

DILEMMAS OF PLACING AND DATING IN BLUE
PLAQUE RESEARCH: THE CASE OF DOROTHY
RICHARDSON IN BLOOMSBURY (1896-1907) – AN
ESSAY IN GROUNDED THEORY AND THE
SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

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The main activity of the Dorothy Richardson Society is its biennial conference. The comparable 2015 event, however, held at the University of London's Institute of English Studies in Senate House on 15 May 2015 was billed as a centenary event.¹ It was marked by two special features. The event commemorated the 100-year anniversary of the publication of *Pointed Roofs*, the first chapter-volume of Dorothy Richardson's 2,262 page novel cycle *Pilgrimage*. Second, the day was marked by the unveiling of the first blue plaque celebrating Richardson's life and work. The placement of the plaque – on Richardson's former residence at 2 Woburn Buildings (now 6 Woburn Walk), Bloomsbury, London, on 12 May 2015, and its formal unveiling on 15 May – was the high point of variously intense periods of collaboration between a number of principal players in their roles as members of the Dorothy Richardson Society and of Bloomsbury's Marchmont Association (MA). It is the purpose of this article to detail the course of events which culminated in this unveiling from my standpoint as a blue plaque researcher, local resident, local historian, sociologist and grounded theorist² with a special interest in the sociology of knowledge and cultural studies.³ In particular, I set forth a blue

¹ http://dorothyrichardson.org/society/conference_2015.htm [Accessed 7 June 2016, unless otherwise stated all other hyperlinks accessed on 16 January 2016]

² <http://www.iwh.on.ca/wrmb/grounded-theory>.

³ In pursuance of my research, I have served on the Marchmont Association Committee since 2012; and on the Marchmont Association Plaques Subgroup since it was established in 2013. I joined the Dorothy Richardson Society soon after my Richardson research began in late 2013. The opening of the British Museum Library and Reading Room in mid nineteenth-century Bloomsbury provided a magnet for researchers, intellectuals and writers, who by this time could find cheap lodgings within walking distance of the Museum, hence the

plaque trajectory in terms of a number of interrelated chronological phases, namely, *Beginning*, *Puzzling*, *Collaborating*, *Clarifying*, *Consolidating*, and *Culminating*, before concluding with a section on *Afterword and Impact*.

Methodologically, this article is rooted in a sociological Grounded Theory approach to historiography which thematises social processes.⁴ Grounded Theory may be defined as:

a set of rigorous research procedures leading to the emergence of conceptual categories. The concepts/categories are related to each other as a theoretical explanation of the actions that continually resolves the main concern of the participants in any substantive area.⁵

In my case this includes the concerns of blue plaque researchers, including blue plaque historians. In consequence, I frame my research ‘findings’ in terms of generic social processes⁶ – the six chronological phases within the trajectory – and then use my research data to illustrate the social processes.

number of potential blue plaque recipients in the Marchmont Association area of interest. See: Rosemary Ashton, *Victorian Bloomsbury* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012). Dorothy Richardson moved to Bloomsbury in 1896 and, using her new Bloomsbury address of 7 Endsleigh Street, Tavistock Square, WC, obtained her first British Museum Reading Room library ticket on 26 September 1896. See: Susan David Bernstein, *Roomscape: Women Writers in the British Museum from George Eliot to Virginia Woolf*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p.206 (unpaginated).

⁴ Grounded Theory is a methodology widely used in the social sciences. The early Grounded Theory texts remain the most important. See: Barney Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (New Brunswick: Aldine, 1967); Barney G. Glaser, *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory* (Mill Valley, CA: The Sociology Press, 1978). The application of Grounded Theory to historiography is in its infancy. See: Richard Ekins, ‘The Rediscovery and Resurrection of Bunk Johnson – a Grounded Theory Approach: A Case Study in Jazz Historiography’, *The Grounded Theory Review*, 11, 3 (2011): 27-54.

⁵ <http://www.groundedtheory.com/what-is-gt.aspx>

⁶ Robert Prus, ‘Generic Social Processes: Maximising Conceptual Development in Ethnographic Research’, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 16, 3 (1987): 250-293.

The distinguishing feature of Grounded Theory as a research methodology and research strategy is its particular use of what it terms ‘the constant comparative method’ and ‘theoretical sampling’, as set within an abductive logic.⁷ Grounded Theory can be used with either qualitative or quantitative data. I follow these Grounded Theory research strategies and logics throughout my blue plaque research and, therefore, regard this article as a Grounded Theory study, notwithstanding that this particular article is written up with the emphasis on substantive detail as opposed to theoretical density.

This is not the place to dwell further on theory and methodology.⁸ Suffice it to say that this phased trajectory emerged as ideal-typical from my work on five previous Marchmont Association blue plaques, those for Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Alexander Herzen and the Free Russian Press, Ernest Boulton and Frederick Park, aka ‘Stella and Fanny’, Jerome K. Jerome, and J. M. Barrie. I illustrate each phase of the trajectory with material drawn mainly from my Dorothy Richardson files supplemented occasionally for comparative purposes with additional material collected in the context of my blue plaque research more generally. As we shall see, my research was marked by an early collaboration with Richardson scholars which continued throughout the research.⁹ To

⁷ See: Glaser and Strauss, op. cit; Glaser, op. cit; Joe Reichertz, ‘Abduction: The Logic of Discovery of Grounded Theory’, *Forum: Qualitative Research*, 11, 1 (2010),

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1412/2902>.

⁸ Rather, I refer the reader to a companion article in this issue which considers ‘On Memory, Forgetting and Blue Plaque Research’ in terms of the underlying theoretical framework of the article.

⁹ I am especially grateful to Scott McCracken and George Thomson of the Dorothy Richardson Society for giving me permission to draw so heavily on our email correspondences within which the blue plaque ‘knowledge’ reported in this article was largely constructed. I thank Susan Henke of the Dorothy Richardson Society for permission to quote from her email to Scott McCracken sent to me as part of a Dorothy Richardson project mailshot. In addition, the inspirational Ricci de Freitas, Chair of the Marchmont Association, has offered me invaluable advice, much of which is referenced throughout the article. I also thank David Hayes of the Camden History Society for his consultancy work on 7 Endsleigh Street; Debbie Radcliffe for her consultancy work on Woburn Buildings and 7 Endsleigh Street; and Revd Anne Stevens for her consultancy

pay the proper respect to this exceptional co-operative endeavour, I consider ‘Puzzling and Collaborating’ together in one section following an initial ‘Beginning’ section. The early co-operation was also marked by an extensive period of renewed ‘puzzling’ following discrepant views given to me by two of the leading experts on Richardson. Not until this discrepancy was satisfactorily resolved by agreement with both experts did I feel able to approach the Marchmont Association Plaques Subgroup with the final draft of my document ‘Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957), 2 Woburn Buildings (subsequently restored and renumbered as the present 6 Woburn Walk): The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque’,¹⁰ in order to seek approval to proceed with the various stages necessary for the plaque to be installed and unveiled.

The Marchmont Association, the brainchild of its founding and current Chairperson Ricci de Freitas, unites local residents in a simple cause – to improve the local area for the benefit of all. Its aim most apposite to its Commemorative Plaques Scheme is set forth in its Constitution thus: ‘to promote the on-going improvement of Marchmont Street and the surrounding area, including the conservation of its historic character, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.’¹¹ More specifically, in 2009 the Marchmont Association established its own independent commemorative plaques scheme with a view to raising awareness of the area’s rich and varied social history.¹² This was an outgrowth of its History Project, established in 2006. The Plaques Subgroup was constituted in 2013 tasked with all blue plaque matters except the final decision as to wording and placement which is subject to the approval of the Marchmont Association full committee.

work on the bells of St. Pancras Church. I thank Ciara Chambers and Debbie Radcliffe for their perceptive comments on the penultimate draft of this article, many of which I have incorporated. Finally, I thank Wendy Saunderson for extensive comment on the themes of the article, most of which have fed into my thinking and writing over the years.

¹⁰ Richard Ekins, ‘Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957), 2 Woburn Buildings (subsequently restored and renumbered as the present 6 Woburn Walk): The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque’, 17 November 2014 (Bloomsbury: Marchmont Association Archives).

¹¹ <http://www.marchmontassociation.org.uk/pdf/CONSTITUTION.pdf>.

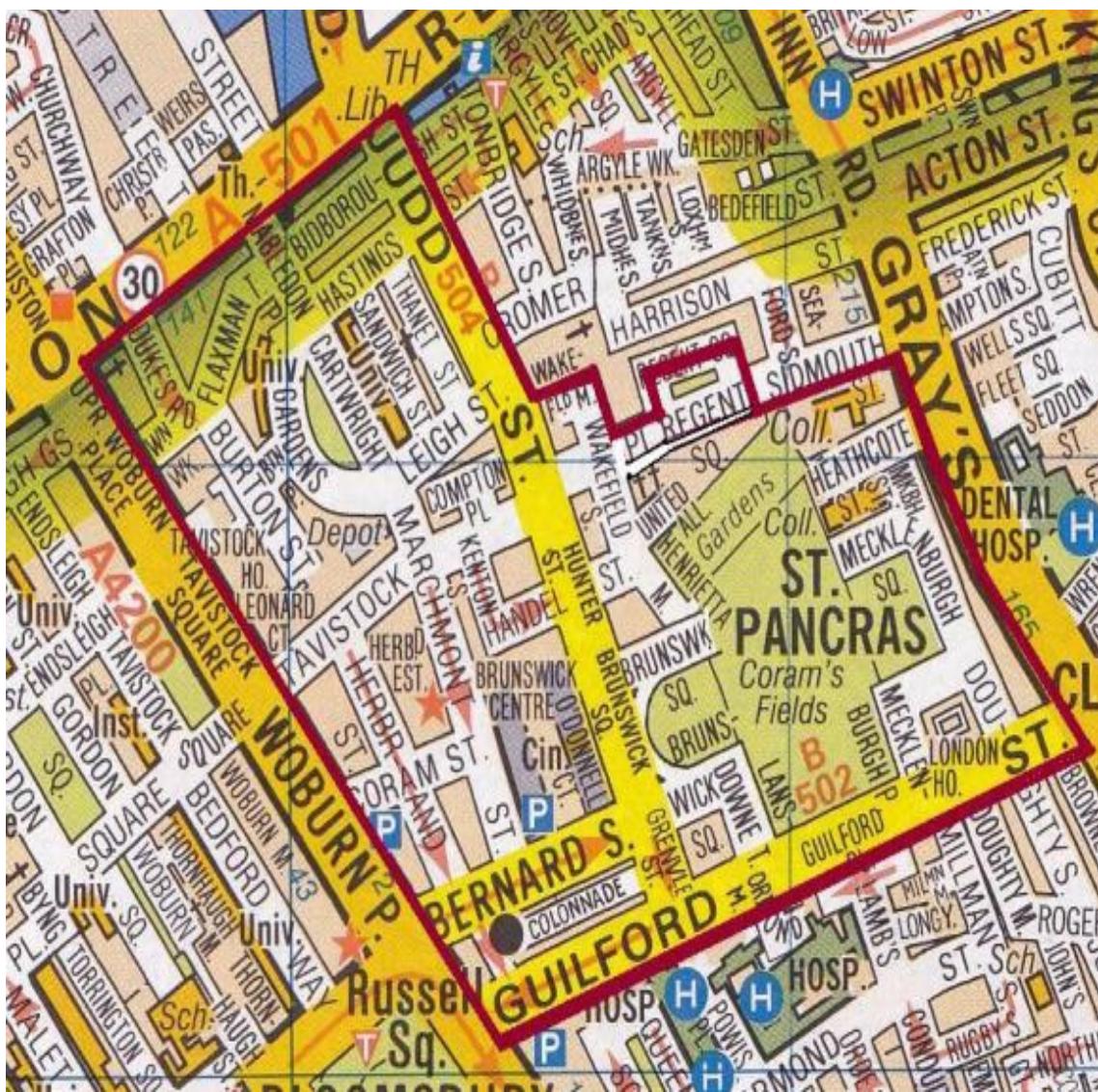
¹² <http://www.marchmontassociation.org.uk/news-article.asp?ID=124>.

From its beginnings in September 2004, as the Marchmont Street Improvement Campaign (MSIC), this voluntary association steadily metamorphosed through a number of phases. Within eight months it had become the Marchmont Street Association (MSA). It extended its ‘area of benefit’ in 2008 and again in 2010 and 2013. The extension of May 2010 was the significant one for the Dorothy Richardson plaque because it now included the whole of the area between Euston Road and Guilford Street and between Judd Street and Woburn Place, including Woburn Walk (previously Woburn Buildings), the residence of Dorothy Richardson for some eighteen months in 1905 and 1906 when she was in her early thirties. The map below (Fig.1) indicates the Marchmont Association area of benefit since May 2013 – the area within the red lines. Woburn Walk is marked as ‘Wn Wk’ and appears as the street the furthest North West within the area of benefit, leading into Flaxman Terrace marked as ‘Flaxman T’.

Richardson’s residence was the upper two floors of the first house on the South West side of Woburn Buildings (now Woburn Walk). Richardson’s time there – shared with Miss Moffat¹³ (Miss Selina Holland in *Pilgrimage*) – is dealt with comprehensively in Richardson’s *The Trap*, but as we shall see it features in a number of other chapters of *Pilgrimage*, and has been the subject of comment in the secondary source literature.

¹³ Miss Moffat is variously spelt Moffat and Moffatt in the literature. Thus M. C. Rintoul in *Dictionary of Real People and Places in Fiction* (Routledge: London, 1993), p.678, writes Moffatt. However, internal evidence suggests Rintoul is simply following Rosenberg’s spelling in his *Dorothy Richardson: The Genius They Forgot, A Critical Biography* (London: Duckworth, 1973). In my efforts to make sense of such discrepancies (‘puzzling’) I soon learned that many Richardson scholars have a poor opinion of Rosenberg’s accuracy in matters of detail. The highly respected Gloria Fromm who writes ‘Moffat’ is regarded as more reliable than Rosenberg. See, also, George H. Thomson, *A Reader’s Guide to Dorothy Richardson’s Pilgrimage* (Greensboro, NC: University of North Carolina), p.112. Veronica Grad is inconsistent. She writes both ‘Moffatt’ and ‘Moffat’ in her letter to Rose Odle, written c.1958, as cited below. This is ‘Letter 13 VG to RO’ in the Appendix (of letters) in Gillian Hanscombe’s *The Art of Life: Dorothy Richardson and the Development of Feminist Consciousness* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1982), p.183. In this latter version of the letter, Veronica Grad writes ‘Moffatt’ on both occasions.

Fig. 1. Map Showing Woburn Walk



In a letter to Joseph Hone, dated 11 August 1939, Richardson provides a useful commentary on Woburn Buildings at the time she was living there:

The alley flanked by Woburn Buildings ran eastward from the top of Woburn Place, just south of St. Pancras Church which faces the Square then known as Endsleigh Gardens & now obliterated by Friend's House, the Quaker headquarters, & above which the Euston Rd. runs east & west. Woburn Square is further south. Even in 1906, the alley was in some respects a terrifying dwelling-place for one unaccustomed to certain of the worst products of poverty & miseries, & the mere presence of the poet was a source of comfort & light. The postman rarely passed further down the court than our two respective doors.¹⁴

The 'poet' refers to W.B. Yeats who lived opposite Richardson's residence at 18 Woburn Buildings (now 5 Woburn Walk) between 1895 and 1919, now marked by a plaque.¹⁵

The Survey of London (1949) describes Woburn Buildings more prosaically:

From the east side of Woburn Place, Thomas Cubitt erected a little street of shops which turned at right angles northwards to Euston Road, skirting the churchyard of New St. Pancras Church. Both sections of this street were formerly known as Woburn Buildings, but the northern is shown as Duke's Row

¹⁴ Gloria G. Fromm (ed.) *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), p.380. See also, most notably, Dorothy Richardson, 'Yeats of Bloomsbury', *Life and Letters Today*, 21, 20 (1939): 60-66; and Dorothy M. Richardson 'Yeats and Bloomsbury', *St Pancras Journal*, 12, 5 (1958): 67-70. For Miriam Henderson (Dorothy Richardson) at and on Flaxman's Court [Woburn Buildings] see *The Trap* (III), *Dawn's Left Hand* (IV), *Clear Horizon* (IV 354-355); *Dimple Hill* (IV 523-524); *March Moonlight* (IV 635). Since the work of Gloria Glikin Fromm, 'Dorothy M. Richardson: The Personal "Pilgrimage"', *PMLA* 78, 5 (1963), 586-600 and, especially, Gloria Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson: A Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), it is widely recognised just how autobiographical *Pilgrimage* is, hence the coupling of 'Miriam/Dorothy' in the secondary source literature.

¹⁵ <http://openplaques.org/plaques/8791>.

on Cary's Map (1818) and has since been named Duke's Road. The southern part is now called Woburn Walk. The south side of the latter was numbered 1–8 (going east to west) and on the opposite side began with No. 9 at the Euston Road end, continuing south and west to No. 20. The leases are dated 1822.

The houses were of three storeys with stucco fronts, each being emphasised by recessing the walls where the houses joined...

The firstfloor window had an ornamental balcony of cast iron with curved ends.

The shop fronts were designed with great skill.¹⁶



Fig. 2. W. B. Yeats Plaque

With regard to their contemporary significance, John Summerson, in his *Georgian London*, concludes that 'There is now nothing else like them in London and it is satisfactory that the St Pancras Borough Council [now part of the London Borough of Camden] has acquired the southern terrace for preservation'.¹⁷

¹⁶ London County Council (1949) *Survey of London: Volume 21: The Parish of St Pancras Part 3: Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood* (London: London County Council, 1949), p.106.

¹⁷ Its quaint aspect and detail, often wrongly described as Victorian, as opposed to Georgian <http://londonunveiled.com/2013/07/04/woburn-walk>, makes it a favourite location for filmmakers, e.g., Robert Bierman's *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1997). For the film, Bierman transposed the Hampstead bookshop where George Orwell worked and lived above between 1934 and 1935 from 1 South End Road, Hampstead to the Woburn Walk terrace. Orwell was writing *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936) while in Hampstead, and the bookshop provided the inspiration for the relevant passages in the novel.

In fact, *The Survey of London* numbers the relevant houses wrongly, misplacing Dorothy Richardson's residence. This is evident from historical Street Directory entries for Woburn Buildings, which list No. 1 nearest to Woburn Place and No. 8 at the Duke's Road end of the terrace, as illustrated by the photograph (Fig. 3) of the South side of Woburn Buildings (Woburn Walk).

Beginning

All trajectories have a beginning. The beginning phase of the blue plaque trajectory includes selecting a potential candidate and residency, and collecting the necessary data which will maximise the chances of an accurate placing and dating of the plaque. Having made the selection of candidate, the researcher may choose to approach the relevant primary sources first, such as relevant Street Directories, Electoral Rolls, Rate Books, Telephone Directories, and letters from the candidate that have been addressed and dated. On the other hand, the research may approach the secondary sources first, such as the various literatures on the candidate whether in hard copy or in electronic and/or internet format. The chronology and the interrelations between the two approaches will often vary with different candidates. It will certainly vary with the location of the researcher.

Researchers living or working in the Bloomsbury area are situated within 'one of the greatest knowledge clusters anywhere in the world',¹⁸ which includes institutions as large as the British Library, and as specialist as the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre. The beginning phase may be short and simple, or long and arduous, depending on the pacing, depth and breadth of what his/her research unearths and the discrepancies as to placing and dating it reveals.

¹⁸ 'KQ is the New Knowledge Quarter at the Heart of London', <http://www.knowledgequarter.london/>.



Fig. 3. The South side of Woburn Buildings (Woburn Walk) in 1922. Dorothy Richardson's former residence at No. 2 Woburn Buildings is the final house pictured in full on the right.



Fig. 4. The more dilapidated-looking North side of Woburn Buildings (Woburn Walk) in 1922 is featured above to further set the context of Richardson's Woburn Buildings residence. Y. B. Yeats's residence was the fourth house along, from the right.

Ricci de Freitas initiated a number of blue plaques, which were unveiled between 2009 and 2011, including Kenneth Williams ('Comic Actor'); William Henry (Bird's Nest) Hunt and John Skinner Prout (two accomplished early nineteenth century artists); Percy Bysshe Shelley ('Poet and Radical Thinker') and Mary Shelley ('Author of Frankenstein'); (George) Emlyn Williams ('Actor and Playwright'); Sir William Empson ('Poet and Literary Critic'); and, finally, Sir John Barbirolli ('world renowned Cellist and Classical Music Conductor').

Eyes sensitised to such things will have noticed that there was only one woman in the above list, and even she, Mary Shelley, was on a plaque shared with her husband. Moreover, there were no women amongst the five plaques I had worked on previously.¹⁹ This embarrassment of riches of men and paucity of women was beginning to be commented on, critically, at full committee meetings of the Marchmont Association at which the Plaques Subgroup presented their deliberations.²⁰

As someone on the subgroup with an academic specialism in gender matters I took it upon myself to be especially sensitive to potential female blue plaque candidates who had lived within the relevant area of benefit. My first choice for possible candidacy was the South African writer and feminist Olive Schreiner, whom I had long admired. It was her case that led me to my first detailed consideration of the selection criteria of blue plaque schemes. She already had a London County Council blue plaque at her address at 16 Portsea Place, Westminster, London W2, which was unveiled in 1959.²¹ The London County Council (LCC) Scheme had

¹⁹ See above. To be more precise there were four men and a further two 'out' cross-dressing men, celebrated specifically for their flamboyant cross-dressing.

²⁰ This unease in regards to gender imbalance was first addressed seriously at the meeting of the Plaques Subgroup on 12 February 2013 which, *inter alia*, considered de Freitas's comment, 'You might want to discuss whether or not we should address the shortage of female candidates or the under-representation of ethnic groups'. The subgroup, at the time, consisted of Ricci de Freitas, Richard Ekins, Debbie Radcliffe and Len Phillips.

²¹ I break off the narrative on Olive Schreiner at this point to provide the necessary background details on the present English Heritage scheme, its selection criteria, and the selection criteria of the Marchmont Association

succeeded the previous Greater London Council (GLC) scheme and before that the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) scheme and was to be succeeded by the present English Heritage (EH) scheme in 1986.²² The LCC had formalised the selection criteria and was responsible for nearly 250 plaques. The aims and workings of the scheme remained broadly the same under the GLC and English Heritage, albeit from the GLC onwards with a wider geographical area and a broadened range of people being covered and, for the first time, with events at historical buildings being celebrated.

The selection criteria for a Marchmont Association blue plaque are broadly similar to those of English Heritage. It does, however, differ in three principal regards. The MA, in celebrating its own specific area of Bloomsbury, lays a particular emphasis on the

scheme. The Olive Schreiner narrative then resumes and leads directly into the Dorothy Richardson narrative.

²² See, Howard Spencer, 'The Commemoration of Historians under the Blue Plaque Scheme in London', University of London, Institute of Historical Research,

http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/blue_plaques.html#1: Blue plaques are a familiar feature of the London streetscape; as elegant markers of the links between famous figures and buildings – usually residences – they have been widely admired and imitated since the first went up in 1867 to Lord Byron. The London plaque scheme – believed to be the oldest in the world – functions as an accessible, perhaps even subliminal, means of public education. It is also an ongoing research project, and there is little sign of the flow of promising new suggestions drying up. It was the Society of Arts (later the Royal Society of Arts) that first took up the suggestion of William Ewart, Liberal MP and public libraries pioneer – to place “some record” on the former homes of “celebrated persons”. The Marchmont Association blue plaque scheme is independent of the Royal Society of Arts (now the English Heritage) scheme but collaborates with it on occasion. A suggestion was made to the then Greater London Council (GLC) in 1981 for a Richardson blue plaque at 32, Queen's Terrace. The proposal was not taken further. I thank Cathy Power of English Heritage for this information. It should be said, too, that in 2001 a proposal to have a Richardson plaque on her place of birth – 18 Park Crescent, Abingdon, now owned by Abingdon School – was turned down by the Oxford Blue Plaques Board. As Jackie Smith put it: ‘Dorothy Richardson was not considered by the Town Council to be sufficiently well-known in town but a later resident at the same address, Arthur Edwin Preston, an Abingdon-born antiquarian, local historian and former mayor was given preference’. Jackie Smith had put forward the proposal in her capacity as Honorary Archivist to Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council. (Email to Richard Ekins, 9 June 2015).

candidate's connection with that area. It does not matter that the candidate had greater connections with another area or, indeed, that the candidate already has a blue plaque in one or more other areas. Also, the original building of residence does not have to be still standing – although it is preferred. And, thirdly, in certain circumstances, the MA Committee is prepared to consider a candidate who might not fully meet EH criteria concerning the fame or the importance of the candidate. These are:

- i. They [the candidates] should be of significant public standing in a London-wide, national or international context; and
- ii. They should be understood to have made some important positive contribution to human welfare or happiness; and
- iii. Their achievements should have made an exceptional impact in terms of public recognition; or
- iv. There shall be strong grounds for believing that they are regarded as eminent and distinguished by a majority of members of their own profession or calling.²³

The MA, on the other hand, is prepared to consider lesser-known important and significant figures in the history of Bloomsbury as part of its educative role, for example, Alphonse Normandy ('Analytical Chemist and Desalination Pioneer').²⁴

When Olive Schreiner first came to England,²⁵ she lived at 81 Guilford Street with her brother from March 1882. The address is particularly significant to Schreiner scholars because it was from here that she set forth on her mission to find a publisher for the book that was to make her so famous – *The Story of an African Farm* – which she eventually did in Chapman and Hall in 1883. My research, based primarily on her letters, suggests that she was in London at this time for a little over seven months. She certainly lived at 81 Guilford Street for two months, almost definitely for four months, and possibly little longer. However, the lack of

²³ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/visit/blue-plaques-persons/2273460/blue-plaques-selection-criteria.pdf>.

²⁴ Plaque pending. See: <http://www.marchmontassociation.org.uk/news-article.asp?ID=124>.

²⁵ See fn.21, above.

enthusiasm of the Schreiner scholars I consulted,²⁶ plus the feeling of the plaques subgroup that her relative importance was not such as to outweigh considerations of the short time she was associated with 81 Guilford Street led to a rejection of her merits for further consideration of any possible blue plaque at that address. This was despite the fact that the original building still stood, albeit part restored, and notwithstanding that *The Story of an Africa Farm* is widely recognized as one of the first feminist novels and *Woman and Labour*, 1911, quickly developed into the ‘bible’ of the early-twentieth-century feminist movement.

It was then that I began in earnest to seek mention of other possible candidates in the now – from May 2010 – enlarged Marchmont Association area of interest; my first ports of call being the guides to literary London, the local history books and internet advertised local tours and walks of the area. It was in one of these, Nicholas Murray’s *Real Bloomsbury*,²⁷ that I was first introduced to Dorothy Richardson. No mention is made of Dorothy Richardson in the major popular guides to literary London, be they the older ones like Andrew Davies’s *Literary London*, 1988,²⁸ and Ed Glinert’s *Literary London*, 2000,²⁹ or the newer ones such as Roger Tagholm’s *Walking Literary London*, 2012.³⁰ These all include quite detailed information on Woburn Walk and Yeats’s residency at No. 5. Similarly, the older Bloomsbury guides, such as Edward Gordon and A. F. L. Deeson’s *The Book of Bloomsbury*, 1950,³¹ mention Woburn Walk and Yeats, but ignore Dorothy Richardson. Local Bloomsbury guides from 1993 onwards do mention Richardson. Richard Thames, in his *Bloomsbury Past: A Visual History*, 1993,³² makes the pertinent points, albeit with inaccuracies in matters of detail:

²⁶ I do, however, thank Schreiner scholar Carolyn Burdett, Birkbeck, University of London, for her encouragement and support.

²⁷ Nicholas Murray, *Real Bloomsbury* (Bridge End, Wales: Seren, 2010), p.33.

²⁸ Andrew Davies, *Literary London* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

²⁹ Ed Glinert, *Literary London: A Street-by-Street Exploration of the Capital's Literary Heritage* (London: Penguin, 2000).

³⁰ Roger Tagholm, Roger, *Walking Literary London* (London: New Holland, 2012).

³¹ Edward Gordon and A.F.L. Deeson, *The Book of Bloomsbury* (London: Edward Gordon, 1950).

Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957), now belatedly acknowledged as the pioneer of the ‘stream of consciousness’ technique, lived at 7 Endsleigh Street from 1896-1906 and after that at Woburn Walk, directly opposite Yeats. Her thirteen novel cycle, *Pilgrimage*, was published between 1915 and 1935 and reissued in 1979 in response to renewed feminist interest in her work.³³

Thames’s book is illustrated with images of prominent people considered in the text but there is no image of Richardson. The subsequent local histories and guides to Bloomsbury ignore Richardson’s time at Endsleigh Street. They focus on Woburn Walk but they either give no dates or inaccurate dates. The otherwise very detailed *Streets of Bloomsbury and Fitzrovia: A Survey of Streets, Buildings & Former Residents*, 1997,³⁴ published by the Camden History Society, makes no mention of Endsleigh Street, simply adding after discussion of the W.B. Yeats plaque, ‘Opposite a t No. 2 lived for a time the novelist Dorothy Richardson’.³⁵ Nicholas Murray, similarly, in his *Real Bloomsbury*,³⁶ makes no mention of Endsleigh Street. He does add more on Richardson and Woburn Walk, even seeming to quote Richardson. He adds that Richardson ‘thought the houses “retained something of an ancient dignity, and, with the faded painted ceilings of their main rooms, a touch of former splendour”’.³⁷ However, the unacknowledged source of this quotation is set within acknowledged quotes from W. B. Yeats, taken from Roy Foster’s biography of Yeats. Again, there is an error in dating. After stating that Yeats moved into No. 5 in 1895, Murray writes: ‘Eight years

³² Richard Thames, *Bloomsbury Past: A Visual History* (London: Historical Publications, 1993).

³³ In addition to the inaccurate Endsleigh Street dates, Thames makes no mention of *March Moonlight*, the final chapter of *Pilgrimage*, published in 1967 as the conclusion to Volume IV of the Collected Edition, and reissued in 1979 (<http://www.eltpress.org/richardson/ch4bk13intro.htm>).

³⁴ Camden History Society, *Streets of Bloomsbury and Fitzrovia: A Survey of Streets, Buildings & Former Residents* (London: Camden History Society, 1997).

³⁵ Ibid, p.53.

³⁶ Murray, *Real Bloomsbury*, op. cit.

³⁷ Richardson actually wrote: ‘retaining, in their decrepitude, something of an ancient dignity ... ?: ‘Yeats of Bloomsbury’, op. cit., p.64.

later the novelist Dorothy Richardson moved in opposite', which would make 1903 the year of the move,³⁸ rather than the correct year of 1905.

Although English Heritage and other plaque schemes do not always include the dates the recipient of the plaque lived at the relevant address, the Marchmont Association scheme has always been successful in dating the relevant years of residence on the plaque. Therefore, I was particularly sensitive to the discrepancies in the dates indicated above (puzzling). Thames states that she lived at 7 Endsleigh Street from 1896-1906, with Woburn Walk 'after that' which might mean 1906 or 1907 onwards for an unspecified period. The Camden History Society gives no dates. Murray gives 1903 as the starting date of the Woburn Walk residency. Such discrepancies are typical for the blue plaque researcher and often entail extensive research to clarify.

Prior to my researching Dorothy Richardson, I had developed what I call my 'D.H. Lawrence – Jerome K. Jerome continuum' in assessing the relative ease or difficulty in dating a particular residency. The briefest of research on D. H. Lawrence's residence in the Marchmont Association area of interest reveals that Lawrence lived at 44 Mecklenburgh Square from 20 October 1917 until 29 November 1917. Lawrence, obligingly, in his letter to Cecil Gray of 18 October 1917 writes: 'Unless we hear tomorrow, we shall move in to 44 Mecklenburgh Square, W.C. – that will be the address after today'. Then follow carefully dated and addressed letters every few days from 44 Mecklenburgh Square until 29 November 1917. Then in a letter dated 30 November 1917, addressed from 13 Earls Court Square, SW, Lawrence states: 'We have moved here today'. In other words, Lawrence gives us very precise dates for his stay at 44 Mecklenburgh Square, namely 19 October – 29 November 1917.³⁹ On the other hand, Jerome K.

³⁸ Murray is following R. F. Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life – 1. The Apprentice Mage* which does reference the Dorothy Richardson material, correctly, as Richardson's 'Yeats of Bloomsbury', *Life and Letters To-day*, op. cit. See Nicholas Murray, *Real Bloomsbury*, op. cit, p.33.

³⁹ James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson (eds.), *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Volume 3, October 1916-June 1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Jerome was notoriously cavalier about dates and locations in his work. In particular, his residency at 19 (now 36) Tavistock Place, London, WC1, had been erased, almost entirely, from the Jerome K. Jerome secondary source material and it took extensive research utilising Rate Books, Street Directories and Electoral Registers to prove beyond reasonable doubt the dating and placing of the Marchmont Association blue plaque for Jerome K. Jerome at 36 Tavistock Place. Our dating and placing were new to Jerome K. Jerome scholars and enthusiasts – a minor, but original contribution to Jerome scholarship.⁴⁰

In ‘Data for a Spanish Publisher’,⁴¹ which Richardson prepared for a Spanish edition of *Pilgrimage* that never materialised, Richardson notes her ‘deep-rooted suspicion of “facts” and ordered knowledge’.⁴² It is, perhaps, not so surprising, then, that she gives her age at leaving her first home in Berkshire as 6, when there is incontrovertible evidence from county registers and directories that she was 8 and the more precise address was Abingdon, Berkshire.⁴³ As we shall see below, it would soon emerge that she was equally haphazard in her dating of her Bloomsbury residences.

Given the lack of dated Dorothy Richardson letters from her Bloomsbury days, together with the fact that she was a lodger and a single woman in the days before women’s suffrage, I was not

1985), pp.171-186.

⁴⁰ Richard Ekins and Debbie Radcliffe, ‘Jerome K. Jerome’s Residences in Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury’, *Camden History Review*, 37 (2013): 20-4.

⁴¹ Dorothy Richardson, ‘Data for a Spanish Publisher’, ed. Joseph Prescott, *London Magazine*, 6, 6: 14-19, 1959. In Dorothy Richardson, *Journey to Paradise*, selected and introduced by Trudi Tate (London: Virago, 1989), pp.131-140.

⁴² *Ibid*, p.132.

⁴³ According to Gloria Glikin Fromm, ‘Dorothy M. Richardson: The Personal “Pilgrimage”’, *PMLA* 78, 5 (1963): 586-600, at p.587. Richardson gives her age as six explicitly in ‘Data for a Spanish Publisher’, op. cit, pp.132-133, which confirms the age she has given in Dorothy Richardson, ‘Beginnings – A Brief Sketch’, in J. Gawsworth (ed.) *Ten Contemporaries: Notes Toward Their Definitive Biography*, 2nd edition pp.195-198 (London: Joiner & Steele, 1933) and included in Dorothy Richardson, *Journey to Paradise*, op. cit. pp.110-113, at p.111. The age of six is also given in Dorothy Richardson, ‘What’s in a Name?’, *Adelphi*, II, pp.606-609, 7 December 1924, included in Dorothy Richardson, *Journey to Paradise*, op. cit. pp.116-119, at p.117.

hopeful about obtaining evidence of her residences at either Endsleigh Street or Woburn Walk from records research which later proved to be the case.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, I explored the internet sources that went beyond published books and articles.

Interestingly, the internet sources tended to place the emphasis upon her residence prior to moving to Woburn Buildings, namely her room at 7 Endsleigh Street.⁴⁵ The following is typical from Bobby Seal ‘a freelance writer who indulges his fascination with London, literature and psychogeography’ at his blog: <http://psychogeographicreview.com/>. The focus is on Richardson’s *The Tunnel*: ‘Dorothy Richardson lived for several years in a small attic flat at the top of 7 Endsleigh Street. At this time many of the large Georgian houses in Bloomsbury were divided up for multiple occupation and provided cheap rented rooms for “respectable” working men and women.’ The emphasis on 7 Endsleigh Street and on the ‘attic living’ was also apparent in the walking tour guides, as, for instance with ‘Women’s History Walk, Bloomsbury’,⁴⁶ the wording is: ‘**Endsleigh St: Dorothy**

⁴⁴ For completeness, it should be noted that Richardson in a letter to John Cowper Powys [June 24, 1935] writes: ‘Alan has never yet inhabited newly-built quarters. I did once, for a fortnight, a small flat in a slum street in St. Pancras, so damp that beards grew on our luggage & we (“Selina Holland” and I) were obliged to move, hardening our hearts against a landlord who wept at us, offered a substantial reduction of the rent &, as a final inducement, the fact that his daughter was an art-student’. See: Fromm, 1995, op. cit, p.294. Fromm adds: ‘This brief stay probably precedes DMR’s move to Woburn Walk in 1905.’ Ibid, p.294. The ‘St. Pancras’ presumably refers to the parish of ‘St Pancras, Euston Road’, see ‘Outline Map of Parishes of St Pancras, Middlesex in 1903’, <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/MDX/StPancras/outline> and ‘Parishes of St Pancras in 1903’, map by David Hawgood, <http://www.genuki.org.uk/files/eng/MDX/maps/StPancras.pdf>. This flat may or may not have been in the present area of benefit covered by the Marchmont Association.

⁴⁵ Endsleigh Street is parallel to Upper Woburn Place running between Endsleigh Gardens to the north (GH GS on the map above Fig. 1) and Endsleigh Place to the south (ENDSLEIGH PL on the map above Fig. 1). The history of 7 Endsleigh Street is discussed below. As is evident from the map, it lies just outside the MA area of benefit. Richardson moved into an attic room here in 1896.

⁴⁶ <http://www.lesleyahall.net/lwhnwak.htm>

Richardson. Where she lived in an attic at £1 pw⁴⁷ while working as a dental receptionist and doing a large amount of miscellaneous writing. Atmospheric descriptions in *Pilgrimage*.⁴⁸

In these latter internet sources, the importance of Dorothy Richardson as a writer is emphasised. In Seal's view, for instance, 'Richardson created the first, and arguably still the best-realised, flâneuse in London literature.' Although no dates are given by these sources for her residencies, it is suggested why Richardson had been off the radar for many decades. Seal, again: 'Female modernist writers like Dorothy Richardson, were until recently, largely ignored by the predominantly male establishment of literary criticism. It was not until the 1970s, and the growth of feminist criticism, that writers such as Richardson were given their due credit'.⁴⁹

After my initial foray into such internet sources, I felt that the time had come to call upon the Richardson academic experts. It became clear to me quite soon that it would not be difficult to make out a *prima facie* case for Richardson's importance and significance for blue plaque purposes. As Thames had indicated, the Virago 1979 edition of *Pilgrimage* was a turning point in her trajectory toward greater recent fame and even a cursory read of the Dorothy Richardson website and its Dorothy Richardson Society pages evidenced her contemporary importance.⁵⁰ The site gives details of the Dorothy Richardson Editions Project: in which four universities are collaborating with the Oxford University Press on new and comprehensive editions of her work, including her letters. Lest the layperson should think all this a matter only for arcane specialists, the website makes clear Richardson's importance for urban and gender studies. I had little doubt that the MA Plaques Subgroup would be favourably disposed to a plaque for

⁴⁷ This is incorrect. Richardson earned £1 a week.

⁴⁸ Ibid. See also 'A Journey of a Thousand Miles Starts Right Here: Walk Post 036 – The Women of Bloomsbury': 'Passing through the gardens onto Endsleigh Street, the attic at number 7 was the next stop. Novelist and journalist Dorothy Richardson lived there for a few years at the end of the nineteenth century'. <http://thousandmilesblog.dreamwidth.org/19301.html>

⁴⁹ <http://psychogeographicreview.com/>

⁵⁰ <http://dorothyrichardson.org/>

Richardson, given the necessary evidence and supportive documentation from Richardson scholars, which I had little doubt would be forthcoming, given the advanced development of the Dorothy Richardson Society website and the Society's activities.

It had been fairly easy to establish the precise location of Richardson's residency in Woburn Walk, notwithstanding the error in *The London Survey* referred to above. Similarly, thanks to Ricci de Freitas, it was relatively straightforward to confirm the re-numbering and date of refurbishment of the Woburn Walk buildings. However, establishing the precise dates of Richardson's residency at Woburn Walk was to prove much more of a problem.

Puzzling and Collaborating

As a noun, puzzle refers to a person or thing that is difficult to understand or explain: an enigma. As a gerund, set within a grounded theory blue plaque trajectory and functioning as a processual noun, it refers to the phase of research within which the emphasis is upon trying to make sense of confusions generated by the beginning phase of research. The confusions may be rooted in either lack of data or discrepancies in data. Major dimensions of puzzling will be those of length, depth and breadth. As we saw, above, in the case of D. H. Lawrence at 44 Mecklenburgh Square, there may be no 'puzzling' phase in any given blue plaque trajectory. The phase's interrelations with the other phases of the trajectory will vary in any given empirical instance. In the case of the Dorothy Richardson plaque the major interrelations were with the collaborating phase, a term used to delineate that phase where the emphasis is upon working jointly with others to resolve puzzling, leading to clarifying, if all goes well. The two interrelated phases, those of puzzling and collaborating, were the longest, deepest, widest and most enmeshed of my blue plaque research to date, which made the instance of Dorothy Richardson such a suitable case study for the purposes of this article.

For the local history researcher with little or no initial knowledge of the potential recipient of a blue plaque, who is seeking help with

his or her puzzling, the online member groups and societies of specialists and enthusiasts are often a useful place to visit. Thus when I was seeking to locate the precise location and dating of Jerome K. Jerome's residence in Tavistock Place, I posted my queries on the Forum of the Jerome K. Jerome Society website.⁵¹ In due time I was introduced to enthusiasts and experts who were deemed to be particularly knowledgeable about such matters and with whom I corresponded by email. However, in Jerome's case the puzzles only multiplied as I communicated with more and more experts. Eventually, my then Marchmont Association colleague, Debbie Radcliffe, solved the puzzles with reference to the relevant Rate Books and Electoral Registers, previously unresearched to the necessary depth.⁵² However, Radcliffe's similar researches on Dorothy Richardson's residences at 7 Endsleigh Street and 2 Woburn Buildings drew a complete blank in regard to the placing and dating of these residences, although it did provide information on such peripheral matters as the name of the landlady at 7 Endsleigh Street, namely, Kezia Baker – Mrs Bailey in *Pilgrimage* – during Richardson's time there.⁵³

When I posted my puzzling as to the precise dating and house number of J. M. Barrie's residence at Grenville Street, London

⁵¹ <http://www.jeromekjerome.com/forum/>

⁵² Richard Ekins and Debbie Radcliffe, 'Jerome K. Jerome's Residences in Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury: Some Preliminary Findings', *Idle Thoughts: The Jerome K. Jerome Society Newsletter*, 34 (2013): 38-47; Richard Ekins and Debbie Radcliffe, 'Jerome K. Jerome's Residences in Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury', *Camden History Review*, 37 (2013): 20-24. In that article we detail Jerome's residencies at two different addresses in Tavistock Place, a matter that had been entirely overlooked in the secondary source literature.

⁵³ The relevant Rate Books, Street Directories and Electoral Registers are held in the Holborn Local Studies library. Dorothy Richardson does not appear in any of them. 'The landlady at No 7 Endsleigh Street is listed as Kezia Baker. She is in the Rates book from October 1896, and identified in the 1906 Street Directory as being Mrs Franklin Baker running a "boarding house" - presumably her husband (who had died) was called Franklin Baker. She was born in 1873, so is the same age as Richardson'. Debbie Radcliffe to Richard Ekins (Email of 18 April 2014). Rosenberg, op. cit, p.211; and M. C. Rintoul, *Dictionary of Real People and Places in Fiction*, op. cit, pp.170-171, refer to her as Keziah Baker.

WC1, on the J. M. Barrie Society website,⁵⁴ I was referred to the most respected published texts on this matter, including J. M. Barrie's own writings, and I was able to confirm the precise location of 8 Grenville Street and such dating as was necessary for blue plaque purposes. In Barrie's case, I wasn't so much collaborating with the experts as drawing on 'knowledge' fairly easily publicly available, once I was referred to the appropriate sources by these experts. Moreover, by combining this 'knowledge' with Ricci de Freitas's additional work on the history of the various buildings on the site of the former Barrie residence, it became possible to formulate a convincing argument as to the precise flight path of Peter Pan from Brunswick Square to Barrie's (Wendy's) window in 8 Grenville Street in Barrie's imaginary accounts of Peter Pan.⁵⁵

The case of Dorothy Richardson was rather different. Here my posting of my initial queries on the Dorothy Richardson Society Facebook page did not prove productive.⁵⁶ However my initial email contact with Scott McCracken who runs the Dorothy Richardson website and edits this journal, triggered an extensive collaboration which in the fullness of time would continue throughout my blue plaque research and, indeed, is still continuing. However, this particular collaboration at first provided me with new information which set me off on a trail I came to see initially as puzzling and later as false. In response to my first email to McCracken seeking documentary evidence of Richardson's residence at Woburn Walk, McCracken replied thus:

We have no letters sent from Woburn Walk. Richardson mentions her time there in two letters. I attach transcripts of both. We should also have copies in the files if you need

⁵⁴ <http://www.jmbarrie.net/>

⁵⁵ See Richard Ekins, 'J. M. Barrie (1860-1937), 8 Grenville Street: The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque', 1 February 2013 (Bloomsbury: Marchmont Association Archives); Richard Ekins and Ricci de Freitas, 'The Marchmont Association's Commemorative Plaque to J. M. Barrie – Background Information', November 2015 (Bloomsbury: Marchmont Association Archives); Ricci de Freitas, *Tales of Brunswick Square: Bloomsbury's Untold Past* (London: Marchmont Association, 2014), pp.84-89.

⁵⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/DorothyRichardsonSociety/?fref=ts>

them. The period is also covered in The Trap and in an article in Life and Letters. I can send you copies of both, if you wish.

You would be very welcome to come and look at the letters. The other person you should contact is George H. Thomson [...] who is the greatest living authority on Richardson.⁵⁷

The first letter was a transcribed copy of the one sent to Mr Hone that I have quoted from above. The second letter was a transcription labelled '[Draft]' written to Frederick Sinclair. According to the person who transcribed the letter, preserved in the Richardson Papers at the Beinecke, 'this series of notes' represents 'a rough draft of a letter to Sinclair. Whether it was ever sent is unknown, since no reply from Sinclair has been preserved. . . Nor has the Sinclair-Richardson correspondence been preserved.'⁵⁸

The crucial feature of this latter letter for blue plaque purposes is that it sets forth explicitly the years of Richardson's residence. Richardson writes: 'A few data –with apologies for delay. It was from early in 1904 to the spring of 1905 that I shared with a friend the second floor and attic of the house on the right of the one appearing in your magazine[.] with shopfront. Yeats was in the upper part of the house exactly opposite.' However, as the draft progresses, a puzzle is introduced. Richardson writes: 'During the time at Woburn Buildings, I was contributing to The Crank . . . and kept up a duel with the Tolstoyan Anarchist editor & contributed also translations of booklets of Consumption while still it was an inspiring vision.'⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Email, Scott McCracken (SMcC) to Richard Ekins (RE), 13 April 2014.

⁵⁸ Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, Guide to the Dorothy Richardson Collection, GEN MSS302. Presumably the letter was sent, or something very like it, because in the *St. Pancras Journal*, 12, 4, 1958, p.53, there is a 'Notice', presumably written by the editor Frederick Sinclair, which states: 'The distinguished novelist, Dorothy Richardson, who died last year, was at one time a St. Pancras resident. She lived in Woburn Walk, opposite the rooms of W. B. Yeats, from early 1904 to the spring of 1905.' This notice seems to have been missed by the Richardson scholars.

Richardson's publications for *The Crank* started in late 1906, a puzzle I put to George Thomson thus:

I am slightly puzzled by the fact that in her communications with Frederick Sinclair (or at least the draft material of this), she says she lived in Woburn Buildings 'from early in 1904 to the Spring of 1905', and yet in the same draft of ? 1949 she also says that she was contributing to *The Crank* at this time. Whereas, according to my preliminary researches, she does not seem to have published in *The Crank* until August 1906 - surely, a rather long time lag between writing, submission and publication.

I would be most grateful for your advice as to whether we can say with certainty that 1904-1905 were the correct dates for her residence in Woburn Walk. Is it possible, for instance, that she got her dates wrong (a memory issue, for instance), or could there have been a transcription error somewhere along the line.

I should say that our researches regarding street directories, electoral rolls, and so on have not revealed any useful evidence, as yet.⁶⁰

George Thomson's reply to my puzzle endorsed the 1904-1905 dates thus:

I think you are fairly safe with the years 1904-1905. We do have Richardson's draft letter. And my conclusion, argued at some length (in *A Reader's Guide: Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage*, Greensboro, NC: ELT Press, 1996) is that the same dates of 1904-1905 apply to *The Trap* where the Woburn Walk episodes are recorded in *Pilgrimage*. Also in *Pilgrimage*, in *Revolving Lights* (III, 368-69) and *The Trap* (III, 495), Richardson rearranged the years in which she published material in the *Crank*. By 1939 she may have come to believe her own fiction!⁶¹

⁵⁹ Draft Letter to Frederick Sinclair c.1949, Richardson Papers, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

⁶⁰ Email. RE to George Thomson (GT), 13 April 2014.

⁶¹ Email, GT to RE, 15 April 2014.

So I now had Richardson, herself, and ‘the world leading expert’ on Richardson going for 1904-1905, but as I explored the secondary source literature further the puzzles proliferated. By now McCracken had generously sent me a copy of his working draft in progress regarding Richardson’s chronology (see Fig 5).⁶²

At this time, the more dates I was given by experts and the more secondary source reading I engaged in the more puzzling things became to me. Thus, just to give two examples, Carol Watts, in a brief ‘Biographical Outline’ has Richardson beginning her ‘brief affair with Wells which was to end in pregnancy and miscarriage in 1904’⁶³; and Rosenberg in his full length biography of Richardson which gives detailed source references states categorically ‘In the spring of 1907, when Veronica came out of prison, Dorothy left Woburn Buildings at last, and moved back to 7 Endsleigh Street, where Veronica had previously taken a room’.⁶⁴

Moreover, my further attempts to compare the dates of Miriam with Dorothy’s often only complicated things still more. Thus Thomson gives very clear reasons for his dating *The Trap* from Autumn 1904 to 7 August 1905,⁶⁵ but then adds his dating for the relevant parts of *Dawn’s Left Hand* – those parts where Richardson is still sharing with Miss Moffat in Woburn Buildings – to include up to March 1906⁶⁶ (contra his 15 April 2015 email to me). Moreover, Thomson specifies the days of the week precisely, as in: ‘March, next day, Sunday morning’: ‘It was her last Sunday with Selina Holland [Miss Moffat]’, ‘March, Friday of the same week,

⁶² Email attachment, SMCC to RE, 14 April 2014. On the 1906 entries, it should be noted that Richardson met Veronica Leslie-Jones (Veronica Grad) before she moved back to 7 Endsleigh St. Indeed, it was Leslie-Jones who seems to have instigated the move. See: Fromm, 1977, p.52.

⁶³ Carol Watts, *Dorothy Richardson* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1995), pp.x-xi. Thomson, *A Reader’s Guide*, 1996, op. cit, p.168, notes that this brief biographical sketch is ‘marred by four errors of fact’. The 1904 date for the pregnancy and miscarriage is just one of them. All the evidence suggests that the date for the pregnancy and miscarriage was 1907. See: Fromm, 1977, op. cit. p.54.

⁶⁴ Rosenberg, op. cit, pp.44-45.

⁶⁵ Thomson, *A Reader’s Guide*, 1996, op. cit, pp.37-40.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.81.

evening', 'As she compares the prospect of her new room at Tansley Street with her rooms at Flaxman's Court [Woburn Walk], she discovers that Amabel [Veronica's Grad] has written "I love you" on her mirror'.⁶⁷

So this would make Thomson's dates for Miriam at Woburn Walk Autumn 1904 to March 1906. And yet elsewhere Thomson shows himself well aware 'of the larger rearrangement of events undertaken in *The Trap*'.⁶⁸ And all this is to say nothing of the disparate views taken in the literature on the precise dating of Richardson's relevant two trips to Switzerland, those of Oberland and Vaud which are seen, variously, as occurring on different dates between 1904 and 1908, which on some readings would have Richardson leaving for Oberland from Endsleigh Street and from Woburn Walk on others; similarly for Vaud from Woburn Walk on some readings and after she had left Bloomsbury on others.

McCracken had, I think, been largely following Fromm for his own dating. I had been puzzling on a number of different datings given by Fromm in her earlier work and changed in her later full length biography of Richardson, particularly relating to the two Swiss trips of the relevant period.⁶⁹ Later, I realised that the

⁶⁷ Ibid, p.81.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p.37. Indeed, later in *A Reader's Guide*, Thomson specifically states: 'The invoking of biographical evidence as a ground for dating incidents in *The Trap* is a risky business for here, more decisively than in any other of her books, Richardson restructured the events of her own life.' (p.39)

⁶⁹ Glikin Fromm, 1963, op cit, p.591, dates the (Bernese) Oberland and Vaud trips within a year of each other, seemingly between 1905 and 1906. It is not entirely clear. Fromm, 1995, op. cit, p.xxx, dates Oberland to 1904 and Vaud to Winter 1907. Fromm, 1977, op. cit, p.44, dates Oberland to 'the end of 1904' and Vaud to Winter 1907, ibid, p.57. Rosenberg, op. cit, p.48, has Dorothy travelling to Switzerland in January 1908. It should be said, perhaps, that such matters are not merely arcane. Blue plaque enthusiasts often like to know what the recipient of the plaque was doing in the relevant residence at the relevant time. My own reading is that Richardson was living in Endsleigh Street at the time of her Oberland trip (Winter 1904) and had left Bloomsbury by the time of her Vaud trip (Winter 1907). Richardson, herself, refers to this Vaud trip as being in 1908: Letter to Bryher 15 February 1938, Bryher Papers, Beinecke Library, Yale.

1905	Moves to Woburn Buildings in Woburn Walk, sharing room with woman called Moffat, whom she met in a London club.
1905	Begins affair with Wells
1906	Moves back to 7 Endsleigh St
1906	Meets Veronica Leslie-Jones

Fig. 5.

clearest chronology was set forth in her ‘Chronology’ included in her *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson* published in 1995,⁷⁰ although this does not specify the year Richardson left Endsleigh Street for the second time and thereby left Bloomsbury. Accordingly, I wrote to George Thomson with a selection of my major continuing puzzles:

I have now been able to read a little more of the literature including your own work. I confess to have reached something of an impasse on dating DMR’s dates at Woburn Walk for our blue plaque purposes . . .

You say in your email . . . that ‘you are fairly safe with the years 1904-1905’. However, I am puzzled by what you say on p.39 of your ‘A Reader’s Guide’: ‘Her visit to the Oberland took place in December 1904; in the following Summer of 1905 she began sharing rooms with Miss Moffat.’ Here you cite Fromm. You seem to be endorsing Fromm’s view.

Then you say: ‘In The Trap, on the other hand, Miriam enters upon her living arrangement with Miss Holland during October 1904, if we assume the narrative begins in that year . . .’

As you say ‘the invoking of biographical evidence as a ground for dating incidents in The Trap is a risky business for here, more decisively than in any other of her books, Richardson restructured the events of her own life’, does this mean that

⁷⁰ Fromm, 1995, op. cit.

while you ‘confidently assign the novel to 1904-1905’, you are following Fromm in her dating of the ACTUAL move to Woburn Walk with Miss Moffat (i.e., 1905)?

Since writing to you, I have also come across the following [postcard], in which Veronica Grad dates the time at Woburn Walk to 1905-1906 - presumably in response to a request by Richardson for earlier biographical details - Grad summarises in the last sentence:

[1946.07.10a] From Veronica Grad to Dorothy Richardson
No 2 WB July 10th [1946]⁷¹

I was born in 1885. It was about a month after my 21st birthday I met you 1905-6 at the club— You had moved [canceled: down] into the smallroom at W. Place. Almost immediately I went to Endsleigh Street to ‘help’ Mrs. B during the summer hols— I think you were at W. P. I remember going to see you – then you came to live at No 7 & I stayed on in the big room & the June following 1906-7 Phillip died and I married B. in Oct & you went to Switzerland[.] You came back & went to Herstmonceau where I came [continued along left margin] to stay— so it would be 1905-1906. D[avid] G[rad] was born 1908[.] I was 23[continued across upper end of face of card] on the 20th of that July and he was born the 20th. – . I was 22 when I married – 21 just when we met. – I had moved from No 7 about six weeks before p. died on Derby day to W.Place. [continued across bottom end of face of card] I don’t know where you were when B and I got engaged late August[.] You were away. Did you go to S. twice in that year? I don’t know – [continued along top of face of card] We had a year together nearly from my 21st to the Easter I went to Holloway. You had your panic [?] & because of it gave up your job & went to Switzerland in the autumn after my marriage. So you were at W.Place 1905-6 –

Though, puzzlingly, Richardson, herself, says, 1904-05, a few years later: [see fns 58 and 59 above]

⁷¹ As classified/referenced by my source. Note that this postcard appears as transcribed from the original document.

Could it be - your view - that she dates The Trap to 1904-1905 - and then comes to believe her own fiction that she was 'actually' at Woburn Walk 1904-05, as opposed to 1905-06.

I won't burden you with further puzzles that I have stemming from the secondary source literature and various internal evidence, except to say that it is by no means universally held that Richardson left Woburn Walk and went back to Endsleigh Street in 1906. Thus, for example, at least one writer (Rosenberg) has her leaving Woburn Walk and going back to Endsleigh Street in 1907.

I was wondering if, on reflection, you would still say I am fairly safe with 1904-1905.

In the past, with such plaques as Alexander Herzen and the Free Russian Press and Jerome K Jerome, I have been able to unearth documentary evidence more or less conclusively 'proving' the length of a particular residency. However, with Richardson this is proving impossible - so we are, right now, very much in the hands of scholars and experts like yourself.⁷²

In a follow-up email to George Thomson, I wrote:

Despite all my efforts in these last months, we haven't been able to improve on the dates 1904-05 (DMR herself, and you) or 1905-06 (Veronica Grad and Scott McCracken, in his preliminary work).

It would be most helpful if you could give me your final view in the light of the email I wrote to you [see above, email of 13 May 2015].⁷³

Clarifying

Clarifying is the phase in the trajectory where the puzzling is resolved, where a confused situation becomes less confused and

⁷² Email, RE to GT, 13 May 2014.

⁷³ Email, RE to GT, 23 October 2014.

more comprehensible. It may variously entail filling in gaps in the puzzle, separating out the wheat from the chaff of the puzzling phase, and proceeding as far as is necessary to provide the necessary material and accurate detail for the consolidating phase which follows it. Clarifying can be variously speedy and variously complex depending on the nature of the puzzling. In the case of the Dorothy Richardson plaque it was one very lengthy email from my principal informant – Scott McCracken – that largely concluded the clarifying phase.

In an email attachment of 31 October 2014, I received McCracken's arguments for a 1905-1906 dating at Woburn Walk following his examination of all the evidence he had available to him. I could not have wished for a clearer or more detailed clarification:⁷⁴

Dorothy Richardson: Residence at 2 Woburn Buildings.

Biographies

John Rosenberg's biography is not considered reliable by Richardson scholars. Fromm's biography and her later chronology in the Selected Letters gives the dates as 1905-1906. Fromm talked to people who had known Richardson and looked at most of the sources. However, we now know, from material not available to Fromm, that some of her assumptions about Richardson's life and the dates of the letters are wrong, so it seems sensible to go back to the primary sources.

Primary Sources

The relevant primary sources are:

A letter from Richardson to Joseph Hone written on 11 August 1939. At this time Richardson was 66 and the letter was written c.33 years after her residence in Woburn Buildings. The relevant passage reads: [see fn.14 above]

⁷⁴ Email attachment, SMCC to RE, 31 October 2014.

At first sight, the date 1906 might appear to relate to a date suggested by Hone, but it seems fairly clear from what follows that the ‘one unaccustomed to certain of the worst products of poverty & miseries’ was Richardson herself and the date refers to when both she and ‘the poet’, W.B. Yeats, lived there. So this dates her as in residence in 1906.

The second piece of evidence is a postcard from Veronica Grad [...] to Richardson from [10] July 1946, written when Grad was 60 and c.40 years after her residence: [see fn.71 above]

Veronica Grad, née Leslie-Jones, was indeed born in Manchester in 1885. So if her birthday was 20 July, a month after her 21st birthday would be 1906. ‘You had moved’ suggests that Richardson was already at Woburn Place when she and Grad met. According to the marriage register, Veronica married Benjamin Grad in October-December 1907,⁷⁵ and their son David is registered as having been born July-September 1908. In other words, all the verifiable dates in this communication are accurate and based around things Veronica would not have forgotten, such as her birthday, her marriage, and the birth of her first child. So her dates for Richardson’s residence of 1905-1906 have some substance.

The third piece of evidence is a draft letter written in early 1949 from Richardson to Frederick Sinclair [see fn.59]. Richardson was then 75-76 and 43 years from the event [...]

The dates 1904-1905 are put in doubt by the dates of her named contributions to *The Crank*, which were 1906. Her translation of Paul Carlton, *Consumption Doomed* was not published until 1913. It is possible Richardson might have been working on the articles and the translation before their dates of publication. However, we should bear in mind that

⁷⁵ The marriage certificate, dated 10 October 1907, states that Veronica Grad ‘was 22 and her residence was Woburn Buildings. Dorothy Richardson was a witness. The age, date, and the place of residence accord with her [postcard]’ (email, SMCC to RE, 5 November 2014). In the email that contained this attachment, McCracken had written: ‘I still think we have to go with the primary documents and I find Veronica Grad’s letter particularly compelling’.

this is a draft letter, not one actually sent. It is less reliable than the earlier [correspondence].

The final letter referring to this time is from Veronica Grad to Rose Odle, Richardson's sister-in-law, written c.1958, when Grad was c.73 and over 50 years after the events. The relevant passage reads:

Dear Rose, Forgive that I haven't answered you sooner – I was away for three days with my daughter – Do I remember S. Holland! Her real name was Moffatt. If she is still alive she must be over 90 – She was an evening class Teacher for the LCC – she must have been round about forty. Very proper – & spinsterish. Dorothy met her because she was also a member of the Arachne Club where I was a resident. They were both, I don't know how you say – outside members – I imagine for them both it was somewhere where they could invite people – It was for Dorothy – It was for Miss M. also exceedingly dashing. Miss Moffat deceived by Dorothy's being a dentists sec. & her modest appearance suggested their sharing – To Miss M's horror Dorothy blossomed out, as to her, everything undesirable – I suppose she was forced to be very mean, but her economies were a sort of pride to her – She was always angry in her outlooks – She made her own blouses – she always wore a neat blouse & skirt, she was a big woman – If you saw her setting off to her job in the evening – She'd tell you 'I've broken the back of that blouse I've been making' meaning she'd got over the worst of the job, nearly finished – She set her teeth at everything & battled on – She was worried about me – did – with much embarrassment [sic] & from a real sense of duty – her best to warn me of D's lack of moral sense. What got her down was D having an affair 'with a married man' – She had curious morals really – When I told her that so far from being myself a well brought up (obviously a gentlewoman, how your parents come to allow you to go in for the theatrical profession!!) I was at 20, only living at the Club to be near my lover thirty years my senior she advised me to give it all up & she would help me to emigrate & find a husband 'who would never know' – She didn't seem to be so shocked by me as by Dorothy – I had

obviously been 'led astray by an elderly roué – ' She was disgusting & mean & ugly from D's point of view but she was rather a dear too – D. left Endsleigh [sic] Street to go & share with her & when it didn't work went back to Endsleigh Street & I left the Club & went there too –

This differs slightly from Grad's earlier [postcard], in that she says she was 20, but she could be referring to her residence at the Arachne Club, when she was 20-21 rather than her first meeting with Richardson. It's a later and less careful letter, but doesn't contradict the dates of residence as 1905-1906.

Other Evidence

The only other evidence we have is George Thomson's account of the chronology of Pilgrimage, which dates Miriam's (Dorothy's) residence at Flaxman's Court (Woburn Walk) as 1904-1905. But this is problematic, because no dates are given in the novel and Pilgrimage is fiction not autobiography.

Conclusion

In the evidence above, 1904-1905 is the outlier. It only occurs in the primary documents once and in a draft letter not an actual letter. Richardson's earlier date, when she [is] closer in time to the period being described is 1906. The most compelling evidence is Veronica Grad's [postcard] of 1946, because she situates the time of Richardson's residence in relation to other verifiable dates in her personal life. So my conclusion is that the dates are 1905-1906, which accords with Fromm's chronology.

McCracken had prefaced his email to me with 'Let me know whether you find it convincing'. I was, indeed, convinced. But would George Thomson be convinced? As a blue plaque researcher and newcomer to Dorothy Richardson, it was important to me to strive for 'expert' agreement on the dates. It was a relief, therefore, when on 6 November 2014, I received the following email:

Dear Richard

With apologies for the long delay, partly because I have been away and partly because I have nothing to say. It is now 15 years to 25 years since I did the work on DMR. I cannot now reconstruct my mind set from that time. Rereading what you said in your letter and what I said in Reader's Guide, my only thought is to trust Veronica Grad when she says 1905-06. Veronica is pretty sharp. Otherwise there is likely to be some doubt: 1904-5? 1905-6? Unless some new evidence comes to light. The decision is in your capable hands, with an assist from Scott.

With every best wish, George Thomson
PS I would not put great trust in Rosenberg.⁷⁶

I was home and dry on dates. I put the finishing touches to my document - 'Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957), 2 Woburn Buildings (subsequently restored and renumbered as the present 6 Woburn Walk): The Case for a Marchmont Association Blue Plaque'⁷⁷ and presented it to the Plaques Subgroup. It was duly approved by that group and referred to the next meeting of the full Marchmont Association Committee. A little more research enabled me to write to McCracken: 'I believe with this, that we are home and dry on the plaque and its wording, subject, of course, to permissions and funding. 1905-06, it is. My follow up of the relevant writings, especially Fromm's, suggests to me dates of May/June 1905 - September/October 1906 as probable'.⁷⁸ In this case, Richardson would have been 32 and 33 years of age while at Woburn Walk, if she moved in on or after her 17 May birthday. According to Thomson's *Reader's Guide to Pilgrimage*, which I follow in regards to Miriam's dating, Miriam would have been 29 and 30 years of age while at Woburn Walk. The Thomson dating for

⁷⁶ Email, GT to RE, 6 November 2014.

⁷⁷ Richard Ekins, 7 November 2014, op. cit.

⁷⁸ Email, RE to SMcC, 8 November 2014. Given these 1905-06 dates, in all probability Richardson wrote the first five of her *Crank* articles (August 1906–November 1906) while she was living at 2 Woburn Buildings (6 Woburn Walk). Possibly she wrote her remaining two articles for the re-named *Ye Crank* (January–February 1907) from 7 Endsleigh Street. It should be said that Richardson, in her 'Yeats and Bloomsbury' article, 1958, op. cit, implies that she moved into Woburn Walk 'Early in the . . . summer', notwithstanding the date of 'early in 1904' she had given Frederick Sinclair. She further states, erroneously, that this 'Bloomsbury backwater' is 'long-vanished', op. cit, p.69.

Miriam at Woburn Walk in *The Trap* is 1904-05; the Thomson dating for Miriam in *Pilgrimage* (*The Trap* and *Dawn's Left Hand*) is 1904-06. McCracken set the seal on the Richardson dating with the words: 'I am delighted we can now confirm 1905-06'.⁷⁹

Consolidating

Consolidating is the phase within which the blue plaque researcher combines the relevant outcomes of the previous relevant phases into a single and coherent whole, in order to proceed to the final culminating phase. While there may be more or less puzzling, collaborating and clarifying in any given instance of blue plaque research, a consolidating phase is a necessary condition of a successful culmination. In the case of the Marchmont Association plaques scheme, consolidating includes obtaining approval from the full Marchmont Association Committee to proceed further, finalising the wording on the plaque, obtaining the necessary permissions, securing the required funding, having the plaque made and installed, and agreeing a date and arrangements for the unveiling.

In some instances, the recipient of the plaque is particularly well-known amongst the general public for one major achievement. Where this is so, there may be a case for specifying that achievement on the plaque either alone or accompanied by details of other contributions. Thus the Jerome K. Jerome plaque referred to Jerome simply as 'Author of "Three Men in a Boat"'; similarly, Mary Shelley as 'Author of Frankenstein'. On the other hand, Sir James Matthew Barrie was referred to as 'Novelist, Dramatist and Creator of "Peter Pan"'. Wikipedia refers to Dorothy Richardson as 'Author and Journalist'.⁸⁰ The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* prefers 'Novelist and Journalist'.⁸¹ Frederick Sinclair, in his 'A

⁷⁹ Email, SMcC to RE. 17 November 2014.

⁸⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_Richardson.

⁸¹ Richardson [married name Odle], Dorothy Miller (1873–1957), novelist and journalist', <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/37/101037894/>; Susanne Stark, 'Richardson, Dorothy Miller (1873–1957)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Poet's World in Woburn Walk' writes 'Dorothy Richardson (novelist)'.⁸² Clearly, Richardson's claim to fame rests on her mammoth *Pilgrimage*, a title not well known to the general public, so arguably not best included in the wording of her blue plaque, for this reason. The home page of the Dorothy Richardson website refers to Richardson as a 'major writer',⁸³ and the single word 'writer' arguably resonates best with Richardson's own view of her vocation, from her very earliest journal articles to the end of her writing career. 'Writer' proved an uncontroversial choice and it was gratifying that on the day of the unveiling of the plaque, a number of Richardson scholars specifically praised this wording.

Currently, 6 Woburn Walk is owned by the London Borough of Camden and landlord's consent for the plaque was required from Camden Council. In addition, 6 Woburn Walk is a listed building within the London Borough of Camden. In consequence, a planning application had to be made to Camden Council in accordance with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposal: the 'Display of commemorative plaque on front façade at first floor level' was submitted by Ricci de Freitas with the required drawings of the site plan, heritage statement and plaque. The final decision included details of consultation thus: 'Public consultation was undertaken by placement of a press and site notice, whereby no responses were received. Historic England⁸⁴ (formerly English Heritage) was also consulted because the subject building is Grade II. It has responded by advising that the Council is authorised to determine the application for listed building consent as it thinks fit'.⁸⁵

The collaboration between the Richardson Society and the Marchmont Association was especially evident in the final stages

⁸² Frederick Sinclair, 'A Poet's World in Woburn Walk', *St. Pancras Journal*, 2, 7, 1948): 124-127.

⁸³ <http://dorothyrichardson.org/> (accessed 7 June 2016).

⁸⁴ Following the April 2015 restructuring of English Heritage, moving the protection of the National Heritage Collection into the voluntary sector, the body that remained was rebranded as 'Historic England' (officially titled as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England). See: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/>

⁸⁵ Decision notice - Application Ref: 2015/1070/L.

of the trajectory. The centenary of the publication of *Pointed Roofs* was in 2015 and the Richardson Society had long been planning to hold a *Pointed Roofs* Centenary Event on 15 May 2015 in the University of London's Senate House, which is situated between Malet Street and Russell Square, only a short distance from Woburn Walk. The respective locations were ideal for a combining of the plaque unveiling with the centenary event, assuming the plaque could be made and installed in time. This was the goal and by fast tracking the planning application that goal was achieved with Camden Council approval being granted on 22 April. Exceptionally, the plaque maker, Ned Heywood, agreed to make the plaque before the permissions were finalised, in order to facilitate meeting the deadline of 15 May. The University of Ulster, Transgender Archive (TGA),⁸⁶ had agreed to sponsor the plaque, with the approval of the sponsorship given by Sir Richard Barnett, Vice-Chancellor of the University, some months earlier, so that everything was in place for the culminating phase.

Culminating

Culminating is the high point of the trajectory which embraces the final concluding phase of the trajectory. It may be more or less protracted and more or less densely choreographed. In the case of the Dorothy Richardson plaque both of these dimensions were compressed and speedy. Moreover, unusually, the phase was attenuated as regards input from local dignitaries.

Advance notices had been sent out to members of the Dorothy Richardson Society and Marchmont Association mail listings, respectively, inviting them to the unveiling. It is normal practice for the Marchmont Association to invite the Mayor of Camden to

⁸⁶ For details of the University of Ulster Transgender Archive, now housed as 'The University of Ulster TGA Collection', University of Victoria Libraries: Transgender Archives, see: <http://transgenderarchives.uvic.ca/university-of-ulster-tga-collection>. On the circumstances which led to the archive moving from the UK to Canada, see: <http://www.camdennewjournal.com/news/2013/jul/unique-transgender-archive-sent-canadian-university-after-offer-lse-rebuffed>.

officiate at its plaque unveilings. Most usually, he or she accepts the invitation, as does the local Member of Parliament (MP) on occasion. Frank Dobson, MP for Holborn and St. Pancras from 1979-2015, was an enthusiastic attender at a number of MA plaque unveilings. However, the uncertainty over whether planning permission would be obtained in time for the unveiling to coincide with the Centenary event meant that no such invitations could be sent. At the unveiling ceremony there were initial introductions from Ricci de Freitas on behalf of the Marchmont Association, Scott McCracken on behalf of the Dorothy Richardson Society and Richard Ekins on behalf of the University of Ulster Transgender Archive, followed by the formal unveiling and unveiling speech delivered by Laura Marcus, Goldsmiths' Professor of English Literature, University of Oxford. Press coverage was provided in both the national and local press. The *Guardian Saturday Review*, 16 May 2015, featured Rebecca Bowler's article headlined 'Yesterday a plaque was unveiled for the modernist writer Dorothy M Richardson. About time, argues Rebecca Bowler'. The piece concludes with 'People are starting to read her once more, again reasserting her place in the canon of experimental modernist prose writers'.⁸⁷ The *Camden New Journal* article of 21 May 2015 headlined 'Centenary tribute plaque honours pioneering writer', cited Richardson's description of the area, particularly Woburn Walk, as an 'oasis to the north of the British Museum' and published a photograph taken in front of the plaque which included twenty six of Richardson Society enthusiasts and scholars, including many of the world's leading Richardson academics.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ See, also, Rebecca Bowler, 'Dorothy Richardson Deserves the Recognition She is Finally Receiving', *The Guardian Review*, 15 May 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2015/may/15/dorothy-m-richardson-deserves-recognition-finally-receiving>

⁸⁸ *Camden New Journal*, 'Centenary tribute plaque honours pioneering writer', 21 May 2015, p.8.

Afterword and Impact

The purpose of this article has been both substantive and methodological. It has reported a number of dating and placing problems that I met and have sought to resolve in my blue plaque research, with particular reference to the recent unveiling of the first blue plaque to commemorate the life and work of Dorothy Richardson, unveiled on her former residence at 6, Woburn Walk, Bloomsbury, London, WC1. The substantive details were set forth within the major phases of an ideal-typical blue plaque trajectory embracing the major phases of the trajectory, namely, beginning, puzzling, collaborating, clarifying, consolidating, and culminating. A major feature of this particular plaque was the extent and longevity of the collaborating that took place between principal players within the Dorothy Richardson Society and the Marchmont Association and the trajectory was written up accordingly. As Scott McCracken put it in his final email to the Dorothy Richardson project listing:



Fig. 6. Camden New Journal 21 May 2015

After a lot of work by the Marchmont Association, it looks as if we will be able to unveil the blue plaque for Dorothy Richardson in Woburn Walk at 4pm on Friday 15 May, just before the *Pointed Roofs* Centenary Event at the Institute of English Studies. The plaque has been funded by a generous

donation from the University of Ulster Transgender Archive.⁸⁹

For many enthusiasts and scholars of Dorothy Richardson, a wrong had been righted, as one such scholar was quick to point out:

Fabulous news, Scott! Wish I could be there! I once resided just around the corner, on Thanet Street. I used to take my American students to Woburn Walk whenever I taught in London and would point out the Yeats plaque, then point to the wall opposite and ask, ‘So what do you see?’ When the answer was ‘nothing,’ I would comment that this was precisely the point. No plaque commemorated Richardson’s habitation there. Now that historical inequity has been corrected. Bravo!⁹⁰

Such wrongs being righted have impact. Not only do they give enormous pleasure to many, but they open up new areas of enquiry, the ramifications of which cannot always be predicted. I close this article with a selection of the most relevant developments since the unveiling of the Dorothy Richardson plaque.

I had been keeping the Camden History Society abreast of developments and David Hayes, Editor of the *Camden History Review*, had expressed to me a special interest in being kept informed. The attentive reader will recall that the Camden History Society’s *Streets of Bloomsbury and Fitzrovia: A Survey of Streets, Buildings & Former Residents*, 1997, had made no mention of Dorothy Richardson’s residency at 7 Endsleigh Street. Placing and dating at Woburn Buildings/Walk were intimately bound up with 7 Endsleigh Street, as we have seen, not least because Richardson moved from Endsleigh Street to Woburn Buildings/Walk and back again to the same Endsleigh Street address, this latter at the behest of her then new-found friend Veronica Grad. Moreover, it

⁸⁹ Email, SMcC to the Dorothy Richardson Society members, 23 April 2015.

⁹⁰ Email, Suzette Henke, Senior Professor Emeritus of Literary Studies, University of Louisville, to SMcC, 23 April 2015.

is Grad's dating that we have considered definitive for Woburn Walk.

But what more of 7 Endsleigh Street? In one of her letters to Bryher, Richardson writes on 6 August 1948:

I am glad to hear the news of your Tea Kettle people [a tea shop in Knightsbridge]. They deserved their good fortune. (Thinking of bomb damage, I am reminded that Amabel [Veronica Grad] told me of lovely old Endsleigh Street . . . that it came through, losing only one house by a direct hit; & that house was our own no. 7. I am glad I did not know at the time.)⁹¹

The visitor to 7 Endsleigh Street, today, is confronted by a 1950s block of Camden Council owned flats named Winston Court sitting flush with No. 6 which remains substantially as it was in Richardson's day. The block extends into the space where 7-12 Endsleigh Street would have been. My enquiries amongst present day tenants of Winston Court indicated that 7-12 Endsleigh Street were all affected by bomb damage, not just No. 7 as Richardson had said. It was time to call on David Hayes with my puzzling. Hayes' check of the LCC bomb damage map revealed that:

While Nos 1- 6 Endsleigh Street are shown as unscathed, Nos 7-12 are shaded light blue, meaning 'clearance area'. This designation relates to sites deemed ripe for clearance before the war, and considered suitable for development following wartime damage. There's no indication of the scale of that damage.

Nos 7-12 remained habitable, however. The electoral register for 1946/47 lists a full complement of flat-dwelling residents, except at No 7 where there is only one voter. By 1950/51, none of the six houses are listed, suggesting that they have been cleared for the erection of Winston House. This actually appears, albeit unidentified by name, on the 1951 OS map.⁹²

⁹¹ Fromm, *Windows on Modernism*, op. cit, p.587.

⁹² Email, David Hayes to RE, 30 April 2015.

But what of Richardson's point that it was only No. 7 that was lost by a direct hit? Hayes continues:

The bomb damage maps are pre-war OS maps which were progressively hand-coloured by London County Council staff during the course of the war. So they don't relate to a particular incident; rather, they give the cumulative effect by the end of the war. It's a pity that Endsleigh Street wasn't in the Borough of Holborn. For that borough we have a detailed record, with photos, of every bombing incident. But for St Pancras there is nothing. I imagine that No. 7 might have had only one registered elector, as opposed to the half dozen or so in the other houses, because it has suffered greater damage and was part derelict. But that's only a guess.⁹³

Visitors to either or both Endsleigh Street and Woburn Walk who remain in the area for at least fifteen minutes will hear the chimes of the nearby St. Pancras Church. The sounds of these bells play a prominent and significant part in several sections of *Pilgrimage*.⁹⁴ The attentive visitor at the plaque unveiling would, indeed, have heard their chimes. But were we hearing the same sounds from the same bells as Richardson was hearing over 100 years previously? – that 'tuneful booming of St. Pancras clock [that] called her back to listen . . .'⁹⁵ It seems we were: 'The bells on the clock were hung in 1822, the year the church opened. The rest of the peal were added later, we think in the 1880s, to ring for weddings and other special occasions. So yes, Dorothy Richardson would have heard the same bells that local residents can hear today.'⁹⁶

⁹³ Email, David Hayes to RE, 12 May 2015.

⁹⁴ Most notably, in *The Tunnel* (2 21-23). See, also, *The Tunnel* (2 96); *Clear Horizon* (IV 355-356).

⁹⁵ *Clear Horizon* (IV 355). I am grateful to Wendy Saunderson for drawing my attention to this passage.

⁹⁶ I thank the Vicar of St. Pancras Church, Revd Anne Stevens, for providing this information (email of 2 March 2015). Note that the church in question is St. Pancras New Church, Euston Road. The editors of the recent Broadview annotated edition of *The Tunnel*, for instance, confuse the 'old' and the 'new' St. Pancras Churches. See: Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel*, eds. Stephen Ross and Tara Thomson (Ontario: Broadview Editions, 2014), p.66, footnote 3. The St. Pancras Old Church, a Church of England parish church in Pancras Road, Somers Town, which was largely rebuilt in Victorian times, is about half a mile

At the time of the plaque unveiling, the furthermost westerly section of the south side of Woburn Walk extending beyond the present No. 4 Woburn Walk (one door down from Richardson's residence), was largely hidden behind a concrete-faced wall. Shortly after the unveiling, the Imperial Hotel group, the owners of the nearby County Hotel, demolished this wall and began works to construct what is now completed and opened up as 'The Resting Hare', a bistro with open air seating beside Woburn Walk.⁹⁷ During the period of construction from approximately August-October 2015, the builders surrounded the works with black boarding that featured in tasteful gold lettering details of the history of Woburn Walk. Dorothy Richardson was featured on a number of the boards and, of the five information boards, one was devoted exclusively to the life and work of Dorothy Richardson. As Ricci de Freitas put it to me: 'The hoarding does credit to the history of the locality, which comes as no surprise considering the interest shown to date by the Walduck family who own the County Hotel, where the works are taking place to extend the rear and create an outdoor terrace.'⁹⁸ The Marchmont Association works closely with the Walduck family who own a number of the largest hotels in Bloomsbury and, indeed, one of their hotels – the Morton – fully funded the Marchmont Association blue plaque commemorating Roger Fry's residence at 48 Bernard Street, and unveiled on 26 May 2014.⁹⁹

away from the St. Pancras New Church, Euston Road. Both still stand. The St. Pancras Old Church has been a site of Christian worship since the fourth century. Such notables as William Godwin, Mary Wollstencraft, and John Polidori were buried in the churchyard there.

⁹⁷ The outside forecourt, off Woburn Walk, leads into the bistro-cum-gastropub, a part of the County Hotel, adjacent to Veronica Grad's former residence at 1 Woburn Buildings (now 4 Woburn Walk). I am not sure what Dorothy and Veronica would have made of the inscription above the doorway: 'THE RESTING HARE: OFFERING PEACEFUL RESPITE FROM THE HURRIED LONDON AROUND US.' But surely the outside forecourt smoking area might have pleased her.

⁹⁸ Email, Ricci de Freitas to RE, 20 August 2015.

⁹⁹ <http://openplaques.org/plaques/33150>.

There can be no doubt that the prominence afforded to Dorothy Richardson on these boards was an illustration of the ‘impact’ of the blue plaque and its accompanying publicity. A number of walking tours and similar regular events are now including the plaque within their routes.¹⁰⁰ We can expect these to multiply. A further consequence has been requests from local businesses to feature other famous residents of Woburn Walk. As I write, for instance, the Marchmont Association is researching and assessing the case for a blue plaque for George Holyoake, the co-operator and coiner of the terms ‘secularism’ and ‘jingoism’, who was resident in Woburn Walk for a number of years. One George Holyoake advocate is even suggesting a statue on the balcony of his former residence at the former No. 1 Woburn Buildings immediately adjacent to Dorothy Richardson’s former residence. This is the self-same address, no less, where Alice Veronica Leslie-Jones [Veronica Grad] was living when she married Benjamin Grad on 10 October 1907 at the nearby St. Pancras Register Office. Dorothy Richardson was a witness to the marriage¹⁰¹ – as fitting a valediction as there could be to Richardson’s eleven years of residence in Bloomsbury.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Yannick Pucci, ‘The Woburn Walk is part of my Bloomsbury tour, so I will make sure to point out the new plaque!’ 14 May 2015, https://twitter.com/helena_bonett/status/598787704621551616.

¹⁰¹ See fn.75.

¹⁰² Dorothy Richardson’s eleven years of residence in Bloomsbury had ended some three months earlier, in July, with her final departure from Endsleigh Street. Following the wedding, she left for Switzerland for the winter to recover from the lingering effects of her miscarriage (of her pregnancy with H. G. Wells) and indeed the entire year. See: Fromm, *Dorothy Richardson*, op. cit, p.57.