May 1917.

¹¹⁹ *The Tribunal* 27 December 1917.

¹²⁰ *The Tribunal* 26 April 1917.

¹²¹ *The Tribunal* 30 November 1916.

to be involved overtly in political activity or, through personal circumstances, may have decided that quiet, practical support for the cause of the CO and his family would be more appropriate. This consideration has never been made before, because the crucial and varied roles that women played in supporting the CO have been underestimated, ignored or marginalised by their contemporaries and subsequent historians of the era, whose focus has been on the political aspects of the anti-war activism undertaken by the NCF and its allies. Furthermore, the small advertisements allow some insight into the economic, social and emotional issues faced by the relatives of COs. Likewise, they reveal that there were women who, although not involved in direct political activism, were prepared to support a CO's relative through employment, provision of shelter, or funds. This realisation takes support for the CO and his cause beyond the women who were politically active on his behalf, into more nuanced and invisible areas of quiet and understated support.

Not only do the outdoor campaigns and the small advertisements reveal different aspects of women's contributions to campaigns on behalf of COs, they disclose that these overt and covert contributions to anti-war activity took place on the margins of war resistance as directed by the NCF. Furthermore, they offer a contrast to the office-based methods of campaigning in which women were involved at HQ, so broadening the perception and extent of war resistance undertaken by women beyond the conventional acknowledgements, enabling a more complete appreciation of the significance of the contribution that women made to the NCF, and their gendered positioning within the Fellowship.

Conclusion

The aims and objectives of this thesis were to explore the nature, significance and impact of war resistance activities of women involved with the NCF, an organisation that campaigned on behalf of COs within a larger AWM. The impetus for this thesis has been an hypothesis that more women were involved in the anti-war activity of the NCF than has previously been acknowledged by historians of the period, and that the contributions made by the women featured in the study enabled the NCF to maintain its campaign of opposition to conscription, and its support for the stance of the CO. During research for this study, it became apparent that women had had a far greater involvement and influence on the NCF than had been acknowledged in secondary sources. It became clear that this anti-war group enabled dozens of women who held religious and/or political aversion to war to be politically active in their challenge to the conflict.

The research for this study has shown that these women participated in a wide range of war resistance activities as both individuals and as members of groups. These activities ranged from political activism directed by the officers of the NCF to renting a room to a CO's wife. The women's undertakings and willingness, on the part of some, to risk their own freedom had considerable impact on the ability of the NCF to maintain its opposition to conscription and support for the stance of the CO. The findings have enabled further insight into the significance of the methods of war resistance engaged in by women during the First World War. Furthermore, such understanding could enable a broader appreciation of the methods women were willing and able to carry out to participate in war resistance.

The central questions addressed by the thesis concerned the extent to which the women's war resisting activities, on behalf of the NCF, contributed to the ability of the Fellowship to maintain its opposition to the war and how such an understanding of the significance and impact of these contributions could encourage a modification of the narrative of the NCF and the nature of its war resistance.

In response to the identification of this gap in understanding, the methodology deployed during research for this study was influenced by Scott's theory of invisibility, which accompanied her direction that women's roles in political history can be uncovered through a reading, or re-reading, of existing sources to reveal the presence of women. This would be particularly pertinent for records that would not normally be associated with women, such as official documents. This approach underpinned this study, as many

government documents were utilised, specifically HO, WO and Cabinet files, which pertained to the various aspects of the issues of war resistance that were of concern to government agencies, such as the police. Many of these documents have been consulted by historians of this period, but not necessarily with the aim of uncovering the role of women in war resistance activity. Re-reading the documents, with the aim of finding the names of women, garnered rich evidence of their political activities on behalf of the CO and pacifism. A further outcome of the use of the methodology developed for this study has been an expanded and deeper understanding of the significance of the contribution made to the war resistance movement by those women acknowledged in some narratives, such as Beauchamp, Smith, Tillard and Rinder. Their inclusion in the narrative shifts the emphasis from the men who founded the NCF, to the women who maintained its stance of war resistance and dissent from late 1916 through to the end of the war, leading to a deeper appreciation and understanding of the roles that these women, and their companions, took in war resistance.

Through a re-reading of official HO and WO files, an adjusted understanding of the role of women has been reached, along with the disclosure of several hitherto ignored and unacknowledged female anti-war activists, illustrating Scott's point that women get overlooked in the writing of political history. Reading the official sources specifically for the involvement of women in the anti-war movement has revealed that they made a considerable contribution to the campaigns of the NCF. Their numbers require that their political activism need no longer be obscured by the sacrifice or stance of the CO. Furthermore, this knowledge of their presence has unlocked the potential for a deeper understanding of the significance of the participation of women in the war resistance activities associated with the NCF. There has been, therefore, some recovery of the significance of the contribution made by women to the perseverance and, therefore, success of the NCF within the AWM. The presence of several women, who had previously been unaccounted for in histories of war resistance, has been noted, such as Miss Loolah in Weymouth, Charlotte Drake in London, Mrs Jenkinson at NCF HQ, and Mary Waid in Cumbria,¹ adding weight to the understanding of how women's presence can change the narrative.

¹ Miss Loolah see Chapter 7, p.188, Charlotte Drake see Chapter 3, pp.97-98, Mrs Jenkinson see Chapter 6 p.162, Kitty Read see Chapter 7 pp.194-196, Mary Waid see Chapter 6 p.186.

One outcome of the research undertaken has been the recovery of individual contributions to the collective work of the NCF. One such NCF employee, Miss Morgan Jones, gave the COIB a gravitas within peace and other politically active circles, through her initiatives in the organisation of the COIB, and her intelligent vision of its function within war resistance activism. Her work has been almost wholly disregarded by historians and commentators from the period, even though her presence is signalled in the papers for the Bureau's office finances. These documents have enabled her role and influence within the COIB to be highlighted, and her example is illustrative of how a woman, prominent and influential within an organisation, can become hidden from view, because the men who wrote the narratives of the organisation ignored or minimised her contribution to the work of the group. Miss Morgan Jones was very possibly at the inauguration of the COIB and was in regular correspondence with Edith Ellis of the FSC, with whom she had a cordial relationship, despite the difficulties the FSC had with the nature of the work of the COIB. In addition, Miss Morgan Jones contributed ideas to the development of the Bureau and enjoyed authority over staff.

A further element of the methodology for this study has been the use of collective biography, which has allowed focus on a small group of women, who held diverse motivations for opposing the conflict and engaging in war resistance, and who operated in isolation from women and other non-combatants who supported the war. The use of this flexible approach has allowed reflection upon one aspect, or extraordinary moment or period, in these women's lives, rather than a consideration of their whole lives. Furthermore, its use has enabled the bringing together of diverse people in their common aims. In another time or place they may not have worked together for a variety of reasons; class, ideology, gender, space. Cowman's² assessment of her own motivation, in using collective biography as a methodology, was that she wanted to investigate the effect that embarking on political activism had on an individual, rather than considering how a group of individuals shaped a political organisation.³ The research undertaken has indicated that the converse can be equally as valid, in that the coming together of the group of diverse individuals featured, who possessed various motivations for engaging in war resistance, affected the way the NCF developed, and therefore contributed to the ability of that organisation to maintain its opposition to the war. The women who became involved in the

² Krista Cowman 'Collective Biography' in Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire *Research Methods for History*, Edinburgh, 2012.

³ Krista Cowman 'Collective Biography', p.94.

NCF held a common objective in the support of the CO and a willingness to engage in war resistance, despite its risks of isolation and dangers of imprisonment, came from diverse social, religious and political backgrounds. For instance, Marshall, the most influential women and one of the most important officers of the Fellowship, was from a privileged middle-class background, which enabled her to work in an honorary capacity for the NCF. No other women held an unpaid post, yet all the women were educated, and some were professionals, such as Smith and Daunt, who were teachers. A further example of a contrast can be illustrated through motivation to engage in war resistance, found with Smith, Tillard and Beauchamp, who worked closely together in publishing *The Tribunal*. Tillard's motivation was influenced by her beliefs as a Quaker, while Smith had been engaged to a CO who died because of treatment received while in custody, and Beauchamp was a socialist, who went on to be amongst the first members of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

A further advantage in choosing collective biography as an integral part of the methodology has been that it has allowed a fragmentary collation, focusing on the war years, rather than a life biography. The times were clearly extraordinary, and the NCF and its focus on conscription and the CO, offered politically active women, along with those who had little or no experience of political agitation, a cause in which they could believe and serve. The methodology values the placement of a coherent (and chronological) narrative alongside an assessment, analysis and understanding of the context in which the featured groups of individuals operated.⁴

The contributions women made to the ability of the NCF to maintain its war resistance have been shown within this study to have been significant and extensive. Their inclusion broadens the perception of the nature of war resistance at this time, which has generally focused on the stance of the CO, and his determination to not to be conscripted. He required a support system and organisation to enable him to stay faithful to his conscience and the political activism promoted by Marshall, and the war resistance of the women who worked within the NCF, enabled him to continue his protest. The women participated in all the war resistance activities of the Fellowship as organisers, administrators, policy makers and the maintenance of propaganda and publicity. Some women supported the CO at court as designated NCF 'watchers,' who reported on the findings of the court, and were involved in Maintenance Committees, both locally and centrally, which ensured that funds were

⁴ Advice on constructing collective biography from Krista Cowman 'Collective Biography', p.97.

distributed to COs and their families when in need. In addition, women became involved in events which they promoted and encouraged women to support, such as singing outside the walls of prisons to lift prisoners' morale, and the raising of funds through local sales and garden parties. Their participation in the keeping of records of the information collected by watchers and from the family and friends of COs, enabled the NCF to demonstrate to the authorities that their actions and decisions were being monitored. The collated information was used in the persual of actions taken in cases of brutality, illness or unfair treatment. Questions were asked of the authorities in Parliament or in *The Tribunal*. These activities demonstrate that women were more broadly involved in acts of war resistance, at both central and local levels, than has previously been recognised, and that the number of women involved with the AWM and the NCF, was far higher than supposed. This supports the need for a reappraisal of the NCF and how it maintained its opposition to the war despite the incarceration of many of its male members meaning that they were unable to actively support the work of the Fellowship.

A further enquiry has been how this understanding and appreciation of the contribution of the women to the war resistance of the NCF adds to a wider understanding of the nature of war resistance activity throughout the conflict. An appreciation of the complexity of the women's contributions and their impact on the war resistance of the NCF, broadens the understanding of the extent of such radical women's contributions and involvement in the maintenance of anti-war activity. This can be viewed particularly through their role as shadow officials deployed by NCF to cover men who were sent to prison. Furthermore, local and district political activism, often led by women, made significant contributions to the campaigns of the Fellowship, as personified by the work of Simie Seruya and Miss Stewart, who worked for the London Division, alongside the dedication of Mrs Wray in Yorkshire, who kept her branch operational despite lack of other workers and volunteers, and Nellie Best and Kitty Read who organised singing outside London prisons.

The degree of women's war resistance shown through research for this study exposes the lack of acknowledgement and understanding of the importance of women's roles in both the sustenance of the NCF's anti-war activism and the extent and nature of women's war resistance generally. Women's roles in war resistance has been barely acknowledged by historians of the Home Front in the First World War, perpetuating the position of the NCF *Souvenir*.⁵ The role and importance of the scores of women, not named in the *Souvenir*,

⁵ See Chapter 2, pp.37 and 54.

have not been assessed or evaluated; in many instances, their contribution has been ignored or marginalised.⁶ Therefore, nothing has been written that directly assesses the variety of these pacifist women's contributions to the anti-war movement in Britain: this, despite the fact that women's roles in this war have been re-assessed in many ways, mainly through their contributions to the war effort, and to International Peace initiatives, in particular those of the WIL. Women's roles in the anti-war movement, within the NCF, have been minimised to the mention of a few women, namely Marshall, Rinder, Tillard, Beauchamp and Smith, all of whom worked in various capacities at NCF HQ in London.

A further reason for this gap in the narrative of the NCF could be the context of the time; women were working in the NCF as shadows for the men who went to prison, it was a temporary occurrence and was for the duration of the war only. In addition, the women were campaigning for a man's cause, and therefore might expect their contribution to be minimalised, even though they made an important contribution to the NCF's ability to maintain its opposition to the war and support the CO. A puzzling reason given for the omission in the *Souvenir* was the idea that there "were too many to mention,"⁷ an indication that there were a significant number of women who were engaged in the NCF campaign. Yet, in an age of lists of casualties, CO prisoners, COs with mental health issues and so on, a list of women involved with the Fellowship was too much to be researched or organised, reflecting the status of women at this time and during the war, as in many arenas of the Home Front during the war, the work women undertook was accepted for the duration only.

That the women were working within a gendered position should be understood, as the women were working as political activists, on behalf of a campaign that could only affect men; the repeal of conscription and then latterly the struggle against the consequences of the conscription act. At the same time, they challenged some gender roles as they worked within a mixed-sex environment, where some of them held authority over both men and women, while several held key posts within the organisation, such as Miss Morgan Jones, who was responsible for reporting to the JAC on the spending of the COIB. Men and women were paid the same rate for the same work, and women were paid more than men if they were in positions of authority, such as Tillard and Miss Morgan Jones. Some of the

⁶ See Boulton *Objection Overruled* 2nd ed. London 2014. For example, in the first publication of *Objection Overruled* women were referenced briefly, in the second edition, published in 2016 as part of the First World War 'celebrations' no new material had been added to an expanded Introduction.

⁷ R Runham Brown *No-Conscription Fellowship, A Souvenir of its work during the years 1914-1919*, London 1920.

women who operated outside the office environment of the NCF and COIB had to undertake some of their duties within male dominated public spaces, such as parliament, the courts martial, men's civil prisons, military barracks, and cells. The knowledge that women moved in such male public space to carry out the political duties of the NCF worker, extends the awareness of the extent and impact of women's involvement in the political activism of the Fellowship. Without their willingness to enter such space, then the NCF and the COIB would not have been able to track the location of so many COs and, thereby, support their stance against conscription.

Furthermore, it has been through Scott's recommendation that in order to understand the role of gender in the analysis of the past, there can be an appreciation and recognition of the extent and significance of the gendered power and authority held by the women in a narrative, and therefore the impact such involvement could have on historical events.⁸ This has been pertinent for this study as the research undertaken indicates that several of the featured women controlled key aspects of the work of the Fellowship, which at the time may have been regarded as masculine roles of authority such as printer, publisher or editor of *The Tribunal* or as supervisors of men's administrative work. This meant that they can be regarded as officers who possessed power and authority within the organisation, thereby enabling them to influence its direction, purpose and resilience. In addition, the study has shown that there were several women who used the gendered arena of domestic space to undertake war resistance, illustrating instances of how women demonstrated their power and authority in their support of the CO and his stance within a space which they controlled. Such an appreciation of the significance of the activities of a wide range of women, contrasts with the contemporary understanding that women possessed little power or authority within the war resistance movement as their contributions were minimalised, along with some historians' subsequent view of the women as being somewhat anonymous, and without a meaningful voice. Moreover, the recognition that women demonstrated their power and authority through this variety of gendered approaches to war resistance, assists in embracing a more rounded understanding of how the NCF maintained its war resistance despite internal and external opposition, loss of personnel and persecution.

One woman whose role in war resistance has been highlighted in this study is that of Catherine Marshall. Due to Marshall's large archive, historians of the war resistance movement have already recognised the importance of her role in the NCF, and consequently her position as an important campaigner for the NCF has been secured. This study's emphasis on the influence of her principles of political activism on the war

⁸ See Joan Wallach Scott 'Gender A Useful Category for historical analysis' in Joan Wallach Scott (ed) *Gender and The Politics of History*, Columbia 1999.

resistance of the Fellowship, makes it possible for some modification of the narrative of the NCF to be considered. Marshall's principles of political activism employed by the Fellowship, enabled it to keep the position of the CO in the public domain.⁹ To achieve this, the NCF became an active publicity machine, producing pamphlets and posters that informed its supporters and the public of its stance and values. Its most public article of propaganda and information was *The Tribunal* newspaper, which was produced every week from March 1916, until January 1920. During 1917 and 1918, the newspaper was 'kept alive', through the actions of Smith and Beauchamp, and the existence of a secret printing press located in Islington. For protecting the printing press, both Tillard and Beauchamp were jailed. Such defiance of the authorities enabled the newspaper to be printed weekly, so enabling a vital symbol of support for those engaged in all form of war resistance.

The chief method of seizing the psychological initiative was through the political lobbying. The politicians who supported the work of the NCF in Parliament often did so through questions to government ministers. This method of political activism became so essential to the campaign of the Fellowship that a weekly *COs Hansard* was published so that supporters could see the questions and the responses for themselves. The lobbying of MPs continued after Marshall had left the NCF due to ill health, when this activity was organised by Charles Ammon. Careful organisation was deemed as crucial for success, illustrated by the creation first of the Record and Investigations departments and then the COIB, which became Marshall's legacy to the cause of the CO and the Fellowship. This organisation, largely staffed by women, was led initially by Marshall, and then by her assistant Rinder and more latterly by Miss Morgan Jones. These records were used to maintain pressure on the authorities as through information collated from watchers and other supporters, the Fellowship was able to keep track of the men who refused to be conscripted. The information was used as evidence in the campaigns to have COs released from prison.

As Marshall held influence and authority within several departments of the NCF, the introduction of her principles of political activism, and their clarity of purpose, became central to the success of departments such as the COIB and the political departments in which she worked. In applying these principles, a sound organisational basis for the NCF was created, which enabled its continued existence and activism, even when she had moved away from the NCF, due to ill health.

⁹ Briefly these were: publicise and create activity, seize the psychological initiative and to be organised.

A further question posed was whether the results of the research have assisted in a broader understanding of women's involvement in war resistance of the NCF, and whether this could widen the perception of women's involvement in war resistance at other times and places. The NCF was one of several organisations, which when considered as a wider group, and using Tarrow's definition¹⁰ of the existence of contentious politics within social movements, created an AWM. This social movement, which consisted of a complex set of groups and individuals, who generally worked in a co-operative and supportive manner, despite their differing attitudes and approaches to war resistance. The AWM confronted elites, the government and its officials, over issues such as opposition to conscription and in furthering the claims of their members.

This definition has been helpful in moving towards an understanding of the nature and existence of the AWM, as it has assisted in explaining why it, and especially the NCF, was able to persist and maintain its objections to government war policy. It attracted those who had political, religious and moral objections to war. From the groups that comprised the AWM, the NCF was the most significant and successful war resistance organisation of the First World War, because it was able to accommodate a variety of positions on conscience. Furthermore, unlike other anti-war groups, the NCF provided a platform for both men and women, young and old, working class and middle class, intellectuals, and those with spiritual and religious reasons for opposing the war: in other words, a multiplicity of opinion, approach and motivation that the other prominent group, the UDC, was not able to embrace. The further distinction of the NCF in the war resistance movement was that it uniquely embraced and attracted men and women who came from varying political and religious backgrounds, yet in the one central cause of the conscientious objector, and his refusal to be conscripted into service for the furtherance of the war, they were able to work together.

Ideas were spread by the individuals who moved around the collective. For instance, some individuals were members of several anti-war groups; Helena Swanwick and Bertrand Russell were members of the UDC, while he was Chairman of the NCF and she of WIL. Catherine Marshall was involved with the UDC, WIL, NCF and the PNC. Groups supported each other by allowing leaflets to be distributed at their meetings from a variety of groups,

¹⁰ Sidney G. Tarrow *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, Cambridge, 2011, 3rd edition, p.4. Tarrow's definition of the existence of "contentious politics," is when "collective actors join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents around their claims or the claims of those they claim to represent."

speakers 'made the rounds', and activities of other groups were reported or advertised in the NCF newspaper, *The Tribunal*. A further reason why it is fair to suggest that there was an anti-war movement was the government's view of opposition to the war by such groups. HO papers and the Cabinet briefing papers indicate that all individuals and groups were treated with suspicion and attempts that involved police action were made to silence them. The definition has been helpful in addressing the issue of the diversity of motivation and commitment to war resistance of the women featured, as it supports the use of collective biography as the methodology selected to account for the bonding of women of diverse social, religious and political backgrounds during an extraordinary time.

Another way in which the research has led to a wider understanding of women's war resistance during the First World War and in the wider context was through the exploration of women's engagement in local anti-war activity, which has assisted in broadening the perception and extent of war resistance undertaken by women. One facet of locally overt political activism, uncovered and highlighted in this study, was the activity of singing outside prisons to boost the morale of the incarcerated COs. This politically motivated activity was organised by Kitty Read and Nellie Best, both of whom were local organisers for the Fellowship. This openly defiant act of war resistance commanded public space, and because of its provocative nature, attendance at such an event could have been fraught with danger, as the public were not sympathetic to the cause of the CO, and the presence of women at such a public event was no longer any guarantee that the group would not be harassed. This element of the campaign on behalf of the CO was only partially successful during the war as supporters were sometimes reluctant to participate. Nevertheless, the singing continued throughout the war and beyond, to highlight the plight and circumstance of the CO.

Some of the war resisting activities that women became involved in were more veiled than the other endeavours which have been addressed. Through an analysis of the small advertisements in *The Tribunal*, it has been possible to demonstrate that covert political support existed for the stance of the CO and his family. Such announcements and requests were related to the domestic environment, where some women may have been more comfortable; these included offers of work, companionship and housing to the CO and to his family.

The examination of the small advertisements in *The Tribunal* disclosed that such covert support for the CO and his cause were of a diverse nature. Some women became involved overtly in political activities such as singing or holding events to raise funds, which are present in the small advertisements, but others, possibly through personal circumstances, chose quiet, practical support for the cause of the CO and his family as more appropriate and practicable. In addition, the small advertisements in the newspaper allow some insight into the economic, social and emotional issues faced by the relatives of COs. Likewise, they reveal that there were women who although not involved in direct political activism, were prepared to support a CO's relative through employment, provision of shelter or funds. This realisation takes support for the CO and his cause beyond the women who were publicly politically active on his behalf, into more nuanced and almost invisible areas of quiet and understated support. They disclose that overt and covert contributions to war resistance took place on the margins of war resistance as directed by NCF HQ. This consideration has never been made before, because the crucial and varied roles that less well-known, or even anonymous, women played in the support of the CO and his cause, have been underestimated, ignored or marginalised by their contemporaries and subsequent historians of the era. A further reason for such omissions is that the war resistance offered by the women in the small advertisements has been hidden, and only uncovered through the theoretical approaches advised by Scott and her successors. The evidence disclosed demonstrates that more than a few women were prepared to undertake low level acts of resistance and defiance, through discreet assistance for the CO via support for his family. These discoveries promote a wider understanding of women's war resistance during the First World War and indicate that women were willing to participate in differing types and levels of conspicuousness.

The incorporation of the contributions made by the women featured in this study into the narrative of the NCF, means that a deeper understanding of the nature of war resistance can be attained. The revelation of the number of women who committed themselves to the aims and campaigns of the NCF validates the concern that women had been marginalised or even excluded from the narratives and that by such an exclusion a gap had been created in the account of the resilience of the NCF in maintaining its opposition to conscription and the war. The featured women's contributions to war resistance during the First World War went a long way towards enabling the CO's personal stance of conscience to be maintained throughout the conflict. The gendered roles performed by women contributed substantially to the narrative of war resistance undertaken at this time.

Further, the involvement of the women establishes that war resistance can be viewed as more than the recognisable stance of the CO, a preparedness to go to prison by both men and women or engage in public confrontation with the authorities. The narrative of war resistance can now include the co-operation of diverse groups of women, brought together by the cause of the CO, who worked together to accumulate knowledge about the persecuted, publicise the actions that constituted war resistance, and to communicate with and support other groups and individuals who opposed the war. The women established that, for war resistance to be sustained, they had to be flexible and adapt to the difficulties encountered in the form of persecution from the authorities, and that knowledge was a powerful tool, that if used quickly and effectively, could promote the cause of the CO and enhance their groups' ability to sustain support for him.

Further questions raised by thesis

These findings open the possibilities for further research, on the women themselves, the nature of war resistance, and the role that women assume in anti-war agitation and pacifism.

This thesis realises the potential for further study into how these women's experiences in war resistance might have informed their political choices in the years following the Armistice of 1918, and the extent to which their political experience and political activism in the years leading to the war may have led them to choose the NCF as the vehicle to express their antipathy towards the war. Further consideration could be made of the political networks that informed women's roles in anti-war activity, and the extent to which these encouraged and sustained the women in their war resistance.

Opportunities for research raised by the conclusions of this study could include investigations into the nature, extent and significance of the roles, if any, women played in the war resistance activities of other mixed sex anti-war groups, such as the UDC, FOR and FSC. Assessment of the impact, or not, of the presence of women, in all or any of these groups, would expand the understanding of the extent and nature of war resistance in mainland Britain. Additionally, a wider understanding of the roles of women working in local and district areas would enhance evidence of their contribution to war resistance. In turn, this would enable further conclusions to be drawn about the status of the NCF within the AWM, as a crucial group within the movement, and as a group which utilised the experience and abilities of women who were prepared to resist war.

The compilation of a database of all women known to have been involved in anti-war activity could incorporate their war resistance work and their previous and subsequent political activity, supporting enquiries about typicality and the legacy of women war resisters. Such a database would enable a study of the political and social diversity of the women who chose to be war resisters

The findings unlock the potential to examine the extent of the legacy for peace and anti-war activism left by the women featured in the study, through political, social or humanitarian campaigns with which they became involved. This could generate interest or enquiries into the nature of the changing role of women in the inter-war period and enable

some questioning of the idea that the British women's movement, so dynamic in the years preceding the war, lost its vitality and direction in the years after the war.

The time seems ripe for a similar spotlight to be further shone on the women who chose to become peace activists and war resisters in the years leading up to, and during, the Second World War. Women were conscripted into the war effort through such groups as The Women's Land Army and were imprisoned if they refused to serve. Further research is needed to investigate whether women used more covert methods to resist the war as they had during the First World War.

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Appendix A

No-Conscription Fellowships Statements of Principles

July 1916

Resolution passed at Nat Commtee 15 July 1916

“That while the Fellowship should continue to make its principle object the exposure of militarism and the spread of pacifist views, it should make every possible effort, by political and other means, to secure for its members and other COs, those forms of exemptions allowed by the Act which they applied for at the tribunals or can conscientiously accept.”

Appendix B

Women's war resistance in association with the NCF.

The women listed in this biographical appendix engaged in the war resisting activities recorded here, on behalf of, or in association with, the NCF. Some personal biographical details have been included where known and where they have been considered relevant to the years of the First World War, the era of the focus of this study.

Total number of women in this appendix: 141.

Number of women who were involved in organisational affairs with the NCF: 99.

The number of women who appear in this appendix whose war resistance has been discovered as a result of the research for this thesis: 78.

Unless otherwise stated, information about branch and divisional secretaries is from the Divisional and Branch Secretaries 1917 list from Thomas C. Kennedy *Hound of Conscience A History of the No-Conscription Fellowship*, Arkansas 1981, Appendix A, pp.294-301.

Women who were district or branch secretaries in May 1916 are identified as such by the annotation: May 1916 PCOD.¹

Mrs Abernathy

Spoke at Divisional Secretaries Conference, 1917, spoke of difficulties in Scotland, branches isolated, good work in Glasgow and Dundee. "She noted a tendency amongst men who were exempt to drop out of active work."² *Trib.* 24.5.1917

Mrs Adams

Branch Secretary N-C F Cambridge.

Priscilla Albright

29 Frederick Road, Edgbaston

Wrote to Marshall expressing her concern that "women should not do anything to protest against [conscription]." She proposed a march in Parliament Square and believes that Marshall's suffragists seem to be "the only people who can organise."³ Further letter expressing concerns about the direction NCF taking.⁴

¹ PCOD citation NCF Divisional and Branch Secretaries 27May 1916, D/MAR 4/4 and D MAR 4/5, CEMP.

² *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

³ Letter to CEM from Priscilla Albright 23 April 1916, D MAR4/3, CEMP.

⁴ Letter to CEM from Priscilla Albright 25 October 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

Mrs Reid Andrews

Pear Tree Corner, Alyan, Romford, Essex.

Branch Secretary N-C F Grays.

May 1916 PCOD.

Lady Clare Annesely

Sister to Constance Malleson.

Friend of Gladys Rinder and mentioned in a Home Office note as Lady X. Marshall wrote to Philip Snowden to complain about this treatment of Annesley and Rinder. "Neither Lady Clare nor Miss Rinder has ever had anything to do with suffragette agitation, but both are members of the UDC and NCF." ⁵According to Russell, she "threw herself into the work of the NCF."⁶

Margaret Ashton⁷

Signatory of an NCF pamphlet *The NCF: A Record of its Activities*.⁸

Kathleen Attlee

Set up the Poplar NCF Maintenance Committee at the Poplar and Stepney NCF branch.
Wife of Thomas Attlee, CO.⁹

Reported as Treasurer at London Divisional Convention. 23 September 1916. D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

Hatty Baker

CO pastor in Plymouth. Quaker.

Attended Plymouth Conference, seconding a resolution made by ex-soldier concerning treatment of COs.¹⁰

Miss Barralet

Typist or admin person probably paid. Left COIB beginning of Feb.1918.¹¹

Florence M Beach (nee Preston)

⁵ Letter to Philip Snowden from CEM, 18 June 1916, D MAR 4/7, CEMP.

⁶ Bertrand Russell *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, Volume II*, 19114-64, London, 1968, p25.

⁷ <http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38511?rskey=Ru5fPE&result=2>

⁸ *The NCF: A Record of its Activities*, London nd, D MAR 4/7, CEMP.

⁹ Clive Barrett *Subversive Peacemakers, War Resistance 1914-1918: An Anglican Perspective*, Cambridge 2014, p.157-161.

¹⁰ *The Tribunal* 2 August 1917.

¹¹ Letter to Ellis from Rinder, 1 Feb.1918. SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff.

64 Briscoe Buildings, Brixton Hill, SW2.

Streatham Branch. Letter to Marshall from Beach, informing her about her change of name as she had got married. She indicated that she did not use titles.¹²

Kate M Beaton

184 Perth Road

Cowdenbeath

Scottish Divisional Secretary May 1916 PCOD.

Joan Beauchamp

Published *The Tribunal* from Autumn 1917 to April 1918. Worked closely with Lydia Smith.

Summoned with Bertrand Russell to appear at Bow Street Magistrates 9 February 1917 over the article, 'The German Peace Offer' which appeared in 3 January 1918 edition of *The Tribunal*. In this article he alluded to American soldiers being involved in strike breaking, an occupation they are used to carrying out at home (paraphrase)¹³ Fined £60 and £15 and 15 shillings costs. Russell sentenced to 6 months second division. Sentenced appealed against. The appeal was held on 1st May 1918 and dismissed. Beauchamp refused to pay her fine and, although the magistrate was reluctant, she was sent to prison for one month in the First Division.¹⁴

A second charge was brought against Beauchamp on the grounds of publishing a false statement in a published letter from a CO who wrote about the respect for which COs were held by the regular army, hearing adjourned and charge later dropped as defence offered to support truth of the statement.

Substitute General Secretary for Violet Tillard when Tillard in prison in July/August 1918.

Nellie Best

98 Manchuria Road, Nightingale Lane, Clapham SW.

Secretary of Kennington NCF.¹⁵

Announcement of singing party formed to sing outside Wormwood Scrubs every Sunday evening.¹⁶

Sentenced to 6 months in prison for making statements prejudicial to recruiting.¹⁷

¹² Letter to CEM from Florence M Beach 3 July 1917, D/MAR 4/21, CEMP

¹³ *The Tribunal* 3 January 1918

¹⁴ Needs citations

¹⁵ *The Tribunal* 26 April 1917.

¹⁶ *The Tribunal* 26 April 1917.

¹⁷ Ken Weller *Don't be a soldier*, London 1985, p75.

Paid to picket at Wandsworth Prison, which entailed standing outside prison in support of COs inside, sometimes to meet those men released ¹⁸

Mrs Beswick

Accompanied members of E Dulwich NCF branch to House of Commons to see MPs May 1916.¹⁹

Helen Bowen Wedgewood

Hoddenshall Oaks, Stone, Staffordshire.

A member of the Stoke branch of the NCF. Gives £1 a month to the branch for maintenance work Engaged in distributing appeals and publicity for NCF with her sister Rosamund. "Neither of us have had the courage to go on the stump yet- father doesn't encourage us to either."²⁰

Rosamund Bowen Wedgewood

Sister of Helen, distributed Siegfred Sassoon's peace statement, "to the scandal of Stone."²¹

Mrs Brewster

Wrote to Archbishop of Canterbury about COs. Letter in reply from Archbishop passed to Marshall.²²

Lilla Brockway (nee Harvey Smith)²³.

Wife to A Fenner Brockway. Thought of the idea of a Fellowship for those who wanted to oppose conscription.

Had a close friendship with Marshall and kept up a correspondence with her through the war supporting her work and position in the NCF.²⁴

Jessie Brodie

Declined the offer of a post at NCF because of the "nature of the temporary work." As she was living independently the "difficulty was insuperable." If she was living at home, then "I should not hesitate to take this post."²⁵

¹⁸ Letter to CEM from Harrop 12 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁹ Letter to Marshall from ME Hoggins, 18 May 1916, D MAR 4/5, CEMP.

²⁰ Letter to Miss Marshall from Helen Bowen Wedgewood 13 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

²¹ Letter to Miss Marshall from Helen Bowen Wedgewood 13 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

²² D MAR 4/21 10 July 1917 CEMP).

²³ https://menwhosaidno.org/context/women/brockway_l.html

²⁴ Letters to CEM from Lila Brockway 11 December, 30 December 1916, New Year 1917, 3 January 1917, D MAR 4/15, CEMP.

²⁵ Letter to CEM from Jessie Brodie April 1917, D MAR 4/18, CEMP.

Mrs E Cahill.

60 Limas Grove, Lewisham.

Dulwich Branch Secretary.

May 1916 PCOD.

Visited COs Letter from her to HQ re A.E Allen.²⁶

Clara Cole writes of her contribution to war resistance. Cahill "worked unceasingly in visiting prisoners, taking up any and every task possible." She "attended (Dulwich branch) regularly she could be relied on to volunteer for some task and carry out the work most thoroughly." She "knew the ropes" and "mothered many sons beside her own."²⁷

Mrs Annie Chappell

23 Kensall Road

Victoria Park Bristol

Bristol Branch Secretary, May 1916 PCOD.

Mrs Mary Churchwarden (or Churchyard).

47 Connaught Road, Norwich.

Branch Secretary Norwich.

Clara Cole²⁸

Member of Dulwich branch.

An ex postal worker sent to prison for 5 months with friend Rosa Hobhouse.

Started a group called League Against War and Conscription. Had been nursing in a war hospital. wanted to draw people's attention to horror so she and Rosa took to the road and told people about it. after 5 days arrested in Kettering Northants.

With conscription she stood in Trafalgar square, with her "Stop The War " badge on and a banner which read 'League Against Conscription', she was arrested, brought to court but charges dropped, and according to Sylvia Pankhurst she did this many times.²⁹

Mrs Cole organised a deputation of 30 people to HoC in November 1919 to demand the release of those COs still in prison.³⁰

²⁶ Letter to HQ from Mrs Cahill, D MAR 4/10 16 September 1916, CEMP.

²⁷ Clara Cole *They Did Not Fight A Record of British Objectors to War 1914-18. How they were man handled, imprisoned, starved and why they objected*, Manchester 1936. p57.

²⁸ https://menwhosaidno.org/context/women/cole_clara.html

²⁹ Sylvia Pankhurst *The Home Front*. p. 16

³⁰ *The Tribunal* 28 November 1919.

Wrote an account of her war resistance. Visited COs She knew the Miles brothers (COs) and had contact with wives of COs. ³¹

Miss Crutchley

Brook Houses, Little Mayfield, Derbyshire

Divisional Secretary Division 2 (North West England).

May 1916 PCOD.

Mrs Connor.

Shephards Bush

Wife of CO. Advertisement to let rooms in her house.³²

Mrs Coventon

A report to the National Committee states she was a shorthand typist for COIB, at the John Street. office³³ Left COIB by Sept.1917.³⁴

Helen Crawford³⁵

Initiated the WPC in Glasgow. A Socialist and suffrage activist.³⁶

Marion Daunt.

School teacher from Brighton. Address in Brighton, 9 Crown Street, Brighton. Prosecuted at Brighton Police Court for distributing NCF circular *Maximilian*.³⁷

Letter to Allen accompanied by a reference for Daunt asked for work for her at NCF as she had lost her position as teacher because of her peace work and would "make a good interviewer."³⁸

National Committee News 1918 Div.6 (Home Counties) substitute Marion Daunt for J.W. Brunt.³⁹

Letter to Allen from Daunt states she is a Maintenance Secretary.

Miss N.J. Dawtry.

³¹ Clara Cole *They Did Not Fight* p.56.

³² *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

³³ July 1917 D MAR 4/21

³⁴ Rowntree Gillett Papers FL

³⁵ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-40301?rskey=a0CPJj&result=1](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-40301?rskey=a0CPJj&result=1).

³⁶ Helen Crawford Unpublished Autobiography, nd, Marx Memorial Library, London.

³⁷ *The Tribunal* 29 June 1917

³⁸ Letter to Allen from HE 27 July 1916, D MAR 4/8, CEMP.

³⁹ *The Tribunal* 17 January 1918.

35 Perth Road, Dundee.

Branch Secretary, Dundee.

Letter to NCF HQ with information on David Nairn and his whereabouts, possibly indicating she was a watcher.⁴⁰

Miss Annie Delaney

68, Prosser Street, Park Village, Wolverhampton.

Branch Secretary, Wolverhampton.

Charlotte Despard⁴¹

Leader of WFL. Attended number of anti-war meetings.

Agnes Dollan

Friend and colleague of Helen Crawford. Involved in war resistance activities in Glasgow.⁴²

Miss Doncaster

Escort for Brockway on his release from prison in March 1917. He would go to her house and "stay there as long as possible."⁴³

Charlotte Drake

49 Crediton House, Custom House, Woolwich.

Spoke at meeting protesting about imprisonment of Nellie Best 6 March 1916.⁴⁴

Arrested with Emily Kiley and Lily Watts 12 March 1916 STW stickers on post boxes in Millwall. Other activities reported in police report: meeting at Caxton Hall 15 November 1914, spoke at WFL meeting 25 January 1915. Spoke at Victoria Park Meeting 23 January 1916 to protest against conscription.

Distributed anti-conscriptionist leaflets at TUC Congress in Bristol, 16 January 1916 (with Nora Smyth). Husband worked at Woolwich Arsenal.⁴⁵

Mrs G Duppa.

Lead article in *The Tribunal*: 'A Tribute to COs'.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Letter to HQ from Miss Dawtry, 15 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

⁴¹ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-37356?rskey=EstF4r&result=2](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-37356?rskey=EstF4r&result=2)

⁴² Helen Crawford Unpublished Autobiography, nd, Marx Memorial Library, London.

⁴³ Letter to Mr Chalmers from Marshall 6 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

⁴⁴ TNA HO 45/10741/263275.

⁴⁵ TNA HO 45/10741/263275.

⁴⁶ *The Tribunal* 24 October 1918.

Edith Ellis

Quaker. Honorary Secretary at FSC. Funded NCF.

Mother Mrs Ellis looked after Clifford Allen when he was released for prison.

Mrs Fenner

Clapton, NE London.

Advertisement placed in *The Tribunal* for help for COs wife in Colchester.⁴⁷

Mary Fox

Member of the FSC and based at Devonshire House. She sent information about COs to COIB.⁴⁸

Joan Fry⁴⁹

District Secretary for Home Counties. Elected onto National Committee for NCF in January 1918.⁵⁰

Corresponded with Marshall about Allen and her concerns about his health because of his incarceration.⁵¹ Worked in Records department and gathered evidence and information about work conditions in the HO Camps.⁵²

Mrs Gibbins

Substitute for Hugh Gibbins Division 5.

Mentioned as Divisional Secretary in National Committee News 1918.⁵³

On ballot paper for elections of National Committee, December 1917.⁵⁴

Miss D Gillins

6 Salisbury Road

Leicester

Secretary Leicester Branch, May 196 PCOD.

⁴⁷ *The Tribunal* 8 February 1917.

⁴⁸ SERV 4/8 Reports /Staff, FL.

⁴⁹ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38522?rskey=1wmdoe&result=1](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38522?rskey=1wmdoe&result=1)

⁵⁰ *The Tribunal* 18 January 1918.

⁵¹ Letter to Marshall from Joan Fry 2 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

⁵² See for example letter to Miss Fry from G Binson of the work centre at Wakefield 10 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

⁵³ *The Tribunal* 17 January 1918.

⁵⁴ Ballot Paper for elections of NCF National Committee 15 December 1917, D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

Mrs Lillie (or Lily) Girdlestone

7 Devon Road

Fishponds Bristol.

Attended Military Service Tribunal hearings for NCF. Tried at Bristol Police Court, for helping COs on the run. 1 December 1916.⁵⁵

Miss Glaisyer

FOR representative on JAC.⁵⁶

Mrs Glidden

Despatched and addressed circulars to individual supporters. Worked with Tillard.⁵⁷

Mrs Goodwin

124 Hampton Road, Bristol.

Reported to Rinder as an administrator for the Visitors Department about a situation with COs held at Portsmouth Prison regarding the Governor insisting that they undertake war work by sewing mail bags. Rinder's noted on report that it is very difficult to take up the case without source and detailed information.⁵⁸

Eva Gore-Booth⁵⁹

Candidate for National Committee December 1917.⁶⁰

Alice Graham

Maintenance fund committee.⁶¹

Miss F Graham

73 Wentworth Road, Golders Green.

Branch Secretary NCF Golders Green (to 23 July 1917).

Member of the sub-committee for the Friends of Freedom Garden Fete.⁶²

Mrs Greener

⁵⁵ Western Daily Press, 2 December 1916, PCOD.

⁵⁶ Letter to Ellis from Hunter 5 June 1918, SERV4/8, Reports/Staff, FL.

⁵⁷ Organisation at HQ memo. D MAR 4/11.

⁵⁸ Memorandum to Visitors Department from Mrs Goodwin, 31 January 1917, D MAR 5/15, CEMP.

⁵⁹ <http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-37473?rskey=dbNKMT&result=1>

⁶⁰ Ballot Paper for elections of NCF National Committee 15 December 1917, D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

⁶¹ COIB files SER/4, FL.

⁶² Letter to BS Hoggins from Harrop 3 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

Wrote to Tillard to ask her to investigate the food situation at Durham Prison where her husband was being held.⁶³

Mrs Barbara Halliday

68 Polworth Gardens, Edinburgh.

Letter sent to Marshall/the NCF which contained information about a petition a “combined group of anti-conscriptivist bodies” wish to send to the government. Halliday appears to be an organiser or secretary of an NCF branch as she mentions receiving *The Tribunal* for members and requests central office’s comments on the idea of the petition.⁶⁴

Miss J M Hall

The Fletts, Thirsk, Yorkshire.

Contact for Thirsk and North Allerton and district Peace League

Miss Edith Hampton.

2 Hurst Road, Northumberland Heath, Erith, Kent.

Branch Secretary Erith.

Miss Harris

Involved with collecting “left off” clothing for COs. Worked with Marshall at NCF HQ.⁶⁵

Letter to her from COIB re: Thomas Bellow and separation allowance 30 Jan 1918.⁶⁶

Miss M A Harris

Address given as Swansea Socialist Centre, The Bomb Shop, Sidehall Building, Alexandra Road, Swansea.

Branch Secretary Swansea.

Mrs Harrison

332 Whitechurch Road, Cardiff.

Divisional Secretary Wales.

Miss Hart

⁶³ Letter to Tillard from Mrs Greener of Newcastle, 14 March 1918, SERV4/7, COIB General, FL.

⁶⁴ Letter to NCF Central office from Mrs Barbara Halliday 23 April 1916. The petition was concerned with the final vote about to take place in Parliament on the MSA, which would introduce conscription.

⁶⁵ Mentioned in letter to CEM from Mrs LE Spintis, 10 January 1917, D MAR 4/15, CEMP.

⁶⁶ SERV/4 COIB papers FL.

Shorthand Typist for COIB and had worked for Kentish Town NCF, according to Miss Morgan Jones she was “quite sympathetic.”⁶⁷

Miss Harvey

c/o N.C.W, 8 Merton House, Salisbury Court.

Branch Secretary Walthamstow.

Requesting info from Marshall about a man selling Christmas cards who claimed to be a CO. Requested Marshall to write to him to ask him to meet her at office to see if he is “genuine case.”

Mrs Harvey Smith

Accompanied Miss Doncaster in escorting Brockway on his release from prison “if the escort allows” to Miss Doncaster’s house.⁶⁸

Miss H Hatrill

48 Telephone Road Southsea.

Branch Secretary Portsmouth to August 1917 when she was replacement by Mary A Poole.

Grace Hawkins

c/o Mrs Jones, 31 Albany Road, Balby, Doncaster.

Distributed *The Tribunal* and other NCF literature at peace meetings.⁶⁹

Emily Hobhouse⁷⁰

A pacifist and sympathiser with the cause of the CO advertised in *The Tribunal* for domestic help.⁷¹

Mrs Margaret Hobhouse

Mother of Stephen Hobhouse, a Quaker CO whose plea for her son’s release from prison was published as *I Appeal Unto Caesar*.⁷²

⁶⁷ Lett to Ellis from M Morgan-Jones 1 May 1918, SERV4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

⁶⁸ Letter to Mr Chalmers from Marshall 6 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

⁶⁹ Letter to Marshall from Grace Hawkins 1 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

⁷⁰ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38520?rskey=QPWX1V&result=2](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38520?rskey=QPWX1V&result=2)

⁷¹ *The Tribunal* 30 November 1916

⁷² *Margaret Hobhouse, I Appeal Unto Caesar, London 1916.*

Contribution of funds to NCF.⁷³

Rosa Hobhouse

36 Enfield Buildings

Shoreditch

Wife to Stephen Hobhouse, CO and Quaker.

Friends with Clara Cole.

Mrs A Hookey

17 Spurgeon Road, Pokesdown, Bournemouth.

Branch Secretary, Bournemouth.

Housekeeper (no name given on any accounts)

COIB at Adam Street. On petty cash accounts ⁷⁴

Miss A Hughes

Report on COs working at Llannion Reservoir. She “went to the reservoir to see conditions for herself.” She wrote letters on own initiative to Philip Snowden MP, Mr Llewellyn Williams the local MP and Brace at the HO.⁷⁵

Elizabeth B Hutchinson

4 Oakland Road

Redland

Bristol

Attended Military Service Tribunal hearings for NCF. Tried at Bristol Police Court, for helping COs on the run. 1 December 1916.⁷⁶

Rachel Jeffrey

Edinburgh Branch.

Sent an account to Marshall about “rowdy and difficult meetings in Scotland for the women speakers.”⁷⁷

⁷³ Letter to Marshall from Margaret Hobhouse, D/MAR 4/20 June 1917, CEMP.

⁷⁴ Statements of expenditure 16 to 14 May 1916, SERV 4/8 Reports/staff, FL.

⁷⁵ Letter to CEM from Mrs A Hughes 7 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

⁷⁶ Western Daily Press, 2 December 1916, PCOD.

⁷⁷ Letter to Marshall from Rachel Jeffreys 21March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

Miss Jenkins

Appears on the petty cash accounts for the COIB at NCF HQ, Adam Street paid 5s a week.⁷⁸Suggested to be retained permanently in COIB.⁷⁹

Mrs Jenkinson

Worked in basement in York Buildings, despatched literature, Tribunals, Hansards “almost wholly propaganda work.”⁸⁰ Packed and despatched parcels⁸¹.

Dorothy Jennings

Wrote to Marshall asking for details of a proposed planned demonstration on behalf of men illegally arrested. She would like to attend, but she lived in Whaddon near Royston in Hertfordshire which she described as “out of the way,” so she needs plenty of notice which was why she had written to Marshall.⁸²

Miss A E Jones

S Kennington Oval, S E.

Branch Secretary Kennington

May 1916 PCOD.

Mrs Kaye

32 Sycamore Street, Stock Lane, Barnsley.

Requested *The Tribunal* supplements on behalf of friend Grace Dawkins.⁸³

Miss Gwendoline Kemball

Lived with Miss Stewart at 31 Markham Square, Chelsea, SW3 and then moved to 11 Station Road, Hampton Wick. Invited to be Marshall’s secretary in response to Kemball’s enquiry about work with NCF.⁸⁴

Married Aylmer Rose after the war. Personal Secretary to Allen according to Aylmer Rose.⁸⁵

Miss Kersley

⁷⁸ Statement of expenditure 16 to 14 May 1916, SERV 4/8 Reports/staff, FL.

⁷⁹ Rowntree Gillett Papers FL nd (possibly Sept 1917).

⁸⁰ Memorandum concerning ‘Organization at HQ’ probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916. D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

⁸¹ July 1917, D MAR 4/21, CEMP.

⁸² Letter to CEM from Dorothy Jennings, 16 April 1916, CEMP. No demonstration took place. No indication in Marshall’s papers that she or anyone else replied to Dorothy Jennings.

⁸³ Postcard to Marshall from Mrs Kaye 9 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

⁸⁴ Letter to Marshall from G Kemball 29 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

⁸⁵ Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, The Liddle Collection, Tape 530.

Typist⁸⁶

Mrs Katherine King

6 Glyn Avenue, Christchurch Road, Doncaster.

Branch Secretary, Doncaster.

May 1916 PCOD.

Miss Eva Kyle

1 Arundel Mansions, Fulham SW6.

Worked as Marshall's secretary.

Letter to Marshall from Aylmer Rose 27 Nov 1916 referencing him having sent her (CEM), Miss Kyles salary and petty cash. The amount in total was £4 10s (not clear how much salary was).⁸⁷Updated her on work undertaken at the office while Marshall away and commented on policy.⁸⁸

Mrs Winifred Lamb⁸⁹

Bordon Wood. Liphook, Hants.

Friend of Helen Bowen Wedgewood, who would be willing to distribute appeals (propaganda).⁹⁰

Mrs Jack Lees

63 Gainsborough Road, Newcastle on Tyne.

Divisional Secretary Division 3 (North East England).

May 1916 POCD.

At second divisional conference spoke of NCCL campaign in NE with which NCF members had co-operated.⁹¹

Resigned as Divisional Secretary in August 1917 due to husband's ill health.⁹²

⁸⁶ 'Work at HQ Recommendations from meeting of London Members to National Committee 1 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

⁸⁷ Letter to Marshall from Rose, 27 November 1916, D MAR 4/11, CEMP.

⁸⁸ Letter to Marshall from Eva Kyle 8 June 1917, D MAR 4/20, CEMP.

⁸⁹ Letter to Marshall from Helen Bowen Wedgewood 13 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.
<http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-67872?rsk=PAOh3s&result=1>.

⁹⁰ Letter to Marshall from Helen Bowen Wedgewood 13 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

⁹¹ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

⁹² Minutes of National Committee Meeting 31 August 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

Miss Loolah

Reported to the Home Office in June 1916, by the Devon Constabulary, for issuing a pamphlet, 'Peace by Negotiation', published by the PNC. She had been asking people to sign a petition to the PM, requesting he start peace negotiations.⁹³

Miss Lynch

Associated with the WSF and spoke at an organised weekly 'Peace Picket' in September 1917 in Islington alongside Mrs Nellie Best of the NCF⁹⁴, and Miss Lynch of the WSF.⁹⁵

Constance Malleson (Colette O'Neil)

Worked in office for NCF.⁹⁶

Addressed envelopes in the office.⁹⁷

Mrs F.A. Mann

4 Rolandale Mansions, Holmdale Road, Hampstead.

May 1916 Secretary Hampstead Branch, PCOD.

Divisional Secretary South and South East (Division 6).

Catherine Marshall⁹⁸

27 Catherine Street Westminster W

Honorary Secretary of the Associates Political Committee at NCF.

Member of the West Central Branch of NCF.⁹⁹Member of National Committee.

Acting Honorary Secretary of NCF Summer 1917.

Founded COIB March 1916.

Personally, involved in Parliamentary lobbying. Marshall tended to meet with the most prominent politicians, such as a member of a private deputation received by Herbert Asquith PM on 11 May 1916.¹⁰⁰ She was the only female member of a deputation from the JAC to 21 MPS 27 June 1916.¹⁰¹

⁹³ TNA HO45/10742/263275. Petitions were called memorials. This memorial called for the PM, "at the earliest opportunity [to promote] negotiations with the object of securing a just and lasting peace."

⁹⁴ She had been involved with the Anti-Conscription League at the beginning of the war.

⁹⁵ *The Daily Herald* 1 September 1917.

⁹⁶ Constance Malleson *After Ten Years, A Personal Record*, London 1931.

⁹⁷ Bertrand Russell *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell Volume II 1914-1964*, p25.

⁹⁸ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38527?rsk=vsUsRW&result=1](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38527?rsk=vsUsRW&result=1).

⁹⁹ Letter to Marshall from Marion Peppercorn referring to branch meetings for West Central Branch 19 July 1917, D MAR 4/21, CEMP.

¹⁰⁰ Letter to Herbert Asquith PM from Marshall, 19 June 1916, D MAR 4/7, CEMP.

¹⁰¹ 'Report on deputation from Members of JAC', 27 June 1916, D MAR 4/7, CEMP.

Attempted to meet with prominent men to clarify the CO position, wrote to Edith Ellis at FSC to ask her to “help her set up a meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury.” As she can “[vouch] for me as a responsible person who knows the facts.”¹⁰²

Candidate for National Committee elections December 1917.¹⁰³

Dorothy Mackenzie

Administrative duties at COIB.

Experienced financial difficulties in working for COIB as her family did not approve of her working for Socialists.¹⁰⁴

Miss Frances Melland

Member Manchester branch and involved in producing a journal for the Manchester NCF members.¹⁰⁵

Margaret Morgan Jones

Worked for COIB. Evidence shows that she was responsible for paying invoices and liaised with Edith Ellis who it seemed had control of the purse strings for COIB.

Let to Mary Fox at FSC requesting information about COs¹⁰⁶.

COIB Report to Nat Cmmtee her post described as indexing, which she does with a Mr Savage.¹⁰⁷

Miss Morris

COIB Filing, addressing and General Office Work¹⁰⁸

Mrs Jesse M Munro

17 Cochran Street, Falkirk.

Branch Secretary Falkirk.

May 1916 PCOD.

¹⁰² Letter to Edith Ellis from CEM 15 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP. The meeting did not take place as Archbishop was ill. Letter to Marshall from GKA Bill, Archbishop’s Secretary 15 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

¹⁰³ Ballot Paper for elections of NCF National Committee 15 December 1917, D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

¹⁰⁴ Letter to Ellis from McKenzie 30 April 1918 SERV 4/8 Reports/Staff, FL.

¹⁰⁵ Letter to Marshall from Frances Melland 22 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

¹⁰⁶ Letter to Fox from Miss Morgan Jones 17 Feb. 1918 SERV 4/8 Reports/staff, FL.

¹⁰⁷ COIB Report, July 1917, D MAR 4/21, CEMP.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Organisation at HQ’ July 1917, D MAR 4/21, CEMP.

Mrs A Mycicle

From Leigh. branch of NCF ¹⁰⁹

Mrs N

Required help with her children but was unable to place the advertisement in *The Tribunal* herself so it was placed by Mrs Fenner. ¹¹⁰

Miss Neal

Shorthand typist at Duke Street¹¹¹

Promoted from publicity department to work in Finance under Miss Stewart, September 1917.¹¹²

Marjory Newbold¹¹³

30 Atalanta Street, Fulham, SW6.

Visitor for COs.¹¹⁴

Miss O'Callaghan

Associated with the WSF and spoke at an organised weekly 'Peace Picket' in September 1917 in Islington alongside Mrs Nellie Best of the NCF, and Miss Lynch of the WSF.¹¹⁵

Mrs Offord

Shorthand typist at Duke Street¹¹⁶

Miss Mary Over

Reported in September 1916 to NCF "in response to your letter I visited COs on Milton Hill today." She gave a full outline of the working and living conditions of the men. ¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁹ *The Tribunal* 5 Sept 1918.

¹¹⁰ *The Tribunal* 23 November 1916.

¹¹¹ Letter to Marshall from Ammon 30 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP. Report to National Committee July 1917 D MAR 4 21, CEMP.

¹¹² 'Work at HQ Recommendations from meeting of London Members to National Committee 1 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹¹³ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-55682?rskey=ciyohE&result=1](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-55682?rskey=ciyohE&result=1)

¹¹⁴ Letter to Marshall from Marjory Newbold 1 October 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹¹⁵ *The Daily Herald* 1 September 1917.

¹¹⁶ Report to National Committee July 1917 D MAR 4 21, CEMP.

¹¹⁷ Report to Isaac Goss from Miss F Mary Over, 29 September, report on COs at Milton Hill. 29 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

Miss Pallister

Reported to Divisional Secretaries Conference.¹¹⁸

Sylvia Pankhurst¹¹⁹

The WSF, led by Sylvia Pankhurst, organised weekly 'Peace Pickets' throughout 1917 and 1918. These meetings took place in public parks, such as Finsbury Park and at Highbury Corner in Islington. In September 1917, three women spoke at the meeting in Islington; Mrs Nellie Best, Miss Lynch and Miss O'Callaghan. Mrs Best was an activist for the NCF¹²⁰ and the other women associated with the WSF.¹²¹

Mrs Parker

Temble Orchard, High Wycombe.

Branch Secretary, High Wycombe.

May 1916 PCOD.

Part of delegation to HoC from E Dulwich NCF May 1916.¹²²

Helen Pease Bowen (nee Wedgewood).

Possibly daughter of Captain Wedgewood MP.

Advertised for work in *The Tribunal*.

Visited Home Office Camp.¹²³

Miss Marian Peppercorn

67 Romney Street, Westminster, SW.

Branch Secretary, West Central, London.

Donation of 10s to NCF, "wish it could be more, but I am giving all I can afford to the NCF in other ways. I saved the 10s by walking 8 miles with 2 heavy bags."¹²⁴

Miss Annie E Pimlott

93 Beech Road, Gale Green, Stockport.

¹¹⁸ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

¹¹⁹ [http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-37833?rskey=r71ObE&result=2](http://www.oxforddnb.com/winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-37833?rskey=r71ObE&result=2)

¹²⁰ She had been involved with the Anti-Conscription League at the beginning of the war.

¹²¹ *The Daily Herald* 1 September 1917.

¹²² Letter to Marshall from M E Hoggins, 18 May 1916, D MAR 4/5, CEMP.

¹²³ Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, Liddle Collection, Tape 587 CO 071.

¹²⁴ Letter to Marshall from Miss Peppercorn August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

Branch Secretary, Stockport.

Sold pics of Walter Roberts, CO who died in prison.¹²⁵

Mary A Poole

17 Green Road, Southsea.

Replacement for Miss Hatrill as Portsmouth Branch Secretary.¹²⁶

Miss Mary B Pumphrey

9 Linden Road Bourneville.

Secretary Birmingham Branch in May 1916, PCOD.

Miss K Read

6 Torrells Square, The Green, Stratford.

Branch Secretary, Forest Gate.

Placed announcement of carol singing organised outside Pentonville and W Wood Scrubs
Particulars of songs from 88 Central Park Road East Ham E6.¹²⁷

Mrs Redgrove

Loaned to COIB Services when not required by Miss Marshall. Part time only.¹²⁸

Mrs Reid

7 Grenville Street, Glasgow

Receipt of *COs Hansard* on behalf of Glasgow NCF.¹²⁹

Gladys Rinder

14 Westgate Terrace, Radcliffe Square, London SE.

Rinder's house was raided In June 1916 by the police and became known as the "Rinder
Raid."¹³⁰ Worked closely with Marshall throughout 1916 and 1917.¹³¹

¹²⁵ *The Tribunal* 30 November 1916.

¹²⁶ Letter to Mary Poole from NCF 8 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

¹²⁷ *The Tribunal* 13 December 1917.

¹²⁸ Report to National Committee July 1917, D MAR 4 21, CEMP.

¹²⁹ Letter to Harrop from John Winning Glasgow NCF 17 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

¹³⁰ Letter to Philip Snowden MP from CEM, 18 June 1916, Information for National Committee Meeting 25 June 1916, 'Contents of papers removed from Miss Rinder's house' D MR 4/7, CEMP.

¹³¹ See D MAR 4/6, D MAR 4/17 CEMP. Wrote personal letters to Marshall, see for example letter to Marshall from Rinder 10 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

She was contacted by relatives concerned with conditions in the prisons.¹³² Working within Visitors Department in January 1917.¹³³ Prepared case notes for “mentally deranged prisoners”.¹³⁴ Received reports from supporters about conditions in which COs kept.¹³⁵

Report to National Committee information stated she was a secretary at COIB, at John Street in July 1917 where she has a large room on 3rd floor.¹³⁶ Recruitment responsibilities as she placed advertisement for office girl COIB bureau.¹³⁷

Helen Rule

Subscriber to *The Tribunal* and donations.¹³⁸ “Glad we can help the financial strain and anxiety.”¹³⁹

Ada Salter¹⁴⁰

Gave an exhaustive report on the Maintenance Committee to National Committee.¹⁴¹

Candidate for National Committee elections December 1917.¹⁴²

Elections for National Committee, Substitute as national member for Barrett Brown.¹⁴³

Miss Mary Serpel

37 Selvorne Road, Walthamstow.

Branch Secretary Leyton, London.

Miss Sime Seruya or Seraya

Married name Mrs R Williams.

Little Orchard, Ashstead, Surrey.

Divisional Secretary, London area.

¹³² See for example, Memorandum about prisoners’ food rations to Rinder from AS Deacock (relative of prisoner) 22 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

¹³³ Memorandum to Visitors Department from Mrs Goodwin, 31 January 1916, D MAR 4/15, CEMP.

¹³⁴ Letter to Rinder from Marshall 23 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP., Letter to Rinder from CEM 12 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹³⁵ See for example, ‘Report on HO camp at Mountain Ash Waterworks, Aberdare’ to Rinder from AW Evans and AW Griffiths 7 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP. See also ‘Notes of interview with Mrs Phipps’ 26 June 1917 D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

¹³⁶ Report to National Committee July 1917, D MAR 4 21, CEMP.

¹³⁷ *The Tribunal* 31 January 1918.

¹³⁸ Letter to NCF from Helen Rule August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

¹³⁹ Letter to Marshall from Helen Rule 1 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁴⁰ <http://www.oxforddnb.com.winchester.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-38531?rskey=3CWPGm&result=1>

¹⁴¹ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

¹⁴² Ballot Paper for elections of NCF National Committee 15 December 1917, D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

¹⁴³ *The Tribunal* 18 January 1918.

Summoned for distributing 'Challenge to Militarism' (FSC leaflet) with Miss Stewart.
Rochester Row Police Court 18.4.18 (DORA 27c). Adjourned.

Reported to London Divisional Convention as Divisional Secretary, 23 September 1916.

Attended Divisional Secretaries Conference. Emphasised difficulties in getting replies to her letters from branch secretaries in London and Home Counties and said their divisional Council not seem to be any real use to branches.¹⁴⁴

Mrs Sharman

Candidate for National Committee December 1917.¹⁴⁵

Miss Sharp

Typist, press cuttings etc. Works in same room as Smith at HQ¹⁴⁶

Miss Agnes Sleeworthy(?)

Highfield, Whiteway, Nr Stroud, Gloucestershire.

A member of the Stroud NCF branch, which she tried to sort out after the secretary, Mr Davies, had been arrested, "which [she] had intended to do in the event of [his] arrest." Indicated in her letter that she was leaving the area, but no reason for this decision.¹⁴⁷

Lydia Smith

7 Claremont House

Lister Road

Hampstead

Teacher from Brighton.

Engaged to Royle Richmond an artist CO who died in December 1916. Married Percy Horton, after the war, an artist CO.

Watcher for NCF

Worked on the second floor of York Buildings Press Department, *The Tribunal* and Legal Advice.

"The main object of the department is that of propaganda and publicity."¹⁴⁸

Compiled a 'List of Interesting articles' usually on a weekly basis for distribution amongst office supporters and published in *The Tribunal* and issued to about 40 weekly papers.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

¹⁴⁵ Ballot Paper for elections of NCF National Committee 15 December 1917, D MAR 4/27, CEMP.

¹⁴⁶ Report to National Committee July 1917, D MAR 4/21, CEMP. See also Letter to Marshall from Smith 24 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

¹⁴⁷ Letter to Marshall from Agnes Sleeworthy 30 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

¹⁴⁸ Memorandum concerning 'Organization at HQ' probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

¹⁴⁹ See for example 'List of Interesting Articles' week ending 28 October 1916, D MAR 4/11, CEMP.

Held some authority within HQ and prepared to challenge Marshall on rules she thought unnecessary such as objections to the women “lunching in the office...because it good economy and convenience to us.” Any attempt by Marshall to forbid them lunching in the office would result in her requesting an increase in salary for Miss Sharp.¹⁵⁰ These were the only two people in the press department. Their responsibilities were extensive, which included as stated above as well as watching for “opportunities for writing articles and sending particulars to suitable people and requesting them to write similar.....sending reports of all tribunals arrests etc off to records.....wring to and interviewing friendly editors and reporters...se ding out answers to questions in Parliament to local and other papers.”¹⁵¹

Recommended by Marshall to take on “anything that requires technical research.”¹⁵² May 1917 went to Dartmoor HO Camp to report on conditions and to report back to HQ about the problems there had been with some COs, led by CH Norman, who wanted to have a work strike.¹⁵³

Editor of *The Tribunal* probably from September 1917¹⁵⁴ to 11 December 1917.¹⁵⁵

Mrs L E Spintis

Arundel Villa, Ewart Grove, Wood Green, North London.

Watcher for NCF, collected “left off” clothing for COs at Newhaven Camp.¹⁵⁶

Miss Stevens

Shorthand typist at COIB, at John Street.¹⁵⁷ Earned £2.10.¹⁵⁸

Miss Stevens

A local branch worker who had contact with CO prisoner, Frank Bertoli at Winchester Prison.¹⁵⁹

Miss Anne Stevens

60 Kenninghall Road, Clapton.

Branch Secretary, Hackney.

May 1916 PCOD.

¹⁵⁰ Letter to Marshall from Smith 24 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

¹⁵¹ ‘Special Work of the Various Departments and Sub-Committees’ September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁵² Letter to Isaac Goss from Marshall 7 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

¹⁵³ Item in letter to members of National Committee from JH Harrop, Organising Secretary ‘Report on Dartmoor from Miss Smith given to London members.’ 10 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP. See also letter to Marshall from Smith 25 May 1917, D MAR 4/19, CEMP.

¹⁵⁴ ‘Work at HQ Recommendations from meeting of London Members to National Committee 1 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁵⁵ Minutes of National Committee Meeting 11 December 1917, D MAR 2/27, CEMP.

¹⁵⁶ Letter to Marshall from Mrs LE Spintis, 10 January 1917, D MAR 4/15, CEMP.

¹⁵⁷ Report to National Committee July 1917 D MAR 4 21, CEMP.

¹⁵⁸ Rowntree Gillett Papers, COIB Correspondence, FL.

¹⁵⁹ Letter to Miss Stevens from Frank Bartoli 14 March 1918, SERV4/7, COIB General, FL.

Invited speakers to the branch.¹⁶⁰Sub-committee member of Friends of Freedom Garden Fete Committee.¹⁶¹

Miss Ella H Stevens

c/o Café Vegetaria, Market Place Leicester.

Branch Secretary, Leicester.

Miss Stewart

She received letters to HQ about literature for sale and she books the orders and gives instructions to Mrs Jenkinson.¹⁶²Responsible for literature orders and cash at HQ situated on first floor of York Buildings office.¹⁶³In September 1917 appointed as Financial Secretary at £2.10s a week. Miss Neal working for her at £1.5s a week.¹⁶⁴Summoned for distributing 'Challenge to Militarism' (FSC leaflet) with Miss Simie Seruya. Rochester Row Police Court 18.4.18 (DORA 27c). Adjourned.

Miss Ruby (Robina) Stoddard

12 Hackworth Street, Dean Bank.

Branch Secretary, Bishop Auckland.

Brother Henry Stoddard, CO.¹⁶⁵

Mrs Sutherland

Huntly, Peaslake, Surrey.

Husband, Mr Sutherland, was a CO. Mrs Sutherland was requested by him to ask whether the men in Lewes who it is believed have been illegally detained should have a lawyer for their CMs.¹⁶⁶Reported about men at Seaford Camp who have refused HO Scheme. L Nelson 4th Eastern NCC¹⁶⁷

Miss E Tayler

Horncop Cottage, Kendal.

Branch Secretary, Kendal.

¹⁶⁰ For example, Letter to Marshall from Anne Stevens inviting Marshall to speak at Hackney NCF 26 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁶¹ Letter to BS Hoggins from Harrop 3 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

¹⁶² Memorandum concerning 'Organization at HQ' probably October 1916, certainly after September 1916 D/MAR 4/11, CEMP.

¹⁶³ Report to National Committee, D MAR 4/21 July 1917 CEMP.

¹⁶⁴ 'Work at HQ Recommendations from meeting of London Members to National Committee 1 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁶⁵ PCOD.

¹⁶⁶ 'Points of Importance from Duke Street', 20 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

¹⁶⁷ 'Points of Interest' 20 September 1916 D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

Mrs Taylor

Visitor to Military Barracks to see Private R Drewett who states in a letter to Rinder that he “will give her full particulars of my appearance before the tribunal.”¹⁶⁸

Violet Tillard

Had good relationships with some families of COs.¹⁶⁹

Attended some National Committee Meetings.¹⁷⁰

Worked closely with Marshall and maybe deputised for her when she was away. Request for information about the camps while Marshall away from the office.¹⁷¹Ran the maintenance Organisation for relatives of COs 1917 Responsibility for distribution of Scott-Duckers book delegated to her by Marshall.¹⁷²

Acknowledged by Marshall as “the chief link of continuity between all the different phases of the NCF’s existence.”¹⁷³

Member of the Organisation and Propaganda Committee which organised and took initiative in Fellowship with for example the composition and distribution of circulars to branches and other literature to supporters. The committee made suggestions to press and Parliamentary Departments and gave “widest possible effect to their activities.” Member of the Finance Committee and NCF Representative on MacDonald Committee.¹⁷⁴

Appointed General Sec. by National Committee to replace J A Harrop (illness)
17.1.1918Spent time in prison in 1918 for refusing to name the printer of *The Tribunal*.

Attended meeting of WPC as representative of NCF.¹⁷⁵

Mrs Margaret Tritton

Had a brother who was a CO. She wrote to *The Tribunal* on behalf of him to “thank the friends who sing outside the prison” as it is “greatly appreciated.”¹⁷⁶

Dorothy Vipoint Brown.

Active member of Manchester NCF Maintenance Committee after 1916.

¹⁶⁸ Letter to Rinder from Private Drewett 9 August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

¹⁶⁹ See for instance letter to Tillard from W Jones 16 September 1916, D MAR 4/10, CEMP.

¹⁷⁰ See for example, CEM handwritten notes on National Committee meeting, 14 October 1916, D MAR4/11, CEMP.

¹⁷¹ Letter to Marshall from Tillard 14 December 1916, D MAR 4/13, CEMP.

¹⁷² ‘Notes for Mr Russell’ 23 March 1917, D MAR 4/17, CEMP.

¹⁷³ ‘Proposed Changes of Work at HQ’ August 1917, D MAR 4/22, CEMP.

¹⁷⁴ ‘Special Work of the Various Departments and Sub-Committees’ September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁷⁵ WPC meeting information 7 August 1917, D MAR 4/23, CEMP.

¹⁷⁶ *The Tribunal* 30 November 1918. Mrs Tritton’s brother was at Wormwood Scrubs.

Miss Mary Waid

23 Graham Street, Penrith.

Branch Secretary Penrith.

May 1916 PCOD.

Wrote to Marshall to inform her of her summons to court for distribution of the leaflet 'Two Years Hard Labour' (known as The Everitt leaflet). Commented that she though "the cause is progressing."¹⁷⁷

Wrote to Marshall relating outcome of her court case with her co-defendant Mr Lester. She was given £10 or a month (in prison) and. Mr Lester was given £20 and a month in prison. Although she was happy to "take the month" the fine will be paid as there was so much to do and "no one else to take on the work."¹⁷⁸

Kathleen Walker

54 Seymour House, Compton Street, WC.

Contributor to CO fund (£1) and member of UDC study circle.¹⁷⁹

Miss Walker

Associate member Kilmarnock Branch.

Sale of work 4 October 1917 raised £25. Marshall wrote of the "energy of Miss Walker and her assistants- other branches take note."¹⁸⁰

Miss Kate Wallwork

41 Oxford Street, Manchester.

Branch Secretary Manchester

Had been a member of the Manchester WSPU¹⁸¹ and a known census objector who spent 1911 census night evading at Denison House, along with a further 207 persons, which had been organised by Jessie Stephenson.¹⁸²

Miss D Ward

72 Bermouth Road, Wandsworth Common.

Branch Secretary, Wandsworth.

Miss Wedgewood

¹⁷⁷ Letter to Marshall from Mary E Waid, 23 May 1916, D MAR 6/6 CEMP.

¹⁷⁸ Letter to Marshall from Mary E Waid, 1 June 1916, D MAR 6/6, CEMP.

¹⁷⁹ Letter to Marshall from Kathleen Walker 27 September 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁸⁰ *The Tribunal* 18 October 1917.

¹⁸¹ Cowman Women of the Right Spirit, p.162

¹⁸² Liddington Vanishing for the Vote, pp.32-34.

12 Beaufort House SW

Possibly daughter of Colonel Wedgewood MP

Placed advertisements in *The Tribunal* "Young and active lady (pacifist) wants work on market garden, not more than 50 miles from London. Little practical experience. Services in return for training."¹⁸³

Miss W Wedgewood

Newnham College

Cambridge

Secretary to Cambridge Branch.

May 1916 PCOD.

Miss R Wheeldon

12 Peartree Nr., Derby.

Branch Secretary, Derby.

Mrs B A Whisson

33 Whitehall Road

Grays

Essex

May 1916 Secretary to Grays Branch, PCOD.

Marjorie Whitehead

26 Straithblaine Road, St Johns Hill, London SW11

Friend of Ted Morris, CO. Letter requesting any information she has on him as she is going to visit.¹⁸⁴

Miss Williams

Summoned with her brother and a boy for distributing leaflets.¹⁸⁵

Mrs A C Wilson

169 Withington Road

¹⁸³ *The Tribunal* 22 March 1917 and 5 April 1917.

¹⁸⁴ Letter to Marshall from Marjorie Whitehead, 24 May 1917 D/MAR 4/19, CEMP.

¹⁸⁵ Letter to Marshall from T G Williams 3 July 1916, D MAR4/8, CEMP.

Whalley Range

Manchester

Divisional Secretary to Division 2, North West.

Mrs Wilson

69 Beechdale Road, Brixton Hill.

Advertisement in *The Tribunal* Letting two large unfurnished rooms socialist or wife of CO preferred.¹⁸⁶

Mrs E Wray

Strathmore, New Congisburgh.

Divisional Secretary, Division 4 (Yorkshire)

Corresponded with CEM in which the women discussed their positions on issues related to the CO,¹⁸⁷ such as concerning her Nephew, Jack, a CO in Winchester prison, asking for an hour of socialising like the Sinn Feiners have.¹⁸⁸At the Divisional Secretaries Conference she gave an account of Yorkshire, 12 out of 15 branches "living and healthy" York put up as a model branch giving money to poorer branches.¹⁸⁹Resigned from post of branch Secretary in August 1917 due to ill health.¹⁹⁰

Mrs Zusman

Worked in the Investigation Department at COIB, at John Street.¹⁹¹Worked for the Visitors Department. Salary £2.10s.¹⁹²

Possibly wife of Benjamin Zusman, member of International Free Trade League.

¹⁸⁶ *The Tribunal* 10 May 1917.

¹⁸⁷ See for example; Letter to Mrs Wray from Marshall 23 October 1916, and Letter to Mrs Wray from Marshall 26 October 1916, D MAR 4/11, CEMP.

¹⁸⁸ Letter to Marshall from Celia Wray 17 April 1917, D MAR 4/18, CEMP.

¹⁸⁹ *The Tribunal* 24 May 1917.

¹⁹⁰ Minutes of National Committee Meeting 31 August 1917, D MAR 4/24, CEMP.

¹⁹¹ Report to National Committee July 1917, D MAR 4/21, CEMP.

¹⁹² Rowntree Gillett papers, FL.

