Minding His-Story: Dora Russell's Voice on the Side of Life against the Backdrop of Her Peace Mission in the 1950s

Appendices

Michaela M. M. Schwarz-Santos Gonçalves Henriques

2015
Table of Contents

Appendices

1. Telephone Interview with Paula Maura Phoenix (née Popp).................................1
2. Interview with Jill(ian) Newbrook (née Vasey)....................................................7
3. Excerpts from Conversations with Harriet and Colin Ward..................................27
4. Interview with Lady Katharine Jane Tait (née Russell)........................................34
5. Robin Ball’s Testimony........................................................................................39
6. Interview with Barbara Wright (by marriage: Hubbard).......................................41
7. Interview with Madeleine Simms........................................................................44
8. DECLARATION OF MOTHERS...........................................................................54
1. Telephone Interview with Paula Maura Phoenix (née Popp)

1. Telephone Interview with Paula Maura Phoenix (née Popp)
Full-time Caravan Traveller
(Resumée)

Date: 22 June 2004 at 9:55 pm
Information about the interviewee:

Mrs Paula Phoenix (née Popp): Retired, lives in Wales. Was born in Dublin. Before embarking on the Caravan trip with Dora Russell, she and her older sister Rosaleen had worked in offices (Paula in accounting, Rosaleen as cashier). Both gave up their jobs to join the Caravan. They are of German / Irish descent (their father was a German from Mannheim, NRW), their mother an Irishwoman from Dublin. Both had taken part in the first Aldermaston March, Easter 1958. In 1951 Rosaleen (maybe both) had attended the International Youth Festival in Berlin (1951), and both also took part in the Youth Festival in Moscow (1957). Paula married her husband, a widower, on 10 March 1975.

Occupation: Her occupation was given as “accountant” in the marriage register.

Note: Her husband John Richard Phoenix, a chartered civil engineer, warned me that his wife's mind would sometimes wander and that she tired quickly. I had located him first via the Institute of Civil Engineers in London, and after some initial hesitation (because of his wife's health), he kindly forwarded me her contact in Wales, where she preferred to stay.

Telephone conversation (based on notes taken):

Note: The call had to be made from a pay phone, which involved interruptions as I ran out of coins twice and had to arrange more change.

Mrs Phoenix came to the phone hesitantly. Her husband had informed her about my research interest. Because of my maiden name she guessed correctly that I am German.

Asked about Dora Russell she replied that she had always felt great respect for her, as a former wife of Bertrand Russell. She wondered why I did not write about him - I should rather be looking into his peace efforts than hers. I then explained to her that Dora Russell had all her life been in Bertrand's shadow and that there was no shortage of researchers studying his philosophy and actions. She then reminded me of Dora Russell's school, which, I explained to her, I had already given my attention in my MA thesis. In fact, it had been this project that had made me curious about Mrs Russell and her lifelong campaigns.
When she joined the Caravan project as Miss Paula Popp, she must have been about 21 years old, or thereabouts, and that it was difficult for her to remember anything that long ago.

[Speaks very slowly, with frequent gaps/sudden lapses. Strays off to subjects closer at hand, such as her adored dachshund named Freia, after one of Wagner's opera, and that she loved opera, Wagner in particular. Seems to be melancholy.]

When I prompted her about material from the Caravan mission which she might have kept and which might help her remember, she informed me that her sister Rosaleen had kept everything - photographs, etc. -, and that she had not been in touch with her since 1979. It was a difficult subject, for her sister had married an Iraqi and had apparently changed a lot since [was close to tears] - was sure her sister would remember the details.

How did she and her sister get involved?

She vaguely recalled something about the place Dora lived at, and that she and her sister had been involved in the peace movement, as "most feeling people would be". I asked about Aldermaston and she confirmed that they had both taken part in the first march. I mentioned that Dora had also been there distributing pamphlets about the Caravan project, besides advertising in newspapers - but Mrs Phoenix could not recall the exact circumstance that made them join the project.

What could she recall that had struck her as unusual / outstanding from the trip?

That they went to Albania, which at that time almost no one had done. (The Yugoslavs were very anti-Albanian.) She could recall that when they came to the border, soldiers would point guns at them, which was absolutely frightening. Someone had to be sent to Tirana to fetch people of influence for them so that they would be able to enter the country. Only when these arrived and sorted the situation out, did the officer lower the guns. Then she remembered one of the hotels they had been at there - she had never been exposed to such primitive living conditions. For example: in the loo, one had to stand and pee in a hole.

In Tirana they were lodged in a fantastic hotel and were invited to an opera, had fantastic singers (she is very fond of operas).

What stood further out in her recollection about Romania was that they had been very unfriendly hosts; cold - that brought her to Switzerland, where they were kicked out, had to
leave and that Dora still had to pick 'it' [the coach?] up in Lausanne.

About Germany: she remembered that the Germans loved their visit; they were the most active for peace, particularly in Frankfurt, with campaigns against the nuclear threat. There they were given the freedom of the city. (?)

Comes back to my being German and informs me that her father had been German, too. Her mother, Irish, had met him while living in Wiesbaden. When the Second World War came, they moved to Ireland where her father, a musician, worked with the Radio [name not understood] orchestra.

Why did they – the sisters – later moved to London?

That was a long story, but had basically to do with the fact that Ireland was poor and had not much to offer. In London she worked as an accountant. Eventually, she met her husband, a widower, and married him in 1975. She had a stepdaughter from his first marriage, but no children of her own. When she stopped working, she retired to Wales, while her husband John still had work to do in London, but visited her whenever possible. She had still her dachshund whom she absolutely adored.

Back to outstanding Caravan events in her memory:

Recalled that the efforts they had to make to meet appointments was so exhausting that at one time – either in Italy, or probably in Albania – she and another young traveller collapsed, exhausted, and a doctor was called in to give them an injection. They must have slept something like 48 hours. What she certainly recalled then was to have taken a bath in the warm water of the sea shortly afterwards – probably the following day – though she couldn't swim.

As to Bulgaria: They naturally went to see the grave [mausoleum] of [Georgi Mikhaylovich] Dimitrov. Also recalled her journey to Plovdiv, well-known then, and that they flew to Moscow [I added that the flight to Moscow had been from Warsaw.]

She had been to Moscow before, to the Youth Festival in 1957. Had felt that the “bureaucrats” in the city were cold and unfriendly, while the people on collective farms (they went to one) had been very friendly and accessible. The last time she went to Moscow had been in 1978, with her husband. She never went back to Eastern countries again. (Meanwhile, she went to Rome / Spain, visited Portugal once shortly after the Revolution in 1974, staying at a hotel with a lot of Germans and enjoying horse-riding – found the landscape and people very nice / lovely).
Appendices

What about the idea in the West of the people behind the 'Iron Curtain' in relation to what they found 'on the other side'?

At the time she was quite idealistic, believing that they could “turn the world round”. But during the journey (and even the year before) did not like what she heard and saw. Stalin had died and Khrushchev was revealing that he had been a tyrant and what he had done to his own people. That's when her idealism flagged. [Mentions in that context that she is now a member of the Conservative Party.] She got the impression that the people were blind to what was really going on around them, and that the terrible bureaucracy was still there.

Did the journey make any difference in her life?

Yes, most certainly. It made her realise that things were not always what they were made out to be. When they went to Trieste they were shown what the Fascists had done, yet when they got to know “so-called socialism” and what it had done to its people … What Stalin had done was, to her mind, much worse than what the Germans had done. They had practised ethnic cleansing, while Stalin went against his own people.

The trip had certainly opened her eyes to reality. In fact, she became rather cynical about human nature. The journey had made a great impression on her.

For example, in Belgrade: When they went into the city, they saw donkeys and carts everywhere, they could hardly believe that it was a capital city. Nothing in the rest of Western Europe could be compared to that. Zagreb was just another example: horses were used to go round and round to grind the corn. As an animal lover, she found that appalling. Even Ireland, a comparably poor country then, was much better off!

Did she give any talks about the journey afterwards in England?

Yes, but not for very long. She remembered one terrible incident where she was to go to a meeting by train and got on the wrong train – never made it to the meeting.

How did the people react to her talk?

She found this almost impossible to assess. Germans would blurt out their honest opinion at once, but the British were ever so polite – they would just not tell what they may really have thought (repeats that she gave talks only for a short period).

About her life: Upon return from the journey continued to work as an accountant until her retirement. In 1979 saw the last of her sister – to date does not know what has become of her.

How did the travellers get along with one another?
On the whole they got on very well, considering the many hardships they went through. There was one traveller, Edith Adlam, who was a Quaker and had taught in China. She didn't believe in drinks, which was a pain in the neck. The other person she did not get on well with was Helga Ginigé, a Swiss who had married someone from Sri Lanka. Apart from these two, they worked together well, considering that it was such a strenuous trip (to the point that she and someone else collapsed and slept for 48 hours!)

How did she feel about Dora Russell?

Dora was just fantastic. At the time of the trip she was 63. Paula had never met a person whom she admired more. She was an “icon” in the right meaning of the word (not the way it is used now). She kept everyone going, even walked with Lenin (?), although she was never ever a Communist [emphatically said and repeated]. She simply believed in peace – did not view the bureaucracy there positively. Paula would say that Dora was the woman she most admired in her life as a woman. (Goes back to when they met.)

Could she recall their first official meeting? Did Dora explain what the journey was about?

Believes to have met Dora in a Swiss Cottage (?). Yes, they had a meeting and it was understood that they went on a peace mission. They were also told that Dora went as an official representative of the PICM. (When I recalled the name of Hilda Lettice as the other official representative of a women's organisation, she was not sure she remembered her.)

The major motivation for the journey, as she recalled it, was the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima. Associates it with Frankfurt, which had a very active movement against the threat of nuclear warfare. In Wiesbaden they also met all sorts of people. In General: Germany showed them “fantastic hospitality” - and she recalled with delight the porcelain museum in Meissen, GDR.

[Mentions that her dachshund is called “Freia” - Wagner's Freia – which is Greek and means: “The Goddess of Youth and Beauty”. To her she will always be this goddess; is now six years old, in her prime.]

The Balkan stood out as a “weird” region. They were treated well in Zagreb and the other places. When they mentioned in Yugoslavia that they were going to Albania, people became really hostile. At the time she did not understand why and Dora would not explain the situation.

With Dora she got on very well and spent many an evening talking with her, she really
respected her. But as to details of the journey, etc., she pretty much “kept her own council about these matters”, which at the time was probably for the better.

[I ended the conversation – by that time, over an hour later - she was really enthusiastic about it, almost sorry to let go, willing to help me any time. … ]
Date: 18 June 2004
Place: at her home in London

Information about the interviewee:
- born in autumn 1936; during WWII went to a progressive school – Platts-Mills School, Assington Hall – later became a designer;
- after the Caravan, briefly worked with a big London advertisement agent, in 1960/61 changed to Thompson, which became well-known
- by 1969: Advertising Art Director
- married Norbert James Newbrook, architect, on 21 March 1969; two sons

Occupation: freelance jeweller

Preliminary information: At the time of the Caravan event, Jillian Vasey was sharing a flat with the New Zealander Wynne Marshall, who was a few years older than her. After the journey, Wynne returned to New Zealand and they kept corresponding until her partner died tragically. Helga Ginigé and her husband had just separated, and Jill believes her to have been of Jewish origin because of her reaction at Auschwitz. Like Jill, she did not want to look at photos, teeth, hair, etc. of former prisoners shown on site. Both felt that this was bordering on voyeurism. Before joining the Caravan, Jill had been working in London, which at the time was unusual, she underlines, since most young women envisioned a life as a housewife – her longtime friend was one of those.

The only prior trip she had had to Europe before had been with her mother to Italy [except for a school exchange to France].

Cassette 1, Side A:

My first question is: How did you get to know about the Caravan?

Yes, yes - well, I joined my local CND-group, ehm, in Hampstead, which had / hike to be / can have been about the Aldermaston march - and I think - certainly it was the first one, I
can't remember whether we did any, any sort of prior demonstration ... I am slightly vague about this. Certainly I went on the one, the very first one that went from London to Aldermaston - that was about three days, I think, during which there was some very well-known speakers, and, you know, people strong in that movement at the time, ehm, Michael Foot springs to mind, ehm, of course, Dora was on it, and she was, she was handing out these leaflets, saying that she was planning this trip, and I was very interested, I had, I think, been just once outside Britain, had been abroad just once, I think ... - so she handed out ...- Yes, she handed out her voucher/flyer [?] and the thing that fascinated me basically was the whole idea of seeing so much of the world, so much of Europe - I mean, to my mind that was the world [chuckle], but certainly, and going to - behind the Iron Curtain, which was, your know, unheard of in some ways in those days. One just didn't travel behind the Iron Curtain ... and that fascinated me, and I liked, too, the fact that this was anti-nuclear ... Now, my parents, of course - your were asking me earlier about it, I mean, it slightly overlaps - my parents certainly knew of Dora's school. And in fact, I've been to - what was the name called? - a progressive school, A. S. Neill type progressive school, but this was run by Platts-Mills - What was the name of the school? - Platts ... He was a barrister called Platts- Mills - Platts hiphen Mills - and, ehm, I gather, he was alive till recently [died in 2001] - and he was, I sort of divert a bit here, it's a group of parents who had got together, because it was wartime, and they found us a beautiful old building out in the middle of Suffolk, that is well away from any sort of bombs, or anything, but it was very much, very left-wing, a progressive sort of, and my father at one time, I believe, was a member of the Communist Party, but this was the Spanish Civil War, when it was very much popular, so it, so there wasn't really a problem from their point of view, they were quite interested and quite supportive.

And your school had a name?

Well, it was called Assington Hall, but it was very much a unit that came together, mostly teachers who wanted to have their children - well, most children, a lot of children were being evacuated, so this was a sort of alternative, that they would educate their children in the middle of the countryside, but basically - it is not that important, it is just that it was quite a left-wing organisation and my parents were, had a lot of left-wing friends. So they were quite supportive of the whole idea. Now, I had not been working, so, I was 21, so I had probably been working, probably only about 2 years, in a job, and in those days it
2. Interview with Jill(ian) Newbrook (née Vasey)

wasn't a problem to leave a job and come back to one. And also, I was only sort of just starting a career, ... in a sense it wasn't a problem to give up work.

Dora then invited you - you contacted her?

She - I think she must have had a meeting, I'm a bit vague about this, but certainly I contacted her to say that I was interested - and I presume there must have been quite a group of people interested. And I seem to remember a meeting - and whether that was later, I don' know. We all met at her flat, it was very informal, and she sort of .presented what she had in mind and what it would involve. Now, my memory of this is very vague, I'm afraid ...

(prompting) At the same time she also had ads in the newspaper ...

Oh, definitely, but I don't recall seeing those ... I mean, my contact with her was a personal one with her, on the botch, I mean I must have spoken to her, I seem to recall, she certainly gave me a leaflet about it ...

Do you recall the first meeting you had there with the travellers?

I certainly, I mean ... after a while she presumably, she had either whittled it down, or we ... I don't know whether there was ever any specific number that she gave as a limit ... there must have been to a certain extent ...

She obviously had a limit because of the seats on the bus - she had tried for some time to get the Unions involved to get a bus as [a piece of] workmanship from Britain ...you know...

Yes, she was very good at that, she had all these contacts, so she had ... there must have been a lot of work put in, because she had - em - there was a lot of hospitality in both ... well, in the East is was perhaps slightly easier because the Party machine would have been behind it. But certainly in the West, she had a lot of contacts with the people in each country, who were very active in finding accommodation, and hospitality, and so on. Yes, she, she ... I don't know where she got the bus from, but we had after all two drivers ...

The coach was hers, actually she had organised this in order to make holiday caravans, she was experience in caravanning before, because she couldn't get a fixed job herself, so it was the only way she had to make some money

Right, ah, it was a very ancient thing, totally unreliable, as you probably know - exactly - [laughter] it broke down several times

that was limited in terms of seats, and the army truck, originally, was meant just as a
transport vehicle ...

It was, it was, it carried always the tents and the baggage and this and that and other - ...exactly, that could take the load

- and that was Dave's ...I don't know what Dave's background was but he was extremely, ehm, extrovert, very extrovert person was Dave. I mean, he was quite, I mean in some ways he was extremely useful, in as much as he sort of kept, ehm, kept everyone down to earth. I mean, he was a very down-to-earth sort of person, I mean, he was obviously very left-wing, very much - but I often wondered why on earth he signed up to sort of go round Europe with a group of, of women.

Well, he ...Actually, according to what Dora's daughters told me of him, he was a kind of womaniser ...

Oh, he could well have been, yea, I mean, not that he did it, [laughter] but he certainly gave that ... at one stage, he very proudly told us that we had all been mistaken for his wives, that they had assumed that we were all his wives he was carting around ...

He was about to marry then ... or was already married. He married actually, em, he married Brenda, she is Brenda Burke, she is actually an artist, a painter, and, a minor one, not really important, but I think she made one or two expositions, she had expositions ... and he ... I think, Dora met him actually - I'm not really sure when it started, em, he was the boyfriend of a secretary of Dora's, Vera, and then later on, Vera married someone else, and then he got involved in part in Dora's activity, so Dora knew him already much earlier, and he was an experienced driver, I think, that's actually one of the reasons, that's the job he continued afterwards ...

I think he was very … he must have done a lot of work, you know, on her behalf, from what I can recall, but certainly I remember that the flat we got together … generally we discussed the sort of logistics of it all, I don't remember a great deal of discussion on aims, I mean I think it was assumed, of course, that it was some fairly clear-cut mission to... to... I mean I was very … I mean I saw things very much in black and white – and that the nuclear bomb was absolutely, you know, abhorrent and that the only reasonable thing to do was to get rid of them, I mean I had this sort of idealistic idea that if you got rid of that then everything would be fine [...] and fall into place. So I had this very sort of …I suppose, blinkered look of what we were aiming to do, and I don't recall a great deal of discussion other than the practicalities of the trip.
Did Dora ever mention then or later on that it was part of, that the Caravan was part of the organisation she was representing, which was the Permanent International Committee of Mothers?

She certainly spoke a lot about the, the Committee, the Mothers' Committee, but I don't recall much emphasis on that at all, I mean, I ... my perception is that that was her organisation and they were the group that were going to sort of find us the accommodation, sort of hold meetings where we could speak, and all this sort of things, but it was, that was just something that she had arranged, you know, that was sort of had nothing to do with us, in a sense, that was just a vehicle for ... for...

You had actually more the idea that it was Dora's Caravan?

Oh yes, it was very much her thing [short laughter] - Ok - and don't forget I was the youngest and probably very naïve, too, at the time yes ...

So you did not really talk much to the others at the time, discussing details or ...?

No, I think we felt that we were all much of the same mind, and that really, you know, we were going to convince other people, we were, we were, you know, we didn't have a need to convince one another about our views and our ideas... this was something that ...

But you clearly understood that it was a mission ...

Oh yes, oh yes ... Ok ... We were going to ban the bomb, as the sort of phrase went ...

And some entertainment in between ...

And ... from my point of view, to sort of see the rest of Europe. That was the big excitement ...

So, what was your first impression then of Dora? Do you recall this – at the meeting?

Em ... yes, I suppose I found – certainly I thought of ... very much organised, well – extremely articulate and I say organised, but it actually turned out she wasn't, but she gave the impression of 'She could do anything', you know, it just, you know, she would sort of open all doors, she could, you know, extremely capable, and also extremely sort of ... I think – well set-up – no, well set-up is not the right word – I mean, she was very much a part of the peace movement, high upses as it were, you know, the people who really ... I mean in these days you couldn't shake as a move [?], it is a horrible phrase, but you know, ...[unclear expression] she was very much – she knew people, the right people - yes, she knew all the right people, she was very well known herself, ehm, I rather looked up to her [unclear wording], fairly famous in her own life ... ahem
So you had this perception, anyway, that she was a known person ...

Oh yes, as I said, even my parents who knew of her, well, they knew quite a bit about her, that she had been to Russia, and that she'd married Bertrand Russell, that she had run this school, she had done this, she had done that, and I think they thought she was, you know, she was quite a – a person – a [unclear wording] to be, you know, to be admired ...

Do you recall whether the others had any notion of Dora's for..., I mean, knowledge of her?

Oh, I would think so. I mean, I think, yes, I mean, certainly on the march itself I say those few well-known names, people like Michael Foot would speak – it's dreadful, my memory of names is hopeless - but certainly, people within – Hugh Bruck.. - oh yes, Fenner Brockway, well yes and [unclear exchange] – and Canon – Collins – that's right, and Dor., I mean, they in my mind, they were all much on the same level, and I would've thought most of the others would have perceived that, too. I mean, it is difficult to say, but – certainly Wynne, who I knew very well, she did, and – I would imagine, Jo, as well, being Peace Pledge Union, she'd also have felt the same. I don't know about the older ones, that would be possibly a different perspective.

Well, this brings me to how Wynne got involved.

Right, basically in a very odd sort of way. I was the one, who – I don't know, we never remembered in the end even, but certainly, she was very interested, she was a journalist, and I am not sure quite in what capacity, anyway, she was very interested in the whole idea of going behind the Iron Curtain – ehm – and I think she came along, I say I am very vague about it, but she was certainly very intrigued and interested, and I think she felt … I am sure she was in tune with the aims of it all, but I think her idea was that this was something that for a journalist it would be really interesting to do …

Well, she is … [wording unclear] … said that she wanted to participate because she wanted to write the life experience, being back in her country ...

Yes, I think that would be right, I think she would look with an eye to what she could get from a journalistic point of view … but also because she was convinced of the necessity to do something for peace … Oh yes, yes …

So she came actually because you talked to her and mentioned ...

Well, I presumably was very enthused about it all, and I presume she got sort of swept up with it … [laughter]
In terms of preparations, what do you recall in how far you had to do something to participate to help organise the final ... ehm?

Not a great deal, Dora was very much, or, she wanted to be totally in control of it all, I mean, apart from defining what to take, and the sort of, you know, the rather more logistical things about it, ... no, I don't think there was anything really expected of us other than that we were to come [laughs], and – I vaguely remember, it cost us 100 pounds each of us – yes – in those days it was a lot – and I, my parents were not very well off, and I had – not even an uncle, really – but a sort of uncle by marriage in a sense who loaned me, and he, he – my [uncle ?] was very supportive – he obviously thought this was an extremely good thing to do and that it was well worth doing, and the idea was that he, he didn't loan me all of it, but he certainly loaned me a fairly sizeable amount of money, which I think in the end I paid back, which was quite nice [laughter] - when I came back and got a well-paid job ...

And did you get a kind of list of what to take along?

I'm sure we did, and I remember somebody loaned me, she'd been out in India or somewhere, and she loaned me this wonderful bed, it all folded up, because all slotted together, a camp bed, and soldered [?] nettle things and canvases and a mosquito net, and the whole lot was packed up, and that was wonderful, I mean, that really was, because, you know, some of us were sort of sleeping literally on the, if you are camping, on the ground, and I had this lovely camp-bed thing [laughter].

And for you it was the first time that you actually left England, and ...?

Probably it was the second – might have been the second, I'm not sure of it, it might have been the second time, but I mean, previous to that would have just been a sort of a two-week holiday somewhere – I went to the Italian lakes, with my mother. ... first holiday, first job, and I wanted to go abroad, ... and I wasn't to go on my own, I didn't feel strong enough to go on my own, taking mother to the Italian lakes as a treat, but this was virtually – oh, a partner school trip to France [laughter], but that really was – ehm -

So, before you started, did you have any fixed ideas about the communist countries, the countries on the other side of the Iron Curtain?

No, apart from the fact that it was, I mean, the sort of propaganda at the time was that the communist [?] was much to be feared, it was, it was repressed, it was grey, I actually think ... [interruption]
Appendices

[back to Dora, her apparent organisation]

Certainly in charge, perhaps is a better word, totally in charge of what the arrangements were to be, and what would happen …

And – she insisted on that, I mean, in terms of asking you to collaborate was she open for that, or was she rather someone who kind of…?

Ehm, I seem to recall, I mean … it is difficult to recall from this perspective in this length of time, but my perception was that this was something that she was organising, she had the backing of all sorts of organisations and, you know, in each of the countries we were planned to visit, and really, she didn't expect any input from me to this, other than the fact that my aims were to spread the word that, you know, that one should get rid of nuclear weapons. Ehm, I didn't feel there were any expectation from the participants in who we spoke to, where we went and what we did, I mean this was, this was her thing.

How did it [turn out] in reality?

I think it pretty well went to plan, actually, because, as I say, she was a big name, in - certainly … in the women's movement, in which was, presumably, just, I say, just beginning, not just beginning, but was a smallish world of its own, it certainly didn't get much publicity, I mean, I only really knew of her through CND and through my parents … I don't think there was a great deal I would have got from the general press.

Not particularly – not in the 1950s, it was a male world…What do recall particularly of the trip, now? You started in London, officially?

I – well, I have to get the book [diary] to refresh my mind as to what, … yes, and there is a list then which refreshes my mind as to who went, and she then gave a list of countries … and it said – where is it – here, this was the list of people, of course, the travellers, and then it says, Edinburgh, what, I certainly didn't make a stop there, and then it says London - St. Paul's Cathedral – I don't ever remember services at St. Paul's, I felt strange and I thought, why can I not remember that, and then it occurred to me, of course, we lived right down in Maidstone not very far from Dover, I then vaguely remembered that, I think, I joined them down at Dover, when they were about to embark on the ferry. So that was, you know, that was my first recollection, once it was all in place, the dates were set, you know … I seem to recall my parents driving me down there, 'cause it were [?] the luggage and what not, and joining them at the ferry. And I remember, I remember France, and we must have camped in the countryside, - yes, somewhere after Reims – yes [laughter] and I remember
Paris, I mean – as I say, I have got – I mean, I show you later – I have got sorts of notes and diaries which are all in a terrible, I mean, not in any sort of order, I meant to … but I never … in Paris, there was a big meeting, - yes, a conference - yes, a conference, and I was sitting there, and, I mean, conferences, it must have been an all-day one, if not several days, … but certainly a lot of speeches, probably some of them in French, and my French was not very good, and I remember wandering around Paris now and again, just simply watching this [guard?]. Dora, I think, spoke once … I mean, there were among the group people who were good public speakers, I had never spoken in public, and I was very shy, so I was certainly not expected to pass a statement, probably [lots were?] terrified of the thought. I did later on, I did, certainly … ehm, and I've got some very selective memory of things, ehm, we went to Lille, I remember that, and Lille was being extremely – what is the word – sort of full of factories, very industrial, which I believe is not actually the case, but … we may well only have seen the industrial port, that's where the support group was …

let me think again, my strongest memory, oddly enough, is in Switzerland, and we went to Basle, and I was, I mean, everyone was given hospitality, of course, by various families, I presume belonged ... or had been organised with Dora's ..., and I went to this family, and he was a tram-driver, I think, and his wife, who were absolutely charming, and lovely, and they packed off a box of gentians to send to my mother – I mean, it is a charming thought, and my mother was, I kept, I sent, I mean, I wrote a diary just so [unclear wording] my parents and I wrote some postcards to keep in touch for the family, and I knew that they had done this. And then there was another interesting – several interesting, Switzerland was quite interesting, we then went to Geneva, this beautiful city, absolutely gorgeous, and I was with a family, his wife was a psychiatrist, and I presume, he might have been, the husband might have been as well, she spoke extremely good English, and I remember, the only place I could sleep on was the couch in her consulting room [laughter], she made my bed up there and she tucked me in and said “Sweet dreams”. [laughter] And then, the next day, she had to go somewhere, and of course, we had a gathering point, to meet up again, and he took me, he had his bicycle, he wheeled his bicycle along, and he spoke French, of course, and my French was pretty, pretty basic, but anyway, he said, just a minute, he was going to this shop, so he went in, I don't know, to buy something, and his bicycle had a carrier, which, in it was a newspaper, so I thought, I opened the paper to have a look, just, I presume, to spend time, I was holding it while he was shopping for something, and I was
looking at this paper, I was trying out a bit of my French on it, he came back absolutely horrified, folded it up, hid it down – and it was obviously a very left-wing paper. And you do not, in public [laughter], and the terrible, terrible thing I had done … and Switzerland was, I mean, the women didn't have the vote, and then, yes …

_Do you remember the police?_

Yes, there was this big demonstration organised, a peace demonstration, and I, we had, at the very front was a big banner with Albert Schweitzer, and it was, I don't recall much about the organisation, but of course it was quite a large contingent of Swiss nationals, and we walked amongst it, and we defied the police by going ahead with it, banned, all demonstrations, I think, were banned, and of course they rounded us all up, … anyway, we were all rounded up, the whole lot, and put into this police compound, I can't remember how long we were there, milling around – _quite a few hours_ – quite a time, and eventually decided, the nationals, I presume, were charged with something, and we would, had our passports taken, and they gave us 24 hours to get out of the border, and they marked out passports “Not to return for 20 years”. And I didn't actually go back, I have only gone to Switzerland fairly recently, I took up skiing in my old age, aged about 55, and I joined the club – ski club – and booked on this trip to France, but we flew into Geneva, and I [began?] sort of … “Oh, last time I was here, they threw me out and gave me 24 hours to get over the border and banned me for 20 years.” And this person, who was with me went sort of “Oh ha!”[fright] But don't worry, it was a long time ago, they renewed our passports since then, it's the thing, you know, I should have mentioned then, as I had to go through Switzerland … _[I mentioned that Dora had asked them to write individual reports as witnessses to join the letters of protest written by their supporters, which Jill no longer remembered; but recalled the absurdness of the situation that a neutral country such as Switzerland would oppose a peace demonstration.]_

Switzerland is such a strange puzzle, isn't it? I mean, that's me, my perception of Switzerland. It was neutral, it was, women didn't have the vote, they were the only country that was anti-[nuclear], or showed that they were anti-, I mean, I am sure the others, some of them just put up with it, they thought, 'well, okay, we'll ignore them, then maybe they'll go away'.

_Well, they [the Swiss] are quite hospitable in general, …_

Oh yes, well, the Swiss, and another … lady we met in Lausanne, had a beautiful house,
2. Interview with Jill(ian) Newbrook (née Vasey)

... charming, they are very, very nice, very, very hospitable, I mean, there is a contrast, too, I mean, from the tram-driver, who was quite working class, to a professional psychiatrist, and I don't know the lady in Lausanne, but she had a gorgeous house right by the lake, beautiful ...

From there you went then on to Italy ... Yes – And do you recall the trouble you had with the coach in Belgium, it was left behind with a number of the older travellers ...

Yes, I mean, I don't remember that, I mean, but I have been looking up my diary, and there is some mention here about the ... coach. I remember we went on with the truck, because... I was thinking about that, how on earth did we manage because there were just too many of us. She presumably took the younger ones because it would have been jolly uncomfortable ... it must have been.

So you joined then the other group again in Italy ... Bologna ... Yes. But Italy was fast driving...

Yes, I don't have that much recollection. I remember Verona [something about the drains] [laughter], a beautiful, beautiful place, Verona, I mean, in the Shakespearean connection, beautiful, and the smell was appalling! Actually, in the film Dora praises this balcony, and talks about ..., but she wouldn't tell about the smell ... [laughter] No, no, ... naturally the beauty of it, but the smell, no, no. But, ehm, and then we did nip across, ... I don't think we went to Milan ... You did, but it was just a drive-through ... as I say, my remembrance of Italy is very vague, and Trieste, which in those days, I think, belonged to Yugoslavia, ... it was a border, and then, of course, that was Iron Curtain... So that was really ... Before we move to the Iron Curtain, how would you classify in general the feedback you got in support of peace, or peace demonstration?

Yes, ... we would have to go back to Germany, oddly enough, because we did spend quite a lot of time there. I remember very, very vividly, we were – and I suppose we were in the truck then, maybe that was without – if we left the old ones behind - but I remember this man who was ... he obviously had been in the war, he would have been, maybe late forties, fifties, I mean, he would be youngish, and he behaved just, I mean, he just came upon us, in the streets somewhere, and I think we were on in our, in that truck, and he said ... I can't remember exactly what he said, he spoke obviously good English, but “War was such a terrible thing, and that this was never [to] happen again” - sort of idea, and I got the idea that he had had really an awful time, he was really sincere in what we were doing, yes ...
he made this big impression on me, because, I suppose, not perhaps so much by what he said, but what I felt was behind it. That was very encouraging. More so than the set speeches, the toasts, as you say, people. They come to say their piece, okay, they are very sincere, … but this was a completely spontaneous thing … and I must tell you a very, very funny story, too, I mean, I don't remember now whether it was Dortmund or Düsseldorf, but we were driven to, I think it was a school that was accommodating us, [It was some kind of hostel for girls] it would have been a hostel, and … we were given the hospitality, you know, we were given beds, and there were meals organised, and it was sort of outside the city, and about half a dozen of us, I think, decided to go into the town, we took a bus, Dora as well, and we were going just sort of sightseeing the town, and Dora said: “Six o'clock, come to the post-office – or something like that – and we will get the bus back;” and [unclear wording], anyway, I think I was with Hilda Lettice and Jane – Wyatt, no, not the older one, Jane Saxby [cannot be, as Jane Saxby joined the group in Italy] – they were great friends, those two, and myself, and … I think it was just the three of us, we got separated from the other group, anyway, we couldn't find this post-office … or whatever it was, and six o'clock came and went, and then we didn't know how to get back, we didn't know where we were staying, we couldn't remember the name of the place, we knew the number of the bus we had come on, and we wandered around – what should we do, eventually we met up with a military policeman – British - “Can you help us, you know, we are lost – we came on such and such … “ Oh”, he says – he didn't know the name of the place, “Come back and let's see if you can tell us … , back to headquarters, and they had a huge map of the whole area, and we said: “We have come from such and such a place,” and we came from … so we sort of pinpointed where we thought we were staying, and he said it was probably, you know, and he told us the name, “yeah, I am sure that is the place”, “Ok, we will give you a lift.” So, he took the three of us in his jeep, from the military police, [unclear word] off at the hostel, where they were having their meal, and I remember all these jaws dropping, as the three of us – came out – with the military police people. [laughter] And I don't, I think they must have known, in fact, they did it on purpose, because obviously they knew who we were, … right to take the three back in a military vehicle … Oh God, I don't know whether Dora was amused or annoyed …  

Well, she had quite a sense of humour …

Yes, I don't know whether this was ever recorded … No, not this one [I mention another
2. Interview with Jill(ian) Newbrook (née Vasey)

incident]

But in general, in terms of impact in these western countries, was there a lot of support or demonstration that would make the public notice it, or ...?

Well, I think it was very much within the organisations, that had, you know, that we were there to link up with and who gave us the platform, yes I think, they, there would have been a lot of publicity from there, but I don't think it would have made much of an impact on … I mean, I never really knew, one never really got a feedback from that, but Dora might have been in a position to discover, because she, she would have been in touch, you know, it would have happened, I suppose, while we were there, and then we would have moved on. So, in retrospect, she might have discovered whether or not … but I suspect it didn't make an impact on the general public. [I mention West Germany as the only western country that showed further interest, and Jill would in general agree, but radio broadcast and other public voices would have to be examined to confirm genuine interest.]

...To a certain extent one could lay oneself open to that because we were relying on the organisations to give, to make it possible, because, you know, we paid a certain amount to be there, that was the cost of doing it, would not have been covered by the amount of money we paid, we were relying on their generosity, which meant, in effect, you've got to tow the line and you say what they want you to say … and there was a certain amount of that because, I certainly remember broadcasting over Moscow Radio, I'd bee interviewed, and – I can't remember what I said, … but anyway, I spoke over the radio. The questions, of course, were such that you could only really answer the way they wanted, and I believe, I've got a note that we must have broadcast over Prague Radio.

[My explanations as to the Prague Radio broadcast – because of some family connection of one of the travellers – but also the general fact that media coverage in the Eastern-bloc states was more assiduous than in the West, and that at least Radio Moscow could be listened to in the UK.] Yes, yes, [I've still ?] some of the telegrams I obviously sent home saying: “Listen to...”, you know, and given them the broad- the wavelength. I think my parents did manage to tell the friends – ring up – couldn't have been that easy [wondering about whether Prague could be received …] My mother, my parents certainly said they heard me from Moscow Radio. They managed to hear that. Then, that, in this country, was perceived as being, you know, in league with communists, of being a fellow-traveller, this sort of thing ...
Appendices

So, you would say, then, probably, that here in England this fear of the Reds was stronger than maybe in Germany or the other countries?

No, I don't think it would have been stronger. I mean, it is difficult to say because of course all your contacts and friends here wouldn't give you that sort of feedback, whereas you might well have got the same [unclear] been mixing with the other people, ehm, I am just passing through a country, and basically just talking to people whose interests are similar, anyway, you don't get that feedback anyway … I imagine the Swiss were a great paranoid […] …

Coming to the Eastern part: What do you recall there? Of the trip, of the meetings, of the women …

I can remember being, just in very, very general terms, being totally overwhelmed by sheer numbers of people, and, I [unclear wording] this, whether it was a specific of all these countries, or just one or two, but there was much more of a feeling of almost being mobbed by the people. I remember at one instance, in fact, I think that photograph of us walking over the bridge, and I don't know where that is – Bulgaria – yes, I got the same photo, the same photograph, but I’ve got nothing on the back, I can remember we were walking in a group with big bouquets, and – literally – and it was hot – it's August, I think, and it was, I remember of being almost, almost sort of claustrophobic, lots of other people mobbing you, and people wanted to come and touch you, it was that, too …

[End of cassette 1, side a]

____________________________________/________________________________

[Cassette 1, side b] Continuation as Resumé

Jill Newbrook's recollection of the trip through the Eastern-bloc states:

Explains that some of this need for people to come so close may have to do with the fact that they had never seen people from the West, considering how cut-off and simple some of the rural places were they travelled through. Confirms that some of the countries had a strong tradition of “welcoming strangers”, being hospitable; recalls how they were loaded with gifts, and in one place were handed a huge chocolate cake (in mid-summer); in one place a young girl spontaneously took off a silver necklace and gave it to her personally. In fact, there was much more of this personal response – as with the girl – than in the West, although the movement of the masses was possibly 'whipped up' to a certain extent, particularly in situations where they
2. Interview with Jill(ian) Newbrook (née Vasey)

met such official groups as the pioneers, who handed over gifts that were given them for that purpose. But she never felt reluctance in what the people did. Discounting the big demonstrations and reunions, which were certainly orchestrated, she was sure that a lot of what the people did and expressed was heartfelt. Communicating with women was difficult because one was dependent on an interpreter, which she felt was an incumbrance. For spontaneous encounters with the crowd one relied on body language and one's own feelings. Occasionally, someone spoke English, but she had the impression, especially in Moscow, that such people were 'fended off' by the interpreters. Albania was fascinating, as it was then totally unknown territory to westerners. Yugoslavia was much more open, there they had a lot of meetings and travelled through without problems. For some reasons, they arrived at the wrong check-point at the Albanian border, and were met there with armed guards, which looked scary – after a lot of back and forth in the conversation, they could finally move on to Tirana, the capital – she isn't sure whether they stopped somewhere else before. The capital was fascinating because there were no cars, everything looked quite poor – in fact, they were prevented from looking about in back streets, probably so as not to see the poorer areas. Instead, they were shown the official sites and monuments. Jill at some point felt quite sick with a stomach-ache and remained in the hotel while the others went sightseeing. Around midday, she felt recovered from what she presumed had been some form of blood-poisoning and began to feel hungry. So she opened the door and almost fell over a huge lady sitting on a chair guarding her, which she found frightening. Julia James was more adventurous, she and some of the group managed to walk about a bit – but she wasn't sure whether they weren't being watched while doing it. This occurred in Albania and later on in Moscow, as well. They were simply kept busy the whole time – in Moscow, visiting the Kremlin museum, going to all important places, etc., so there wasn't really time for anything else. In all the capital cities, they were taken to the national monuments and mausoleums, she recalls one in Bucharest [must have been Sofia, because of Georgi Dimitrov's mausoleum] reminding her later of Lenin's, as they were of the same kind. As to public speeches, Dora as the leader of the Caravan did most public speaking, but at times they would call on Jane Wyatt, the oldest, and Jill, the youngest, to make a
public appearance. She only had to say a few words, so it didn't matter much.

As to the travellers' group: She thought that on the whole they did get along very well, most of them were accommodating, and considering the difficulties they had at times, they managed well. One of the divers, Alex Piper, was the quiet sort, not so easy, but he returned home when the coach broke down a second time. Dora could be quite dogmatic at times. The only conflict she could recall was the one Dora had with Julia over the film afterwards. She did not get directly involved in it, but recalls that Julia approached her, too, to see whether she could win Jill over to her side in the conflict, so Jill could confirm Julia's efforts in undermining Dora there. She also agreed that Dora was too trusting as far as people were concerned.

To return to Dora: She was the accepted leader, spoke very well, and Jill would even call her a charismatic person. She managed to get people to do things willingly for her; to Jill, she was a sort of mother figure. That the whole trip, at times extremely tiring, would work out so well was largely owing to her, and that she and the older ladies, particularly Jane Wyatt, withstood the stress and uncomfortable travel conditions (the ride on the truck came to mind) so well was an admirable feat.

The flight to Moscow: That was a special experience, as she had never flown before. When landing, they were given boiled sweets, which seems to have been customary then, she can't recall when they stopped doing that. Likewise, the trip by train back to Eastern Germany was also special as from that direction few Westerners could claim to have made the trip. They had a sleeper ticket as the trip would take several days (but doesn't recall the bunk beds). During the day they sat in their compartments and witnessed peasant people coming in with their provisions, slicing off big chunks from their salami and sharing food, loads of bread. Their ticket entitled them to tea from the samovar, so that was new to Jill, too. In Berlin they only saw the Eastern side, she believes she has never been to West Berlin. Of Dresden, she remembers the ceramic museum with its impressive pieces and beautiful designs. Back to Poland, they went to Krakow, which was beautiful, then to Warsaw, where she remembers a huge people's palace, and the old part of the capital, which had been flattened during the war and afterwards rebuilt, having a bit of an medieval flair. At Auschwitz (near Krakow) they went around the camp and in the end were shown photographs and personal belongings of the victims, and that's
when she had the feeling they were prying into private spheres to which they had no right. Helga Ginigé reacted the same way, and Jill had the impression that she might have Jewish ancestors.

[tracking off, we talked about her more recent experiences when revisiting some of the sites in Poland, accompanying her Polish friend and neighbour on one of her yearly summer return trips to her country; war experience contrasting with her happy childhood which her parents had made possible by moving to the country side, etc.]

After the journey: She recalls that the meeting Dora organised in September had to do with the conflict caused by Julia, whom she described as a very wilful person. Julia was obviously in opposition to Dora, the 'chief', and although sympathetic to the aims of the journey, understood her role in it mainly as the film director, “it was a job, in a sense that she was there for.” Peace was not her main issue. Jill then admits that to her the major attraction had been to travel throughout Europe, she wasn't one mostly dedicated to the mission. The travellers apparently never openly talked about the mission, and Jill was sure that her friend Wynne was also more intrigued by the whole idea of visiting the other side of the Iron Curtain, especially as what was known was derived from propaganda. Jill was pleasantly surprised that life on the other side was 'nowhere near as awful' as propaganda made it out to be, though Moscow was drab and dark. Hilda Lettice and Jane Wyatt came across as being sincerely dedicated to the mission of peace. Edith Adlam, as a Quaker, certainly was a dedicated pacifist, and Sybil, too, adhered to this overarching goal. She was a very quiet, thoughtful person, 'a solid sort of person'. And Jill recalls that Sybil went on to do a lot for peace afterwards, although she didn't have that charismatic impact that Dora had. But Dora came across as being more 'diffused' in her action, while Sybil was decidedly more focused. However, Dora probably achieved more because she always managed to enthuse her collaborators, the media, her supporters … “She had a great charm in that way”, Jill concludes, and confirms that one might call her 'inspiring'. Asked whether Dora had accused them of not pulling their weight, Jill believes it quite likely. Dora clearly had an enormous amount of energy and managed a lot of things, so she would expect others to follow suit. But she was not a vindictive kind of person. She could get annoyed, and show an outburst of
tantrum, but the next moment it was over – she wouldn’t bear a grudge. She would take the travellers under her wings and would defend them ‘like a mother hen with all her chicken’, but “on the other hand, she’d expected us to be totally loyal” - which brings the problem of Julia in focus. The younger ones, in particular, would leave the solution of problems totally to Dora (e.g. when the coach broke down). But then the older ones were probably fairly supportive in such crises.

[End of cassette 1, side B]

[Resumé]

As to propagating the Caravan and its message: Jill does not recall that there was anything really organised for them to appear. “I got the impression that we had been to Europe, we set out to do what we wanted, intended to do, we had done that and then were virtually ignored when we came back.” Certainly, those who were members of organisations did give talks within the range of their organisations, Dora herself continued to be active, but Jill was never approached for that purpose.

As to her keeping in touch with caravanners: She kept in touch with Wynne, but can't recall when Wynne returned to New Zealand, probably shortly after the trip as they had terminated the lease on their shared flat before the trip. Jill doesn't know whether Wynne ever published anything about the Caravan. On the trip they had met a correspondent from one of the major papers (the Times or so) whom Wynne knew, and the journalist would ask her what she was doing on the Caravan. Wynne would always say that she hadn't found 'her niche in life' yet. As to Wynne's age (which is difficult to tell from the passport photo) she only knows that Wynne was some years her senior, but not how many. Wynne later met someone and wanted to return to Europe for a visit, but then he tragically died and their correspondence stopped, in part because Jill has never been a regular writer. Jo(sephine) was a jolly character, and Jill remained in touch with her for some time, for she recalls that Jo got a new flat and invited Jill and her work mates for her housewarming party. Jill's boss was a trumpeter and decided to blow the trumpet, totally drunk, at 2 o'clock in the morning, and the neighbours complained so much that Jo got thrown out by the landlord. Jill believes she took up nursing again, and that her family was quite supportive. [talking about the difficulty of tracing the whereabouts of formerly
unmarried women]

About Helga Ginigé: She kept to herself, had a lot of Asian friends (probably because of her husband); seems to have invited the younger members for some university parties, initially. Really passive was Doris Adams, a 'sweet' person, not quite with her feet on the ground.

Dora's influence: It's difficult to specify, she was likeable, inspiring, but there was no specific point where Dora had influenced Jill in particular: rather more in general the women's point of view, “making you realise that ... one can fight for things” (though Jill has never been a feminist). When I remind her that the mission had been in the name of the Permanent International Committee of Mothers, Jill points out that most of them had not been mothers. When I explain the larger sense in which women as potential mothers were to be understood in Dora's view, she agrees that that idea had been quite present during their mission: “the feminine side of things was quite important”, “it was up to the women to tell the men the mess they were making”.

Was Dora right – did it make a difference? - At the time, Jill was too young and too naïve to get the measure of things. In retrospect, it doesn't seem to have made any lasting impact. Dora would certainly have had the clearer perspective on things, but then she had also a kind of childlike side to her, almost naïve, too, although one could not really call her that. She seems to have been the kind of person who once was very idealistic in her youth and never really lost this side – contrary to most people who become cynical. “Innocence” is probably the better word to describe Dora's side.

As to the uniqueness in History of their visit: Jill is not sure whether their visit in the Eastern-bloc states was at a unique moment in history in the sense that it became more difficult or more controlled later. She felt, though, that Albania had been a much-controlled visit, other bloc states appeared to be more open. Recalls that the food in Russian restaurant had not been so good, although it must have been the best there, and that there were huge gaps between the courses, during which young men came to ask the women for a dance. On the whole they had been well taken care of, even paid in rubels for their interview over the radio. Also recalls that they were always well dressed in general, and Rosaleen in particular became their show-
Appendices

piece. After the radio interview, they were taken to the most famous department store there, called 'GUM', a huge building and probably the equivalent of Harrods, where Jill bought her father a souvenir. They went to a watch factory and similar industries to meet the workers, but it often was rather boring and communication was difficult (via interpreter). There were women (workers), personal conversation did not take place. On the whole Jill had not the impression that communist women were more emancipated than women in the west. Women were well dress, smart, but not particularly feminine, non-frill and rather masculine. The process of meeting and visiting sites was, on the whole, rather dry and formal.

Back home: She can't recall finding it difficult to readjust to living back at home, people in general are more resilient than one would expect. [looking at her photographs, and some of the diary entries; end of recording]

3. Mrs Jill(ian)
Newbrook, jeweller -
http://www.jillnewbro
ok.co.uk/
(1 Feb. 2015)
3. Excerpts from Conversations with Harriet and Colin Ward

(Resumé)

(Place: at their home in Debenham, Suffolk, 20-22 Oct. 2002)

Information about the interviewees:

Name: Harriet Ruth Ward, daughter of Dora Russell and the American journalist Griffin Barry

• born 8 July 1930
• retired; grew up in her mother's progressive school, Beacon Hill, before continuing her education in more conventional institutions, last years at Dartington Hall School; graduated in History (BA) from Pembroke College, Brown University, USA; worked as Youth Officer of the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (1952-55); became Factory Inspector for the Ministry of Labour (1955-60); after the death of her first husband, Chris Unwin (1963), attended a Teacher Training Course for Further Education (1964-65) where she met her second husband, Colin Ward; taught part-time History at various educational institutions (1965-95);
• three sons

publications:

• World Powers in the 20th Century (1978; rev. 2nd ed. 1985) - a course book for History in Further Education
• A Man of Small Importance: My Father Griffin Barry (2003) - a biography of her father, Griffin Barry.

Name: Colin Ward (14 Aug. 1924 - 11 Feb. 2010) – Britain's most famous anarchist writer of the past half-century

• left school at 15 to work; was called up to the Armed Forces at 18; after World War II became active in the anarchist movement; while working in various architects' offices (1951-61) developed his own perspective on housing policies; in the 1960s and 1970s was a teacher at Wandsworth Technical College; in 1971 became the Education Officer of the Town and Country Planning Association and edited the Bulletin of Environmental Education; from 1947-60 wrote the 'People and Ideas' column of the British anarchist newspaper Freedom; from 1961-70; apart from contributing articles to various publications, he published over 30 books on the most varied social and environmental issues; received honorary degrees from Middlesex and Anglia Ruskin universities.
• one son, two stepsons

Some of his publications:

• Talking Green (2012)
• Cotters and Squatters: The Hidden History of Housing (2004)
• Talking School (1995)
• The Child in the City (1978)
Pat (Gordon) Grace (1910 - May 1949), Dora's second husband (married 29 June 1940), 16 years her junior:

He was despised by everybody. Griffin was jealous of him, while being at the same time fully aware of Pat’s total inadequacy as a parter for Dora. In 1938/9 the staff explained the phenomenon ‘Pat’ as a reflection of Dora’s nostalgia to get back to the simple roots of social existence, which meant, however, that Dora had to stoop down to lower levels. They certainly had sexual relations.

Pat was bisexual and there was the suspicion that he had at one time been a boyfriend of Paul’s [Paul Gillard, Dora's lover sometime after Bertrand Russell had left her]. (Griffin was bisexual, too, but less obviously so, since he was ‘more masculine’.)

Pat obviously accepted Dora’s view of Paul and her interpretation of his death. He became a supporter of her romantic approach to the chapter ‘Paul’, which sustained and perpetuated it.

Dora’s view of the proletariat

Her idea of the proletariat was equally romantic. She never really met the ordinary mass, the kind of people who are only interested in the Sun. Those relating to her were a special selection of the ‘simple people’. They were either more educated or had been influenced by politics. These certainly admired or even idolised her uncritically – like Jena Ingram - and many saw in her a ‘saviour’. (Lily may be one of the few exception who, though loyal to Dora, was not blind to her shortcomings.) Harriet would agree which my suggestion that Dora’s charismatic personality and her attitude towards them may also have played a role in bringing forth the better side in the ‘simple’ people she met.

Dora had certainly been a self-confident person, born out of her ‘happy launching’ in life: her happy childhood, loving parents, a father who doted on her. However, Harriet is convinced that Dora would never have been able to work as a social worker. Helping, for example, people in the slums presupposes ‘a saintliness’ which was not Dora’s characteristics. Even if Dora had had to live in the slums, she would soon have risen out of it. She didn’t like anonymity and clearly sought and enjoyed the limelight, which is not to say that she wanted to be famous. Her empathy with the suffering and misery of the
3. Excerpts from Conversations with Harriet and Colin Ward

socially underprivileged was sympathy ‘from afar’. As far as Dora’s idea of inborn human empathy is concerned, Harriet believes it to be true. It is a fact that Dora had a knack for attracting and maintaining loyal to her the people who were willing to help – and throughout her life she found many such women.

**Dora as a person:**

(Both Harriet and Colin): She was domineering, opinionated, self-righteous and difficult to live with. Colin describes her as ‘heroic’, taking care of John while continuing her various fights. She certainly had ‘firm views’ and clung to them in a way common to the ‘communist line’ (although she was expressly not a communist). Many of her contemporaries categorised her nonetheless as an eccentric semi-communist. (Harriet suggests ‘fellow-traveller’ as the more appropriate term for Dora’s political attitudes.) Some of her views could be considered naïve, often too optimistic about the reality that surrounded her.

Harriet describes her mother as a ‘steamroller’. In particular, she refers to Dora’s harsh treatment of Harriet’s father, Griffin Barry, who had to fight for his identity. In certain situations she was just ‘not sensitive to other people’s needs’ (particularly not to those of G. Barry, whom she did little justice especially in the 1930s. To be fair, she did help him out with money, but never really appreciated his point of view. In the 1950s, it seems, a feeling of guilt toward Griffin prevailed and determined her treatment of him.) All the other men in Dora’s closer circle were ‘doormats’, such as Pat Grace, Dora’s second husband. He was a ‘nonentity’ who did Dora’s bidding, he was reliable but not much of a help. (He was a smoker and heavy drinker.) It seems that Dora was most comfortable in a relationship with a man when he was ‘under her thumb’. Yet, she had a weakness for the ‘stray dog’, to whose rescue she would willingly come.

Another example is David Burke, an Irishman, who ‘buttoned on’ to Dora at a time when he was without any serious occupation. Harriet has always found him ‘a bit of a scrounger’. (His wife Brenda made an amateur portrait of Dora. Harriet recalls that she did not like it very much). He was - like Pat Grace - a Communist.

(From the 1930s on Dora’s choice of her companions reflected her move toward the left after Bertrand Russell had left: she gradually became a ‘fellow-traveller’ without ever becoming a Communist.)
As to Alex/Alec Piper:
Was more acceptable since ‘he was more honest in his relations with people’.

And Paul Gillard? [according to Dora, he was her true love after Bertrand's desertion]

In Harriet’s view Dora’s portrait of him was a construct of her imagination, probably the product of a felt need of hers (of an ideal partner). Her idealisation of Paul was intensified by his death (or may have even been triggered by the mysterious circumstances under which he died). At the same time the kind of image she created of Paul reveals her romantic nature.

Some of Dora’s (re)actions must be seen and understood in the light of the few choices and many difficulties she experienced, certainly after Bertrand left. She was rather driven by circumstances, e.g. the terrible financial burden and responsibility which running a school entailed – or later on John’s nervous breakdown and lifelong dependence on her. However, Dora firmly believed in the school and, encouraged by others, was always willing to carry on regardless of the hardship that came with it. What stands out as typical is ‘her total dedication’ to causes she believed in, while she was always very ‘disciplined’ in the process of working towards these goals. By education she was a bluestocking, much like her sisters who also went to university (Mary went to Cambridge, but dropped out later on due to a nervous breakdown). (Actually, Griffin Barry used his “lack of education” [compared to Dora] as an excuse for his lack of achievement, which, as Harriet has concluded based on her research into his background – was more likely the product of his nature, since Barry had been given a reasonable education – he only hadn’t taken advantage of it!)

Dora was probably at her best as a teacher. Harriet describes her as a ‘brilliant’ teacher, ‘wonderful with children’ and an inspiration to others. In this context she mentions Mrs Barabara Wright, who came to the school in 1938, aged 21, and who claims that her one year at the school changed her life. She only left the school because she got married and her husband’s work was in London.

Dora as a mother:

To Harriet she had never been a ‘hands-on parent’. This role had been taken over by Lily Howell, the school matron, who went on assisting Harriet with her own family when
her husband died. Lilly was the ‘cosy’ person, ‘who was always there’.
Dora initially frightened her grandchildren (Harriet’s children), in part because she spoke very loudly owing to her hearing problems which increased with age. She related better to older children than to the very young. She had certainly not been the kind of mother who changed her children’s diaper regularly. She was too busy to pay attention to these details. However, Harriet didn’t feel neglected, and considers the sense of security conveyed by her mother probably one of the most important ingredients in raising children. Furthermore, Dora would make no demands on her (emotionally). Later on her mother proved always to be a hundred per cent dependable, watching over her children ‘like a tigress over her cubs’. She never conveyed the financial difficulties she constantly experienced, because she was not the person to feel sorry for herself. Neither did she communicate to the children the anxieties about the decline of the school she must have felt. Harry did, however, resent the quarrels between her parents in the 1930s. Dora then accused Barry of abandoning her after Roddy’s birth, much like Russell had. However, Barry had his reasons, which Dora was incapable of seeing since she was too much wrapped up in her own problems.

Harriet agrees with her mother that there are biological differences between women / mothers and men that account for / lead necessarily to different kinds of experiences. Formative are certainly pregnancy, labour and birth which only women can experience. One of her antipathies towards feminism has to do with its biased radicalisation, culminating in Greenham Common’s lesbianism – negative because of its lack of balance and exclusiveness. Even though men also wanted to demonstrate against nuclear armament near the base, they were not given ‘access’.

*Dora’s influence on Harriet’s own life*

Harriet is careful to point out that there is a difference between her [Harriet's] early-developed desires of ‘wanting a stable domestic life’ and ‘not wanting to stand out’. The first was very likely influenced by the undomestic type of person Dora was, while the second was more likely a response to Dora’s radical political stance.

*Dora’s relationship with her sons*

She related to them differently. Although John did veer towards her (contrary to
Appendices

Kate), he mostly lived in his own world. Roddy war her spiritual partner: he was a member of the Communist Party and supported her in her fights for radical causes. Both John and Roddy did not mind the chaos that living with Dora entailed. Harriet (much like Kate) resented this confusion and preferred / prefers a regulated domestic life. Like most children they hated to stand out as “different” and young Harriet felt, for example, ashamed each time her kin refused to rise when the national anthem was played in the cinema.

**The role Beacon Hill played in Harriet’s life**

To Harriet it was a ‘truly enjoyable period’. Kate obviously experienced it differently since she is older than Harriet and at the time became entangled in her parents’ divorce struggle. Her autobiographical book gives a rather bleak impression of her time at the school. That is because when writing it – after her father’s death - Kate was personally going through difficult times in life herself. She felt stranded and unhappy in America. It is, nonetheless, true that she didn’t like Dora; she always loved her father.

**‘Gender’ education at school:**

All students were truly educated and treated as equals. Harriet adds that both she and Kate did not get involved in the women’s movement because as far as they were concerned ‘the battle had been won’. The women’s movement was no issue for them, which must not be seen as a reaction against Dora’s incessant campaigns and active involvement in such issues. Throughout her life Harriet never ran into situations where she felt discriminated against because of her sex. She also mentions other former pupils of BH, such as the German Beate (Ate) Frank, the niece of Walter Gropius. Mrs Johansen (née Frank) dedicated a whole chapter of her unpublished memoirs to BH, where she had spent 18 months after her mother’s death. The school helped her overcome this trauma and she, too, cherishes her memories of the time at BH.

**About Margaret Clover’s portrait of Dora**

It has probably not been sold because ‘it is ugly’.

**About the Memorial Meeting**

It was organised by Nicholas Walter, director of the Rationalist Press Association.

**How did Dora’s papers end up in Amsterdam?**
It was suggested by Heiner Becker, known to the family already before Dora’s death. At the time he did intermittent work for the IISH. Colin describes him as “suffering from ‘bibliomania’, subsequently explained as applying to a person who loves digging up (in) and collecting papers/bibliographic material. Given the main focus of the Dutch archive on socialist / communist organisations, movements and people, it seemed the right place for Dora’s papers. So in 1993 Harriet, Colin and Kate visited the Archive in order to help organise some of the material deposited there.

The Caravan material in the Feminist Archive South in Bristol:

Could it be the same material Dora had previously offered to the National Museum of Labour History in the early 1980s?

Possibly. It was certainly Dora who offered it to the Bath / Bristol library. Colin volunteers the information that the National Museum of Labour History ran into financial difficulties, which might be the reason why its administrators probably didn’t accept the material offered by Dora. (The material of the museum was transferred to Manchester).
Appendices

4. Interview with Lady Katharine Jane Tait (née Russell)
(Resumé)

Date: 21 June 2003

Place: at her home, Carn Voel

About the interviewee:

Occupation: writer, retired

- went to Beacon Hill school till 1934, then to Dartington Hall School (under W. Curry)
- in 1939 accompanied father to the US in 1939, had to stay there because of the War; went to UCLA for 1.5 years (French, History, Philosophy and Astronomy)
- 1941-44: went to Radcliffe, Havard, studied German: Language and Literature/French Literature;
- 1944: BA (AB) Honors in German, Radcliffe College; was awarded the Sohiers Prize
- for 2 worked as TA, giving introductory courses
- Feb. 1948: married Charles William Stuart Tait, who would become Minister in the Episcopal Church
- Jan. 1949: moved to New York; had a daughter and four sons
- taught 2 years in high school (German); then did freelance editing in Washington
- worked some years as a Steward at Harvard's Signet Society (Literary Lunch Club)
- worked for McMaster, editing her correspondence with her father
- 1986: returned to Carn Voel to attend to her mother's affairs
- lives now in a flat on the first floor of Carn Voel, while her son Andrew lives in a flat on the ground floor

Some of her publications:


Dora as a mother:

Kate has no clear memory of Dora as a mother when she was very young. When once mentioning this to her father, Bertrand Russell told Kate that she had been very devoted to Dora. What Kate does remember is that her mother was always doing something or going somewhere and nannies would be in charge of them. Not that this was
unusual for the time: parents were not very close to their children and it was normal for people of Dora and Bertrand Russell’s social standing to have servants.

By 1939 Kate could hardly tolerate her mother and for some time wouldn’t even write to her from the US, which a boyfriend of hers found very cruel. After her parents’ separation it became her personal ambition to be ‘a perfectly conventional person’. In the end she had to realise that this was impossible: one can always manage to look conventional but if one’s personal attitude does not match that appearance, conventionality could never result. The main reason for her different attitudes had been her upbringing at Beacon Hill School. (In this context Kate briefly mentions two of the ‘tough’ aspects of life at Beacon Hill: the Spartan way of life – in a physical sense; and the ‘nasty’ children who bothered John more than her.)

When Kate returned from the US Dora helped her get a job at the Ministry of Information, where she was working herself. Kate felt quite useless there and was made redundant after ten months. She also did not enjoy her stay in her mother’s crowded household [at the time Dora would sublet rooms to young people]: there was no living room available and Kate had a gas heater in her room. As a result she would try to stay away as much as possible and see her mother as little as possible.

**Dora’s ideas and opinions:**

What most irritated Kate then and later on were Dora’s ideas: as regards politics they were not realistic. She also believed, much like Bertrand Russell, that everything could be sorted out by reason. Yet Kate is quite convinced that, had they both ever been given the power to actually change things the way they thought right, they would have been unable to do so. As far as her notions of family and the role of mothers were concerned, Kate considered them ‘sentimental’, ‘cloudy’ and ‘romantic’, subject to idealisations. Dora ‘only saw what she wanted to see’.

**Dora’s effect on the people in her presence**

Dora was ‘forceful’, ‘dynamic’ and ‘opinionated’. Here Kate mentions that a lot of Bertrand Russell’s friends would like Dora as a person, but not share her views. There were some who would not even take to her as a person. Women friends, particularly of the working class, would like and admire her, especially when agreeing with her views.
Would Dora have been able to share the way of a working class life?

This thought has never occurred to Kate and she would not really know… but in her last years of life, for example, Dora could not see that her helpers (Chris and Rena) needed time off. She had also become fond of the royal family, which was part of her increasingly pro-British attitude.

**Dora and her grandchildren:**

Their relationship was basically a good one, although Dora did not see much of Kate’s children. But Dora was very good with children.

**Family reunions:**

Kate did not enjoy them in the 1960s, partly because it was difficult to deal with Dora and her kind of organisation. She wanted to do the cooking herself in the kitchen, but she did not really doing housework (for example, Dora didn’t notice the dust on her furniture, these details were totally irrelevant to her). Furthermore, there was a constant argument going on about John’s children. Kate felt that the tension was ‘miserable’.

In general, Dora was not a pacific person (actually, as Kate adds in an aside, motherhood is not pacific – this only goes to prove how romantic Dora’s notion of mothers as ideal peace ‘fighters’ was). However, she was able to back out if someone stood up to her, although she would not give up the opinion held in the argument. By her personality, Dora was a leader.

Kate’s own idea of motherhood was the result of her criticism of her mother’s behaviour and ideas. Kate wanted to be truly there for and with her children.

Dora wanted to organise mothers at a political level without thinking about the implication, namely that these mothers would have to neglect their children as a consequence of their political activities. Mothers as a political force would actually be seen separate from their private role as mothers. Kate refused a public life and preferred being a mother in the private sphere.

Dora wanted Kate, for example, to write because she writes so fluently, but Kate didn’t think that she had anything important to say to the public.
4. Interview with Lady Katharine Jane Tait (née Russell)

**Dora and politics:**

Politically, Dora was a ‘fellow traveller’. Kate never argued with her when disagreeing because Dora would not change her viewpoint (and later on, because she was deaf), however much it may be unsubstantiated. For example, Dora believed that the Korean War had been caused by the Americans and never bothered to find out if this were so. As long as the story was good, as Bertrand Russell himself must have contended, the details were irrelevant. (Kate was deeply shocked when she heard her father make this statement, since she had been educated to tell the truth). Kate does not consider Dora’s story telling as a remnant of her one-time dream to become an actress. Actors reproduce stories, while writers and story tellers are their creators. Dora would probably never have been a good actress and certainly did not have the mind of a fictional writer. Academic writers such as Dora just ‘don’t have the narrative knack’ – therefore Kate believes that Dora’s fiction would very likely have served as a vehicle for her ideas, and would therefore never have been good.

**There was a change in Dora's view:** in the 1960s when she got involved in the conservation movement – years ahead of her time.

**Have you ever tried to talk about your relationship with your mother?**

Kate confesses that she has never been good at talking. She did try to go over their relationship in her letters, as she did with her husband Charlie. Initially she mentioned that she was tired of listening to Dora’s ranting, which was comparable to Dora having to listen to Mrs Thatcher all the time. Dora replied that she had to listen to Mrs Thatcher all the time whether she liked it or not.

**Was Dora insensitive to the needs of other people?**

Dora often acted as if she was, but sometimes indicated afterwards that she had noticed the people’s reaction and then regretted her attitude towards them. This was probably part of her energetic and impulsive nature. (As Bertrand Russell must have said once about living with Dora: it was like riding on a speeding train; everything was fine as long as it was going in the direction you wanted.)
**Dora’s last years at Carn Voel:**

She did not complain about feeling lonely. Bob, whom she had met at the local council meetings, would always pass by her house on the way to work (at the Transatlantic Cable Company). One day he noticed that the curtains were drawn both in the morning and in the afternoon, when he returned. So he knocked and entered, finding Dora with flu in bed. She could not even get the medicine the doctor had prescribed. From then on Bob would drop by regularly, usually during lunch time. Every once in a while he took one of her typewriters along to clean and oil it at the Company, since they got regularly clogged with dirt and cat hairs (Dora’s cats would sit on the machines).
5. Robin Ball’s Testimony

5. Robin Ball’s Testimony
(Resumé)

(Place: at Carn Voel, Penzance, 12.06.2003)

Information about the interviewee:

Name: Robin Ball
Age: 74
Occupation: Retired; worked as a Development Engineer in London, a technical lecturer in Porthcurno and supervisor of the workshop at the Transatlantic Cable and Wire

The first time he met Dora:

- He had moved to the area (Porthcurno) from London in 1961 (in order to work as a technical lecturer and supervisor of the workshop at the Transatlantic Cable and Wire Company). Once he watched Dora on her energetic strides past his house to the beach to take a swim and wondered who this woman was; he was told that it was Dora Russell. In 1967 he was talked into running for the local council elections, which he did, convinced though that he as a non-Cornish person, a newcomer, would not be elected by the locals. Yet his ‘pals’ from the shop did a good propaganda job, and when the results came out he was astonished to notice that he was the second most voted candidate. When going to attend the first council meeting, he felt apprehensive. No sooner had he entered the room than Dora came in, went straight to Mr Hacking, her next-door neighbour and then apparently President of the Council, and in a loud voice (owing to her hearing difficulties) demanded to know who the person was that had received second most of the votes - she wanted to talk to him. The neighbour pointed to Bob and Dora went up to him at once. Bob’s comment: she was very easy to talk to, very understanding and fun. That’s how they became friends. He always picked her up for the meetings. Both fought against the negligence of a warfare establishment in the region, and also dealt with local issues.

Collaboration in friendship:

- The next year he was elected to the school board of a secondary school (the Cape Cornwall Secondary Modern - his son was there); this school would not allow their pupils to take O-level exams, reserved for grammar schools; they had to be contented
with GCS-exams, recently introduced in secondary modern schools. He did not really feel up to the job of contesting this form of discrimination, but Dora coached him on what he had to say in order to argue the parents’ case convincingly – and he managed to dismantle the director’s argument in favour of the grammar schools’ sole right to O-level exams.

- His way to work would lead him past Dora’s house. One day when on his way back, he noticed that her curtains had not been opened the whole day. So he stopped by to enquire. It turned out that Dora was in bed with terrible flu, and in no condition to get up and buy the medicine the doctor had prescribed. He came to her rescue and decided from then on to drop by regularly, mostly during his lunch break. As she was nearly deaf, she often did not hear him enter and only looked up when he was already in the door. “Oh, it’s you, Bob” – she would say and immediately go on typing. Since food and dirt and cat hair regularly clogged the machine (she had three / John seemed to have another three because Kate found six typewriters when taking over the household), Bob would take them every now and then to his workshop and immerse them in a cleaning liquid, oil them and bring them back for Dora to continue. Often they engaged in a discussion about the book she was then writing. Bob was particularly helpful with the Machine Book (dedicated to him), for he did some research on the Industrial Revolution, particularly the so-called “Second Industrial Revolution” when the invention of the transistor led to the electronisation of machines. (Bob has all her books, each with a personal dedication written by Dora). Bob found the discussions interesting and at times very profound. He adds, though, that Dora left out what did not suit her argument, and was not willing to listen to Bob’s cautionary remark: ”Dora, there is another point of view to it.” There were times when she wanted to give up on the book; then Bob would encourage her since he, too, found it important for the book to reach a publisher.

- Once she even celebrated Christmas at his house, with his friends. Again Bob underlines that ‘it was so easy to talk to her’, she would join the group and engage them in conversation. His friends felt the same about it. According to Bob Dora had been a very fine lady. In light of her sharp intelligence and educational background, he feels honoured to have been her friend. That she had accepted him, a simple ‘guy’, as a friend......
Mrs Wright about herself:

- She grew up in a typical bourgeois family, mostly in Worthing, Sussex. When she was 14, her parents died (her father had had TB even before she was born). Her elder sister and two brothers were by then old enough to take care of themselves. Young Barbara was placed in the care of a guardian, who sent her to a girls’ boarding school, the Godophin School, Salisbury. She still recalls that the only reason why they were not allowed to go to the cinema was “because you could get germs”. On the other hand, the school had an excellent piano teacher. With music she felt at home (her mother had been a star singer pupil at the Royal Academy of Music and was just starting a promising concert career as a coloratura soprano when she got married). She was advised to learn the viola, while a friend of hers, Lillian, played the cello. When not yet legally an adult, she persuaded her guardian to let her go with her friend Lillian to Paris to attend a one-year music course. She had made up her mind by then that she wanted to get away from the provincial bourgeois life her sister and brothers were living. Upon return from Paris, she was accepted at the Royal Academy of Music to study both piano and viola, and got a degree (L.R.A.M.) in piano accompanying. From Jan. to Dec. 1938, the month she got married to Walter Hubbard, she was a teacher for the “smalls” and a music teacher for all pupils at Dora’s Beacon Hill School. Her husband brought one boy into the marriage, and later they had a girl. For some time Mrs Hubbard did piano accompanying. Friends in the publishing business then asked her to try her hand at translation (from French) and reviews, which she did successfully. Opportunities came her way and Mrs Wright [she reverted to her maiden name as translator and critic] became a well-known translator of French (modern literature) and critic of art and literature.
Appendices

Some of her translated works:
- Sylvia Bourdon. *Love is a Feast* (1977).

*How she came to Beacon Hill School:*
- After finishing her musical education, she became interested in things other than music, answered ads and did a few jobs. Dora had put an ad in the newspaper looking for a music teacher for the younger children. Miss Wright, as she was still called then, had read about the Russells and their unconventional ideas and practices, was interested and sent her application. Dora phoned as soon as she got it and arranged a meeting in an educational exhibition, where they walked around accompanied by Pat, who had a recently acquired monkey on his shoulder (“Rasputin”). Dora hired her there and then.

*The importance her stay at the school had for the rest of her life:*
- Both Dora and the school had a decisive influence on her - not in an intentional or direct way. Dora, for example, exerted an influence on people by simply being her optimistic, inspiring self. She would talk very freely to Miss Wright, although they were never close. Yet, by simply treating her as a human being and whole person, Dora helped her come into her own. The atmosphere at the school was the other liberating factor. People, children and adults alike, were generally frank and co-operative. “At school, things were thought out”. For the first time Miss Wright saw humanism and socialism put into practice - their principles were simply taken for granted in daily life. Nobody so far had bothered to give her explanations, and now, all of a sudden, she was confronted with children who demanded honest answers all the time – ‘naturally’.

*Dora as a person:*
- Dora could be an inspiration with all her peculiarities. Mrs Wright would consider her an almost ‘classless’ person who got along well with most people – maybe because she would always treat people as human beings. Even at school, where she was the
headmistress, she would never make out that she was ‘the boss’. She had a feeling for the right people, except when men were concerned. (In this context Mrs Wright recalls Dora’s grieving over Paul, the ‘sort of strange ideas’ she had about him, and how Pat seems to have arrived on the scene, dramatically claiming that he had known Paul, and thus gained Dora’s confidence. When he was around there was not much of an intellectual conversation going on.) She also recalls Griffin, a ‘nice guy’. To him Dora was ‘biestly’, unfairly blaming him for Bertie’s desertion and influencing her children to the point that Harriet became prejudiced towards her own father.

- When in her element, she would create her own atmosphere, could be comical and entertaining. She tended to try and convince people of her ideas. In some way Dora ‘was a great exaggerator’, often too optimistic and to a certain extent ‘blind’ when politics or her own person was concerned. For example, Dora did not care (or was aware of the fact) that her frizzy hair, dyed red in old age, or her plump body when bathing naked could be an embarrassment to the people around her. (As regard the last example, Mrs Wright referred to the time when she was at Beacon Hill School at Kingwell Hall, which had an outdoor swimming pool).

- Dora, the writer, did not fare well with Mrs Wright. She read her books and, though not an expert in this field, felt that they were not well written. What prevails in them is her enthusiasm and a knack for wanting things to come true her way. Mrs Wright considered part of Dora’s lifelong battles for certain goals a matter of sheer ‘obstinacy’.

- As a mother, Dora was like a ‘tigress’. Although Lily took over the role of a ‘surrogate mother’ for most of the time when Dora was busy running the school, she was always there as a mother to defend them and fight in their interest. Mrs Wright recalled Dora’s loyal care of John and how she struggled to make sure of his lordship and the privileges that come with it. She certainly loved children and was very ‘even-minded’ and fair to them.
Appendices

7. Interview with Madeleine Simms

(Transcript of 2 audio cassettes)

Where: at Mrs Simms’s home in London
When: 3 June 2003- early afternoon (ca. 2 pm)

About the interviewee:

Mrs Simms is author of several pamphlets and two books on birth control and the Abortion Law Reform. She came to know Dora Russell personally when she got involved in the campaign for the Abortion Act in 1969 and decided to write a book about the Abortion Law Reform Movement.

Publications:

• Abortion in Britain before the Abortion Act. 1981.

Cassette 1, Side A:

How did you meet Dora Russell for the first time?

“I knew about Dora long before I met her because I was involved in the Birth Control and the Abortion Law Reform Movements, and when I started reading about the history of these movements, she was very prominent. Hmh, and – then, in 1969 / 70, I started writing – when we had got the Abortion Act into Parliament, and it had become law – I started writing a History of the Abortion Law Reform campaign with Keith Hindell. He was at that time the BBC home affair correspondent. And – at this point, my family and I were on holiday in Cornwall, and - it struck me that I could actually meet her and talk to her. And so I wrote her a letter saying ‘Could we take you out to dinner at a hotel in Penzance?’ Ehm, and I don’t know whether you have read the accounts of her Memorial Meeting, aha, yes, because I actually told the story, and so we went to the Queens Hotel in Penzance, which was a rather old-fashioned sort of English hotel, and we said we would sit in the Lounge and wait for her and every time some elderly person came past, we looked at her very carefully to see whether it was her... Once or twice we said: 'Are you Dora Russell?’ and they said: ‘No, no’. Ehm, and then a sort of very energetic, brisk lady shot past us and I
suddenly realised that was probably her. It was a totally different image from what I had expected and we introduced ourselves and it was her and (laugh) we went into dinner and she was in very high spirits, and we talked about oh, these various things and then she started telling us reminiscing, and we talked about her early life and her love life and I became conscious after a while that all the waiters were surrounding our table (laughing) and in the distance you could see other diners trying to attract their attention – they wanted to have a bottle of wine or so – can you believe that – they simply stuck to our table as they couldn’t believe what they were hearing. (laughing) And she was most – most entertaining and very lively. Ehm, and – after that time, you know, we had various bits of correspondence, ehm, and I think, ah, the next time I really had the opportunity to talk to her at length was in 19 – 1986 when it was the 50th anniversary of the Abortion Law Reform Association and there was a big celebration in London. And –ehm - some of the younger girls, they cooked an enormous birthday cake and they wanted her to cut, cut the cake – and I have photos of it, I don’t actually know whether you want to see them. Anyway, she came to London with a companion [her housekeeper at the time] and she stayed with us for three days. Ehm, and she said she felt terribly guilty about this because apart from lending her name to the cause she hadn’t actually been very actively involved. But she had been very actively involved in the Wor-, thing of the Workers’ Birth Control Movement. Ja, and she had got help to get her resolution passed the Woman’s group of the Labour Party, which was actually very important because it had longtime effects. It resulted in Local Authority Birth Control Clinics being allowed to advice to – to married women who desired it. – Yes, that’s right, it took a few years, but it was the fact that the labour movement now supported it was really very important and I think that was her big contribution to this – to this cause. But she was always very willing to sign letters on abortion and so on – and then, of course, they had a big incident down in Penzance with Dr. William Tulland [?], yes, that’s right, he was a local general practitioner and did abortions and then got caught – and she led a tremendous campaign in the press and elsewhere to try and prevent him being sent to prison, which they didn’t unfortunately succeed. But, ehm, it really was, it sort of brought the whole movement back into focus, you know, and – it really showed what a nonsense, eighteen, I think eighteen thousand people signed the petition they would play through (?) in his defence. So, whenever the opportunity arose she would be prepared to be active and say something. But I think by
then her real interests were probably more focused on other issues. Ja – I think she had a sort of patch in the twenties, early thirties, when she, the feminist thing was, was her main interest and then other things took, took over. Eh, and, of course, she was, never had, hardly any money, and, she had to keep herself and her family going and this was very hard work.

(me asking something in the background …)

Well, we had a very curious meeting with John, because, after we met in Penzance she invited us to have tea with her in her house, Carn Voel, ja, with, and to bring our children who were then about ten and five, and we went over there and, I actually always, always remember this because it was such a strange occasion. John, who was, by this time he was fifth, fourth Earl or something, fifth Earl, was in the back of the room, writing all the time, a sort of strange parody of his father, and – her whole of wall where he was writing was lined with his books, which were complete nonsense, I mean, they were, he was just pretending to write, because he was, I think he was schizophrenic. – Yes, and – she was looking after him, which was no, no easy thing, eh, and he, he was, had moments of relative sanity when he remembered that he was an earl and he was talking in the House of Lords and he wished to go to London and make a speech, and she had to try and restrain him, and this was very difficult, and there they were alone in this cottage, you know, and, ehm, we spent the afternoon there and – it was a very strange occasion, and then, years later, there was an American film called ‘Reds’ that she was in that, and she invited us to go to the Preview which was in a London cinema – and he was there then, and actually looked enormously improved, sort of eh, almost you wouldn’t particularly know that, that, you know, that, ehm, …. that’s right, ja. So, ehm, there is, ehm, and curiously enough, although, - I’d met Harriet, oh a number of times, we had a mutual friend, ehm, but, about a year ago, I have a friend who lives very near here, who is the widow of a Labour Cabinet minister, Susy Dell, I don’t know… Edmund Dell, he was a minister … (me speaking) oh, I see, …. yes, I see, yes, yes, well, she started life, I was at school with her, so I have known her vaguely for a long time, a little older than me, but I knew her, and she started life as a factory inspector, which was a new profession opening up to women in the fifties, and Kate Russell was also factory inspector, (me interrupting) --- was it Harriet? I thought it was Kate, …was she, well maybe it was Harriet. But the thing is that when I came out of the tube station at … Street about a year ago, I happened to meet Susy Dell and she said:
‘Do let me introduce you to my friend, Kate eh, Russell,’ and I said ‘Hello’ and only afterwards did I realise: ‘My God, Kate Russell, that must be’ (me speaking)... yes, and she now lives at Carn Voel. (me speaking)... Yes, that’s right ... oh I see, yes, ...that’s interesting.... yes....

I think, it was sort of high spirits, really, you know, and, also, at that period in her life, she was fairly lonely, and so having visitors was, was rather fun and she enjoyed that, you know, because there she was on this cliff, and, there weren’t many people around, and she only came into Penzance occasionally, when the bus, you know, a very occasional country bus, and there was John there, who was intermittently mad or... ehm, it’s amazing how she survived, really,... (me speaking) oh really, yes, ... yes ...that’s right, ... yes.....yes, she was quite ard???ent.....yes,... yes, ........ 50th anniversary, yes, ...

How did the younger generation see her at the anniversary?

....well they thought she was wonderful, ehm, and, you know, she was a great figure from the past as far as they were concerned......

(End of recording cassette 1, side B)

Continuation cassette 2, side A:

Yes, that’s right, she was, ehm, she made a big impression, and she was at the same time very modest, she said, you know, she had only contributed her name and not very much else. But, ehm, anyway, she then cut the cake (laughing) to great cheers [or: there were great cheers (?)], and, ehm, you see, the three people who had actually founded it, the Abortion Law Reform Association in 1936, were all dead by then, she was the only person around, really, who would have met them and knew about it, and of course, they knew about her journey around England with Frida Laski, where she was talking about birth control to miners’ wives in the North of England, at the time it was considered a very eccentric thing to do, but she pointed out that it was more dangerous to be a, a ...to be a, having a baby than to be a miner, ja, yes....and, the night before this party we gave a small party here for younger people who - were children of our friends and so on, two of whom were actually involved in, were television producers and so on, and, ehm, they were very pleased to meet her and she was very, she clearly had a flair for talking to younger, younger people and she, she wrote some very charming letters to my daughter after she met her in Carn Voel, when she was only, you know, between five or seven or eight later
on, wrote very nice letters, she obviously loved children, you know, I think she had a great feeling for them, yes….that’s right…. yes….

…no they’d rather, I mean, they’re glad (?) here was somebody who had undertaken the battle they’d all been involved in but very much earlier and ... when it was much more difficult and, ehm, you got into much more trouble and difficulty, where as far (?), you know, by the eighties the battle was largely over, but, in the thirties is still took quite a lot of courage to come out and speak about abortion…..I don’t think...yes....yes ....really, yes..... yes...... I see, oh yes, that’s interesting... that’s interesting, I’ve heard about that.....yes.... I don’t recall..... yes.. that’s right ..... how interesting.....

( my giving information about Dora’s activities in the fifties)

Her contact with Dora:

‘… very intermittent, yes, long periods when we, you know, we weren’t in touch at all, and, I think, largely because her interests were really elsewhere by then. Ehm, but, I mean, everybody admired her… I admired her for the work she had done in this field; I didn’t share a lot of her political views because I thought, in a way, she had been taken for a ride, as we say, you know, by, by the communists. Although I could see, you know, she wasn’t by any means a communist, or anything as narrowly conceived as that. But she didn’t realise, I mean, Russell did realise this very early on, because they, this is one of the great quarrels they had. I mean, he went – when was it? – 1921 or 22 to Russia and he was horrified, he thought it was a police state, and he came back and said so. And this upset her a lot, she, ehm, … yes, that’s right..... yes.....(my giving explanations as regards Dora’s attitude to

That’s right, I felt that very strongly, actually, that, you know, in a way if she, once she’d formed an idealistic idea or something the fact didn’t impinge a lot, you know, - and in a way that, although in a sense it’s a criticism, it also gives you great power to carry on doing whatever it is that you feel is important and I think those sort of characters actually achieve a lot because they are not deflected by practical considerations or one kind of..... ja, so I think every kind of movement needs people like that because the rest of us are rather too practical and low key.... yes, that’s right.... oh yes, very much so...yes… I mean in a way you could say that her relationship with the men in her life was also based on various notions and ideals and that, what was actually going on on the ground was in many ways
different, but she didn’t quite make the connection always…… I think, she – in a way – her judgments were too kind, she wasn’t at all cynical, that is what’s so extraordinary about someone who had lived such a busy and interesting and political life that she hadn’t a trace of cynicism, and us younger people were deeply cynical, you know, felt by contrast. Extraordinary…….Yes, I would, yes, no, I think that’s right… yes, and I am sure, it was the optimism that kept her going in the dreadful things that happened to her at the various stages in her life. But she always felt, I have that feeling that she always felt that if she could just keep going things would look up …. yes… that’s right … Yes, quite (laughing), … I see … Well, I must say, the one occasion we were in the house it look pretty chaotic and there were books and papers everywhere ... and you know, it was really out of hand, she obviously needed a very good secretary she didn’t have, no…. Well, she did talk about, she, I mean, she did give us the impression that the, em, this Caravan, Peace Caravan of Women was, she thought, the most important thing she had done, which we didn’t think at all, but, ‘cause we thought that it had actually not had very much effect; it might have had a bit of [an] effect on the other side of the Iron Curtain, but it didn’t have any, I think, effect here, whereas the work she had done in the Birth Control and Abortion Movements had a very concrete and long term effect. But, she didn’t, I don’t think she saw it that way at all and she liked big projects, you know, I think she felt that the bigger the better and that kind of thing…. yes, it was kind of interesting that, but ah… well, I think, I think when we were talking about her life generally, and, you see, one of the things that came out clearly is, when the young people assembled here, they all wanted to know about Wittgenstein and the relationship between Russell and Wittgenstein and she actually thought that her life was much more important and interesting than… and, I think, slightly was a bit put out by their questioning about the men instead of about what the women had been doing, and then she said, you know, there was this caravan, peace caravan and it was so important and so on, I think this is the trouble about living in the shadow of a great man, but it’s his work that most people consider to be of greater in…, especially that strange relationship with Wittgenstein, who was one of the geniuses, but also fairly mad, ehm, and - but she wasn’t thickly, she had known Wittgenstein, but wasn’t thickly interested in him, at least didn’t give the impression she was, and that was interesting, I mean, her focus was rather different from that of younger people, I think ...., (hesitation) I think that’s probably true, but although at the very beginning of her life, of course, she was very much an
insider, her father was a very respectable senior Civil Servant, she went to America with him and did all this war work and got a medal, and she did say to us once that ‘the first half of my life was all very easy and pleasant and delightful, and then there was this terrible decline in the second half of my life and it was a great anticlimax’, and I thought that was rather sad, but I think she saw it that way, and you know, it was right, in a way. … yes…. she did… no, but you know, it’s curious, a book she wrote in, I don’t know, in the 20s. Hypatia, was it? – was by Mrs Bertrand Russell, but it is interesting that she was prepared to be labelled in that sort of way… I see … that’s right …

(my giving explanations as to Dora’s paradoxical attitude towards the name Russell)
… and I suspect her publishers were keen for her to be called ‘Russell’, also… yes….. How come [there is?] this archive in Holland - are they particularly interested in her work … oh yes, where the Russell papers are (McMasters), … I see … good God….

(my providing information about the IISH and how the papers ended up there)
… gosh, big undertak…. yes….very difficult …in a way it would have been easier if it all had been in a chronological order all together so you could use the bits you needed….. I see, yes, quite… Yes, very shortly before, and she came, she could no longer manage by herself, she came with a companion, who, they stayed up-you know-stairs, in the bedroom, they shared a room, and she needed quite a lot of help by then to get, getting around… ehm…but, and we, you know, took her everywhere by car, she couldn’t walk very far, … but she sort of, you know, was cheerful and kept going, and she was greatly stimulated be meeting new people, and – you know – having a party here with lots of young people she really enjoyed, I think, and meeting all the people the next day at this party, and then our children came and met her and she remembered them, and I think that was really rather fun for her in a way/anyway (?) because, you know, life was fairly isolated down there - and the companion we had mixed feelings about, she … didn’t think she was ideal, but … (laugh) …no, I don’t think she was a secretary, she was a sort of mixture of a housekeeper and a matron … ja, and she drank an awful lot that was another feature which we thought was (??) unfortunate … did she? I see … Yes, in a sort of way that would be quite a fair description, rather innocent, yes, and that goes with the lack of cynicism…. I can’t imagine her being manipulative at all, but … perhaps earlier in life she was… I don’t know, really… Yes, I can, but I think she would always have very firm opinions on most subjects that came out and would probably fairly quickly assume a kind of leadership role, ja …
that’s possible, …. I wondered actually where she had recruited these women and I am interested in what you say... so they were all English, were they? ... (my explanations) ... I see … I didn’t realise actually that it was such a small number of women, it was about eleven or twelve really ... that would be interesting, wouldn’t it.... changed their names, of course, yes… I think she, I didn’t think she meant to be domineering, but she had very clear views of things .. holiday, really ...yes, very uncomfortable holiday, I think…I see, yes… and they went from country to country making speeches?...

(my telling about the caravan, Dora’s expectations, the enormous effort she put into it etc.) .. really ... good lord.... I should think… I would think there was quite a lot of official support because, of course, from the publicity point of view this was a very nice thing for them... So she would, on this side of the Iron Curtain, she would be considered a stooge, wouldn’t she?- a sort of somebody who had really been taken by the communists and been used …

(I am not sure whether it can be put this way…)

Cassette 2, side B:

“... were obviously women who did speak from the heart and so on...the notion that by taking a dozen or so women around Europe you are going to really affect the political scene is slightly mad...yes...I see... yes... ja...

(my giving background information about what Dora all did to affect cold war politics besides travelling with the dozen or so women)

... Good lord – can one see it (the film)?... and tell me, was there a committee that... or was she a one-man band? Was there a committee that organised or...

(my explanations regarding PICM and its the umbrella organisation WIDF)

... I see… yes… it’s always dangerous to be ahead of your time (laugh) you know, you are bound to be disappointed, aren’t you...yes, that’s right... you need people like that...

How would you explain that Dora is so little remembered in the history of the women’s movement?

I suppose not, and I think it is because she spread herself so widely, you know, in the sense that a lot of her energy went into the peace movement and so on, it wasn’t on very narrowly feminist issues like the vote or the birth control or abortion or equal pay, divorce
reform, you know, all those sorts of things. I think if she’d put all that tremendous energy into one of these things probably she would be better known. But she, her vision was really too big, you know, and so she spread herself among many different causes. And I think maybe that her, in a way her reputation was slightly diminished by this, because she couldn’t make a lot of headway in any of them. It might have been better to make a lot of headway in one small issue. … But this is a sort of view I have because I grew up in the Fabian movement, which you may have heard about, which is very parochial in a way, you know. It used to be called ‘gas and water socialism’. It is about, you know, the municipal ownership of gas and water in the 19th, early 20th century in places like Birmingham and so on, and the way to progress was to do all these little things, and ultimately society would become more equal and so forth. And this is the opposite of Dora’s vision, which is to do the grand thing, and that was the only sensible way forward. In a way she is always rather un-English in this respect, that she is much more of a continental type of thinker. … In many ways, yes, but not, I think, in her thought processes so much, because the English left on the whole is, deals with minutiae, with small things….Well, it’s very partial, it puts a lot of energy into very limited number of things, I mean … when I was young, when I got involved in the Abortion Law Reform Movement, I went to elect (?), we heard weekly ‘electors’ at central London Ravenside, and I went and heard a lawyer called Derek Gardener, who later became Lord Chancellor in Harold Wilson government, and he was saying: ‘The next Labour Government, when it comes, must have a series of law reforms waiting to be…’ and he mentioned abortion. Now, this is 1968/9 and a lot of young women who were there were very amazed, they didn’t realise that abortion wasn’t legal, you know, it wasn’t talked about at all, and so a group of people got together, you know, to work on the abortion law – but it’s a very narrow thing, you know, the notion that you could work on things like peace would have seemed absurd to the English left, I think. So I think in that respect she always thought on a bigger scale than those people who were actively involved in the Labour Party or the Fabian Society. That’s my theory, I may be quite wrong (laugh) …

(my observations and question to which country she would attribute Dora’s kind of thought processes)

…France I think, actually, a sort of grand philosophical view… [which would fit because she studied the French philosophers which Mrs Simms knew] …yes, she did of course …
7. Interview with Madeleine Simms

yes, that’s right …. I mean, I think, this fits in with having a sort of, in a way, figure that fits better into Continental Europe than she does here, and I think she often got very impatient with English people because they were so focused and narrow … yes, that’s interesting, I think that’s right… I think that’s … it’s both a strength and a weakness of the English left that it focuses sharply on small issues which it tries to then actually do something about in a practical way, but it doesn’t have a grand theory, and so it then has to start and think of the next thing to do because it’s not carried forward by the sort of ideology … really? … Well, I think because she had this rather grand vision of what should be and what people could do about it… I mean, the whole notion of peace is such an theoretical one in a way and the notion that a few women getting together could make any difference to the world political situation would seem to most English people a very peculiar notion and I think this was part of her problem here that people thought that she was very eccentric because she had this rather grand view, while I suspect in France she would have been taken probably much more seriously than on her home ground. … was she really, yes,…

(fill her in on the more positive reception of Dora, her enterprise and film in West Germany)

…Well, when did this happen? … Which part of Germany do you come from? (Cologne) Cologne! … Extraordinary, isn’t it?… That’s right, yes….

(my giving explanations as to how there might be connections between Dora’s undertaking and the peace marches/caravans in the 80s)

… It’s very difficult, isn’t it, to pin down … Yes,… I mean, just as her energies were rather diffused among many things, I think her influence will also be diffused on a much wider scale than if she’d perhaps confined herself to one small thing … so, it may be, as you say, in Germany, which I didn’t know about that she had an influence, I suspect her group had a sort of influence on the anti-globalisation movement and so on, these are very hard, the threads to trace are very difficult, but I am sure that if there hadn’t been people like that in the fifties there wouldn’t have been people like that thirty years later … yes … let me make you a cup of tea……
8. DECLARATION OF MOTHERS
for the Defence of Children
Against the Danger of War

In July 1955, a World Congress of Mothers for the defence of children against war, for disarmament and for friendship between the peoples, met in Lausanne. So widespread was the anxiety felt by women at the danger to their children from nuclear warfare and the armaments race, that this Congress was supported by mothers from 79 countries and more than a thousand delegates and observers took part in it.

At its conclusions, the Congress decided to bring into being a Permanent International Committee of Mothers which would carry on the work of the Congress and implement its decisions.

This committee met in Lausanne from February 2nd to 4th 1956, and, reaffirming the will and aspirations of all mothers, unanimously adopted the following declaration:

All mothers, all women, know from experience what terrible sufferings war brings to their families: misery, poverty, the destruction of homes and of millions of promising lives. In the course of the last war, some 40 million children were made orphans.

To-day, although the cause of peace has made some progress, the peril of war still threatens the world. Our children are exposed to even more frightful dangers because of the weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear warfare threatens even the unborn child and the future of the race. This warfare, with the weapons that are even now being constructed and perfected, and on which military strategy is based, could lead to the destruction of humanity.

As mothers, we have the duty to demand the end of this threat and we have the right to be heard. Our first responsibility is the defence of human life.

By their work in field and factory, in professional life and in the care of the family, women contribute their full share to the creation of wealth and will no longer endure the squandering of that wealth on armaments and war preparations. Military budgets, amounting in some cases to as much as two thirds of national expenditure, starve health, housing and education. Increased taxation causes a rise in the cost of living and lowers the family standards of life.

The wealth and energies of the peoples of the world, were it not for preparations for war, could be set free to feed the hungry, to build home for our families, to increase and enrich the education of our children, to enable industry, science and art to be used for peaceful purposes and to make possible a life of happiness for all.

War endangers not only the body, but the mind of every individual in the society that prepares for it. Children's minds are warped by fear and hatred, through corrupting literature, through programmes of violence in cinema, radio and television.

We are determined that this pollution of young minds by the glorification of war shall cease. We want our children to be educated in the principles of truth, love and justice, and that those who have the responsibility of their education in the school and in the family shall receive due honour, respect and reward.

We declare that we see no barriers to friendship and understanding between all peoples of the world. To us they are all one family and the world a home in which all have the right to live in peace.

We are convinced that all disputes can be solved by negotiation in a spirit of friendship and cooperation.

We mothers call upon all statesmen and all peoples of the world to observe the spirit of the United Nations Charter, to abolish all military pacts which threaten peace, and to renounce the instrument of war as a means of settling disputes.

We demand general, progressive, substantial and simultaneous disarmament, essential to remove the immediate danger of war.

We demand, pending the prohibition of atomic weapons and complete disarmament, that all governments sign a Convention not to use weapons of mass destruction, and that they at once cease from experiments with nuclear weapons.

We demand that the resources of the world be used for the well-being of humanity and above all for our children, to ensure for them health, education, the social services necessary to safeguard their development and promote their happiness. We demand the education of our children in the spirit of friendship, justice and peace.

We want all men and women to work for increased understanding, friendship and exchanges between the peoples of the world, in mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and national independence.

We demand that the dignity of mothers, so often the inspiration of the artist and poet, shall be fully respected in our society, and that the views and wishes of women be given due weight in all places where decisions on the present and the future of mankind are made.

Convinced that the love of mothers for their children, the desire that they should live and grow up in peace and security, is common to all women, no matter what their race or creed, nation or political and economic system, we, the mothers of all continents, call upon women to join with us.

In unity, in love for our children and in deep concern for humanity, we are assured that we shall succeed in our great task, which is to bring peace to the world.

Adopted unanimously -

Transcribed from the original, International Institute of Social History. Dora Winifred Russell Papers, 281.