

Catalogue of the Papers of David Markham (1913-1983) relating to tax refusal

By Helen Roberts, PaxCat Project
Archivist

Reference code: GB 0532 Cwl DM.

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CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Collection description	2
Cwl DM/1	5
Cwl DM/2.....	5

INTRODUCTION

This collection of papers is one of the archives collected by Commonweal Library, an independent peace library located in the J.B. Priestley Library of the University of Bradford. These archives are part of the Special Collections at the University of Bradford.

This set of papers, like many of the most significant of the Commonweal archives, was catalogued as part of the PaxCat Project. The Project was funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives and ran from May 2009-May 2010. You can find out more about the Project from the reflective blog kept by Helen Roberts, our Project Archivist.

<http://commonwealarchives.wordpress.com>

Alison Cullingford, Special Collections Librarian.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Reference code

GB 0532 Cwl DM

Title

Papers of David Markham (1913-1983) relating to tax refusal

Dates

1960-1965

Level of description

Fonds

Extent

0.02 metres

Name of creator

David Markham

Administrative/ Biographical history

David Markham was an actor, performing on stage, television and film for over 40 years. He married the novelist, poet and BBC radio dramatist Olive Dehn in 1937. Together they had four children, Sonia, Kika (married to Corin Redgrave), Petra and Jehane.

During the Second World War, David refused to serve in the armed forces and received a 12 month sentence as a conscientious objector. He was imprisoned in Winson Green and Wormwood Scrubbs, but was released early on appeal, following the intervention of Queen Mary. After the war, the couple moved from the Manchester area to East Sussex, where they bought a farm at Lear Cottage, Coleman's Hatch.

In the early 1960s David became involved in the Committee of 100 and the Committee Against Tax for Nuclear Arms, a body set up under the auspices of the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War. David personally refused to pay a portion of his tax assessment in protest at government spending on nuclear weapons. After the DAC disbanded, he undertook to continue the tax refusal campaign, gathering support through publicity in Peace News. In 1964, in co-operation with George Clark and Howard Cheney of the Campaign Caravan Workshops, the Campaign Against Taxation for Nuclear Armaments was formed, with David as chair.

The Markhams were also the driving force behind the Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse. This was formed in 1975 to highlight the misuse of psychiatry for political ends, particularly in the Soviet Union. After a campaign which saw the couple arrested in Moscow, David and Olive were successful in gaining the release of the Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky in 1976.

Immediate source of acquisition

These files were found with the archives of the Committee Against Tax for Nuclear Arms, which was donated to the Commonweal Collection in July 1995.

Scope and content

This collection comprises only two files which cover David Markham's attempts to sustain the tax refusal campaign after the Direct Action Committee disbanded in 1961. The files also cover his own case of tax refusal.

Accruals

None expected.

Access conditions

Available to researchers, by appointment. Access to archive material is subject to preservation requirements and must also conform to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act and any other appropriate legislation.

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Language of material

English.

Related units of description

Archives of Committee Against Tax for Nuclear Arms, part of the Direct Action Committee archive [Cwl DAC/5/15].

Archivist's note

Described by Helen Roberts.

Rules or conventions

ISAD(G) 2nd ed.

Date(s) of description

March 2010.

INDEXING

Persons

Markham, David (1913-1983)

Corporate Bodies

Committee Against Tax for Nuclear Arms

Campaign Against Taxation for Nuclear Armaments

Subjects

Pacifism – Great Britain – History – 20th century.

Nuclear disarmament – Great Britain – History – 20th century

Conscientious objection – Great Britain – History – 20th century

CWL DM/1

Title

File. Continued tax refusal campaign after DAC disbanded

Dates

November 1960 - October 1964.

Extent

1 file.

Scope and content

Correspondence, including letters from Tony Weaver (5), Jacquetta Hawkes (4), F Henriquez, Howard Cheney; completed forms.

Conditions of access

Restricted access. Data Protection Act applies.

CWL DM/2

Title

File. Continued tax refusal campaign after DAC disbanded

Dates

November 1960 - November 1964.

Extent

1 file.

Scope and content

Correspondence with George Clark, mainly about formation of Campaign Against Taxation for Nuclear Armaments by Campaign Caravan Workshops; correspondence about David Markham's own tax refusal case, including letters from John Arden, Ernest Rodker, Howard Cheney (4), Jacquetta Hawkes (3), F Henriquez, Donald Room, Eric Walker (2), Francis Deutsch (3), Jon Tinker, Pat O'Connell (5); information about tax refusal and covenants; text of talk on tax refusal; draft affidavit by David Markham.