

**Text of an illustrated talk delivered by Simon Butler
at the South West Academy Open Exhibition 17.12.2018**

PHOTO 1 Flaming June Frederick Lord Leighton 1895.

Although I have include a good deal about Olive Hockin (on whose life my book *Land Girl Suffragette* is based) in this talk, in view of the significance of this month which commemorates 100 years since the end of the First World War I've widened the scope to use Olive's life to represent the circumstances faced by many women artists emerging from the Victorian era and into the decade running up to the Great War.



I start with this painting – ‘Flaming June’ painted by Sir Frederic (Lord) Leighton in 1895. I include it here for two reasons: first because it represents the idealised view of a woman as seen through male Victorian eyes – alluring, sexy even, but its overt sexuality disguised through its classical allusion. The second reason for including it is that the painting was chosen by Jeremy Maas as the cover illustration for his excellent book *Victorian Painters*, first published in 1969, but remaining a seminal work on the subject. Now, call me obsessive but in preparing for this talk I counted in the index the total number of artists included in the book. There are 381 names. Anyone like to guess how many women appear? Well it's 11 – just under 3 per cent. And this is no reflection of prejudice on Maas' part – it pretty fairly represents how the nineteenth century establishment and society as a whole saw ‘serious’ painting as exclusively a male preserve. Samuel Courtauld, founder of the Courtauld Institute, called Leighton's masterpiece “the most wonderful painting in existence”.

PHOTO 2 Kate Greenaway

Of course reliance upon one book to prove a point is somewhat invidious and there were certainly prominent women painters during the mid-to-late Victorian period, but what is of interest is the themes that were generally deemed ‘suitable’ as subjects. Take for instance the prominent women included in Jeremy Maas' book: These include Kate Greenaway. Born in 1846 and trained at The Slade, she came to fame in 1879 with the publication of *Under the Window – Pictures and Rhymes for Children*. These, along with her Christmas and Valentine's Day cards underline the Victorian idea that illustration was particularly suited to the feminine sensibilities – with Fine Art best left to men.



PHOTO 3 Helen Allingham – Far from the Madding Crowd

A lifelong friend of Greenaway and two years her junior, Helen Allingham's career was also based around illustration, having trained at the Royal Academy Schools. Her early career found her working for *The Graphic* newspaper illustrating news stories



of the day before photographic reproduction became widespread. This brought a commission to illustrate a serialised edition of Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* in 1874, an example of which is shown here. Only later did she turn to watercolour painting, becoming best known for her over sentimentalised depiction of the villages in the South East – paintings which ignored the extreme poverty and destitution then prevalent in the English countryside.

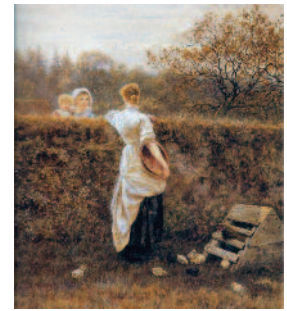


PHOTO 4 Helen Allingham – Beside the Old Church Gate

Indeed, of the eleven women artists included in *Victorian Painters*, five were principally illustrators and five were heavily influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite movement, with works closely echoing those of Holman Hunt, Millais and Rossetti – paintings which in their own grand way might also be illustrations insofar as they idealised nature and romanticised the portrayal of early periods of history. The works of these women painters, though taken less seriously than those of their male contemporaries – not least in terms of sales value – at least opened a door to greater creativity among women artists, though not without attracting criticism.



Elizabeth Siddal, model for many of the greatest Pre-Raphaelite works including Millais's 'Ophelia', was criticised for the 'plainness' of her own self portrait because it lacked the idealised representation of her in Rossetti's portraits.

PHOTO 5 Elizabeth Siddall – Self Portrait

Alone among these women painters in depicting what was otherwise an exclusively male preserve was Elizabeth Thompson, Lady Butler, whose paintings of military scenes are exceptional not only for their quality but also as she is something of a startling gatecrasher in an otherwise masculine world – the exception that proves the rule.



PHOTO 6 – 'Scotland Forever' – an 1881 painting depicting the start of the cavalry charge of the Royal Scots Greys who charged alongside the British heavy cavalry at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 during the Napoleonic wars.

This confinement of women painters to particular subjects and styles ran alongside the restrictions they faced in everyday life, from their traditional position as housewives, mothers and maids, they were expected to perform within roles defined for them by Society, Church and State – and without a much of a say in any of these spheres.

PHOTO 7 – The Apple Seller – Bertha Newcombe

The cry for equal political rights began to reach a noticeable pitch from the mid 1800s onwards. A notable event along the way is commemorated in Bertha Newcombe's painting 'The Apple Seller', completed in 1910. It depicts the instant in which John Stuart Mill MP is presented with the 1866 suffrage petition



which, due to its large size, has been hidden under the stall of an apple seller prior to delivery. Mill had agreed to present the petition to Parliament provided a hundred signatories could be found. In fact 1500 signed the petition – the last, it is said, being the name of the apple seller herself. The 1866 petition marked the start of organised campaigning by women for the vote.

Bertha was a girlfriend of George Bernard Shaw and an active member of the Artists' Suffrage League, one of a growing number of women artists drawn to the Suffrage movement and each contributing in their own way to the cause.

PHOTO 8 – Mary Lowndes – Banner

A significant figure among what were to become known as New Dawn Women (that is, women who at the beginning of the new century saw themselves as emergent figures in obtaining equal rights) was Mary Lowndes who first became involved in the women's suffrage movement in the 1890s. Mary established The Artists' Suffrage League (ASL) to create dramatic posters, postcards, Christmas cards, and banners for suffrage events. Lowndes' training as an artist and stained-glass designer encouraged the use of bold shapes and a love of full, rich colours, using striking combinations of green and purple which became the symbolic colours of the movement.



PHOTO 9 – Ernestine Mills – jewellery badge

Ernestine Mills was also a New Dawn Woman. Born in 1871 she was an English metalworker and enameller who became a prominent suffragette and designed a number of pieces of jewellery incorporating the colours of the movement and produced in support of the cause.



PHOTO 10 – Ernestine Mills – being arrested

In 1907 Mills joined Emmeline Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and is said to be the woman in this photograph which appeared on the *Daily Mirror* front page on 19 November 1910, the day after the 'Black Friday' suffragette demonstration outside the House of Commons. The photograph was published under the headline: 'Violent Scenes at Westminster Where Many Suffragettes Were Arrested While Trying to Force Their Way Into the House of Commons.' It was later used by the movement on a flyer encouraging women to join a further demonstration later that month.



PHOTO 11 – Sylvia Pankhurst – addressing a rally in London

Sylvia Pankhurst, daughter of Emmeline, was trained as a painter and designer, first at the Manchester School of Art, and later, in 1900, at the Royal College of Art in London. Much of her work as an artist was connected with her human rights campaigns. In 1906, Sylvia started to work full-time for the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) with her sister Christabel and their mother.



PHOTO 12 – Sylvia Pankhurst – painting of woman in pottery

In 1907 Sylvia toured industrial towns in England and Scotland, painting portraits of working-class women in their working environments. These show the quality of her painting and her obvious empathy with working women.

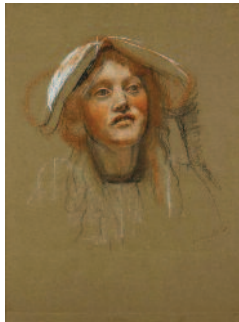


PHOTO 13 – Because we first associate the Pankhursts with the Suffrage movement we tend to overlook Sylvia's talent as an artist a exampled in this superb pastel portrait.



PHOTO 14 – Christabel Pankhurst – The Suffragette front cover – edited by Sylvia

The WSPU became what might be described as the militant wing of the suffrage movement and both Sylvia and her sister Christabel applied their artistic talents in devising its logo and various leaflets, banners, and posters as well as the decoration of its meeting halls. Christabel also edited *The Suffragette*, the organisation's journal.

The front cover of this poster advertising the magazine was designed by yet another Slade trained artist and suffragette, Hilda Dallas, who attended the school at the same time as Olive Hockin, and who also helped design work for the WSPU.



PHOTO 15 Women making banners

As the first decade of the new century came to its close so the numbers of street protests grew, with more and more women taking an active part. Here a group of women are photographed designing and making WSPU banners for a procession to be held in London on 23 July 1910.



PHOTO 16 A major procession through London

These demonstrations, growing in size as the first decade of the century progressed, and attracting even larger number of spectators, as seen here, elicited sympathies from many quarters in Parliament yet failed to bring about significant change.



PHOTO 17 A rally by members of the NUWSS

As the WSPU grew more militant so rival organisations that urged women (and men) away from militancy, attracted growing support. Here we see a 'Law-Abiding Suffragists' rally in Hyde Park around 1912. Millicent Fawcett was a moderate campaigner for universal suffrage and led the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies which distanced itself from Pankhurst and the militant WSPU. By 1913 the former union had 50 000 members, compared to only 2000 of the militant WSPU.

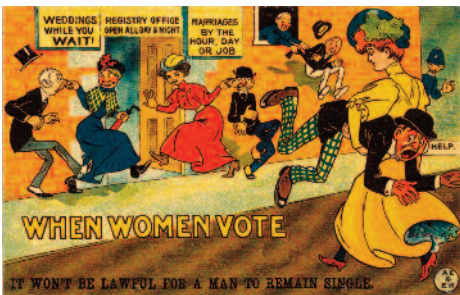


PHOTO 18 An anti suffrage postcard

Nor were the WSPU the only group to call upon artists. Those opposing them also used artwork, although of rather cruder type on many occasions, to support their cause.

PHOTO 19 Photo of Olive Hockin at her easel

And so we come to Olive Hockin who I first came across by accident when researching a book about the use of horses during the first world war. However, the first reference we have to Olive within the Suffrage movement comes in 1912 when Sylvia Pankhurst, writing in the 19 July issue of *Votes for Women*, announces 'we have a new worker in our movement.' This is Olive Hockin, volunteering to prepare banners for the 'Bastille Day' rally in Hyde Park.



So who was Olive Hockin?

Web sources record that Olive was born in 1881, although it appears she was actually born in the previous year. Her father, Edward Hockin was aged 42 at the time of her birth, her mother Margaret Sarah Floyer in her mid twenties. Both father and mother came from Westcountry stock – the Hockins from Poughill in Cornwall, the Floyers from Devon. Margaret's sister, Mabel Frances, married Glynne Barrington Leared Williams, a horse trainer of Estancia San Anselmo, in Argentina, whence Olive travelled as a young woman. Here she first met John Harvey Leared whom she was later to marry.

While in South America Olive also meets Anne Anderson (whose family also trained horses), five years her senior, and the two become lifelong friends. On their return to England the pair enrol at The Slade School of Fine Art. Anne shared with Olive her passion for the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, and particularly admired Olive's interpretation of their style.

PHOTO 20 Olive Hockin painting Circle-wise they sit

In 1908 we find Olive working from a studio in South Edwards Square, Kensington, and later from a studio at 28 Campden Hill Gardens – the address at which she was arrested in 1913. One of her paintings from this period titled 'Circle wise they sit...' is a homage Rossetti's poem 'The Blessed Damozel' and is perhaps inspired by Byam Shaw's 1895 painting of the same name.



Anderson herself, along with so many women artists of the day, found herself drawn towards illustration for which she is best known today. In 1912 Anne married fellow illustrator Alan Wright and the pair moved to Little Audrey, gatehouse to Olive's mother's home at Burghfield Common, Berkshire.

PHOTO 21 Anne Anderson – illustration

In many ways Olive epitomised those in the vanguard of the Suffrage movement through her class, liberal education and aesthetic principals, Otherwise her story reveals a complex character – mixing within elite literary and artistic circles, while revealing a deep understanding and empathy for those whose lives compelled them to a life of drudgery.

Although residing in London, Olive came into contact with a group of young people in Berkshire, close to Olive's mother's home at Burghfield Common. Nearby was the home of Helton Godwin Baynes (1882–1943), a 'golden boy' of his generation who, among other talents, became a friend and translator of Carl Jung. Godwin was central to a group who called themselves 'The Four Just Men', which included Clifford and Arnold Bax, and Maitland Radford. Clifford, who also had attended The Slade (along with Godwin's brother, Keith), was a rising literary star, and editor of *Orpheus*; Arnold became a future Master of the King's Music. Radford's family hovered on the periphery of the Bloomsbury circle, a friend of D.H. Lawrence and his wife Frieda. Other figures in the circle included the poets Robert Brooke, Edward Thomas, and Eleanor Farjeon.

PHOTO 22 Olive Hockin painting of lakeside

A watercolour by Olive Hockin showing two men fishing beside a lake, most probably in Berkshire. It is dated 1902, around the time Olive's mother moved to Burghfield in Berkshire, an area abounding with flooded gravel pits, and where Olive spent much time with members of her literary and artistic circle.

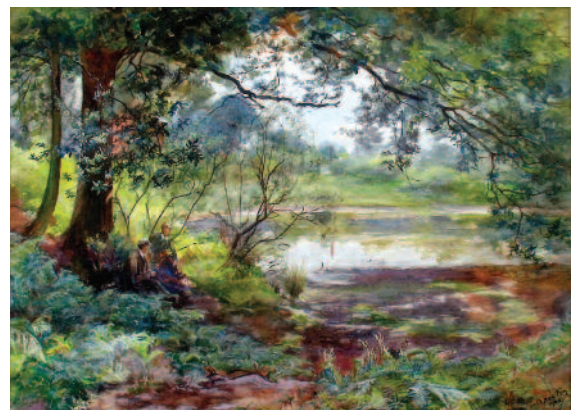


PHOTO 23 Olive Hockin painting of cobwebbed woodland

A major work by Olive in oil on canvas measuring 35x35 inches might be seen as a transition between her early paintings and her later move towards symbolism and mysticism. Around this time Olive embraced Theosophism, a belief that holds to the principal that deeper understanding comes through mystical insight – themes apparent in her paintings, many of which are only now coming to light. Free thought, devotion to her beliefs and freedom of sexual expression characterise her life at this time and to some extent is visible in the few paintings that survive from this period.



PHOTO 24 Olive Hockin Pan painting

A painting, dated 1914, and titled 'Oh Pan! Pan! Bring back they reign again upon the earth!' perhaps more than any other embodies in her work Olive's adherence to theosophy whilst containing clear elements of the interests of her circle in neo paganism. The quote comes from a book of poetry by her friend Eleanor Farjeon published in 1908 and titled 'Pan Worship and Other Poems'.

PHOTO 25 Damage in Bond Street

It's likely of course that Olive's introduction to the Suffrage movement in 1912 came in part through her friendship with one or more of many of Slade artists who also worked for the cause.

It was in the March of that year that the WSPU, which had previously always given notice of their militant demonstrations, undertook mass breaking of windows along Bond Street, Oxford and Regent Streets. Individuals, such as Emily Wilding Davison (who was later killed under the hooves of the King's horse at Epsom) already had multiple convictions to their name, now began attacks on telegraph wires, postboxes and art galleries and the authorities were regarding the suffrage movement as a whole with increasing alarm.



Barely more than 6 months after Olive's first mention within the WSPU, in February 1913, *The Times* reported the sensational news that a bomb had been planted at Pinfold Manor, a country retreat that was currently being built for Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. In fact two devices, each of five pounds of explosive, had been set on timers to detonate in the early hours of 19 February.

PHOTO 26 Emmeline Pankhurst under arrest

Shortly after the attack Emmeline Pankhurst addressed a meeting of followers in Cardiff: ‘We have blown up the Chancellor’s house,’ she declared. ‘For all that has been done in the past I accept responsibility. I have advised, I have incited, I have conspired.’ Relieved of the necessity of tracking down the real culprits, Pankhurst was arrested on 25 February – in all she was arrested seven times – and early the following month was given a three-year prison sentence. She immediately went on hunger strike.



While no evidence attributes Olive’s hand in the Pinfold bombing, she was already marked out as a potentially dangerous militant by the police. There followed increased attacks on Royal Mail property and the destruction of letters by pouring noxious liquids into post boxes. Such events marked an irrevocable turning point in the WSPU militancy, moving away from the notion of gaining public sympathy in order to obtain equal rights, to outright coercion – forcing the Government to act in the face of public outrage.

Golf courses and sports pavilions – seen largely as male preserves – became a favoured target and, on the night of 26 February 1913, just six days after the attack on Lloyd George’s house, Roehampton golf pavilion was severely damaged by fire. A few days later, following surveillance, the police raided Olive’s flat at 28 Campden Hill Gardens, seizing evidence, and Olive was arrested. The police suspected Norah Smythe as her fellow arsonist but Olive alone was charged. While awaiting trial in Holloway Prison, Olive was to make history in being among the first persons to have their photograph taken for the purpose of undercover surveillance.

PHOTO 27 Olive surveillance photo

Convicted suffragettes refused to have their photographs taken for police records, making it difficult for the camera by moving or pulling faces. The authorities then resorted to subterfuge, embarking upon the first of what is now universally tolerated, surveillance photography. Police photographers followed subjects in the street or captured women while exercising in prison yards. Here four suffragettes are snapped while in Holloway Prison, from left to right they are: Margaret Scott, Rachel Peace, Margaret McFarlane and Olive Hockin. These photographs were then edited – each being kept in a dossier along with details of the subject.



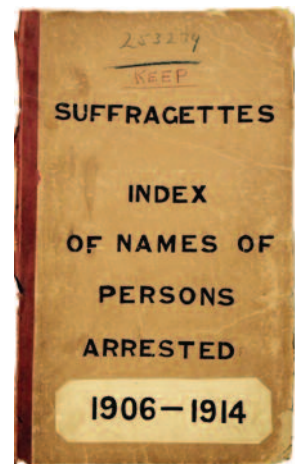
Photo 28 Olive’s photo used in police records complete with identifying number

Photo 29 Home office list of suffragettes

Home Office list of suffragettes arrested between 1906–1914. It contains names and other details of over 1300 persons.

Olives trial opened on 1 April, the charge reading as follows:

HOCKIN, Olive (32) , conspiring with others unknown to feloniously set fire to a building and certain matters and things therein, the property of the Roehampton Club, Limited, and to commit certain other offences against the Malicious Damage Act, 1861, and placing in a post office letter-box a certain fluid.



Over twenty witnesses appeared for the prosecution and masses of evidence was produced to connect the accused with both the pavilion fire and the damage to the letter box. Most damning was evidence found among the ruins of the pavilion – the remains of a copy of the *Daily Herald* and *The Suffragette* with Olive's name and address pencilled on them, presumably material intended to help start the fire

In her defence, Olive told the court she had been attracted to the suffrage movement after she became aware of the evils of prostitution, believing that nothing would be done until women achieved equal power with men. I don't believe this was simply an attempt to mitigate her sentence, for in her book – which come later into this story – she forcefully reiterates such feelings.

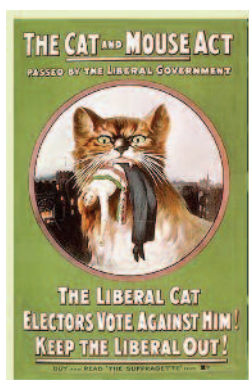
Found guilty of arson in relation to the pavilion fire, but not guilty in the matter of the other offences, Olive was sentenced to four months' imprisonment and ordered to pay half the costs of the prosecution. In common with many other convicted suffragettes Olive immediately threatened a hunger strike but eventually agreed to serve out her term so long as she was allowed to continue to paint.

PHOTO 30 Force feeding Poster

As we know, many arrested suffragettes continued their protest by going on hunger strike. This extremely brutal practice was highlighted in a poster produced by the WSPU which had some affect on the authorities treatment of prisoners but only insofar as it brought about the so called 'Cat and Mouse Act'.



PHOTO 31 Cat and Mouse Act Poster



This simply meant that convicted women on hunger strike would be released until their health had recovered, when they would be sent back to prison.

We hear little of Olive following her release, except for her design of the cover for the front page of the summer issue of *Votes for Women* in June 1914.

PHOTO 32 Olive's cover of Votes for women

And within less than two months Britain had declared war on Germany. The WSPU now put aside their activities and turned instead to supporting the war effort. Ironically the WSPU became more jingoistic in support of the war while the Union of Women's Suffrage Societies attracted more pacifists.



PHOTO 33 Olive's book plate

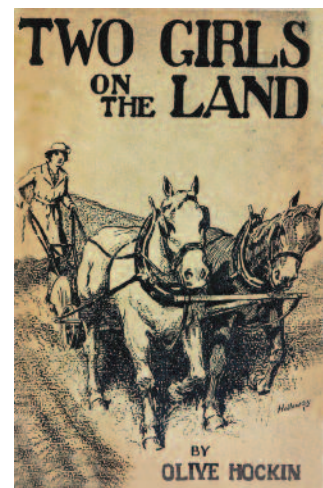


A final reference to her imprisonment is contained in the drawing she made for her bookplate which shows winged horses flying off into the heavens while a female figure remains bound to the earth. The little motif bottom right is interesting and I recently came across the silver and enamel brooch which was designed by Sylvia Pankhurst in about 1909. It comprises a portcullis symbol of the House of Commons, the gate and hanging chains in silver and the superimposed broad arrow of the convict in purple, white and green enamel. It was referred to in the paper

'Votes for Women', 16 April 1909, and first presented to ex-suffragette prisoners at a mass demonstration at the Albert Hall on 29 April 1909. A symbol which Olive uses to commemorate her own imprisonment some years later.

PHOTO 34 Cover of two girls on the land

After the outbreak of war in August 1914 Olive rather disappears off the radar and the next we hear of her is in 1918 through the publication of her book *Two Girls on the Land* in which she takes her reader through the working seasons on a small moorland farm during which time she is joined by a companion worker hence the book's title.



While a quarter of a million women had served on the land by the war's end, 23 000 in the Land Army itself, it seems that Olive was very much a 'freelancer', perhaps unable to serve officially as a result of her criminal record. She describes her first appearance at the Dartmoor farm (the name of which is disguised in her book but which I deduce to be on the eastern fringes of the moor). She writes:

Nor had I any appointment at this place – nor was I, in fact, in any wise expected, for I had already discovered that an application for work by letter would be treated simply as a joke and left unanswered! I knew nothing whatever about him, but having seen in an advertisement that the tenant of this particular farm was desirous of a capable man to drive his horses and to work his land, I had just walked up to offer my services.

PHOTO 35 Bellaford Farm

Dartmoor in 1914 remained quite remote from the rest of Devon, cut off by the ruggedness of the terrain and intemperate climate. Remote farms stood at the end of unmetalled lanes, many without electric power. Such spartan existences bred a stoic resistance to hardship and a rugged independence of outlook, as Olive encounters and records on numerous occasions. It is a challenge she rises to and largely enjoys, particularly her work with horses – perhaps a result of her time on the Estancia in South America.



Only two of Olive's paintings have surfaced from this period, subtle watercolours of the moorland landscape.

PHOTO 36 Olive's Moorland paintings

On occasions in her writing we get a glimpse of Olive's fiery militancy – and particularly her refusal to be cowed by men even in the most male of circumstances and her reader can only warm to her amusing account of fighting off unwanted amorous attention from a fellow worker.



News of the war itself is peripheral to Olive's account. Curiously, too, for one who herself was incarcerated for her beliefs, Olive makes no mention of Dartmoor's notorious prison which, from 1916, and now renamed the 'Princetown Work Centre', housed over a thousand Conscientious Objectors, many of whom were set to work on the land. This is not to say that Olive's story is told without reference to her passionate belief in equality between men and women, her plea for collective responsibility in caring for the natural world, and her cry against the human impulse that 'in the name of Liberty, Justice, and Honour he kills off the best even of the human race'.

The passionate demands, which drove the suffragettes to such extremes in the years before the outbreak of war in 1914, were largely overshadowed by the horror of the events on the Western Front. The grievous effects of a million British dead and missing left little appetite for either side of the suffrage debate to pursue their pre-war aims – the nation was exhausted. As if waking from a dream, politicians – perhaps inspired by the part women had played in supporting the war effort – set aside earlier intransigence and in 1918, the Representation of the People Act enfranchised all women over the age of thirty. In 1928, women received the right to vote on the same terms as men. These seemed somewhat pyrrhic victories for those women who, in the decade before 1914, had risked all fighting for such rights, for while gaining the vote was core to their campaign, universal suffrage was not the end but the means to an end in which women might achieve equality in all spheres of society.

There was to be no such triumph. Even before the war's end, with many conscripts now surplus to requirements, women found themselves being dismissed from war work, their jobs being taken back by men. Within weeks of the Armistice in November 1918, women were

thrown unceremoniously out of their factory and farming jobs, often with little or no notice – and certainly with little thanks.

As for women artists some attempt was through the British Official War Artists' Scheme to commission paintings, initially for propaganda purposes, although it later evolved into a memorialising scheme. Although several female artists were approached either by the British War Memorials Committee or the Ministry of Information, none of them completed commissions for the official schemes. Later the Imperial War Museum commissioned ten female artists through its Women's Work Sub-Committee, which had been set up to record the varied contributions of women to the war effort. Works by two other female artists were purchased for the museum's collection by Sir Muirhead Bone, the first official artist of the war and a significant supporter of the careers of younger artists.

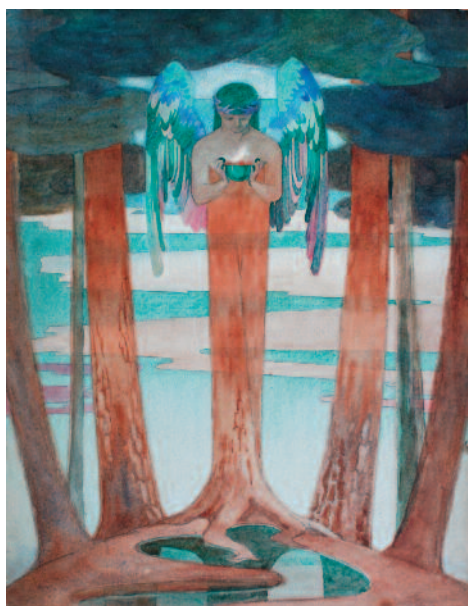
PHOTO 37 Anna Airy painting munitions

One of these, **Anna Airy**, the first official female war artist, was commissioned by the Munitions Committee of the Imperial War Museum in June 1918 to produce four pictures 'representing typical scenes in four munitions factories. Here we see the National Projectile Factory, Hackney Marshes.



As for Olive Hockin, sadly we have no further writings that might provide us with a clearer view of her thoughts on post-war Britain – a country which largely failed to live up to the expectations of all those men and women who gave sacrifice through their work, their wounds, or their deaths. We do however know that she continued painting for we have this curious watercolour dating from 1922.

PHOTO 38 Olive's Jungian painting



It was recently been catalogued with the title 'A Dryad', although it is inscribed on the verso "‘Equipoise’ – Olive Leared. The end of psychoanalysis (with Carl Jung)." It is signed with her married name which dates the work after 1922.

The indication that it involved psychoanalysis with Jung lends the work a considerable fascination. We know that Olive's friend Helton Baynes was closely associated with Jung and that Olive was in love with Baynes according to Annabel Farjeon. In Diana Baynes Jansen's book *Jung's Apprentice*, she records that in 1920 Olive accompanied Baynes' sister, Ruth, to Zurich where the two women spent time painting and walking. Ruth was persuaded by her brother to undergo analysis by Jung – is this what the painting refers to? Or did Olive herself undergo analysis?

On 12 August 1922, aged 41, Olive married John Harvey Leared, first cousin to Glynne Barrington Leared Williams. It is almost certain that Olive and John had first met in Argentina as teenagers. At the time of their marriage, John, then aged 46, is described as a trainer of polo ponies – a calling inherited from his family in South America. The couple later have two children: Richard Oliver Leared, born in 1926, and Nicholas Floyer Boxwell Leared in 1929. Olive sees neither of her sons into their teenage years as she contracts leukemia and dies on 5 February 1936, aged 55.

PHOTO 39 Handkerchief with Olive's prisoner image

But Olive's legacy lives on. Amy Jorgensen is an interdisciplinary artist whose diverse practice involves creating conceptual, immersive works that blend photography, performance and video. In a recent exhibition in New York, Amy addressed the continuing relevance of the women's rights movement and included images of English suffragettes rendered in cyanotype prints, an early 19th-century photographic process instantly recognizable for its brilliant cobalt blue color, transferred on to vintage handkerchiefs.



PHOTO 40 Dorothy Webster Hawksley



In 1919 this watercolour by Dorothy Webster Hawksley entitled 'Peace' was exhibited at the Royal Academy. It was recently offered for sale through the Rupert Maas Gallery. I leave the last word to Rupert Maas who, in his catalogue of sale, describes the painting thus:

This picture is laden with symbolism about peace in the aftermath of the Great War. The father of the child in the painting is absent, perhaps killed. The red of the mother's dress may refer to the blood spilt. The mother and child sit at a spring, as if life is rising again above the barren landscape beyond, while the kingfisher nearby, also known as the halcyon, is an ancient symbol of peace. In the sky stands a full moon, long associated with femininity and fertility – the future in this painting is quite definitely female...