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Home and Away: Politics and Suffrage in the First World War

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A commonly addressed question in the historiography of the suffrage movement is what happened to all its activity when the outbreak of war occurred in 1914. The standard narrative used to focus on the suspension of not only suffragette militancy but also of the work of 'constitutional' societies, followed by the subsequent absorption of many of Britain's working-class women into war work, with the achievement of the vote in 1918 arguably viewed more as a consequence of the latter rather than of any sustained campaigning.¹ In the last twenty years scholarship from feminist historians, notably Sandra Stanley Holton, Nicoletta Gullace and Jo Vellacott, has established a more nuanced picture, showing that suffragist women continued to organise for the vote throughout the war, while also engaging in the war effort and/or working for peace.² Since suffragists were mainly middle-class women, their war work was largely voluntary and philanthropic, arguably advancing women's public role, albeit generally in an appropriately gendered way, thus representing continuity rather than change. For example, the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) quickly mobilised nationally to offer aid to refugees from Belgium.³ The organisation's support for the Scottish Women's Hospitals is another example of the way in which war work, suffrage and philanthropy were intertwined enterprises. However, as Holton, Vellacott and others have described, a split developed within the NUWSS leadership between the patriotic, pro-war president, Millicent Fawcett (and with her, the majority of NUWSS members), and the so-called 'democratic suffragists', a left-leaning, anti-war faction, who resigned en masse from the organisation's executive in 1915 in support of the women's peace conference at the Hague.⁴

Thus a picture of women more-or-less abandoning suffrage activism in favour of war work has gradually been replaced by a scenario in which suffragists mixed relief work with

political campaigning, albeit deeply divided by their attitudes to war. It is evident that national suffrage leaders engaged not only with domestic politics and welfare projects but also with international issues.⁵ This article seeks to explore these themes from a local perspective, away from the politics of the national NUWSS. It presents a case-study of suffragists in the south-east England town of Tunbridge Wells in order to explore the diverse range of political reactions to the war that can be detected amongst activist women. The personal papers of some leading local suffragists in Tunbridge Wells, together with accounts in the local press, can be utilised to establish a relatively detailed assessment of individual women's political stances. Thus a micro-historical, local approach also reveals that pro- and anti-war women continued to co-operate together in war-related social work and that their local suffrage society organisation remained cohesive. Moreover, their political activism encompassed local, national and international issues: they were concerned about matters both 'home and away'.

Women's Suffrage in Tunbridge Wells

For decades the butt of jokes about reactionary colonels signing letters with the epithet 'disgusted', the English spa town of Tunbridge Wells is now becoming the subject of some serious historical study. A series of publications commissioned and written by the Civic Society Local History Group have led the way, together with some academic work focused mainly on leading women of the town.⁶ A particular period of focus in recent work is the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the beginning of the twentieth century the town had grown far from its origins as an aristocratic inland resort, having undergone a phase of rapid expansion in Victorian times, when in common with other English spas, it became a popular choice of residence for retiring businessmen and servants of the Empire, both military and civil. The relative proximity of – and a regular train service to – London also enabled the late-Victorian town to develop as a domicile for wealthy commuters. Yet Tunbridge Wells retained something of its resort character, with many boarding-houses and hotels still in operation in the early twentieth-century. The fact that the town was a relatively

new one, built on the borders of two counties and three parishes and only receiving its first borough charter in 1889, meant that to some extent politics was fluid and civic institutions far from rigid. Moreover, while the average income of the area was no doubt relatively high, there were areas of the town where there was very poor housing and low living standards.

As a result of its development Tunbridge Wells had a distinctive demographic structure, in which probably the most remarkable feature was the high female to male ratio.⁷ This was largely, but not exclusively the product of the prevalence of domestic service: the town's wealthy residents needed an army of cooks, housemaids and nursemaids to look after them and their families. But a study of census returns suggests some other factors which contributed to the surplus of women residents over men. The town's genteel image, coupled with relatively modest living costs, seems to have attracted some all-female households of unmarried sisters, aunts and widowed mothers. Moreover, retiring colonial servants and army officers often postponed marriage until their (relatively) early retirement, whereupon they might marry younger women, who were likely to become widows in due course. These demographic factors contributed to Tunbridge Wells playing host to a highly active women's movement in the early twentieth century. In the county of Kent only one town had a larger women's suffrage society in 1913: the seaside resort of Ramsgate.⁸ Moreover, the town's women made a notable contribution towards the newly- formed Kent Federation of the NUWSS (which had a Tunbridge Wells woman, Gertrude Mosely as the 'Hon. Secretary') and they were at the forefront of the highly-successful suffrage 'Pilgrimage' demonstration of July 1913.⁹

Tunbridge Wells' suffrage movement was intimately connected to local philanthropic and social reform movements. In the 1890s the town was home to 'Madame' Sara Grand, feminist and renowned author of 'New Woman' novels, and to Louisa Twining.¹⁰ The latter, pioneer of both workhouse visiting and nursing, was ostensibly retired, nevertheless she took on the duties of poor law guardian in her new home town for a period.¹¹ Wishing to retire once more, Twining looked for a protégé, and chose an unmarried local woman in her

mid-thirties, Amelia Scott. Granddaughter of a clergyman, Scott lived in an all-female household. Together with her sister, Louisa, she established a local branch of the women's philanthropic society, the National Union of Women Workers (NUWW) in 1895 and set about an energetic programme of social reform, not only in her role as poor law guardian, but also in a range of new voluntary associations. Among the Scott sisters' enterprises were a 'Leisure Hour Club for Young Women in Business' established in 1900 and a women's lodging house, opened in a deprived district of Tunbridge Wells in 1913. It will be noted that many of the social changes Amelia Scott sought to bring about were connected to the betterment of the lives of women and children, so it was not a large step for her to support women's suffrage.¹²

Naturally the Scott sisters did not work on these initiatives alone. It has been possible to identify several women who participated in both social reform and suffrage movements of early 20th century Tunbridge Wells.¹³ They belonged to a network of organisations, including charities, temperance societies, rescue and preventive societies, all with both national and local profiles. Where suffrage was concerned, Tunbridge Wells women were involved in all parts of a multi-faceted movement, including not only militants but also tax-resistors, non-militants and members of specialist groupings such as the Church League for Women's Suffrage. Four local women are on the Suffragette Roll of Honour, having served prison sentences in connection with suffrage demonstrations, but many more took part in the NUWSS's biggest peaceful demonstration, the suffrage 'Pilgrimage' of 1913.¹⁴ Undoubtedly the non-militant NUWSS was the most significant suffrage body in the town and it had a close relationship with the NUWW, with which it shared its local leadership. In addition to Amelia Scott and Sarah Grand, leading figures in the local NUWSS included Lady Matthews, wife of the former Chief Justice of the Bahamas, Lydia Le Lacheur, Guernsey-born widow of a leading City merchant, and Sarah Candler, a Quaker businesswoman. Each of these reacted politically in a different way to the war, yet they all

continued to co-operate in furthering women's emancipation and the advance of social welfare in their home town.

The remainder of this article examines briefly each of these four women in turn, arranging them on a spectrum ranging from the most obviously pro-war to those with more ambiguous attitudes towards the conflict. The war-time activities of each woman are briefly outlined and the interaction between their suffrage and wartime politics is discussed.

Lady Matthews

Annette Matthews was 41 when the war broke out. She was a relatively recent resident of Tunbridge Wells, having moved there after her marriage in 1910 to Sir John Bromhead Matthews, a retired colonial legal officer about eight years her senior. She had a strong political background: the daughter of a Leeds mayor and manufacturer and the half-sister of a Liberal MP,¹⁵ she had served as both a poor law guardian and as the Scarborough suffrage society secretary before her marriage.¹⁶ Despite having two children soon after she married, she was soon involved in Tunbridge Wells women's organisations, and she was listed as vice-president of the town's large NUWSS branch in 1913. Matthews kept a war-time journal, written for her children who were too young to understand what was happening. She was fervently patriotic and strongly supported the war effort, recording the military situation in her journal, as well as repeatedly commenting on the price of food and the war's impact on domestic arrangements. When the war was not much more than a week old she and her 'household' were sewing garments 'for the poor' and on the 15th August 1914 she recorded that the suffrage society had been authorised by the mayor to collect clothing for women, children and convalescing soldiers.¹⁷ The suffrage society's office was immediately transformed into a clothing depot, supported by women across the political spectrum at a meeting during which, Matthews reported, 'the tone was grave'.¹⁸

Lady Matthews mentioned in her journal her performance of both individual and collective aspects of philanthropy during the war. She sent baby clothes to a Belgian mother

and mended a soldier's torn coat as well as assisting (along with many other local women) in providing refreshments – including Christmas dinner – to the large numbers of troops stationed in Tunbridge Wells. She helped out at the suffrage society clothing depot and was also associated with a local VAD hospital. Together with her husband, she was heavily involved in military recruitment drives before the advent of conscription, supporting his public stance of 'inflexible determination to continue the struggle to a victorious end'¹⁹ by helping 'attest' recruits. But despite her obvious patriotism and support of the conflict, she expressed understandable qualms about modern warfare. In the wake of a visit to a Voluntary Aid Detachment hospital she had 'a sense of revolt' at what she called 'the unreasonableness of it all... Germans and English from the industrial classes have no real desire to stick cold steel into each other, [and] already the origin of this war seems very remote...', she commented. Yet she noted the nation's determination to fight on 'because of German brutality' to Belgium.²⁰

Moreover, Matthews' suffragist agenda was not displaced, overtaken or overshadowed - but rather enhanced - by war. In January 1916 she organised a meeting in Tunbridge Wells in support of Elsie Inglis' Scottish Women's Hospitals which, as McDermid discusses elsewhere in this journal, was closely connected to the NUWSS. Matthews reported that the assembly was 'crowded to suffocation'. 'These suffrage women, Doctors [and] Nurses, have done marvels of work in France & Serbia, [and] undoubtedly have gained the sympathy and admiration of everyone, whether for women's franchise or not', she commented.²¹ A few months earlier she had confided in her journal that 'Our best blood is being spilt at the front, [yet] our women [are] still not admitted into the Nation's Councils, their wisdom lost, [and] their experience unused... and the enemy hammering at our gates.'²² Thus repeatedly Matthews associated the themes of women's emancipation, work and the war effort in a direct linkage. On another occasion in 1915 she expressed her deep frustration at the recruitment situation: 'To a woman such as I am, a suffragist, who has tried to urge our Government to allow women the power of fulfilling their duties to the country...

the thought that men must be cajoled....to serve their country...is repellent.'²³ Such a sentiment may have been inspired by her involvement (albeit limited) in the Women's Volunteer Reserve (WVR) established by the most pro-war faction of the suffrage movement. The WVR was a controversial, quasi-military organisation which trained women for more active and arguably less gender-stereotyped wartime roles than the ubiquitous nursing and voluntary work.²⁴ For a seemingly conventional, conservative upper-middle class woman Matthews was perhaps surprisingly supportive of the subversion of traditional gender roles, remarking approvingly of women bus conductresses and even describing a strike for equal pay as 'an epoch making event'.²⁵ However, her patriotic enthusiasm for winning the war may have trumped her feminism, as when she recorded the achievement of the vote, she chose to envisage women's future on conventional, gendered lines. 'The relief to us all is enormous. Now we can devote ourselves to our homelife [sic] because we are a recognised part of the nation even in that quiet sphere', she remarked following the House of Commons vote in favour of suffrage, which had coincided with the birth of her third child.²⁶

Amelia Scott

Amelia Scott has left less direct evidence of her opinion of the rights and wrongs of warfare than Lady Matthews, so one has to infer rather more from her actions. Politically her actions suggest beliefs of a liberal persuasion, although she was associated with Christian Socialism as well as with the Liberal Women's Suffrage Union.²⁷ When in 1919 she stood successfully for election to the local council, she fought under the non-party banner of the Women's Citizens Association.²⁸ There is nothing to suggest that Scott was in any way opposed to the country's involvement in the war, although after its end she expressed the relatively commonplace view that such a disaster for humanity should never be repeated. Scott's godson, Hugh Chittenden was an officer in the Royal Sussex regiment and the Royal Engineers, so she would have had a deep, personal interest in the war.²⁹ An Anglican, Scott had a sincere religious faith, but as already mentioned, she had a strong calling for social action, especially in relation to women and children.³⁰ Where others saw Tunbridge

Wells as a prosperous, comfortable town, Scott noticed the pockets of poverty and bad housing and the consequent environmental dangers, especially for women and children.

Like so many other NUWSS members (alongside Lady Matthews, Amelia Scott was a NUWSS branch vice-president), her first war work was as part of an emergency local committee formed in October 1914 to aid Belgian refugees. Not only were the Scott sisters both on the committee (and Amelia on the executive) but they also donated £2 to the relief fund.³¹ The sisters must have played an important role in caring for the refugees as in July 1916 they were presented with a beautiful, hand-illustrated souvenir album as a 'thank you' from Tunbridge Wells' Club Albert, the Belgian refugees' union in the town. Moreover, Scott was later awarded a Golden Palm by the Belgian King.³²

Another innovation that the Scott sisters were closely associated with was the introduction of women's police patrols early in the war. Scott had close links to the national leadership of the NUWW, which began to promote the use of women's police patrols in the autumn of 1914. While this initiative was introduced across the country, the next innovation of the Scott sisters was more unusual. In 1915, together with local NUWW colleagues, they set up a laundry to wash and mend the clothing of soldiers billeted in the locality, apparently as a result of concerns raised by NUWW patrolwomen and the military authorities about 'undesirable' women hanging around army camps and offering to do washing. The Scott sisters' roles were 'hands on': Amelia was the 'hon. Manageress' of the laundry and studied book-keeping specially in order to undertake this role, while Louisa was one of the ladies in charge of the mending room.³³ Unemployed women were given paid work doing the washing and the profits returned to the patrols fund. Meanwhile, the Leisure Hour Club became the basis for a place where girls and soldiers could socialise in a safe, polite, supervised space, away from streets, pubs and other dangers. The NUWW branch also established soup kitchens for children in the poor areas of the town in 1917 when the price of food and shortages were hitting the inhabitants hard.³⁴

Throughout the war Scott kept up her interest in feminist and suffrage activities. Among her papers are handbills and pamphlets protesting at Regulation 40 D under the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA), which feminists regarded as the virtual re-enactment of the old Contagious Diseases legislation of the Victorian period. She was a regular presence at suffrage meetings and women's gatherings of all kinds. Locally, she remained an officer of the NUWSS branch, which continued to function throughout the war, despite members' energetic war work. In 1919 Scott was elected to the borough council and campaigned not only for the employment of women police but also for 'an up-to-date maternity clinic, maternity home, day nursery and hostel for children and mothers'.³⁵ In Scott's own words, the NUWW was 'not a feminist movement fighting for our own hand', rather it was 'a massed [sic] spiritual formation, to combat any forms of evil, whether by oppression, or through vice, or neglect, to any human being who is feeble, ignorant or poor'.³⁶ Scott's war work was thus inextricably connected with her religious views as well as her feminism and prioritisation of social action.

Lydia le Lacheur

While Lady Matthews and the Scott sisters were Anglicans, my final two examples were both non-conformists. Early 20th century Tunbridge Wells was dominated religiously by low-church Anglican congregations, but there were several, thriving non-conformist chapels in the area as well. Lydia le Lacheur was born in Guernsey in 1843 where she married John, only son of Giullame le Lacheur, a sea captain who had established a profitable coffee business trading with Costa Rica. The family were committed Congregationalists and supported financially the building of chapels in Costa Rica and Tunbridge Wells as well as many other charities, including the Leisure Hour Club for young women.³⁷ They were very wealthy as well as socially important: John was Costa Rica's Consul-General, and his growing family settled into a grand dwelling in Tunbridge Wells' so-called 'millionaires' row' shortly before the 1881 census. Lydia gave birth to at least eleven children, eight of whom were girls. She was widowed in her early sixties, and became active in the Tunbridge Wells

NUWSS. In 1913, now aged seventy, she was treasurer of the local NUWSS and frequently acted as 'hostess' for meetings and 'at homes'.³⁸ She also supported the Women's Tax Resistance League and several of her daughters were active suffragists/suffragettes.

Like the Scott sisters, the le Lacheur family were quickly involved in efforts to support Belgian refugees in Tunbridge Wells. Lydia and one of her daughters were members of the Mayor's emergency relief committee established in October 1914.³⁹ Historian Peter Cahalan, commenting on the reception of Belgian refugees, remarks that it was a rare issue that brought together people who were otherwise politically divided: across the spectrum from left to right could unite in expressing sympathy with the 'poor' Belgians and offering them hospitality.⁴⁰ Regardless of where one stood on questions of warfare and international relations it was unthinkable not to feel horror and revulsion at the stories of German atrocities in Belgium, and it is important to remember that Liberal politicians such as David Lloyd George tended to 'sell' British involvement in the War as being motivated by solidarity with such a small but violated state. Therefore it is unsurprising that suffragists of all political persuasions worked together in offering practical assistance to the refugees.⁴¹

Cahalan also revealingly points out that the NUWSS played a pivotal role in offering assistance to the refugees nationally, being the first organisation to form relief committees. It is therefore not surprising to see leaders of the Tunbridge Wells branch playing such a vital role in offering asylum. In early October 1914 it was announced that the first group of refugees were to be received by le Lacheur – two full weeks before the Mayor's official committee was formed.⁴² As Cahalan comments the early phase of refugee reception had much in common with household management, thus 'women were the real driving force' of efforts.⁴³ Her hostess role was of course reminiscent of the part she had played in so many of the suffrage society 'at homes'.

After the initial show of unity around assisting refugees, by 1915 divisions were emerging among local – as well as national - NUWSS activists, between those who

supported the continued prosecution of the war and those who wanted women of the world to unite for peace. In the summer of 1915, Percy Alden, a Quaker Liberal MP who worked for the Belgian Relief Committee in London, and had represented the British government as commissioner to the Belgian refugee camps in the Netherlands, visited Tunbridge Wells under the auspices of the Council for the Study of International Relations. Once again, le Lacheur performed a hostess role, when one of the meetings was held at her house.⁴⁴ It is likely that she was interested in the ideas Alden was propagating, which included the establishment of a supra-national peace-keeping body at the end of the war, but one can only speculate on where she stood on the big issues of war and peace. However, it is worth noting that alone among the women considered here she had family members in the forces. At least one of her sons was in the armed services,⁴⁵ as was a son-in-law, who was killed at the Dardanelles. Interestingly his wife, one of Lydia's suffragette daughters, later proclaimed her support for the Women's Peace Crusade.⁴⁶ Another daughter left money in her will to the Peace Pledge Union,⁴⁷ so there is strong evidence of a family interest in the peace movement.

Sarah Candler

Like Lydia le Lacheur, Sarah Candler was a member of the non-conformist minority in Tunbridge Wells. She was actually a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers), the religious group who are perhaps most associated with anti-war sentiment in First World War Britain.⁴⁸ Unlike the other women discussed here, Candler (born in 1857) was a business-woman, the proprietor of a commercial steam laundry in partnership with her sister, Phyllis. The Candler sisters (including a third, Lucy) were also financial backers of the Leisure Hour Club.⁴⁹ Candler was a staunch Liberal, a strong supporter of the Women's Liberal Association, in which she argued for women's suffrage, and she was clearly a woman of principle: as late as 1916 she had refused to pay rates in connection with her opposition to the 1902 Education Act.⁵⁰ Some of Candler's war work must have kept her in close association with Amelia Scott and she had a similar focus on the protection of young women.

For example, at the 1918 Annual meeting of the Tunbridge Wells NUWW (the organisation which, under Scott's leadership, organised much of women's voluntary war work in the town) the 'Misses Candler' were thanked for their efforts for the Leisure Hour Club and the provision of canteens.⁵¹ As Lee points out elsewhere in this journal, Candler also volunteered for the NUWW women's police patrols.

But Candler's religious faith and peace politics took her into other activities. When Alden made a second visit to Tunbridge Wells in September 1915 he spoke to the Women's Liberal Association and study groups were formed to discuss international relations, one run by Candler herself.⁵² Like Alden himself, the debate over conscription in early 1916 found Candler placed in opposition to the government, and probably also many of her fellow women social activists. She emerged as one of the town's chief supporters of conscientious objectors, a highly controversial stance indeed. In 1916 she became president of the Tunbridge Wells and District Council against Conscription (the local branch of the No-Conscription Fellowship).⁵³ Later that year she found herself in trouble for claiming allegedly at a temperance meeting that soldiers were given rum to drink before they charged to 'arouse their animal passions'. Comparing soldiers to animals horrified the town's dignitaries and, while she insisted she had been misquoted in the press, Candler was forced to apologise for 'the anxiety and trouble which my words have caused'.⁵⁴ Candler's liberal principles were again on display at the war's end when she chaired a meeting of a local branch of the Council for Civil Liberties. Like Scott, she was highly critical of DORA.⁵⁵

Sarah Candler died in 1919, but it is worth noting that Tunbridge Wells' women's organisations, especially the National Council of Women (NCW, the renamed NUWW) strongly supported the League of Nations during the post-war period,⁵⁶ and that her surviving sisters were members of the local Women's League for Peace and Freedom branch in the 1920s.

Concluding Analysis

Although somewhat fragmentary, the historical evidence explored above suggests that all four women remained committed to suffrage politics during the war, and in the case of Scott and Matthews, to feminist activism for years to come (Candler and Le Lacheur both died soon after the war). Moreover, the local NUWSS remained cohesive and continued to hold regular meetings in wartime, although its office was used as a collection point for charitable donations.⁵⁷ In terms of their political priorities, at least three of the four women featured in this article were vocal supporters of women police, an issue which united Matthews and Candler as much as conscription divided them. During the war years Matthews, Candler and Le Lacheur all displayed a good deal of interest in international relations, although their precise perspectives differed markedly. While welfare work was a field in which the featured women could clearly co-operate, they were nevertheless divided politically. Whereas before the war all four had broadly liberal politics, Lady Matthews left her brother's party and became a Conservative activist after 1918, a move which took place in tandem with the electoral demise of the Liberal Party nationally.⁵⁸ Scott's relatively extensive archive does not contain any material on her views on foreign affairs, and as already mentioned she did not join any political party, but she was a pressure group activist at a national, as well as a local level, holding office from 1913 to 1930 as the secretary of the NCW Public Service Committee.⁵⁹ After the war Scott and Matthews continued to work together locally in the NCW, where the former was secretary and the latter president of the branch.

This examination of the war work of suffragists in Tunbridge Wells has attempted to demonstrate that if we look at suffrage, war, women's work and politics before, during and immediately after the First World War at a local level, we can appreciate a complex web of alliances among suffragists who continued to co-operate in welfare projects and feminist action, while diverging into separate paths over some political issues. At the start of the war the women came together, using their well-honed philanthropic skills to help refugees and provide soldiers with refreshments. However as the country moved towards conscription in

1915 and 1916 there appeared a more pronounced dividing line. Matthews and Candler were seemingly poles apart, the former was enthusiastic not only about getting men to join the fight but also determined that women should be allowed a military role, while the latter prioritised liberty of conscience and expressed public doubts about militarism and warfare. Yet there were still many objectives around which even these two women could unite, the necessity for women police patrols being a particularly obvious and concrete one, and the desire for the creation of a permanent peace being perhaps a less tangible example, since Matthews joined her suffragist colleagues in support of the idea of a League of Nations. Above all, they shared their desire for the franchise. As the war ended the Tunbridge Wells suffragists could come together again and celebrate not only the restoration of peace, but also the attainment of the vote, and were able to share their hopes for future international stability. Thus on general election day 1918, when women were able to cast their ballots for the first time, Matthews and Scott joined 'Madame' Sarah Grand in a 'procession of women electors, with artistic banners' from a local park to the Town Hall.⁶⁰

However differently they viewed political issues, all the women examined in this article took a lively interest not only in local and domestic issues, but also matters of national and international importance, at home and away. Their political engagement was a retort to anti-suffragists who had claimed that women's role should be confined to local and domestic issues. Matthews and Candler took different positions on the hugely controversial issue of conscription, but this did not negate or detract from their support for suffrage. Throughout the war the featured women maintained their interest in the vote, and importantly - as the quotations from Matthews' diary above suggest - they were able to conceptualise war work as an integral aspect of the suffrage struggle. The campaign for the vote was therefore not abandoned when war broke out, but it simply moved into a different phase, adapting with the circumstances. We can see that at a local level there was no automatic subjugation of suffrage politics by wartime issues or by welfare work. Tunbridge Wells' suffrage society

headquarters may have been temporarily turned into a depot for charity clothing collections, but the spirit of suffrage was not closed down in its members' minds.

Notes

¹ For example, Jill Liddington and Jill Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us* (London, Virago Press, 1978), 252-3. See also Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1992).

² Sandra Stanley Holton, *Suffrage Days* (London, Routledge, 1996), 205-26; Nicoletta Gullace, "*The Blood of Our Sons*": *Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship During the Great War* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002); Jo Vellacott, *Pacifists, Patriots and the Vote: the Erosion of Democratic Suffragism in Britain During the First World War* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2007).

³ Katherine Storr, *Excluded from the Record: Women, Refugees and Relief 1914-1929* (Bern, Peter Lang, 2010), 20.

⁴ Holton, *Suffrage Days*, 216-7. However, as Vellacott points out, the roots of the split were to be found in the division between pre-war supporters and opponents of the Election Fighting Fund: Vellacott, *Pacifists, Patriots and the Vote*.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ John Cunningham, ed, *The Shock of War: Tunbridge Wells Life on the Home Front, 1914-1919* (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society, 2014); Anne Logan, "'Lady Bountiful' or Community Activist? Amelia Scott (1860-1952)", *Women's History Magazine*, 62 (2010), 11-18.

⁷ 'Inspiring Women: Edwardian Tunbridge Wells', <http://www.womenshistorykent.org/themes/ladystown/index.html>, accessed 2 November 2014].

⁸ Women's Library (hereafter WL), 2/NWS, NUWSS Kentish Federation First Annual Report, 1913. Tunbridge Wells had 165 full members to Ramsgate's 191, but the former branch also had 278 'Friends', who were working-class supporters of suffrage.

⁹ *Ibid.* Mosely died during the war, and therefore is not featured in this article.

¹⁰ Jane Eldridge Miller, 'McFall, Frances Elizabeth Bellenden (1854–1943)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39086>, accessed 2 Nov 2014].

¹¹ Janet E. Grenier, 'Twining, Louisa (1820–1912)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38083>, accessed 2 Nov 2014].

¹² Logan, 'Lady Bountiful'.

¹³ See <http://www.womenshistorykent.org/themes/biogs/index.html> for a selection.

¹⁴ 'Inspiring Women: The Women's Suffrage Campaign', [<http://www.womenshistorykent.org/themes/suffrage/index.html> accessed 2 Nov 2014]

¹⁵ I am indebted to Lady Matthews' grandson, David Tate, for additional information about his family.

¹⁶ Imperial War Museum (hereafter IWM), 09/36/1, 'Notes for obituary'.

¹⁷ IWM 09/36/1, War Diary, 15 August 1914.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 17 August 1914.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Words of a resolution at a recruitment meeting addressed by Sir John Bromhead Matthews on a handbill for the meeting pasted into his wife's diary, 22 July 1915.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 16 July 1916.

²¹ *Ibid.* 31 January 1916.

²² *Ibid.* 22 July 1915.

²³ *Ibid.* 5 September 1915.

²⁴ For the subversion of gender in the Great War, see Janet S. K. Watson, 'Khaki Girls, VADs, and Tommy's Sisters: Gender and Class in First World War Britain', *International*

History Review 19/1, (1997) 32-51. For the WVR, see Krisztina Robert, 'Gender , Class and Patriotism: Women's Paramilitary Units in the First World War' *ibid.*, 52-65; Lucy Noakes, (2005) 'Eve in Khaki: Women Working with the British Military, 1915-18' in Krista Cowman and Louise Jackson (eds.) *Women and Work Culture, Britain c. 1850-1950*, (Farnham, Ashgate, 2005), 213-28.

²⁵ WWM 09/36/1, War Diary, 1 September 1918.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 26 August 1917.

²⁷ For the LWSU, see E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement: a Reference Guide* (London, Routledge, 2000), 343. Scott's correspondence with the LWSU - which she subscribed 1/- to - dates from the first half of 1918. It was said to be 'practically no longer in existence' by its secretary, Margaret Hitchcock, later an official of the NFWI.

²⁸ *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 8 August 1919.

²⁹ Harry Williams, 'Captain and Mrs HF Chittenden of Newlands School, Seaford', [<http://www.whoisgeorgemills.com/2011/06/capt-mrs-h-f-chittenden-of-newlands.html>], accessed 8 May 2015].

³⁰ Logan, 'Lady Bountiful'.

³¹ *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 16 October 1914.

³² The album and medal can both be found in the WL archive, 7ASC.

³³ WL, 7/ASC/2/1/2 'Some War Work in Tunbridge Wells, May 1915-April 1918' (n.d.), 6-10.

³⁴ *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 8 February 1918.

³⁵ WL, 7/ASC/3/2/1, election speech, c.1919.

³⁶ *History of the National Council of Women in Tunbridge Wells for the Last 35 Years* (Tunbridge Wells NCW, 1931) 14-15.

³⁷ 'Inspiring Women: Leisure Hour Club', [<http://www.womenshistorykent.org/themes/workingwomen/leisurehourclub.html>], accessed 2 November 2014].

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- ³⁸ 'Inspiring Women: The Le Lacheur Family',
[<http://www.womenshistorykent.org/themes/biogs/lalacheur.html>, accessed 2 November 2014].
- ³⁹ *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 16 October 1914.
- ⁴⁰ Peter Cahalan, 'The Treatment of Belgian Refugees in England during the Great War' (Unpublished thesis, McMaster University, Canada, 1977), 28.
- ⁴¹ Cahalan also refers to the importance of non-conformist communities in helping the refugees. *Ibid.*173.
- ⁴² *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 2 October 1914.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 30 July 1915. For Alden, see M. C. Curthoys and Tim Wales, 'Alden, Sir Percy(1865–1944)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39606>, accessed 2 Nov 2014].
- ⁴⁵ Edward le Lacheur had a temporary commission in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. See *Times*, 22 September 1915.
- ⁴⁶ *Women's Who's Who* (London, Shaw Publishing, 1934).
- ⁴⁷ *Times*, 8 October 1947.
- ⁴⁸ See Thomas C. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience: a history of the No-Conscription Fellowship 1914-19* (Fayetteville, University of Arkansas Press, 1981).
- ⁴⁹ 'Inspiring Women: The Candler Sisters',
[<http://www.womenshistorykent.org/themes/biogs/candler.html>, accessed 2 November 2014].
- ⁵⁰ *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 25 February 1916.
- ⁵¹ *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 25 January 1918.
- ⁵² *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser*, 24 September 1915; 28 April 1916.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.* 25 February 1916.
- ⁵⁴ *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 6 October 1916.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 15 November 1918.

⁵⁶ See, for example, question to election candidates from the NCW branch: 'Are you in favour of a League of Nations for the prevention of war and settlement of international disputes?' *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 22 November 1918.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 14 December 1917.

⁵⁸ IWM, 09/36/1, 'Notes for obituary'.

⁵⁹ Anne Logan, *Feminism and Criminal Justice: a Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2008), 26.

⁶⁰ *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 20 December 1918. Le Lacheur and Candler are not mentioned in this article, but they may have been present as only the names of the procession leaders were given.