

## CARNEGIE AGAIN.

Pittsburg's Pompous Plute Defies the Law.

A CITIZEN OF TWO COUNTRIES.

(Special to the "Daily Herald.")

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Andrew Carnegie is a Fat Man of a particularly odious type. He is a "malefactor of great wealth." And because of his great wealth is so far above the law and Government of the two countries that he claims citizenship in both Britain and the United States. As a matter of fact, he is a citizen of both countries. It is against the law so to be, but then Carnegie is one of the Fattest of Fat Men, before whom statesmen and judges are as mere worms.

So far as America is concerned, however, Andrew Carnegie is an "undesirable citizen." To their credit, thousands of American citizens are ashamed of Carnegie's connection with their country. His wealth has been made out of the blood-sweat of multitudes of wage-slaves, and when these wage-slaves revolted at Homestead he, by the use of the militia and Pinkertons, murdered them.

There is an effort being made in the States to purge the country of Carnegie. It has been pointed out to the authorities that he cannot be an American citizen, because he is a British subject. Carnegie denies that he is a British subject, and so the game goes on. He describes himself as "an American sovereign," and last year he was at great pains to cast his vote for Mr. Taft.

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Miss Lillian Troy, an American authoress, residing in London, has taken up the fight on this side of the water. Andrew has a castle in Scotland, and is by way of being a feudal baron in Dornoch and district.

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The matter now rests with the local electors of Dornoch. Is there not one among all these with the courage to lodge a protest against the hand of Skibo, an alien, a "malefactor of great wealth," the Homestead murderer, being allowed to exercise the franchise in this country?

The second railway fatality within a week occurred at Carlisle on Saturday, when James Lennie fell from a wagon in the N.E. goods warehouse and was killed.

A movement is on foot for the formation of a Union to comprise all the workers in the bakery trade, other than operative bakers and confectioners. A meeting with this object in view was held at the Co-operative Hall, Little Newport-street, yesterday.

## THE FIGHT AGAINST HELL IN HOXTON.

How London Workers Struggle for Bread.

There are miles of it, each gray inch bearing the brand of Poverty—bitter, brutalising Poverty.

In Hoxton married men get, some of them, 12s. 6d. per week—and it costs 10s. a week to keep a horse! In Hoxton girls have worked for 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and so on, a week, making cord, and no one is hung with it for the ghastly murder of their youth, their happy girlish beauty!

In Hoxton they are fighting for a crust of bread and a corner to sleep in. The bedclothes are going, and the beloved little cheap ornaments, and some of the girls have had to pawn their underclothes, but they are still *Striking* in Hoxton—*Striking* from their world of gray against that terrible, powerful *Something* which has crushed and is crushing them.

In one house an emaciated man dandled a baby—a baby who cooed and gurgled, one of ten. The woman leaned on her broom. Oh, the tragedy of a broom in that house! The clothes had gone from the beds. *They hope that when the children are grown it will be better for them.*

Four and sixpence is all that is earned in another house. In one house a widow woman with faded blue eyes was making daisies at 1d. a gross! Daisies! Think of green country stretches, and the little golden and white flower, drenched with cold, pure dew, and then of daisies—in Hoxton!

But in Hoxton, tired as they are, crushed as they are, they are *Striking, Striking, Striking!* *Help them!* E. C.

## TOM QUELCH'S MESSAGE.

Permit me, on behalf of the family, to thank all those kind comrades and friends who have sent messages of sympathy and condolence to us in our great loss (writes Tom Quelch).

For myself, I can say that no boy had a better father. He was always kind and affectionate; always ready, in spite of his exhausting work, to

### THE KEYNOTE.

"That's the keynote," remarked a Pressman, when the crowd, in response to Hyndman's call, gave three lusty cheers over the grave of Harry Quelch.

Thousands of our readers up and down the country have listened to, and learned from Harry Quelch. May they make the occasion of our comrade being laid to rest an opportunity of re-dedicating themselves to the fight for freedom for the working class.

give advice and help and encouragement. He was a real pal. To us, our father always personified all that was finest and best in mankind.

His was a hard life. In my early years, when there were seven little ones at home, and he was only getting from twenty to twenty-five shillings a week, with uncertain employment, it was really marvellous how he cared for us. He must have gone hungry many a time. No wonder he hated capitalism!

Undoubtedly the privations and struggles of those early days contributed to his comparatively early death, which was, in a large measure, due to those very conditions he spent his life in trying to alter. He was robbed of a large share of life by capitalism.

He, having been bankrupt and propertyless, I am proud to inherit from him nothing but his hatred and loathing of the present hideous system. And I would say to all who would honour his memory that the best way to do that is to work untiringly for the Social Revolution—to strive with might and main to rid the earth of the hell in which the workers live.

## TO-DAY'S FIXTURES.

- WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION.  
Poplar (Socialist Hall, 256, High-street)—Mrs. Weller, 8.  
Bow (Osiahk Devon-road)—8.  
Bow (321, Roman-road)—Women's meeting, 5.  
Chelsea (308, King's-road)—Working Women's Meeting: Mrs. Temple Bird, 8.
- WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.  
Corner Portobello-road and Blenheim Crescent, Kensington—Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle, 8.  
Bayswater Park (54, High-worth-road, New Southgate)—Branch meeting, 7.30.  
Bromley (Market Square)—Protest meeting, 7.30.  
Greenwood (10, Colham-street)—Branch meeting, 8.
- MEN'S POLITICAL UNION FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.  
Stratford Grove—Miss Haslam, Mr. G. W. A. Dunn, 8.  
Tottenham Broadway—Mrs. Thomas Gough, Mr. Charles Gray, 8.  
Canning Town (Olden Statue)—Miss A. Jacobs, Mr. B. Bobshaw, Mr. Lawrence Marvin, 8.  
Poplar (Corner of Herder's-road, Queen's-road)—Rev. G. A. Wells, Mr. F. Andrews, 8.15.
- NEW CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.  
Whitechapel (Manuel-street)—Miss Simon, Miss McHugh, 8.

## QUELCH'S FUNERAL.

He Wrought His Comrades Lasting Good.

AN IMPOSING TRIBUTE.

From every quarter of London old men and young gathered at Nunhead on Saturday to pay the last tribute to their old comrade, Harry Quelch.

At 3.45 the procession, headed by the band of the Amalgamated Musicians' Union, moved off to the strains of Chopin's Funeral March. First in the line were representatives of societies each carrying wreaths, followed by the banner of the Bermondsey branch of the British Socialist Party, the branch to which Quelch originally belonged. He was a member up to two or three years ago, when he transferred to the North Camberwell, which was represented by a special banner commemorating his services to the movement. After the B.S.P. banners came the I.L.P. and the DAILY HERALD League.

In the Trade Union section the place of honour was given to the banner of the Printers' Warehousemen and Cutters, of which he had been treasurer for many years, and the Labour Protection League, of which he was secretary during the great dock strike of 1889. Other Trade Unionists represented were the Tailors and Tailoresses, Cabinet Makers, Government Workers, Dockers, and Gasworkers. Each Union sent a deputation of representative officials with their banner.

### The Old Guard.

Immediately in front of the hearse marched the Old Guard of the S.D.F.—men and women who had been associated with Quelch in those far-off days of the eighties, when to talk about Socialism meant physical danger, and, in many cases, economic disaster.

One could not help taking off one's hat to this fine body, alas! thinned since those days, but yet, despite age and other troubles, still faithful to the ideals of their youth. I wondered whether a man at Lavender Hill was gazing at the fact that he had excluded himself from the right to be in that body.

The coffin was covered with a red pall, signifying the life-force of humanity which Quelch had done so much to quicken.

As the procession wended its way it nearly circled Peckham Rye, and the most conservative estimate would give the numbers at least 7,000. Unfortunately, hundreds could not get over; this was particularly true of the dockers and quay-side labourers, who have no Saturday afternoon off, and their money is so little that they could not afford to lose it, even to honour a man whose work for them they knew and respected.

At the graveside speeches were made by J. E. Williams (who nearly broke down), by W. C. Anderson (I.L.P.), by Fred Knee, for the London Trades Council, by Herbert Burrows, and by H. M. Hyndman. The latter said that Quelch had always fought for the Religion of Socialism. To-day the mental and moral qualities were put aside by the materialistic, but the spiritual nature of man would overcome all difficulties. We, standing now at the beginning of civilisation, could hardly contemplate the glorious possibilities of the future, for which Quelch had lived and worked.

The ceremony concluded with three cheers for the Social Revolution and three cheers for Quelch, and men and women turned away sorrowful at the loss of a dear comrade, but joyful in the knowledge that he had not fought in vain.

### UNREST AT THE DOCKS.

Although fourteen months have elapsed since the last memorable dock strike, the men are still being victimised by the P.L.A. officials in favour of blacklegs.

A mass meeting of Port workers will shortly be held, when their grievances will be reviewed and demands for an increase in wages, recognition of Union, eight-hour day, etc., will be made.

### STRIKES IN RUSSIA.

At Tiflis, where all the tramway men have gone on strike, the Governor has issued a proclamation threatening them with severe punishments. The management called a conference with the men, but, instead of discussing the question of higher wages, preached a sermon about the wickedness of paralysing the traffic of the city, which sermon left the men unmoved.

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## TRANSCRIPTION

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Andrew Carnegie is a Fat Man of a particularly odious type. He is a "malefactor of great wealth." And because of his great wealth is so far above the law and Government of the two countries that he claims citizenship in both Britain and the United States. As a matter of fact, he is a citizen of both countries. It is against the law so to be, but then Carnegie is one of the Fattest of Fat Men, before whom statesmen and judges are as mere worms.

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There is an effort being made in the States to purge the country of Carnegie. It has been pointed out to the authorities that he cannot be an American citizen, because he is a British subject. Carnegie denies that he is a British subject, and so the game goes on. He describes himself as "an American sovereign," and last year he was at great pains to case his vote for Mr. Taft.

The Feudal Andrew.



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Jim O'Grady, M.P. [Sir James O'Grady], attempted to get questions through in the House of Humbug [UK Parliament], but they were ruled out, "on the ground that no Minister could be held responsible for Carnegie's name being on the register. It was a matter to be tested locally by objection before the revising barrister."

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WIKIPEDIA

# James O'Grady

**Sir James O'Grady**, KCMG (6 May 1866 – 10 December 1934) was a trade unionist and Labour Party politician in the United Kingdom. He was the first colonial governor appointed by the Labour Party from within its own ranks.

## Contents

**Early life**

**Political career**

**Governorships**

**Notes**

**References**

**External links**

## Early life

O'Grady was born in Bristol to Irish parents. His father was a labourer, and after leaving school at ten, O'Grady did various lowly jobs, before training as a cabinet-maker, and became active in the Amalgamated Union of Cabinetmakers.

## Political career



O'Grady (second from right) in 1906, with other leading figures in the party

defeated by a wide margin.

A member of the Independent Labour Party and supported by the Labour Representation Committee, he was elected at the 1906 general election as Member of Parliament (MP) for Leeds East. He had benefited from the Gladstone–MacDonald pact negotiated between Herbert Gladstone and Ramsay MacDonald, and faced only a Unionist opponent, whom he

### Sir James O'Grady

KCMG



#### 14th Governor of Tasmania

**In office**

23 December 1924 – 23 December 1930

**Monarch** George V

**Premier** Joseph Lyons  
John McPhee

**Preceded by** Sir William Allardyce

**Succeeded by** Sir Ernest Clark

#### 17th Governor of the Falkland Islands

**In office**

1931–1934

**Monarch** George V

**Preceded by** Sir Arnold Hodson

**Succeeded by** Sir Herbert Henniker-Heaton

**Member of Parliament for Leeds South East**

O'Grady was re-elected at the elections in January 1910 and December 1910 elections, and when the Leeds East constituency was abolished for the 1918 general election, he was returned unopposed for the new Leeds South East constituency. He held that seat until he stepped down from Parliament at the 1924 general election.

In the House of Commons, he spoke frequently, particularly on foreign affairs, and was noted as a strong supporter of the First World War, speaking at recruitment rallies. He was also Labour's only Roman Catholic MP.

Through his role in the Amalgamated Union of Cabinet Makers, he had been President of the Trades Union Congress in 1898, and he continued his union activities whilst an MP. After a variety of posts in unions related to the furniture trades,<sup>[1]</sup> he became general secretary of the National Federation of General Workers in 1918.

## Governorships

In 1924, Ramsay MacDonald's First Labour Government offered O'Grady the post of British Ambassador to the Soviet Union, and he accepted.<sup>[2]</sup> He was a logical choice because he had successfully negotiated an exchange of prisoners in 1919 and had been involved in international trade union-led efforts to relieve the Russian famine in 1921, but O'Grady did not in the end get the job, because the government postponed exchanging ambassadors.<sup>[2]</sup>

Instead O'Grady became Governor of Tasmania from 1924 to 1930. The first Labour politician to be appointed as a colonial governor by a Labour government, his appointment was resisted by the Australian Labor Party, which wanted the job to go to an Australian.

O'Grady was knighted as a Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George and moved to Tasmania, taking office on 23 December.<sup>[3]</sup> His governorship was marked by conflicts with the Legislative Council (which urged to do more to promote economic development), and his governor's reports were outspoken, but he appears to have parted on good terms.

O'Grady's next appointment was in 1931, as Governor of the Falkland Islands, but he retired in 1934 due to ill-health. He died later that year, aged 68.

## Notes

- There were many mergers of unions in that period, and craft- and area-based unions merged to form national, industry-based unions, and the union names listed in the available sources do not entirely correspond to the list of furniture unions at <http://www.wcml.org.uk/tu/furnish.htm> Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070113142413/http://www.wcml.org.uk/tu/furnish.htm>) 13 January 2007 at the Wayback Machine.

<b>In office</b>	14 December 1918 – 29 October 1924
<b>Preceded by</b>	<u>Constituency Created</u>
<b>Succeeded by</b>	<u>Henry Slesser</u>
<b>Member of Parliament for Leeds East</b>	
<b>In office</b>	8 February 1906 – 14 December 1918
<b>Preceded by</b>	<u>Henry Struther Cautley</u>
<b>Succeeded by</b>	<u>Constituency Abolished</u>
<b>Personal details</b>	
<b>Born</b>	6 May 1866 <div><span></span><div><u>Bristol</u>, <u>England</u></div></div>
<b>Died</b>	10 December 1934 (aged 68) <div><span></span><div><u>London</u>, <u>England</u></div></div>
<b>Nationality</b>	<u>British</u>
<b>Political party</b>	<u>Labour</u>

2. Time Magazine, 24 February 1924 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070930092110/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,717566-3,00.html>)
3. Australian States ([http://www.worldstatesmen.org/Australian\\_States.html](http://www.worldstatesmen.org/Australian_States.html))

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- Dictionary of National Biography: James O'Grady
- Leigh Rayment's Peerage Pages (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191024165310/http://leighrayment.com/>)

## External links

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- Picture of O'Grady at the State Library of Victoria (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070929090225/http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/pictoria/a/0/8/doc/a08720.shtml>)
- *Hansard* 1803–2005: contributions in Parliament by James O'Grady (<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/mr-james-ogrady>)

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WIKIPEDIA

# James Bertram (Carnegie secretary)

**James Bertram** (1872–1934) was the personal secretary of Andrew Carnegie, the industrialist and philanthropist, from 1897–1914. Bertram also served the Carnegie Corporation of New York from its inception in 1911 as secretary and trustee until his death in 1934. He thus continued to have an important role in Carnegie's philanthropic projects after Carnegie's death in 1919.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Early life

Bertram was born in Corstorphine, near Edinburgh, the Scottish capital where was educated at Daniel Stewart's College.<sup>[1]</sup> His first position was with the Great Northern and Northeastern Railway company in Edinburgh. He emigrated to South Africa, where he continued to work in the railway industry. He returned to Scotland for health reasons in 1897, and was recruited by Andrew Carnegie, who had recently acquired a Scottish home, Skibo Castle.

James Bertram	
<span></span>	<span></span>
<b>Born</b>	17 March 1872 <div><u>Corstorphine</u></div>
<b>Died</b>	23 October 1934 <div>(aged 62)</div> <div><u>New York City</u></div>
<b>Occupation</b>	<u>Secretary</u>
<b>Employer</b>	<u>Carnegie Corporation of New York</u>

## Activities in the United States

In the US Bertram by 1908 supervised Carnegie's library program.<sup>[2]</sup> He took a close interest in the new Carnegie libraries, commenting on the architectural plans submitted by applicants. Bertram's interventions discouraged extravagant architectural features and encouraged adherence to published guidelines.

The Carnegie Libraries in Iowa Project notes that Bertram was empowered by Andrew Carnegie to carry on negotiations, answer questions, and oversee contractual arrangements. The Carnegie Libraries in Iowa Project further asserts that Bertram, and not Carnegie, was the one who established the eligibility requirements for a community to receive funding. While he did not exhibit much of a fluid or articulate communication style -- leaving his letters, notes, responses, etc. more confused and misinformed than enlightened by his instructions, Bertram considered the power Carnegie entrusted to him as a kind of sacred trust demanding his protection. Therefore, Bertram established the primary requirements that the community population should be sufficiently large to support the library. He also determined, as time went on, that beautiful architectural enhancements that adorned the library buildings – domes, marble staircases, statues -- had to be eliminated in order to cut down on costs and to improve the libraries functionality and working space for library services. He began a campaign of informing inquiring groups with pamphlets on the need for practicality of design so that the grant amount would cover the construction costs to make it ready for immediate occupancy and fulfillment of its purpose. Bertram's rigorous guardianship of the Carnegie trust had the immediate effect he desired; however, it also caused substantial difficulties for some Iowa communities seeking to build libraries with Carnegie funding. It was these stipulations that Alice S. Tyler quietly but strongly objected to during her time as Secretary, seeking to have them removed and encouraging Iowa communities to pursue local financial support and reject the Carnegie funds.<sup>[3]</sup>

Bertram authored *Notes on Library Buildings*, a work which included complete plans, in 1910.<sup>[4]</sup> Bertram also involved himself with grants for pipe organs, and other projects.<sup>[1]</sup> Booker T. Washington's published correspondence gives details of how Bertram acted as an intermediary between Carnegie and the recipients of his largesse.<sup>[5]</sup>

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3. "Andrew Carnegie & James Bertram – Carnegie Libraries in Iowa Project" (<https://dsps.lib.uiowa.edu/clip/andrew-carnegie-james-bertram/>). *dsps.lib.uiowa.edu*. Retrieved 2018-04-16.
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5. *Booker T. Washington Papers* By Booker Taliaferro Washington, Louis R. Harlan, Raymond Smock. See [these pages](https://books.google.com/books?hl=es&id=6DuqNAjjCKgC&q=James+Bertram#v=snippet&q=James%20Bertram&f=false) (<https://books.google.com/books?hl=es&id=6DuqNAjjCKgC&q=James+Bertram#v=snippet&q=James%20Bertram&f=false>) on Google books.

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WIKIPEDIA

# Will Thorne

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**William James Thorne** CBE (4 October 1857 – 2 January 1946) was a British trade unionist, activist and one of the first Labour Members of Parliament.



Will Thorne.

## Contents

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**Early years**

**Political career**

**Awards / Commemorations**

**Footnotes**

**External links**

## Early years

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Thorne was born in Hockley, Birmingham, on 8 October 1857. His father and other relatives worked as brickmakers. Thorne's father died in a fight when Thorne was just seven years old. Thorne began working at the age of six, turning a wheel for a rope and twine spinner, working from six in the morning to six at night, with half an hour's break for breakfast and an hour for dinner. Thorne recalls that when the spinner wanted to reduce his wages from 2 shillings and 6 pence to 2 shillings, he "went on strike" and never returned to the job.<sup>[1]</sup>

The family was on poor relief. Thorne's mother and three sisters worked all hours sewing hooks and eyes. "It was here I had intimate experience with sweated labour", he commented without irony. Thorne took a job with his uncle at a brick and tile works, and later, at another brickworks further away. At the age of nine, Thorne recalled: "my mother got me up at four o'clock every morning to give me my breakfast". It was a five-mile walk to work.

I had to give up this job finally because my mother said that the work was too hard and the distance too long for me to walk every morning and night.

I remember her telling me that the 8 s[hillings] a week would be missed; some one would have to go short. But it was no use being slowly killed by such work as I was doing, and it was making me hump backed. It was not until I had been away from the work for several weeks that I was able to straighten myself out again.

My mother's rebellion against the way I was being worked is the rebellion of many mothers. It is the rebellion that I feel, and will continue to carry on.

— Will Thorne, *My Life's Battles*, p19

## Political career

Thorne served for many years on West Ham Borough Council and was Mayor from 1917–18.

In 1882, Thorne moved to London and found employment at a gasworks. Thorne joined the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) and became branch secretary. Barely literate, Thorne improved his reading skills with the assistance of Karl Marx's daughter, Eleanor Marx.

In 1889, he helped to found the National Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers, one of the prominent New Unions and became its general secretary. He retained this position in the union and its successors, which became the GMWU in 1924, up to 1934. Thorne also helped to organise the London Dock Strike in 1889.

He contested several elections as a Labour candidate, before finally winning a seat representing West Ham South at the 1906 general election. He remained with SDF as it became the British Socialist Party. Thorne visited the Soviet Union shortly after the Russian Revolution of 1917.

He won the seat of Plaistow in 1918 with 94.9% of the vote, a record for a Labour candidate which stands to this day. He retained it until his retirement at the 1945 general election, aged 87 — the oldest sitting member at the time.

## Awards / Commemorations

Thorne was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1930 and Privy Councillor in 1945.<sup>[2]</sup>

A Greater London Council blue plaque, unveiled in 1987, commemorates Thorne at his home, 1 Lawrence Road, E13 OQD, in West Ham.<sup>[3]</sup> In addition, the Will Thorne Pavilion in Beckton Park in Beckton is named for Thorne.

The GMB's regional office in Halesowen is named Will Thorne House<sup>[4]</sup> after the former NUGWGL leader (the NUGWGL/GMWU being a founding component of the GMB in 1982). The GMB's Thorne Credit Union is likewise named for Will Thorne.

## Footnotes

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Will Thorne as he appeared around the turn of the twentieth century.

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4. ["About Birmingham and West Midlands Region"](https://www.gmb.org.uk/about/westmidlands) (https://www.gmb.org.uk/about/westmidlands). GMB union. Retrieved 27 August 2021.

## External links

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- *Hansard* 1803–2005: contributions in Parliament by Will Thorne (https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/mr-william-thorne)
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Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Will\\_Thorne&oldid=1065825345](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Will_Thorne&oldid=1065825345)"

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WIKIPEDIA

# Reginald McKenna

**Reginald McKenna** (6 July 1863 – 6 September 1943) was a British banker and Liberal politician. His first Cabinet post under Henry Campbell-Bannerman was as President of the Board of Education, after which he served as First Lord of the Admiralty. His most important roles were as Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer during the premiership of H. H. Asquith. He was studious and meticulous, noted for his attention to detail, but also for being bureaucratic and partisan.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

## Contents

### Background and education

### Political career

[First Lord](#)

[Peacetime Home Secretary](#)

[Wartime Home Secretary](#)

[Asquith's Liberal Chancellor](#)

[McKenna duties](#)

[Fiscal relations and Lloyd George](#)

[Conscription](#)

[Chairman of the Midland Bank](#)

[A return to Government?](#)

### Family

### Publications

### See also

### References

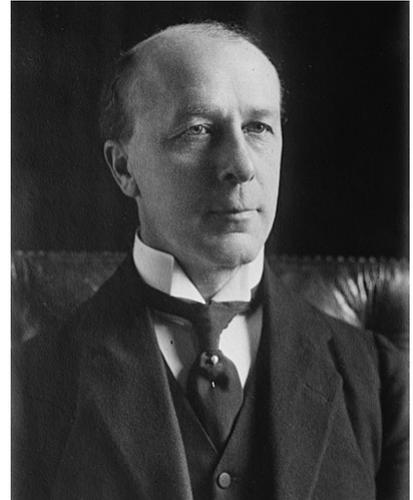
[Bibliography](#)

### External links

## Background and education

Born in [Kensington](#), London,<sup>[1]</sup> McKenna was the son of William Columban McKenna and his wife Emma, daughter of Charles Hanby.<sup>[1]</sup> [Sir Joseph Neale McKenna](#) was his uncle. McKenna was educated at [King's College School](#) and at [Trinity Hall](#), Cambridge.<sup>[4]</sup> At Cambridge he was a notable rower. In 1886, he was a member of the [Trinity Hall Boat Club](#) eight that won the Grand Challenge Cup at [Henley Royal Regatta](#).<sup>[5]</sup> He rowed bow

The Right Honourable  
**Reginald McKenna**



**Chancellor of the Exchequer**

**In office**

27 May 1915 – 10 December 1916

**Monarch** [George V](#)

**Prime Minister** [H. H. Asquith](#)

**Preceded by** [David Lloyd George](#)

**Succeeded by** [Bonar Law](#)

**Home Secretary**

**In office**

23 October 1911 – 27 May 1915

**Monarch** [George V](#)

**Prime Minister** [H. H. Asquith](#)

**Preceded by** [Winston Churchill](#)

**Succeeded by** [Sir John Simon](#)

**First Lord of the Admiralty**

**In office**

12 April 1908 – 23 October 1911

**Prime Minister** [H. H. Asquith](#)

**Preceded by** [Edward Marjoribanks](#)

**Succeeded by** [Winston Churchill](#)

in the winning Cambridge boat in the 1887 Boat Race. Also in 1887 he was a member of the Trinity Hall coxless four that won the Stewards' Challenge Cup at Henley.

## Political career



Reginald McKenna c1895

McKenna was elected at the 1895 general election as Member of Parliament (MP) for North Monmouthshire. McKenna was a Liberal Imperialist. After the Khaki Election of 1900, he favoured the return to government of former Liberal Prime Minister Lord Rosebery, although this did not happen.<sup>[6]</sup>

In December 1905 McKenna was appointed, in preference to Winston Churchill, as Financial Secretary to the Treasury. He then served in the Liberal Cabinets of

Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith as President of the Board of Education, First Lord of the Admiralty (1908–11), and Home Secretary.

He was considered methodical and efficient, but his opponents thought him priggish, prissy and lacking in charisma. McKenna's estimates were submitted to unprecedented scrutiny by the 'economists' David Lloyd George and Churchill. McKenna submitted large naval estimates in December 1906 for the years 1909-10 of £36 m. This was the Dreadnought building programme inspired by naval reformer Admiral Fisher.

In 1907 James Bryce was appointed Ambassador to the US, Augustine Birrell replaced him as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and McKenna succeeded Birrell as President of the Board of Education. He was responsible for such reforms as the introduction of free places in secondary schools<sup>[7][8]</sup> and the bestowing upon local authorities the powers to deal with the health and physical needs of children,<sup>[9]</sup> and was promoted to the cabinet as First Lord of the Admiralty only a year later.

## First Lord

### President of the Board of Education

#### In office

23 January 1907 – 12 April 1908

**Prime Minister** Henry Campbell-Bannerman

**Preceded by** Augustine Birrell

**Succeeded by** Walter Runciman

### Financial Secretary to the Treasury

#### In office

12 December 1905 – 23 January 1907

**Prime Minister** Henry Campbell-Bannerman

**Preceded by** Victor Cavendish

**Succeeded by** Walter Runciman

### Member of Parliament for North Monmouthshire

#### In office

7 August 1895 – 14 December 1918

**Preceded by** Thomas Phillips Price

**Succeeded by** Constituency abolished

### Personal details

**Born** 6 July 1863  
Kensington, London<sup>[1]</sup>

**Died** 6 September 1943  
(aged 80)  
London

**Nationality** British

**Political party** Liberal

**Spouse(s)** Pamela Jekyll (d. 1943)

**Alma mater** Trinity Hall, Cambridge



Reginald McKenna by [Leslie Ward](#) (*Vanity Fair* caricatures) entitled "In the winning crew"

At the Admiralty McKenna started the Labour Exchange Bill from May 1909, a policy later associated with Churchill, in an effort to relieve unemployment. He was increasingly attacked in speeches outside Parliament. The number of Dreadnoughts to be built was increased from six to eight ships; four initially and four later. Lloyd George and Churchill had attacked McKenna's position in a plan to persuade the Liberal left of the need for defence cuts. Nonetheless McKenna was on the Cabinet finance committee that discussed Lloyd George's budget proposal of 7 March 1910, and on 12 April refused to contemplate the chancellor's proposed defence cuts.<sup>[10]</sup>

He held his seat in the General Elections of 1910, and kept his post at the Admiralty in Asquith's government.<sup>[11]</sup> McKenna had attended the Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) on 17 December 1908 and 23 March 1909, during which periods he had fully comprehended the gravity of the naval threat.<sup>[11]</sup> He also attended the famous meeting on 23 August 1911, chaired by the Prime Minister, at which Brigadier-General Wilson, over naval opposition, persuaded ministers to deploy an expeditionary force to France in the event of war.<sup>[12]</sup> Asquith dismissed the Royal Navy's war plans as "wholly impracticable".<sup>[13]</sup>

McKenna had little support in Cabinet, and Asquith, Richard Haldane, and Churchill wanted the latter to replace him at the Admiralty. Fortunately war was averted despite the Agadir Crisis.<sup>[14]</sup> On 16 November McKenna accepted the Home Office, swapping jobs with Churchill.<sup>[13]</sup>

In total McKenna had 'laid the keels' of 18 new battleships that contributed mightily to the British fleet that would fight at the Battle of Jutland in 1916. McKenna commenced the Dreadnought Arms Race: the fundamental strategic basis was for a vast fleet, large enough to intimidate Germany to decline to fight. But in the event Britain's advantage was ephemeral and fleeting.<sup>[15]</sup>

## Peacetime Home Secretary

McKenna accepted his move to the Home Office in October 1911 partly because he had recovered from an appendicitis operation. He was one of numerous Cabinet appointments at the time which, according to historian Duncan Tanner, "pushed the (Liberal) party still further to the left".<sup>[16]</sup> McKenna and Charles Hobhouse were responsible for the Welsh Church Disestablishment Bill finally drafted on 20 February 1912. The ODNB calls him a wise and judicious Home Secretary. He was stolidly opposed by the Conservative F.E.Smith.

Another piece of legislation ensued in the Coal Mines Bill regulating pay and conditions. McKenna enthusiastically supported the minimum wage bill in principle, but partly to prevent 'civil war' in the coalfields.<sup>[17]</sup> With Asquith's approval McKenna left a Cabinet meeting, at which he was on the majority side, to attend on the King, having left behind an "admirable memo."<sup>[18]</sup>



London School of Economics and Political Science 2007 Coll Misc-59

Electors! Do You Like McKenna's Navy Cut?



The Home Secretary remained in charge of State Security: more than 6,000 espionage cases were investigated, none of which produced any traitors. The 'German Plot' in Ireland had sparked fears that Britain was infiltrated by a network of spies. In response cable telegraphs were laid from Dartmouth to Brest in Brittany to guarantee Allied communications links. On 20 October a warrant went out for the arrest of 23,000 Germanic aliens, and food supplies to Belgium were cut lest they fell into German hands. McKenna refused to allow the publication of the sinking of HMS *Audacious*; in the event it was 'leaked' to *The Evening News* anyway. And on 30 October the Cabinet announced a general policy of censorship.<sup>[26]</sup> In the *Wilhelmina* case he again referred to the legal situation, seeking a solution in international law.

McKenna disliked the autocratic and dismissive Lord Kitchener, appointed Secretary of State for War at the start of the war. Immediately on his appointment their relations soured: the policy of voluntary recruitment continued as the Army needed one million men, until the Adjutant-General complained there were too many new recruits. On 5 March 1915 McKenna reported that the Ritz Carlton Hotel, New York was being used as a spy network to inform on British intelligence; the government, determined to prevent the USA entering the war on Germany's side, informed Washington.<sup>[27]</sup> McKenna supported Asquith and gradually fell out with Lloyd George.

Internal wrangling in Cabinet conversations reached fever pitch: Edwin Montagu, a cousin of Herbert Samuel and ally of Lloyd George suggested that Asquith was jealous of Sir Edward Grey's prowess in the Foreign Office. When in April 1915 the Home Secretary banned Montagu from his home for six months, the scene was set for a final split in the party. McKenna was a Teetotaller, something he had impressed upon the King was necessary for good government. His Majesty "took the pledge" for the duration of the war, an example which Lord Chancellor Haldane felt he had to follow for the remainder of his time in office. McKenna's asceticism won few new friends, so that when the end came for his career it was both dramatic and complete.<sup>[28]</sup>

## Asquith's Liberal Chancellor

In May 1915 Asquith formed a coalition government. McKenna, a reluctant coalitionist,<sup>[29]</sup> became Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the meantime, McKenna oversaw the issue of the Second War Loan in June 1915, at an interest rate of 4.5%, although his first budget was actually on 21 September 1915 was a serious attempt to deal with an impending debt crisis. Revenues were rising, but not by enough to cover the £1.6 billion government expenditure. McKenna increased income tax rates and introduced a 50% excess profit tax, and increases in indirect taxation of goods such as tea, coffee, and tobacco.<sup>[30]</sup> Post Office charge increases could not be included in the Budget (as they would have endangered its status as a money bill), and were instead introduced in a Post Office and Telegraph Bill.<sup>[30]</sup>

## McKenna duties

In September 1915 he introduced a 33⅓% levy on luxury imports in order to fund the war effort. The McKenna duties applied to cinematographic film; clocks and watches; motorcars and motorcycles; and musical instruments.<sup>[31]</sup> The duties were revoked by Ramsay MacDonald's short-lived Labour government in 1924, only to be reimposed in 1925.

## Fiscal relations and Lloyd George

The April 1916 budget saw further large rises in income and excess profit taxes, at a time when prices of basic food commodities were rising. Sales taxes were extended to rail tickets, mineral water, cider and perry, and entertainments. The government pledged that if they issued War Loan at the even higher interest (as they did with the 5% issue of 1917), holders of the 4.5% bonds might also convert to the new rate. His predecessor David Lloyd George criticised McKenna in his memoirs for increasing the interest rate from 3.5% on the 1914 War Loan at a time when investors had few alternatives and might even have had their capital "conscripted" by the government. Not only did the change ultimately increase the nation's interest payments by £100 million/year but it meant rates were higher throughout the economy during the post-war depression.<sup>[32]</sup> Compared with France, the British government relied more on short-term financing in the form of treasury bills and exchequer bonds during World War I; Treasury bills provided the bulk of British government funds in 1916.<sup>[33]</sup> McKenna fell out with Lord Cunliffe, Governor of the Bank of England. Furthermore, he tried to sequester the assets of the US Prudential Assurance Company to pay for American war *materiel* purchases.

An opponent of Lloyd George,<sup>[34]</sup> McKenna was critical of the Prime Minister's political approach, telling Conservative politician Arthur Balfour that "you disagree with us, but you can understand our principles. Lloyd George doesn't understand them and we can't make him".<sup>[35]</sup> But unlike McKenna, Lloyd George had no problem with relations with Cunliffe.

McKenna nevertheless saw the state as having an important role in society, a sentiment that he shared with Asquith. As noted by his biographer and nephew, Stephen McKenna,

Without trying to define the whole duty of Liberal man, Asquith and McKenna were at one in seeing that if certain services were not undertaken by the state, they would not be undertaken at all. Old age pensions were a case in point. They had not been dangled as an electioneering bait; Asquith made no appeal to sentiment or emotion when the Cabinet committee of investigation was set up, but from their first days together at the Treasury he and McKenna had agreed that, if the money could be found, this was a matter on which a beginning must be made forthwith.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Conscription

The issue of enforced service in the armed forces was controversial in Britain. The Conservatives were almost entirely in favour, but the Liberals were split, with Asquithians largely opposed on libertarian grounds, whilst Lloyd George united with the Tories in what he declared to be a vital national interest. Sir John Simon, Liberal Home Secretary and an ally of McKenna, resigned over the conscription of bachelors in January 1916. As Chancellor of Exchequer McKenna objected to the conscription of married men in May 1916 on purely economic grounds, arguing that it would 'deplete' Britain's war industries. McKenna knew that for Asquith to remain in office he had to move towards conscription, whether he liked it or not; if he did not, the Tories would topple the government.<sup>[37]</sup>

At a decisive meeting on 4 December 1916 McKenna tried to persuade Asquith to sack Lloyd George to save the government. McKenna retired into opposition upon the fall of Asquith at the end of 1916.

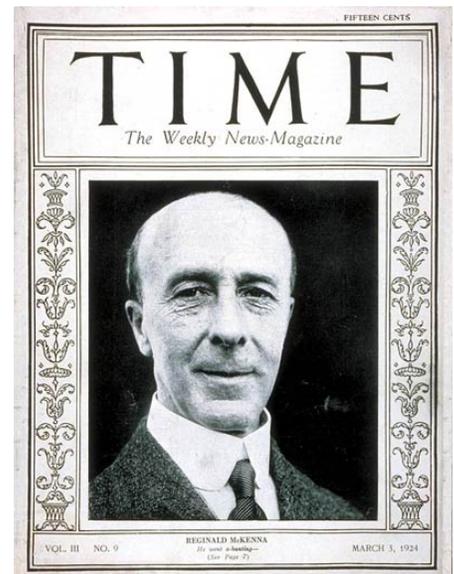
## Chairman of the Midland Bank

He lost his seat in the 1918 general election and became a non-executive member of the board of the Midland Bank at the invitation of the chairman, Liberal MP Sir Edward Holden. Before Holden died in 1919, McKenna had sat in his office every day to observe the activities of a chairman. An elaborate coda was drafted to allow the bank's directors to determine whether he should resign his Pontypool seat where he was presently the Liberal candidate (his previous seat of North Monmouthshire had disappeared in boundary changes). But the situation did not arise as he was not elected in 1922. The new Prime Minister Bonar Law hoped to persuade him to come out of retirement and serve once again at the Exchequer in a Conservative Cabinet, but he refused, and remained in private life.<sup>[38]</sup> His refusal was partly because he wanted to promote an alliance between Bonar Law and Asquith, who was still official leader of the Liberal Party.<sup>[39]</sup> The following year Bonar Law's successor Stanley Baldwin repeated the request and McKenna was more agreeable, but again declined.<sup>[38]</sup>

McKenna used his status as chairman of one of the big five British banks to argue that monetary policy could be used to achieve domestic macroeconomic objectives. At the Chamberlain-Bradbury committee he questioned whether a return to the gold standard was desirable. John Maynard Keynes was the only other witness to do so, although others proposed a delayed return.<sup>[40]</sup>

## A return to Government?

According to Lord Birkenhead Lloyd George's Liberals were of poor intellect, with no great leaders to take the government onwards. McKenna was certainly a technocrat but did not want to be Prime Minister, yet he might conceivably have been offered the post. In reality, the Conservatives wanted one of their own. However he wished to enter Parliament in July 1923 as MP for the City of London and neither of the incumbent MPs would agree to vacate in order to make room. As a result, McKenna declined as he had no wish to vacate the bank. McKenna continued to write economic reports for Whitehall and Westminster, but by August 1923 his political career had come to an end. The lasting impression was one of the pin-striped merchant banker, a model of precision, but not a clubbable leader of men; his absence from London society and Brooks's seemed to imply retirement.<sup>[41]</sup> However, his financial reputation was such as to prompt Stanley Baldwin to demand his return to government in the 1930s. As late as 1939 it was proposed that he should be brought back to replace Liberal National Chancellor Sir John Simon. McKenna was the last of the Asquithians to die, in 1943.<sup>[42]</sup>



*Time* Cover, 3 Mar 1924

## Family

McKenna was married in 1908 to Pamela Jekyll (who died November 1943), younger daughter of Sir Herbert Jekyll (brother of landscape gardener Gertrude Jekyll) and his wife Dame Agnes Jekyll, née Graham.<sup>[1]</sup> They had two sons – Michael (died 1931) and David, who married Lady Cecilia Elizabeth Keppel (12 April 1910 – 16 June 2003), a daughter of Walter Keppel, 9th Earl of Albemarle in 1934. McKenna was a talented financier, and a champion bridge player in his free time. In royal company at Balmoral McKenna played golf.<sup>[43]</sup>

Reginald McKenna died in London on 6 September 1943, and was buried at St Andrew's Church in Mells, Somerset. His wife died two months later, and is buried beside him. McKenna was a regular client of Sir Edwin Lutyens who designed the Midland Bank headquarters in Poultry, London, and several branches. Pamela McKenna was a high society hostess whose dinner parties charmed Asquith at their Lutyens-built townhouse in Smith Square. Lutyens the unofficial imperial-government architect built several homes for McKenna, and the political classes, as well as his grave.<sup>[44]</sup> Lutyens was commissioned to build 36 Smith Square in 1911,<sup>[45]</sup> followed by Park House in Mells Park, Somerset, built in 1925.<sup>[46]</sup> The owners of Mells Park were Sir John Horner and his wife Frances, née Graham, who was Agnes Jekyll's sister,<sup>[47]</sup> and they agreed to let the park to McKenna for a nominal rent, on the understanding that he would rebuild the house.<sup>[48]</sup> Lutyens built a final house for McKenna at Halnaker Park, in Halnaker, Sussex,<sup>[49]</sup> in 1938.<sup>[50]</sup> Lutyens designed the McKenna family tomb in St Andrew's Church, Mells, in 1932.<sup>[51]</sup>

His nephew Stephen McKenna was a popular novelist who published a biography of his uncle in 1948.

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## External links

- *Hansard* 1803–2005: contributions in Parliament by Reginald McKenna (<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/mr-reginald-mckenna>)
- [Buckle, George Earle \(1922\)](#). "McKenna, Reginald" ([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1922\\_Encyclop%C3%A6dia\\_Britannica/McKenna,\\_Reginald](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1922_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/McKenna,_Reginald)). *Encyclopædia Britannica* (12th ed.).

- *The Papers of Reginald McKenna* (<https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/9/resources/1709>) held at [Churchill Archives Centre](#)
  - Newspaper clippings about Reginald McKenna (<http://purl.org/pressemappe20/folder/pe/019084>) in the [20th Century Press Archives](#) of the [ZBW](#)
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