

Clara Rackham: a Chronology

Mary Joannou

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1875 Clara Dorothea Tabor born at 44 Lansdowne Road, Notting Hill, London.
1885-1892 attends Notting Hill High School as a day girl
1892-1893 boarder at St Leonards School, Fife
1895-1898 reads Classics at Newnham College, Cambridge
1898- 1901 returns as 'home daughter' to family farm at Fennes, Bocking, Essex
1901 marries Harris Rackham, moves to 4 Grange Terrace, Cambridge.
1902 establishes Cambridge branch of Women's Co-operative Guild
1904-15 Poor Law Guardian for Castle Ward
1906 contributes to Eglantyne Jebb, *Cambridge: a Brief Study in Social Questions*
1906 Joint Secretary of Cambridge Charity Organisation Society
1908 chairs Eastern District National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS)
1909 elected to NUWSS National Executive Committee, Vice-Chair in 1912,
1912 writes entry 'Cambridge' in Helen Bosanquet's *Social Conditions in Provincial Towns*
1913 chairs NUWSS, takes part in 'Great Pilgrimage' on podium in Hyde Park alongside Millicent Fawcett, forms part of the deputation to meet Asquith, the Prime Minister
1914 -1918 First World War
1915 appointed with Jeannette Tawney as one of four wartime women factory inspectors by the Home Office, based mainly in Manchester area and London.
1918 (most) women over 30 and all men over 21 receive the vote, made an Associate of Newnham College (until 1932).
1919 joins National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC), elected in West Chesterton as the first woman to represent Labour Party on the council
1920 elected Chair WEA Eastern District, appointed Governor of Cambridge College of Arts, Crafts and Technology, one of five women appointed Justices of the Peace in Cambridge alongside Leah Manning, Florence Ada Keynes, Jane Harrison and Edith Bethune-Baker, becomes active supporter of the League of Nations.
1921 attends first meeting of Magistrates Association and advocates, organises and teaches professional training courses for magistrates.
1922 supports Hugh Dalton in Cambridge By-Election, fights Chelmsford for Labour in General Election, lectures at NUSEC Oxford summer school for women JPs.
1923 edits 'Law at Work' column in *The Woman's Leader* until 1934
1924 moves into 9 Park Terrace, appointed to Home Office Committee on Examination of Young Persons for Employment in Factories, supports Henry Morris, Chief Education Officer for Cambridgeshire, and his visionary 'Memorandum' for the development of village colleges.
1925 appointed Home Office Committee on Sexual Offences against Young Persons
1926 helps finance and personally supervises the construction by voluntary labour of Romsey Labour Club and presides over the festivities at the laying of the foundation stone by Ramsay MacDonald. 9 Park Terrace becomes Cambridge headquarters of the General Strike.
1927 elected to Executive Committee of Howard League for Penal Reform (HLRF) and Executive committee of Magistrates Association (MA).
1928 celebrates universal adult franchise, accepts Labour Party nomination for Huntingdon but withdraws, elected to county council in By-Election.
1929 elected borough councillor for Romsey, broadcasts for BBC at invitation of Hilda Matheson.
1930 chairs Labour Party Women's Conference in Kingsway Hall, London with 1,848 participants.
1930-1932 appointed to Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance and with William Asbury, opposes reduction in unemployment benefits and the Means Test, signs the Minority Report, leads

national campaign against Anomalies Act which prevented married women from claiming unemployment benefits.

1932 Vice-Chair of HLPR.

1933 short fact-finding visit to Soviet Union

1934 co-opted on to Central (National) Executive Committee of WEA, joins Peace Pledge Union.

1935 fights Saffron Walden Election against R.A. Butler, chairs WEA Eastern District again

1936 moves toast at dinner celebrating twenty-fifth anniversary of Cambridge Labour Party attended by Clement Attlee, opens new Rock Road Library.

1937 committee member of Cambridge Basque Children's Committee, prison tour of Hungary and the Balkans with Margery Fry reporting back to HLPR.

1938 publishes *Factory Law*

1939-45 Britain declares war on Germany, death of Arthur Rackham (1939), ARP volunteer, elected to the Committee of the Cambridge Anglo-Soviet Friendship Society, supports Cambridge China Campaign Committee, turns down OBE (1941), supports Beveridge Report (1942), death of Harris Rackham (1944).

1945-1957 chairs Cambridgeshire County Council Education Committee.

1946 elected to represent Romsey unopposed.

1947 contributes to HLPR (eds) *Lawless Youth: a Challenge to Europe*

1950 resigns after thirty years as a magistrate, joins Humanist Association (n.d).

1952 active in internal Labour Party educational debates, favours retention of grammar schools, opposes comprehensive education, against new Church schools, against fee-paying schools.

1954 death of sister, Margaret Tabor who was living with her in Park Terrace.

1956 chair of County Council, works for Hungarian refugees, leads anti-Suez Demonstrations

1957 involvement with housing policy, favours, purpose-built accommodation for the old, supports development of 'New Towns', the new Arbury housing estate, and Adventure Playgrounds, resigns from all borough and county committees citing deafness as the cause

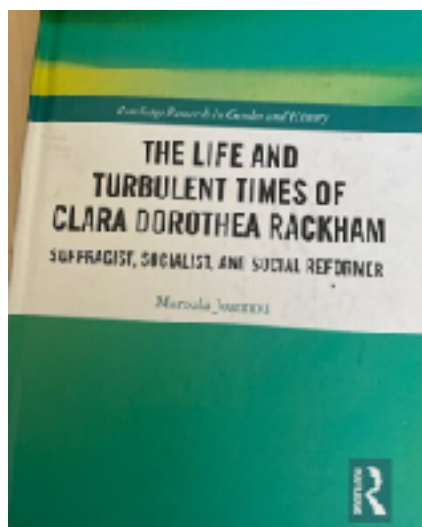
1958-1961 joins Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), participates in four Aldermaston Marches.

1962 leads demonstrations in Cambridge against the Cuban Missile Crisis, last public speech at the Golden Jubilee of the Cambridge branch of National Council of Women, University Arms Hotel

1963 attends opening of Parkside Swimming Pool

1965 turns down Freedom of City of Cambridge.

1966 dies peacefully in Langdon House.



Clara Rackham's biographer, historian, Mary (Maroula) Joannou has written the introduction to Clara Rackham for *Capturing Cambridge*. Mary has also provided the account of Clara and Harris Rackham's family life, the biographical note on Harris Rackham, and compiled the chronology.