‘Fetters and Roses’ Dinner

This was an informal name for a dinner given at the House of Commons on 9 January 1924 for Members of Parliament who had been imprisoned for political or religious reasons. This note is intended to assist identification of as many individuals as possible in a photograph which was donated to the Library, through the Librarian, by Deputy Speaker Mrs Sylvia Heal MP. The original of the photograph will be retained by Parliamentary Archives, while scanned copies are accessible online.

A report in The Times the following day [page 12] lists 49 people who had accepted invitations. Some of these were current MPs, while others had been Members in the past and at least two [Mrs Ayrton Gould and Eleanor Rathbone] were to become Members in the future. I have counted 46 people in the photograph, not including the photographer, whose identity is unknown. Mr James Scott Duckers [who never became an MP, but stood as a Parliamentary candidate, against Churchill, in a by-election only a few weeks after the dinner] is described on the photograph as being ‘in the chair’.

The Times report also points out that ‘it was explained in an advance circular that the necessary qualification is held by 19 members of the House of Commons, of whom 16 were expected to be present at the dinner’. This raises the question of who the absentees were. One possibility might be George Lansbury [then MP for Poplar, Bow & Bromley], who had been imprisoned twice, in 1913 [after a speech in the Albert Hall appeared to sanction the suffragettes’ arson campaign] and in 1921 [he was one of the Poplar councillors who had refused to collect the rates]. The other absentees are currently unknown.

Following is a list, in alphabetical order, of the individuals present who are known to have been MPs, whether in the past, at the time of the dinner, or in the future. Some biographical details, including the reason(s) for their imprisonment, are also given.

Conscientious objector. Helped to establish the No-Conscription Fellowship, served on its executive and became national leader of the ‘absolutists’ [who refused all types of national service, not just military]. For more than two and a half years, served as an ‘absolutist’ in various prisons [The Times obituary of 7 July 1953].
Spent time in seven different jails; held office in the No-Conscription Fellowship and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Local Methodist/Congregationalist preacher, but joined the Quakers after the war.

Contested Bristol North in 1922.

**DAVIES, Revd. George Maitland Lloyd** [1880-1949][Christian Pacifist, University of Wales, 1923-24][Committed suicide, 16 December 1949]

Conscientious objector. Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. Assistant Secretary, Fellowship of Reconciliation until 1916; Servant of the Fellowship from 1916. Imprisoned at Wormwood Scrubs, Knutsford, Dartford and Birmingham, 1917-19 for ‘peace propaganda’. Found hanged at the North Wales Mental Hospital, Denbigh, where he had been a voluntary patient [The Times obituary of 23 December 1949].

Elected as a Christian Pacifist, but stood for Labour when defeated at the 1924 General Election.

**DIAMOND, Charles** [1858-1934][Nationalist and anti-Parnellite, North Monaghan, 1892-95]

Imprisoned for an article entitled ‘Killing No Murder’, published in the Catholic Herald [of which he was Editor] of 27 December 1919. He was accused of ‘incitement to outrage’ and sentenced, in March 1920, to six months’ imprisonment.

He contested various seats as a Labour candidate: Camberwell, Peckham, in 1918; Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, in 1922 [at which he lost by 46 votes] and Wandsworth, Clapham, in 1924.

**DUKES, Charles** [Baron Dukeston][1881-1948][Labour, Warrington, 1923-24 and 1929-31]

Conscientious objector. According to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, ‘in 1916, when conscripted into the Cheshire Regiment, he refused to obey military orders, was court-martialled, and served a prison sentence’.


**GOULD, Barbara Bodichon Ayrton** [Approx. 1888-1950][Labour, Hendon North, 1945-50]

Active suffragist. According to Bellamy and Saville’s Dictionary of Labour Biography Volume 7 [Macmillan, 1984], in 1912 she served a short prison sentence in Holloway gaol for window-smashing and in the following year spent a period of time in France, apparently disguised as a schoolgirl, to avoid arrest.

Associated for a while with George Lansbury in the production of the Daily Herald.
Parliamentary candidate for Northwich three times, in 1924, 1929 and 1931. She was defeated by only four votes in 1929, the victor in all three cases being the Conservative, Lord Colum Crichton-Stuart.
Also contested Lambeth North in 1922, Lambeth Norwood in March 1935 and Manchester Hulme in November 1935.

Conscientious objector. Born in Canada. Went to France with the Friends’ Ambulance, ‘came back to oppose Conscription, got into trouble with DORA’ [S.V. Bracher, Herald Book of Labour Members 1923. Bracher was himself at the dinner].

Conscientious objector and Methodist local preacher. According to The Times obituary of 12 January 1962, he was imprisoned ‘several times and served sentences in all of two and a half years’. ‘A Pacifist especially thorough’ [Bracher]. Co-founder of the No-Conscription Fellowship. Member of the Union of Democratic Control . Quaker.
He beat Airey Neave at Ealing North in the 1951 General Election by 120 votes.
PPS to Philip Snowden [Chancellor of the Exchequer], 1924 and 1929-31; PPS to Sir Hartley Shawcross [President of the Board of Trade], 1951.
Contested Huddersfield in 1922, Altrincham in 1933 and Stockport in 1935.

JOHN, William [1878-1955][Labour, Rhondda West, December 1920-50]
Prominent miners’ leader. Alleged to have participated in Tonypandy strike riots of 1910-11, for which he was sentenced to a year’s imprisonment. Sentence subsequently reduced by Home Secretary. Secretary, Tonypandy Baptist Church from 1902. President, Welsh Baptist Union.

JONES, Morgan [1885-1939][Labour, Caerphilly, 1921-39]
Conscientious objector. Imprisoned several times between April 1916 and August 1919, after the 1916 Mansion House trial, at which he was ‘charged with prejudicing recruitment by urging the repeal of the Military Service Act……. ‘The first
conscientious objector to be returned to the Commons after the war’ [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography]. Leading member, and one of the founders, of the No-Conscription Fellowship. ‘Imprisoned as a deserter’ [The Times obituary of 24 April 1939].

Became a Minister within a fortnight of the dinner. Labour Whip, 1922; January – November 1924 and June 1929 – August 1931, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, under Charles Trevelyan [who had resigned from the Government in protest at the outbreak of the First World War and helped to found the Union of Democratic Control]; 1931 – 38, Chairman of the Committee of Public Accounts.

KIRKWOOD, David [1st Baron Kirkwood of Bearsden][1872-1955][Labour [ILP 1931-August 1933], Dumbarton, Clydebank, 1922-50; Dunbartonshire East, 1950-51]

Prominent member of the Clyde Workers’ Committee. Deported from Glasgow to Edinburgh in March 1916, under the Defence of the Realm Act, for allegedly urging munitions workers to strike [a charge which he denied]. Imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle ‘on the charge of organizing the strike at Parkhead’ [The Times obituary of 22 April 1955]. He remained in Edinburgh for fourteen months, ‘consistently refusing to sign any document promising ‘good behaviour’ as a condition of his return to the Clyde. Finally the order was revoked without this condition, and through the intervention of Winston Churchill, Kirkwood was employed as a manager at Beardmore’s Mile End shell factory in Glasgow [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography]. Arrested after the George Square disorder of 31 January 1919 [after the Government had declined to intervene in the Clyde shipworkers’ strike], during which ‘he was knocked unconscious by a police baton outside the Glasgow municipal offices while attempting to calm a demonstration that was becoming violent. A press photograph of the incident ensured his acquittal on the charge of complicity in a sedition trial resulting from the demonstration [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography].

He published his autobiography, My life of revolt, in 1935. Churchill wrote a foreword to it.

Contested Dumbarton Burghs in 1918.


Imprisoned in 1921 for contempt of court, along with other Poplar Borough councillors, for withholding rate payments to London County Council and other bodies. One of the first three Labour women MPs. Neutral or possibly negative towards women’s suffrage. First Labour woman representative on London County Council. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health [Anthony Greenwood], June 1929-1931. Became Chairman of the Labour Party in 1930.

Contested Camberwell North West in 1920, East Ham North in 1922 and Stockton-on-Tees in 1935.
Passive resister. Convicted in November 1916 ‘of having made statements likely to prejudice the recruiting of His Majesty’s Forces and His Majesty’s relations with foreign powers and….ordered to pay a fine of £100 for each offence and 50 guineas costs’[The Times, 25 November 1916, p 4]. Lupton appealed against both charges, but his appeals were dismissed in January 1917. Sentenced to six months’ imprisonment in February 1918 ‘for having in his possession documents, the publication of which would contravene the Defence of the Realm Regulations’ [The Times obituary of 24 May 1930 p 17]. Strenuous anti-vaccinator.

MARCH, Sam[uel][1861-1935][Labour, South Poplar, 1922-31]
Imprisoned in 1921 for contempt of court for refusal to collect rates in Poplar [along with Susan Lawrence, John Scurr, George Lansbury and others]. A Petition was sent to the Home Secretary on 12 September 1921, and reproduced in a letter to The Times the following day, p 7, requesting ‘the immediate release of the Poplar councillors at present detained in Brixton and Holloway Gaols’. Signatories to the letter included John Masefield and H.G. Wells. Another letter to The Times, published on 21 September 1921, reproduces the reply of the Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, indicating that he had no power to intervene, because the councillors had been imprisoned for contempt of court, not for criminal offences.
General Secretary of National Union of Vehicle Workers [before its amalgamation with the TGWU]. Mayor of Poplar, 1920-21. J.P. for County of London.
Contested Poplar South in 1918.

MAXTON, James [1885-1946][Independent Labour Party, Glasgow, Bridgeton, 1922-46]
Conscientious objector. In March 1916, while awaiting the decision of the Barrhead tribunal regarding his objections to military service, ‘he was arrested for a seditious speech on Glasgow Green – the offence lying in the incitement of munition workers to strike’[The Times obituary of 24 July 1946]. He was sentenced to twelve months’ imprisonment in Calton Prison, Edinburgh’. Released in February 1917. Congratulated Neville Chamberlain on the agreement made with Hitler at Munich in 1938.
Chairman of the ILP for most of the period between 1926 and 1939.
Contested Glasgow, Bridgeton, in 1918.
MOREL, Edmund Dene [1873-1924][Labour, Dundee, 1922-24][Originally Georges Edmond Morel-de-Ville]

Sentenced to six months’ imprisonment in 1917. Charged under the Defence of the Realm Act ‘with inciting a lady to convey one of his pamphlets to Switzerland without a pamphlet’ [The Times obituary of 14 November 1924]. Sent material to Romain Rolland without realising he was not in France but in Switzerland [Ceedel, Semi-detached idealists – the British peace movement and international relations, 1854-1945. OUP, 2000]. Secretary and part founder of the Union of Democratic Control [anti-annexation and called for peace] from 1914. Not a pacifist totally.

Prospective Liberal candidate for Birkenhead, 1914, but resigned on the outbreak of war.

MUIR, John William [1879-1931][Labour, Glasgow Maryhill, 1922-24]

According to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, ‘From October 1915 to March 1916 the Clyde Workers’ Committee threatened to disrupt munitions production, and Muir, who was regarded as its intellectual leader, presented its case for workplace control of production at famous meetings with Lloyd George as minister of munitions at Christmas 1915. The Clyde Workers’ Committee actually disrupted the war effort far less than did more conservative groups of workmen, but in February 1916 the government moved against it. Muir, together with the future communist William Gallacher, was gaoled in April for twelve months for publishing an article entitled ‘Should the workers arm?’ in the CWC journal The Worker (29 January 1916, 73–4); the article said that they should not, and neither Muir nor Gallacher wrote it. The arrests of Muir and Gallacher, and the simultaneous deportation of other leaders of the CWC to Edinburgh, succeeded in breaking up the committee’.

Editor of The Worker. General Secretary, Workers’ Educational Association, 1928-31.

Parliamentary Secretary to Josiah Wedgwood [Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster], 28 January 1924.

Contested Glasgow, Maryhill, in 1918.


Prominent supporter of women’s suffrage. Sentenced to nine months’ imprisonment in 1912 for ‘conspiracy’ to incite members of the Women’s Social and Political Union to cause damage in the West End of London [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography]. Released after five weeks [The Times obituary of 12 September 1961]. Had been on hunger strike. Worked on the land from the point in 1918 when he became liable for conscription [Oxford DNB]. Member of Union of Democratic Control; Treasurer, 1916.

Editor of London Echo, Labour Record and Review and Votes for Women. Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1897.
SCURR, John [1876-1932][Labour, Stepney, Mile End, 1923-31]

Pacifist and active in support of conscientious objectors. Also a supporter of women’s suffrage; arrested once in Norwich for delivering an inflammatory speech on the issue, but subsequently discharged.

Imprisoned for six weeks in 1921 for refusing to collect rates in Poplar, along with other councillors, including his wife [the issue was of Metropolitan Boroughs’ financial contributions to London County Council]. Mayor of Poplar, 1922-23; Alderman, London County Council, 1925-29.

Resigned from the ILP, 1928. A Roman Catholic.

Contested, as an Independent Labour candidate, Bethnal Green South West in July 1911 and February 1914; Derbyshire, Chesterfield in August 1913 and Ipswich in May 1914. Stood for Labour at Buckingham in 1918 and Stepney, Mile End, in 1922.

SHINWELL, Emanuel [Baron Shinwell of Easington][1884-1986][Labour, Linlithgow, 1922-24 and 1928-31; Seaham, 1935-50; Easington, 1950-70]

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ‘He became an early member of the Independent Labour Party and was an active socialist crusader. In 1911 he was prominent on the Clyde during the national dock strike. Shinwell continued his militant union activities during the war and was wrongly alleged to have been involved in the disturbances in George Square, Glasgow, between striking workers and the police on Red Friday (31 January 1919). As a result, he spent over five months in Calton Gaol, Edinburgh’. Sentenced to five months’ imprisonment at Edinburgh High Court on 7 April 1919, he was released at the end of July 1919 [Peter Slowe, *Manny Shinwell – an authorised biography*, p 103]

Parliamentary Secretary to Department of Mines, 1924 and 1930-31; Financial Secretary, War Office, 1929-30; Minister of Fuel and Power, 1945-47; Secretary of State for War, 1947-50; Minister of Defence, 1950-51. Was Chairman and Member, National Executive Labour Party; Chairman, Parliamentary Labour Party, 1964-67.

WALLHEAD, Richard Collingham [1869-1934][Labour, Merthyr Tydfil, 1922-34]

Sentenced to four months’ imprisonment in Swansea Gaol in 1917 under the Defence of the Realm Act ‘for a speech delivered in South Wales’ [*The Times* obituary of 28 April 1934]. Released after two months.
A number of those present at the dinner also stood as Parliamentary candidates, without ever being elected. They are listed below.

**ALBERY, Wyndham.** Labour candidate for Hammersmith South at the 1922 and 1923 General Elections. In the latter election, his brother, Irving, stood as the Conservative candidate at Bow & Bromley, against George Lansbury. [Irving Albury subsequently became MP for Kent, Gravesend, between 1924 and 1945].

**EVANS, Dorothy.** Labour candidate for Paddington South at the October 1930 by-election. Actively involved in the suffragist movement, she was imprisoned and was one of the last suffragettes released under the amnesty of August 1914 and was converted to pacifism in the First World War [Krista Cowman, *Women of the right spirit*. Manchester University Press, 2007, p 220].

**FOAN, Gilbert.** Labour candidate for Croydon North at the 1923, 1924 and 1929 General Elections and for Chelsea at the 1931 General Election.

**HUNTER, E.E.** Labour candidate for Hackney Central at the 1923 and 1924 General Elections.

**MENNELL, Robert O.** Labour candidate for Surrey Eastern at the 1924 and 1929 General Elections.

**MILLWOOD, Philip.** Labour candidate for Bedfordshire, Luton, at the 1924 General Election.

**PETHICK-LAWRENCE, Mrs Emmeline.** Labour candidate for Manchester, Rusholme, at the 1918 General Election.

**PRICHARD, Revd. A.G.** Labour candidate for Chelsea at the 1929 General Election.

**RUSSELL, Hon. Bertrand.** Labour candidate for Chelsea at the 1922 and 1923 General Elections.

**RUSSELL, Mrs Dora.** Labour candidate for Chelsea at the 1924 General Election.

**SCOTT DUCKERS, James.** Liberal candidate at the March 1924 by-election at Westminster, Abbey, only a few weeks after the dinner. Other candidates at this by-election included Winston Churchill [Constitutional] and Fenner Brockway [Labour]. Duckers lost his deposit, winning only 291 votes.

In 1917, he had published *Handed over – the prison experiences of Mr J. Scott Duckers, Solicitor, of Chancery Lane, under the Military Service Act*. Edmund Harvey, then the Liberal MP for Leeds West, wrote the foreword.
Of the others present, although they have not been identified in the photograph, Mrs Helen Archdale, an active suffragist, had been married to an army officer, Theodore, but he was killed on leave in the First World War. She was imprisoned for her Women’s Social and Political Union activities. She was also the first editor of *Time and Tide*.

Cornelius Barritt, a Quaker, had been sentenced to death in 1916. An account of his experiences is given in a manuscript held by the Quakers [see http://www.quaker.org.uk/Templates/Internal.asp?NodeID=90045 and scroll down].

C.H. Norman was imprisoned in Wandsworth Detention Barracks. His punishment was the subject of a Parliamentary Question on 26 June 1916 by John Whitehouse [HC Debs Vol 83 c 526], which inquired as to his welfare. Mr Whitehouse asked ‘whether, on 23rd May, he was confined in a straight jacket, which was too small and caused him great agony; whether the then commandant, who has since been removed, mocked at him; whether Mr Norman fainted and was left unconscious on the floor for an hour; whether he was afterwards taken to hospital; and whether he returned to the barracks on 31st May and was again subjected to brutality by the then commandant?’ In his reply, Harold Tennant, the Under-Secretary of State for War, stated that ‘Norman is still in Wandsworth Detention Barracks. As he threatened suicide he was placed in restraint on the date mentioned. He was removed to hospital. On the 31st May he was sent to detention barracks. The punishment inflicted and the treatment accorded to Norman have been in accordance with the rules for detention barracks, and it is not right to say that he was subjected to brutality by the commandant, though that officer behaved incorrectly and without discretion in expressing his personal views.’

Viscountess Rhondda [Margaret Haig Thomas][1883-1958]  
According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ‘Margaret’s introduction to the suffrage movement came through one of her mother’s cousins, Florence Haig, who had already been to prison for the cause. Inspired by Florence, both Margaret and her mother took part in the great suffrage procession to Hyde Park, London, on 21 July 1908. Shortly afterwards she joined the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) and set up its Newport branch.......Between 1908 and the outbreak of the First World War, when the WSPU suspended its operations, Margaret ran the full gamut of suffrage activities. She organized public meetings, inviting down such speakers as Emmeline Pankhurst, and she herself spoke from public platforms on many occasions, often to hostile audiences.....During the general election of 1910, following the militant policy of harassing cabinet ministers, she broke through a police cordon and jumped on to the running board of Prime Minister Asquith’s car. By
1913 she felt it was her duty, as secretary of the Newport WSPU, to commit arson and thereby give a lead to the others in the branch. She burned the contents of a pillar box on Risca Road, was arrested, tried, and found guilty. Rejecting the offer to pay a fine.....she was sent to Usk gaol, where she proceeded to go on hunger strike but was not forcibly fed; she was released after five days’.

Survived the torpedoing of the Lusitania in 1915.

‘Between the wars Lady Rhondda was arguably Britain's leading feminist’ [Oxford DNB]. In 1920 she set up the feminist weekly journal Time and Tide.

Became well-known for her campaign to take her seat in the House of Lords. From 1918, ‘some women over thirty were enfranchised in parliamentary elections, but peeresses were not allowed to take their seats in the Lords. Lady Rhondda demanded that she be allowed to take her seat in what she regarded as ‘the last feudal assembly in Europe’ (Church Times, 10 March 1922). But although in 1922 she seemed to have won, when the committee of privileges accepted her plea for admission, the decision was reversed in May 1922 after a remarkable piece of skulduggery by the lord chancellor, F. E. Smith, who referred the matter back to a reconstituted committee and delivered a judgment which rejected the claim that a peeress was entitled to sit and vote in parliament. Women were kept out of the House of Lords, despite her continued efforts, until 1958’ [Oxford DNB].

Evelyn Sharp [NOT the first female Permanent Secretary of a Government Department], the sister of Cecil Sharp, the folk song expert, was a prominent journalist and active suffragist. She, too, was arrested and imprisoned as a result of her Women’s Social and Political Union activities.

The dinner also attracted a congratulatory message from the Prime Minister: ‘Heartiest good wishes. It is the old story, from prison to honour’. [The message is quoted by Frederick Linfield, Liberal MP for Mid-Bedfordshire, during a Debate on the Adjournment on 7 August 1924, HC Debs Vol 176 c 3194].

The dinner took place at an interesting and dramatic time, politically. Within two weeks, on 21 January 1924, the Conservative Government was defeated on a motion on a Labour amendment to the King’s Speech and, the following day, Stanley Baldwin announced his resignation. He was replaced by Ramsay MacDonald. Consequently, three Members who were present at the dinner – John Muir, Morgan Jones and Emanuel Shinwell – became Ministers.

Attached is a print-out of the photograph, with a key identifying as many of the Members present [and a few others] as was possible in the time available.

Andrew Parker
Diana Douse
Parliament and Constitution Centre
1) David Kirkwood MP
2) Revd. Thomas Nightingale
3) James Maxton MP
4)
5) Richard Wallhead MP
6) Charles Diamond [former MP]
7)
8) Miss Evelyn Sharp
9) John Scurr MP
10) Walter Ayles MP
11)
12)
13) Edmund Morel MP
14)
15) Mrs Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence
16) Arnold Lupton
17) Hon. Bertrand Russell
18)
19) Charles Dukes MP
20) Viscountess Rhondda
21)
22)
23) James Scott Duckers
24) James Hindle Hudson MP
25)
26)
27) Susan Lawrence MP
28)
29) George M. Lloyd Davies MP
30)
31)
32) Mrs Ayrton Gould
33)
34)
35) Frederick Pethick-Lawrence MP
36) Mrs Archdale
37)
38)
39)
40)
41)
42) Joseph Harrison
43) Samuel March MP
44) W.J. Vodden
45) C.W. Daniel
46) Emanuel Shinwell MP