

NURTURING INTREPID CITIZENS

The Pioneer Health Centre and the politics of welfare in early 20th century London¹

Justin De Syllas

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APPENDIX 1: MEMBERS OF THE PILOT CENTRE COMMITTEES 1926-1929

This appendix contains information on the members of the Executive and General Committees of the Pioneer Health Centre between 1926 and 1929.

The information on many individuals is still incomplete or missing. If anyone can supply additional information, corrections and/or photographs of the individuals listed below, these will be gratefully received and included in future revisions.

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THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Cohen, Adelaide, AKA Mrs Lionel Leonard Cohen and Baroness Cohen

Adelaide Cohen (née Spielmann), (1895-1961), later to become Baroness Cohen, was the daughter of Sir Isidore Spielmann and Emily Sebag-Montefiore. She was married to Lionel Leonard Cohen, 1888-1973, a successful lawyer who was to become a judge and a Privy Councillor. Her husband's father, also Lionel Leonard Cohen, was a banker, philanthropist and leader of British Jewry.



Baird, Dorothea, AKA Mrs Henry Brodribb Irving

Dorothea Baird (1875-1933), the daughter of Sir John Forster Baird, a prominent English barrister-at-law. Between 1894 and 1913 she had a successful career in the theatre, often working alongside her husband the actor Henry Brodribb (1870–1919), son of Sir Henry Irving. She supported charitable causes, especially infant welfare. For many years she was a board member the St. Pancras School for Mothers. The purpose of the school was to provide mothers with advice and information along with home visits and babies' health care. She was elected as a member of the St. Pancras Poor Law Guardians in 1913. In 1917 she used her theatre and film experience, with the help of Percy Nash, to create the film *Motherhood* which she used to create political demands for social improvement. She used her fame to "better the women of Britain."



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Benson, Mrs.

Identity and biography sought

Cooper-Willis, Mr Guy

Identity and biography sought

Demetriadi, Gulielma Norah Mabel, AKA Lady Demetriardi

Portrait from the 1920s sought

Lady Demetriadi (née Bates), (1893-1972). Gulielma Norah Mabel Bates, Elder daughter of Richard George Bates. She was married to 'Stephen' Sir Stephanos Constantine Demetriadi KBE, (1880-1952).

Holland, Violet, AKA Mrs Godfrey Holland?

Identity and biography sought

Is this Violet Holland, wife of Godfrey Holland (1892-1966), and mother of Joanna K H Newton? Godfrey Holland was the son of Sir Arthur Holland and Mary Catherine Barbara Holland.

Lewis, Sarah Beatrice Mary, AKA Mrs Spendan Lewis

Sarah Beatrice Mary Lewis (née Hunter), (???-1953), was a graduate of Somerville College Oxford. She joined Peter Jones in 1922 and within a year had married Spendan Lewis, the son of John Lewis who was the founder of the John Lewis and Peter Jones department stores. She was made a director of Peter Jones and subsequently she served as a Director of John Lewis Partnership Limited from 1929-51. She wholeheartedly supported Spedan in developing the John Lewis Trust and John Lewis Partnership and would have become Chairman had he died in office.



Montagu, Ewen Edward Samuel Montagu, AKA The Hon. Ewen Montagu

Ewen Edward Samuel Montagu (1901-1985), the second son of Louis Montagu, 2nd Baron Swaythling and Iris Rachel Montagu (née Goldsmid). He married Iris Rachel Montagu (née Solomon) in 1923. He was a successful criminal lawyer, later a judge, writer and naval intelligence officer. He was decorated for his leading role in Operation Mincemeat, a critical Second World War military deception operation which misdirected German forces' attention away from the Allied Invasion of Sicily in Operation Husky. He described these events in his book 'The Man Who Never Was' which was made into a film. Ewen Montagu was a founder member of the

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Executive Committee of the Pioneer Health Centre, was Hon. Treasurer during the pilot scheme and remained a member of the Committee for the rest of his life. He was also president of the United Synagogue, 1954–62, and vice-president of the Anglo-Jewish Association. See photograph in Introduction to Part One.

Montagu, Iris Rachel, AKA The Hon. Mrs Ewen Montagu

Iris Rachel Montagu, (née Solomon) (1903-1999), daughter of the British painter Solomon Joseph Solomon RA (1860-1927), who was a founding member of the New English Art Club and member of the Royal Academy and Ella Solomon (née Montagu), (1876-1957). She married Ewen Edward Samuel Montagu (1901-1995) in 1923 and they had 2 children. She was a founder member of the Executive Committee of the Pioneer Health Centre and took up the role of Hon. Secretary when Dorrit Schlesinger stood down in 1929. She was to remain in this role throughout the life of the project, only resigning in 1999. See photograph in Introduction to Part One

Morris, Councillor Elizabeth, AKA Mrs A. G. Morris

Identity and biography sought

Peel, Constance Dorothy Evelyn, OBE, AKA Mrs C. S. Peel

Constance Dorothy Evelyn Peel (née Bayliff), OBE (1868-1934), was a journalist and author who worked for the Ministry of Food in 1917 to help promote 'voluntary rationing'. She then joined the Daily Mail when rationing became compulsory and published recipes for meals that could be made out of the limited supplies that were available during the First World War. These became very popular and she was awarded the OBE for her war work. She continued to publish books and articles on household management under the name Mrs. C. S. Peel, taking the name of her husband, Charles Steers Peel.



Rossiter, Elsie, AKA Mrs Leonard Lewis Rossiter

Portrait from the 1920s sought

Elsie Rossiter (née Oppenheimer) (????-????), wife of Leonard Rossiter, was a founder member of the Pioneer Health Centre Executive Committee, but appears not to have remained active beyond 1926. She was the daughter of Sir Bernard Oppenheimer, the Chairman of the South Africa Diamond Corporation.

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Rossiter, Leonard Lewis. – Chairman **Portrait from the 1920s sought**

Leonard Rossiter (????-????), husband of Elsie Rossiter, was a barrister at Middle temple. A founder member of the Pioneer Health Centre Executive Committee, he appears not to have remained active beyond 1926. Initially he was the Chairman but his place was often taken by his deputy, Dorothy Winkworth. She in due course took over the role. Rossiter acted with Ewen Montagu, on occasion, as poor man solicitors at the pilot Centre.

Rueff, Mrs. **Identity and biography sought**

Sainsbury, Miriam Mabel, AKA Mrs J. B. Sainsbury

Portrait from the 1920s sought

Mabel Miriam Sainsbury (née Van den Bergh), (1873-1941), daughter of **Jacob** and **Lydia Van den Bergh** and cousin of founder Executive Committee member Dorrit Schlesinger. She was married to the founder of the J.B. Sainsbury supermarket group, John Benjamin Sainsbury

Schlesinger, Dorrit, AKA Mrs Gerald Schlesinger - **Hon. Secretary**

Portrait from the 1920s sought

Dorrit Schlesinger (née Van den Bergh), (1897-1987), daughter of Henry Van den Bergh (1853-1937) and Henriette Charlotte van den Bergh (ne Spanjaard), (1868-1927). She married Gerald Leonard Schlesinger in 1915 and they had two children, Jean Dina Schlesinger in 1917 and Seymour James Gerald Spencer Schlesinger in 1920. Dorrit was the initiator of the Pioneer Health Centre but at the end of the pilot scheme in 1929 she had to retire from her role as Hon. Secretary due to ill health. She and Gerald divorced in 1933, at about which time she converted to Roman Catholicism. She was

remarried in in 1948 to Charles H. Talbot (????-????) who was a Trappist monk. He had contracted a serious illness and his (presumably unworldly) superior thought he should convalesce in the better air of Hampstead in the house of a recent Catholic convert, without stopping to think that conversion didn't mean she would be any the less sexually attractive. Father Talbot renounced his vows, married Dorrit, and worked as librarian in the Wellcome Institute, and later in the Warburg Institute. See early Photograph of Dorrit in Introduction to Part One.

Schlesinger, Gerald Lionel **Portrait from the 1920s sought**

Gerald Lionel Schlesinger (1889-1966) was the eldest son of the banker Leonard B. Schlesinger (1857-1921), and Mary Sophia Schlesinger (née Nathan), (1863-1931). He was a great nephew of the first Lord Swaythling and was therefore related to the Hon. Ewen Montagu. He served in the army in the First World War and married Dorrit Rosa Henriette Van den Bergh, (1897-1987), elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Van den Bergh, in 1915. They had two children. Gerald Schlesinger joined his father's banking business, A. Keyser and Co. After his father died in 1921 Gerald and his brother Arthur continued to work as partners in the bank. From his family background Gerald inherited a lifelong interest in charity work. As well as his work for the Pioneer Health Centre, which continued for the life of the project, he became Hon. Treasurer of the Jewish Branch on the Children's Country Holidays Fund in 1913. This charity arranged holidays for London slum children and Schlesinger was made its President in 1938. As well as serving on the Executive Committee of the Pioneer Health Centre, Schlesinger

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was a regular contributor to its funds. He and Dorrit Schlesinger were divorced in 1933. In 1934 he married Juanita Frances Lemont, only daughter of Captain and Mrs. T. Lamont, of Adelaide, Australia with whom he had two children and was later married a third time to Elizabeth Allen (1916-2007), with whom he had one child. He commissioned two important modern houses in the 1930s, Hill House, 87 Redington Road Hampstead, London by the architect Oliver Hill (completed in 1938) for his first wife Dorrit and his daughter Dina, and St. Ann's Hill, near Chertsey, Surrey by the architect Raymond McGrath (completed in 1937) for himself and his friend and lover, the Canadian landscape architect Christopher Tunnard (1910-1979).

Van den Bergh, Nora Gilbert, AKA Mrs Donald Van den Bergh

Portrait from the 1920s sought

Nora Gilbert Van den Bergh (née Samuel), (1894-1986), daughter of **Gilbert Ellis Samuel** and **Dame Louise Victoria Samuel**. She was married to Donald van den Bergh and was the sister in law of founder Executive Committee member Dorrit Schlesinger.

Winkworth, Dorothy Mary

Dorothy Mary "Doll" Winkworth (née Wilberforce), (1875-????), joined the Executive Committee of the Pioneer Health Centre in 1926 and soon took over as Chairman in which role she served until the centre closed in 1950. She was married Stephen Dickenson Winkworth in 1895 and they had two sons and two daughters. Stephen Winkworth died in 1933. Dorothy wrote and published a novel under her maiden name D. Wilberforce about a doctor serving at the front in the First World War. The story was supposedly based in part on the exploits of George Scott Williamson. The novel was

called 'Lamb in Wolf's Clothing' and was published by ??? in By ???.



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THE GENERAL COMMITTEE 1926-1929

The General Committee consisted of the members of the Executive Committee above plus the following:

Bruce-Porter, Sir Bruce, KBE. CMG. MD [1920s portrait sought](#)

Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter KBE CMG MD (1869 – 1948), had one of the largest and most lucrative general practices in London. In the First world War he was put in charge of the Third London General Hospital at the head of a team of the leading London consultants. He founded the Bruce-Porter Home for children of Dr Barnardo's Homes needing orthopaedic treatment. In 1919, then a colonel in the Army Medical Service, he was honoured for his services by the conferment of the K.B.E. In later years he joined forces with Sir Arbuthnot Lane in the latter's New Health Society. Bruce-Porter had been an early and keen devotee of motoring, and was a founder-member of Brooklands.

Carlisle, The Countess of [Portrait from the 1920s sought](#)

Bridget Helen "Biddy" Monckton, 11th Lady Ruthven of Freeland CBE (1896–1982). She married George Howard, 11th Earl of Carlisle, in 1918 becoming the Countess of Carlisle between 1918 and 1947. They had two children. In 1947, Lord and Lady Carlisle divorced. Lady Carlisle then became the second wife of Sir Walter Monckton. She was known as Lady Monckton between 1947 and 1957, as The Viscountess Monckton of Brenchley between 1957 and 1965 and as The Dowager Viscountess Monckton of Brenchley between 1965 and 1982. She was a British peer and Conservative member of the House of Lords, but

is probably best remembered as the wartime commander of women's services in India.

Collie, Professor Norman, FRS [Portrait from the 1920s sought](#)

Prof John Norman Collie FRSE, FRS, (1859 – 1942), was a British scientist, mountaineer and explorer. Collie served as Professor of Organic Chemistry at UCL from 1896 to 1913, and headed its chemistry department from 1913 to 1928. He carried out pioneering research in his field and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1888 and a Fellow of the Royal Society in June, 1896.

Cooper-Willis, Mrs Guy [Identity and biography sought](#)

Crow, Dr Nora, MD. BS. [Identity and biography sought](#)

Dickson, Kenneth, Esq. BA. MB. BCh. [Identity and biography sought](#)

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Erleigh, Viscountess AKA 2nd Marquess of Reading
Eva Violet Isaacs (née Mond) (1895-1973), daughter of Alfred Moritz Mond, 1st Baron Melchett and Violet Mond, Baroness Melchett, and wife of Gerald Rufus Isaacs, styled Viscount Erleigh from 1917 to 1935 and 2nd Marquess of Reading from 1935. In 1928 Viscountess Erleigh edited a set of essays titled 'The Mind of the Growing Child'.



Goff, Miss

Identity and biography sought

Greene, Mrs Wilfred

Identity and biography sought

Hall, Mrs Eric,

Identity and biography sought

Harvey, The Hon. Lady

Identity and biography sought

Henriques, Basil, Esq. JP

Portrait in the 1920s sought

Sir Basil Lucas Quixano Henriques CBE, JP, (1890–1961). He married Rose Loewe in 1916. They established the St Georges Settlement Synagogue where they worked together throughout their marriage, concentrating their voluntary work in the East End of London during the first half of the 20th century. In 1929 they moved to a former school in Berners Street off Commercial Road. Berners Street has been renamed Henriques Street in honour of Basil & Rose Henriques. The building was called the Bernhard Baron Settlement after Bernhard Baron (major shareholder in Gallagher's tobacco Co) who donated £65,000 for the building's purchase. The Berner Street building had 125 rooms equipped for welfare work and recreation. All sorts of games, skills and arts and crafts were available to Jewish East End boys and girls.



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Hicks, Stanton, Esq. MD. **Identity and biography sought**

Holland, Lady **Identity and biography sought**

Holland, Mrs Godfrey **Identity and biography sought**

Margesson, Lady Isabel **Identity and biography sought**

Hubback, Eva Marian

Eva Marian Hubback (née Spielman), (1886 – 1949), daughter of Sir Meyer Spielman and widow of Francis William Hubback who, in February 1917, died of wounds received in action during The first World War. From 1918 to 1927 she was Parliamentary Secretary and later President of the National Union for Equal Citizenship, which successfully campaigned for reforms to the laws affecting the rights of women and children. She became Principal of Morley College for Working Men and Women in 1927, succeeding Barbara Wootton. In 1929 she joined the Eugenics Society, becoming a Fellow in 1931, member of the council in 1932 and member of the executive committee in 1934. She assisted in establishing the Townswomen's Guild in 1930. She co-founded and became secretary of the Association for Education in Citizenship in 1933, and chairman of the Family Endowment Society. From 1946 to 1948, Hubback represented Kensington North on the London County Council, elected on the Labour Party platform



Lane-Roberts, C., Esq. MS. MB. FRCS

Cedric Sydney Lane-Roberts (1888-1959), Obstetrician and gynaecologist; rugby player.



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Maffey, Sir John, KVCO. CSI. CIE. [Portrait in the 1920s sought](#)
Sir John Maffey, KVCO, CSI, CIE, 1877-1969, later to become John Loader Maffey, 1st Baron Rugby GCMG, KCB, KCVO, CSI, CIE, a key figure in Anglo-Irish relations during the Second World War.

Maffey, Lady [Identity and biography sought](#)

Milne, Alan Alexander, AKA A. A. Milne
Milne 1882 – 1956, was an author, best known for his books about Christopher Robin and his teddy bear Winnie-the-Pooh and for various poems. Early in his career Milne was known primarily as a playwright, before the huge success of Pooh overshadowed all his previous work. Milne married Dorothy "Daphne" de Sélincourt in 1913 and their son Christopher Robin Milne was born in 1920. See photograph in Chapter Three.

Morant, Helen Mary, AKA Lady Morant
Helen Mary (née Cracknell), Lady Morant, (1869-1953), widow of Sir Robert Laurie Morant, 1863-1920, distinguished civil servant, administrator and educationalist.



Norman, Rt Hon Sir Henry, Bart, PC. JP. [Portrait in the 1920s sought](#)
Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Norman, 1st Bt. 1858-1939. He was the son of Henry Norman and Sarah Edna Riddington. He held the office of Justice of the Peace for Surrey and was MP (Liberal) for Wolverhampton South between 1900 and 1910.2 He wrote the books All the Russians, published 1903, Peoples and Politics of the Far East, 1904 and The Real Japan, 1908. He was invested as a Knight Bachelor in 1906. He was MP (Liberal) for Blackburn between 1910 and 1923 and held the office of Assistant Postmaster-General in 1910. He was created 1st Baronet Norman, of Honeyhanger, Parish of Shottermill, co. Surrey in 1915, was invested as a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and as a Privy Counsellor in 1918.

Ossulston, The Lady [Identity and biography sought](#)

Parker, The Hon Mrs Hubert [Identity and biography sought](#)

Pollock, Sir Adrian [Identity and biography sought](#)
The City Chamberlain

Russell, Miss Alys, BA. [Identity and biography sought](#)

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Sloan Chesser, Dr Elizabeth, MD

Elizabeth Macfarlane Sloan Chesser (1878-1940), was a Doctor, writer and pioneer of women's health and was married to Stennett Chesser. She was the daughter of Dr Samuel Sloan, MD, and Elizabeth Mc Farlane. She trained in Glasgow and moved to Harley Street in London soon after graduating. She was a prolific journalist and writer and lecturer on the health of women and children and during the suffrage campaign she frequently spoke in support of and always remained a champion of women's causes.



Swaythling, The Lady

Lady Swaythling (née Goldsmid), (1879 – 1965), was the daughter of colonel Albert Edward Williamson Goldsmid, MVO, and Ida Stewart Beauclerk Hendricks. Born Gladys Helen Rachel Goldsmid, she married Louis Samuel Montagu in 1898, who later became 2nd Baron Swaythling and inherited the office of president of the federation of synagogues, an organisation created by his father to

promote the acculturation of Jewish immigrants. They had four children, one of whom was the Hon. Ewen Montagu and both she and Ewen were active supporters of the Pioneer Health Centre throughout its existence. According to André Simon, with whom she founded the International Food and Wine Society, she was “one of the most charming and well-beloved figures on the London social stage. She was petite and pretty; she looked frail but she was remarkably tough and tireless, supremely free from fear of danger or gossip.” <https://www.iwfs.org/americas/wine-food--friends-1/articles/lady-swaythling-and-the-iw-fs> accessed 03.11.16. Her extensive charity and welfare work is described in ‘celebrating the contribution of women: Lady Swaythling’ at: <https://specialcollectionsuniversityofsouthampton.wordpress.com/2017/03/08/celebrating-the-contribution-of-women-lady-swaythling/>



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Van den Bergh, Henry

Henry Van den Bergh (1853-1937), was the father of Dorrit Schlesinger, the initiator of the Pioneer Health Centre. He was born in Oss in the Netherlands and moved to London in 1870 to work in the family margarine business. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the National Art Collections Fund in the 1910s-1920s and a major donor, through the National Art Collections Fund, to most departments of the British Museum and of Dutch tiles to the Victoria and Albert Museum. He was an active supporter and funder of the Pioneer Health Centre charity and served on its general Committee during the pilot project and on the Executive Committee in the early 1930s.



Van den Bergh, Henriette Charlotte, AKA Mrs Henry Van den Bergh

Portrait in the 1920s sought

Henriette Charlotte van den Bergh (née Spanjaard), (1868-1927), was married to Henry Van den Bergh and was the mother of Dorrit Schlesinger, founder member of the Executive Committee and Donald van den Bergh who was a member of the General Committee.

Van den Bergh, Donald Stanley

Donald Stanley Van den Bergh (1888-1949), was the eldest son of Henry and Henriette Van den Bergh Van den Bergh and brother of Dorrit Schlesinger. He worked for the family business Van den Bergh Brothers and when this was merged with Unilever in 1929 he became a director of the new company. His wife, Norah Gilbert Van den Bergh, served on the Executive Committee of the Pioneer Health Centre and she and Donald were to continue to support the charity until its closure in 1950 and beyond.



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Walker, Mrs Douglas

Identity and biography sought

Walker, Mrs Hubert

Identity and biography sought