

Subscribers, Society members and contributors to this issue are owed an apology for its extremely late appearance. This is entirely due to personal and professional pressures on the Editor, who is grateful to all concerned for their patience during the many delays. In view of the delay and the exceptional size of this issue, it is being regarded as a double issue and dated 1992-93. Sufficient material is already to hand or promised for the next issue, which will appear quite soon and be dated 1994, thus allowing the *Journal* to return to its regular annual publication. Contributions for future issues are invited and should be sent to the editorial address given at the end of this issue. The *Journal* is happy to consider articles on any aspect of Lawrence's life and work and his relationship to his predecessors, contemporaries and successors.

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D H LAWRENCE, ROBERT MOUNTSIER AND THE JOURNALIST SPY CONTROVERSY

Louise E. Wright

In October 1917, Major-General W. Western of the Southern Command, Salisbury ordered D.H. and Frieda Lawrence, then living at Higher Tregetheren in Cornwall, to leave the county, to stay out of prohibited areas and to report to the police (*Letters* 3, 167-9). Possible causes for the order include Frieda's German birth, Cornish xenophobia and increased submarine activity. Although the actual reasons for the command and for its timing may never be known, why and when the Lawrences first came under official suspicion can be determined.

Although Paul Delany believes otherwise (319), British authorities could not have suspected the Lawrences from the outset of the First World War. If they had, Lawrence and Frieda would not have enjoyed the freedom of movement that they did. On 8 August 1914 the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) was passed. It required enemy aliens to register with the police and forbade them to live in prohibited areas without a police permit (Andrew 181). Later on, subversive individuals – regardless of national origin – received similar treatment. In the spring of 1916, a wave of strikes shook munitions factories on the Clyde; the leaders were arrested and, under DORA, deported from the region (Andrew 194; Carsten 70). That same year, the War Office denied Bertrand Russell entry into prohibited areas as a result of the speeches he had made to munitions workers in South Wales. According to Russell, these areas 'were those into which it was particularly desired that no spies should penetrate' and 'included the whole sea-coast.' Although the War Office admitted they did not believe Russell to be a spy, they refused to allow him 'anywhere near the sea for fear [he] should signal to the submarines' (Russell 28-9). By 1917, DORA contained a provision which restricted civilian entry into 'special military areas' along the coast (Williams 178).

The Lawrences, however, spent most of the war in coastal counties. From January to July 1915, they lived in Viola Meynell's cottage in Sussex. They made excursions to Worthing and Brighton and from 30 July to 4 August vacationed in the seaside town of Littlehampton. In late December, they moved to Cornwall where they stayed until October 1917. Only then were they ordered to stay out of prohibited areas and report to the police.

The Lawrences' freedom of movement extended to foreign travel as well. In late October 1915, they applied for passports for the United States. Lawrence wrote twice to Cynthia Asquith asking her to have a friend at the Foreign Office expedite matters

(*Letters* 2, 418, 420). In particular, Lawrence was concerned that the phrase 'born at Metz' on Frieda's application might trouble the authorities. Early in November, he reported to Ottoline Morrell that the passports had arrived (*Letters* 2, 428).

Not all individuals obtained passports with such ease. Bertrand Russell, offered a position at Harvard University, was refused a passport for the United States (Williams 70). Writing to the President of Harvard on 8 June 1916. Cecil Spring Rice, British ambassador in Washington, explained that Russell could not be issued a passport because he had been convicted under DORA for writing an objectionable pamphlet (Russell 79).

In the winter of 1917, the Lawrences applied for a renewal of the passports. Lawrence again anticipated trouble and wrote to Cynthia Asquith, Eddie Marsh and Gordon Campbell for help. The problem of Frieda's birth remained although it had not proved an obstacle fifteen months earlier. There was also the question of Lawrence's position on the war. Replying to Eddie Marsh, he asked, 'Have I showed any public pacifist activity? – do you mean the Signature?' (*Letters* 3, 84). At least two issues of the Signature had appeared, however, before the Lawrences were issued passports in the autumn of 1915. In accordance with Marsh's advice, Lawrence strove to prove he had definite work that required him to go to America (*Letters* 3, 72-3, 75-6). Despite his efforts, the passports were denied.

Writing to Catherine Carswell in mid-February, Lawrence gave the official reason for the denial as 'in the interests of National Service' and claimed that the Foreign Office would have approved the passport (*Letters* 3, 92). National Service was the new coalition government's answer to the ever-increasing need for manpower. Its purpose was to register and recruit men and women for work in war industry. The Ministry of National Service, which began operating in March 1917 under Neville Chamberlain's direction, administered the plan (Williams, 131, 179). Lawrence seems to have accepted this reason; on 15 September 1917 he told Waldo Frank he might try to get a passport 'in the winter ... when this National Service bubble is again burst' (*Letters* 3, 160). Yet National Service might have been only one of the grounds for the refusal. It is possible that the change in government deprived Lawrence of any influence he might have had because of his friendship with Cynthia Asquith. It is also possible that by early 1917 the Lawrences had attracted the attention of the authorities.

The Lawrences' movements indicate that they could not have come under official suspicion before 29 December 1915 when they set out for J.D. Beresford's cottage in Cornwall. In June 1917, according to Stanley Hocking, local authorities began to keep watch on the Lawrences' cottage for lights (273). The refusal to renew their passports suggests that they might have been suspected as early as February 1917.

Sometime, then, between January 1916 and February 1917 something happened which made Lawrence and Frieda suspects.

In June 1916, the police raided the offices of the No-Conscription Fellowship and confiscated, along with other items, the account books (Carsten 68). That Lawrence had contributed to the Fellowship on more than one occasion can be seen from his writing to Philip Heseltine on 24 February 1916, 'I send you on these papers from No- Conscription league. I sent them another 2/6: they are worthy' (*Letters* 2, 551). It cannot be assumed, however, that the police found Lawrence's name in the ledgers or that they regarded all contributors to the Fellowship as suspect.

In early November 1916, the Americans Robert Mountsier and Esther Andrews visited Cornwall. Lawrence described Mountsier as a 'journalist' and Andrews as 'doing some journalism' (*Letters* 3, 25). At Christmas, they returned and stayed with the Lawrences. On 31 December, according to a clipping in the files of the Alumni Records Office of the University of Michigan, Mountsier was arrested in London.¹

Lawrence responded to the news vehemently and indignantly:

What a nasty jar for you to be dropped into Scotland Yard like that! ... It's a pity one can't just say to the fools 'Yes, I am the cleverest spy in the universe,' and set them ransacking nothingness to its farthest corners – We are used to suspicions and Scotland Yard foolery and police busyboddiness by now, and put out our tongues at the whole mystery-play. (*Letters* 3, 65)

This letter is the first in which Lawrence acknowledged that he and Frieda had experienced harassment. Frieda has related several incidents such as the searching of her rucksack for a hidden camera and told of the St Ives policeman who came time and again to check Lawrence's papers 'to see if he were really an Englishman' (86-9). Such events found their way into chapter 12, 'The Nightmare', of *Kangaroo* but not into Lawrence's correspondence.

Lawrence's silence lends credence to his claim that he was 'used to' suspicion as does his comment to S.S. Koteliensky of 12 June 1916, 'I shrink from asking you down here to the coast – they make such an absurd fuss about foreigners. Oh what fools people are' (*Letters* 2, 615). The remark betrays none of the hostility and indignation found in the letter to Mountsier. Lawrence seems resigned and detached, as if the 'fuss' were something Kot would have to endure and nothing to do with him. His reticence about any harassment he suffered contrasts sharply with his readiness to tell his correspondents about other unpleasant experiences, such as his detention at the barracks in Bodmin and

the expulsion from Cornwall.² Apparently he regarded the checking of papers and searching of rucksacks as routine. They were probably little more.

War hysteria seems at the root of these incidents, examples of local persecution rather than official suspicion. In August 1914, according to Basil Thomson, Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard and head of the Special Branch, war hysteria 'assumed a virulent epidemic form accompanied by delusions which defied treatment. It attacked all classes indiscriminately, and seemed even to find its most fruitful soil in sober, stolid and otherwise truthful people.' Sufferers from the disease witnessed the landing of Russians in Scotland, knew German governesses who hid bombs in their trunks, uncovered secret messages to Germany in the agony columns and suspected pigeons of carrying information to the enemy. Night-signalling was by far the most persistent and longest lived of the delusions, yet Thomson knows of not a single case, out of the thousands reported, that proved genuine. No matter how preposterous these and other allegations seemed, Scotland Yard followed up on them (40-51).

War hysteria infected the Cornish as much as it did any other people – perhaps even more so. According to Cecil Gray, 'One of the less engaging aspects of the Cornish character consists in a mania for spying and listening at keyholes or windows ...' (130). For months prior to October 1917, when he was fined for showing a light, 'the coastguards, police, and the entire local population had been spying on' him and the Lawrences, 'watching all [their] movements in the hope of being able to discover something against' them (127). Stanley Hocking recalls that the Cornish 'became scared in late 1916 and all of 1917.' They feared an enemy invasion and believed the Germans capable of raiding the farms and cutting the inhabitants' throats (270-2). He admits that local people began to suspect his brother William Henry, even though they had known him all their lives, because he and Lawrence 'were such jolly good friends' (275). Both Hocking and Ivor Short, son of Lawrence's landlord, mention the rumour that the Lawrences signalled to the submarines and P.O. Eddy, William Henry's brother-in-law, states that he 'heard people say they used to see a little lamp flashing at the Lawrences' (Stevens 99-100). Eddy also explains that the Vicar of Zennor and his daughter 'wanted Lawrence to leave Cornwall, and the police went round to check on Lawrence' (Stevens 107).

The intensity of Lawrence's reaction to the Mountsier episode suggests that he considered it more serious than the 'suspicion' and 'police busybodiness' which he had experienced. Undoubtedly the involvement of Scotland Yard was significant. Lawrence included 'Scotland Yard foolery' among those things he and Frieda had become accustomed to, but there is no evidence that the Yard bothered Lawrence until after the expulsion from Cornwall when he was living in London (see Richard Aldington in Nehls 449-50; Gray 128-9; *Letters* 3, 188-9).

Perhaps Lawrence, in his letter of 4 January 1917, simply linked Mountsier's troubles with his own. Or perhaps he has in mind those times early in the war when detectives questioned David Garnett about the number of Germans living in his flat and the identity of its inhabitants. The enquiries followed a dinner Garnett hosted, at the end of which Frieda and H.G. Newth exchanged loud good-byes in German in the stairwell. Garnett believed that the Lawrences' visit had aroused the suspicions of the tenants downstairs. One detective told him 'that Scotland Yard was getting hundreds of letters every day from people denouncing their neighbours and that they all had to be investigated' (Nehls 240-1).

Why did Scotland Yard arrest Robert Mountsier? Delany believes Mountsier 'was probably arrested because of his contact with Frieda; not only was she under routine surveillance as a "person of hostile origin", she was also known to be in contact with her family via Switzerland' (283). Delany offers no proof for this or the other references he makes to Frieda's being under surveillance (101-2, 315) and admits that the documents pertaining to the Lawrences have been destroyed (102, 408 n89). He quotes a statement made on 9 November 1915 by Sir John Simon, the Home Secretary (99, 400 n15); perhaps this is the basis for his assumption. According to Simon, 'women of hostile origin married to British subjects come within the scope of Regulation 14b of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, and are subject to the general supervision which is kept over suspected persons of hostile origin' (Delany 99). Simon's wording suggests, however, that not all such persons were subject to 'supervision' but only those who were 'suspected'. Furthermore, six months earlier, in tightening the policy for the internment and repatriation of enemy aliens, Asquith announced in the House that 'naturalised Germans, being British subjects, would remain free and unmolested' (Williams 66). Surely, if the authorities had reason to suspect Frieda, they would not have permitted her to live along the coast.

Frieda's letters to her family would have been subject to censorship. Examining mail addressed to neutral countries like Holland or Switzerland was one way of monitoring German espionage, for the Germans sent 'dangerous correspondence' to those countries instead of directly to Germany (Felstead 69-70). Postal censorship was also a means of preventing loyal subjects from inadvertently leaking information. Felstead notes how futile it would have been to censor the correspondence of soldiers fighting in France if, on returning to England, those soldiers 'were able to write freely to friends in Holland' (73). British postal censors examined mail going to and coming from Northern Europe (Felstead 69). The Lawrences received letters from Germany as well as copies of the *Berliner Tageblatt*. There is no indication that the censors found anything objectionable in the Lawrences' incoming mail. Whether the same is true of the letters Frieda sent to her relatives cannot be said. It must be realized, however, that towards the end of the war about 375,000 letters a day were checked and that in 1917 approximately 180,000,000

were examined (Felstead 82). In view of these statistics, the monitoring of Frieda's correspondence must be seen as routine and not an indication that the Lawrences had been singled out by the authorities.

In short, if Scotland Yard had suspected Frieda, they would have called her in for questioning. It would make little sense to interrogate Mountsier while leaving the Lawrences relatively unmolested in Cornwall. The fact is that Scotland Yard had reason to suspect Mountsier in his own right because of his nationality and his profession.

During the fall of 1916, Scotland Yard was hard at work cracking a German espionage ring which employed American journalists as agents. According to Basil Thomson:

It was not be expected that the Germans would do no recruiting among the Americans as long as the United States remained neutral. American journalists were travelling to all the belligerent countries, and were allowed to see much that could not properly be shown to private citizens ... All the respectable American newspapers were very careful in the selection of their foreign correspondents during the War, and it is, perhaps, for that reason that there was no cause for suspicion until late in 1916. (193)

In the summer of that year, George Vaux Bacon, whom Felstead calls 'the central figure in the most widespread spy conspiracy of the war', arrived in England. On 20 September, identifying himself as a representative of the Central Press of New York, Bacon applied for and was granted a travel permit to Rotterdam. On the same day, he wrote a letter containing 'numerous' and unnecessary underlinings to a German agent living in Amsterdam. For this reason, officials suspected Bacon of being a German spy but, because the letter had come to their attention after Bacon's departure, they could do little more than put him under surveillance and notify the port authorities to look out for him (Felstead 233-4; see also Thomson 193-4).

About this time, Sir Guy Gaunt, in charge of overseeing British interests in the United States, intercepted a spy bound for England. The spy turned informer and provided a full account of the German plan to flood England with journalists. He identified the man who had recruited him and who gave the spies their orders as Sanders. The informer also revealed that Sanders instructed his agents to visit Ireland, where the Germans had already financed the Dublin rebellion, in order to determine 'the possibilities of further trouble there' (Felstead 237-9; see also Thomson 194-5).

On 3 November, Bacon returned to England and spent the next three weeks travelling around the country; throughout this period he was watched and his correspondence scrutinised. On 26 November, Bacon crossed to Dublin. Scotland Yard had no reason to doubt that Bacon was in Ireland for purposes of espionage and, early in December, asked him to come in on a 'confidential matter.' Bacon complied, was detained and, on 3 February 1917, confessed. He identified his contact in New York as Davis, a man whose real name was Charles Winnenberg. Davis had told Felstead the Germans wanted details of British 'anti-aircraft defence, the movements and *moral* [sic] of ... troops, the actual whereabouts of the British squadrons in Scottish waters, and anything he might be able to get hold of concerning ... new battleships' (Felstead 235-43; see also Thomson 194-7).

Shortly after Bacon's arrest, British officials tipped the United States Secret Service about the conspiracy and forwarded Bacon's photograph to them. This enabled the Secret Service to connect Bacon with Sanders and Winnenberg. *The New York Times* refers to Sanders as Albert A. Sander, dramatic editor of the *Deutsches Journal*, and to Winnenberg as Charles W. Wunnenberg.³ Both worked for the Central Powers War Films Exchange. They were arrested on 19 February 1917 for 'violating the Federal law against carrying on a military enterprise against a foreign country.' Specifically, they were charged with 'sending bogus American newspaper men to England there to obtain military information to be forwarded to this country and thence sent to the Central Powers' ('Arrested' 1).

The spy ring operated from 1 January 1916 to 21 February 1917 ('Find 3'). The agents, most of whom were American citizens, all had ties with newspapers in the United States. Their mission was to obtain 'information in England which would be useful to Germany in waging "ruthless submarine warfare," as well as in other ways' ('Alleged Spies'). According to the indictment, the information included:

the dates of the sailing of merchant ships, the conditions under which the civil and military population were living, the apparent amount of foodstuffs available for consumption [sic] within the kingdom, the amount of distress and want that might be caused within the kingdom by the efforts of the naval force of the Empire of Germany to prevent the passage of ships to the ports of the said kingdom, and divers [sic] other matters. ('Find 3')

Sander and Wunnenberg insisted on their innocence but finally pleaded guilty to the charges against them. It was rumoured they did so in order to protect higher ranking German agents in the United States ('Spies Plead').

Although probably the best known of the journalist spies, Bacon was not the only one. The *New York Times* reports that at least seven and perhaps as many as fourteen journalists were involved ('Alleged Spies'). Felstead and Thomson mention others. Both emphasise, however, that the authorities had no reason to doubt the bona fides of most American correspondents (Felstead 249-52; Thomson 199-200). Scotland Yard, then, must have had grounds other than nationality and profession for arresting Robert Mountsier.

Who was Robert Mountsier and why was he in England? The *New York Times* identifies him as automobile editor of the *New York Sun* from 1914 to 1916 ('Robert Mountsier'). According to a biographical note in Asia which published his article 'An Abyssinian "Book of Prayers"', Mountsier 'turned war correspondent when the war broke out ('Contents').

The clipping in the files of the Alumni Record Office reports that, at the outset of the war, Mountsier was working for the *New York Evening Sun* as literary editor and later edited a page of the 'comic paper' Judge. In March 1915, he sailed to England on the last voyage completed by the *Lusitania*; he went on to Holland, where he awaited the United States' reaction to the sinking of the *Lusitania*. When war was not declared, he travelled to Berlin, Budapest and Vienna. Mountsier returned to England in June, 'where he prepared a series of articles for the London Daily News'. In August, attempting to find out about English prisoners, he was arrested in Constantinople. During the interval between November 1915, when he returned to New York, and October 1916, when he set out again for England, he spent some time 'on the Mexican border for the Newspaper Enterprise Association'.

Much of the information contained in the clipping can be verified. 'Judge's Between Covers' bearing Mountsier's by-line first ran in the 31 October 1914 issue of Judge. The column continued until 26 June 1915 but, during its last two months, appeared infrequently and in much shortened form. On 8 July 1915, the *Daily News and Leader* published the first of three articles by A. Robert Mountsier. An editorial note identifies him as literary editor of Judge and 'formerly' of the *New York Sun*. In these articles Mountsier describes conditions in Budapest and Vienna and chronicles his three-day journey from Budapest to London ('Budapest', 'Vienna', 'From Budapest').

Prior to returning to New York in November 1915, Mountsier stayed in London. In mid-October, Lawrence asked Kot to send Mountsier a copy of the Signature (*Letters* 2, 410). After Mountsier and Andrews visited Cornwall in November 1916, Lawrence told Catherine Carswell and Cynthia Asquith that he had known Mountsier 'last year' (*Letters* 3, 25, 27).

Lawrence believed Mountsier represented 'the leading New York papers' and had come to England 'to interview the leading authors' (*Letters* 3, 27). He told Mark Gertler that Mountsier wanted to interview Gilbert Cannan and gave Mountsier advice for getting in touch with Cannan and John Masfield (*Letters* 3, 28, 71). For the years 1914-18, however, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* lists just two articles by Mountsier. 'Three Loyal Children of France,' co-authored by Mabel Louise Mountsier, describes the contribution made by three French children to the war effort. 'Spiritism in England' mentions Israel Zangwill and John Galsworthy (515-6) and refers to an interview with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (516-7), but the essay deals with spiritualism, whose increasing popularity Robert Graves noticed in the autumn of 1916 (Williams 125), rather than with literary matters.

Mountsier's attention was focused on the war, specifically on conditions on the home front, as much as, if not more than on the literary scene. Lawrence, in the same letter in which he mentioned Cannan and Masfield, advised Mountsier to talk to Bertrand Russell, who was very anti-war' and who would probably help him contact 'all the Union of Democratic Control people - Lowes Dickinson, Gilbert Murray' (*Letters* 3, 71). Condemned by the right wing press as pro-German and traitorous, the UDC had ties with the labour movement, especially the Independent Labour Party whose membership included numerous pacifists (Carsten 176). Thomson, with grudging objectivity, sums it up as follows:

the Union became the rallying point for most of the Pacifists in the country, and though the Union itself disclaimed any desire to hinder the prosecution of the War, it could not be said to have done anything to support it... But while the Union included people whose attitude is always pro- anybody except pro-British, there were others who would have deeply resented any imputation of a lack of patriotism. (300)

Mountsier also had an interest in war industry and labour but apparently suggested that others do the research and writing. Esther Andrews promised to send him 'the Woolwich thing', which she feared was 'not very good' but was willing to rewrite ([4 January 1917]).⁴ Woolwich was the site of a Royal Arsenal which employed both men and women to produce shells, guns and steel for tanks (Carsten 173; Williams 57-8). Andrews planned a piece on 'women in general', which she wanted to introduce with a discussion of conscription. She wrote to Selfridge, the merchant, hoping to get his views, but sent the letter to Mountsier, asking him, if he approved the idea, to send it on to Selfridge ([5 January 1917]).⁵ Later she reported, 'I am...working...on the first general article on woman's work' ('Sunday' [7 January 1917]).⁶ Mountsier may have suggested an article on the same topic to Lawrence, for

on 20 January Lawrence told him, 'I can't write about women and the war, and labour' (*Letters* 3, 78).

In addition to the UDC and the war industry, Mountsier focused on the British economy, especially the food supply. When he returned to the United States, he made his housekeeping accounts for the months he had spent in England available to the *New York Times*. On 23 February 1917, the day after his arrival in New York, the newspaper published a comparison of food prices and taxicab fares in New York and London. The article, using Mountsier's ledger as its source, reports that in London potatoes cost 4 cents a pound; cauliflower, 4 cents a head; and unsweetened butter, 44 cents a pound. It contains comments by Mountsier on the price and availability of cabbage, the rationing of sugar and the cost and quality of restaurant food ('Finds London Food'). In it, Mountsier states:

While the necessity for economising in the use of food is felt, I have been told by economists and shipping men that England is well provided with food for a long time ahead, so that the submarine campaign must become far more effective than it has been to make a great impression. I have very good authority for saying that England has imported vast quantities of foodstuffs and for a long period has been storing it against the possibility that the German submarine campaign might cut deeply into shipping. ('Finds London Food')

Just two days earlier, the *New York Times* reported that the journalist spies had been sent to England to obtain information 'which would be useful to Germany in waging 'ruthless submarine warfare' ('Alleged Spies'). Ten days later, the newspaper would quote from the indictment against Sander, Wunnenberg and Bacon that the information included the apparent amount of foodstuffs available for consumption [sic] within the kingdom' ('Find 3').

Moutsier's interests also included the 'Irish situation' for, according to the clipping in the files of the Alumni Record Office, he travelled to Ireland in the autumn of 1916 to study that country. The clipping attributes his arrest to his 'Irish adventures' which 'were not looked upon favorably by the English'. A letter from Esther Andrews, postmarked 20 December 1916 and addressed to him at the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin, reveals that these adventures occurred just before the Christmas visit to the Lawrences. Andrews wrote, 'I had a letter from Lawrence tonight asking me what day we were coming.' Evidently, Mountsier left Dublin before Andrews' letter reached him, for on 21 December it was forwarded to him care of John Lane

at the Bodley Head ('Tuesday Eve,' [19 December 1916]).⁷

Three days later, on Christmas Eve, a police sergeant arrived at Higher Tregertthen. Lawrence told Stanley Hocking that the sergeant 'wanted to know all the details about us, including Mr Mountsier' (Hocking 256), but in *Kangaroo* the sergeant, acting on 'military orders', comes specifically to interview Monsell [Mountsier]. Lawrence attributes the incident to America's position on the war: 'those were early days, when America was still being jeered at for standing out and filling her pockets. She was not yet the intensely loved Ally' (249). It seems much more likely, however, that Mountsier's recent stay in Ireland prompted the enquiry.

In what capacity was Mountsier known to Scotland Yard? As automobile editor, literary editor or war correspondent? Whatever his position, he must have looked suspicious. He arrived in England in the autumn of 1916, the time of the journalist spy conspiracy. During his stay, he spoke to various experts about England's food supply with reference to the German submarine campaign. Within two months, he made two trips to Cornwall. Why? What kind of research did an automobile editor hope to carry out in an agricultural community? How many 'leading authors' did a literary editor expect to find living in this restricted area? Most importantly, just as the journalist spies had been instructed to do, he crossed from England to Ireland and, as Andrews' letter probably written on 19 December 1916 makes clear, was in Dublin less than four weeks after George Vaux Bacon travelled there. Indeed, it would be surprising if Robert Mountsier, given his profession, his interests and his visits to Cornwall and Ireland, had not been arrested by Scotland Yard.

Whether Mountsier was one of the journalist spies or was even suspected of being one will perhaps never been determined. Felstead, however, in closing his account of the conspiracy, makes this intriguing remark:

In January 1917, we had occasion to detain another American journalist, whom we had every reason to suspect was an emissary of Wunnenberg. It proved extremely difficult to secure any evidence, however, and after a good many examinations 'M', as I shall designate him, was sent back to America, with the parting salutation that he would be arrested if he ever attempted to land in England again. (251)

The 'M' suggests Mountsier and the date corresponds to the time of his detention. Although the clipping reports that Mountsier was arrested on 31 December 1916 but 'immediately released', he was in fact held overnight. After news of the arrest reached Cornwall, Esther Andrews, who had stayed on with the Lawrences, wrote

to him, 'I rage when I think of your spending a night in prison simply *on suspicion*' ([4 January 1917]). Similarly, in *Kangaroo* Monsell is 'kept for a night in a cell' and not released until the 'next evening' (249). Thus, Mountsier would still have been in custody on 1 January 1917.

Whether Mountsier was questioned several times, as was 'M', is not known. Andrews' letters to him clearly indicate, however, that Scotland Yard continued to suspect him after his release. In one, she protested, 'You dont [sic] seem to mind not being able to go to France – if you are *cleared*, why wont [sic] they let you out of the country?' ([4 January 1917]). In another, 'I do hope Scotland Yard have let up on you it makes my blood boil every time I think of it' ('Sunday' [7 January 1917]). On or about 10 January, she asked, 'Why in the world is Scotland Yard still pursuing you?' ([10 January]).⁸ Thus, more than a week after his arrest, Mountsier was still suspect.

Like 'M', Monsell is 'advised to return to America' (*Kangaroo* 249), but Mountsier did not arrive in New York until almost eight weeks after his arrest. Lawrence's letters reveal, however, that Mountsier left England sooner than he expected to and that his plans for the return trip changed several times. Originally, Mountsier intended to sail to the United States on 1 March 1917 (*Letters* 3, 71-3). That he moved the date up to 24 January is evident from Lawrence's comment of Saturday 20 January, 'So you are really going on Wednesday!' (*Letters* 3, 78). But Mountsier did not go on Wednesday. In fact, his departure was postponed at least twice, first until the last weekend in January and then until mid-February (*Letters* 3, 83, 85, 92). He finally sailed on the *Philadelphia* which docked in New York on 22 February ('Finds London Food').

Whether Mountsier and 'M' were one and the same, whether Mountsier was actually a spy, the fact remains that he looked suspicious enough to Scotland Yard to be arrested. That was something that the Lawrences, despite the inconveniences they endured and the harassment they suffered, had not experienced. It must be concluded, therefore, not that Mountsier was arrested because of his friendship with the Lawrences, but that the Lawrences came under official suspicion because of their friendship with Mountsier. Thus, the Lawrences' troubles with the authorities can be traced to late 1916 when Mountsier made two visits to Cornwall. This date corresponds with that given by Catherine Carswell, who notes that 'The cloud of war suspicion ... had begun to gather even before Christmas ...' (90), and by Delany, who, despite his theories about Mountsier's arrest (283) and his belief that 'The authorities ... distrusted Lawrence and Frieda from the beginning of the war ...' (319), observes that 'after Mountsier's Christmas visit the Lawrences came under a steadily darkening cloud of suspicion' (316).

Carswell claims that by August 'Lawrence's letters were being held back and examined' (91), but it is likely that official tampering with his correspondence began

as early as January 1917 and did so because of his friendship with Mountsier. On 6 January, Lawrence posted two almost identical letters to Mountsier – one addressed to his home and the other to his office (*Letters* 3, 68 n10). Both contain detailed accounts of the mail sent and received. Lawrence reported that, after hearing of Mountsier's treatment by Scotland Yard, he had written once and Esther Andrews several times. In one letter, he continued, 'I expect you will have got these by now. We are in a black fury at the insolent pawing of these officials.' In the other, he acknowledged receipt of a letter from Mountsier with an enclosure for Andrews and added the postscript, 'packet for E. not arrived – only laundry' (*Letters* 3, 67-8).

Suspicious of Mountsier, the authorities almost certainly monitored his correspondence. Andrews must have assumed that they did, for she declared she hoped Scotland Yard would read her letter ([4 January 1917]). If Andrews' letters were intercepted, so too were Lawrence's. The authorities would have been interested, as Delany has pointed out (283), in his suggestion that Bertrand Russell could help Mountsier contact leading members of the UDC. They would also have been interested in Lawrence's letter of 7 February. After commenting on the submarine attack on two ships off the Zennor coast the day before, he related, 'My sister writes a ghastly story from Glasgow, of a new and splendid submarine on her trial trip in the Clyde: she dived and never came up, all watching expecting her' (*Letters* 3, 88). Thanks to the spy turned informer Scotland Yard knew that Sanders required his agents to obtain information concerning British battleships and 'other recently built classes', intelligence that could only be gathered in Scotland (Felstead 239-40).

A few days later, Lawrence wrote that the authorities had refused to endorse his passport (*Letters* 3, 92). Since Mountsier arrived in New York on 22 February, this letter is probably the last Lawrence sent him prior to his sailing. Postmarked 12 February, it is probably the last letter Lawrence wrote Mountsier for just over three years, for the next known letter to Mountsier is dated 16 February 1920 (*Letters* 3, 476-7). Such an abrupt end to the correspondence seems improbable, and the possibility must be considered that at least some of Lawrence's subsequent wartime letters to Mountsier did not pass the censor.

Forced to leave Cornwall, Lawrence protested that he had not the 'faintest notion' how he had 'incurred suspicion'. His claim that he and Frieda were 'as innocent even of pacifist activities, let alone spying in any sort, as the rabbits of the field outside' and his admission that Frieda had been 'corresponding with her people in Germany, through a friend in Switzerland but through the ordinary post' indicate that he did have some ideas (*Letters* 3, 168, 175). In contrast, Lawrence seems to know why Mountsier had been arrested. On receiving the news, he lamented that one could not 'just say to the fools "Yes, I am the cleverest spy in the universe" and set them

ransacking nothingness to its farthest corners' (*Letters* 3, 65). After the war, Lawrence wrote to Irene Whittley, daughter of his Cornish landlord, that Mountsier was 'the Amer. who stayed with is and was supposed to be the spy' (*Letters* 3, 713). To Mountsier himself, he confided, 'I think Wm H [William Henry Hocking] was scared when you were kicked out of Zennor and you were a "Spy"' (*Letters* 3, 634).

NOTES

1. Mountsier graduated from the University of Michigan in 1909. The clipping begins, 'Robert Mountsier, '09, has just returned to America after an adventurous four years in Europe ...' and ends, 'He ... spent a few days in Ann Arbor the later part of January, before returning to New York.' Handwritten at the bottom is '1920'. I am indebted to Mrs Lauralee A. Ensign, Operations Manager of the Alumni Records Office of the University of Michigan, for supplying me with 'all copies contained in our files on Mr Mountsier' (Ensign, 29 June 1990). Mrs Ensign states that she is unable to identify the source of the clipping (20 July 1990).
2. Those to whom Lawrence wrote about Bodmin include Koteliensky, Dollie Radford, Barbara Low, Catherine Carswell, Amy Lowell and Cynthia Asquith (*Letters* 2, 618-9, 623-6, 644, 648); about the expulsion, Cecil Gray, Cynthia Asquith, J.B. Pinker, Catherine Carswell and Amy Lowell (*Letters* 3, 167-9, 189-90).
3. The *New York Times* does not identify Wunnenberg as Davis.
4. Extracts from the letters of Esther Andrews are reproduced by kind permission of Mr Andrews Wanning. This letter, which begins 'Your letter just rec'd....', is not dated, but its contents strongly suggest it was the first Andrews wrote to Mountsier after news of his arrest reached Cornwall. Since Lawrence responded to the news on 4 January 1917 (*Letters* 3, 65-6), Andrews' letter can be provisionally given the same date.
5. This letter, which begins 'I was greatly relieved to get your letter today....', is not dated but was most likely written on 5 January 1917. Andrews told Mountsier, 'Your predicament seems to have put the last touch on L's wavering decision and he is writing today to see about going to America.' On 5 January, Lawrence wrote to Eddie Marsh for advice about going to New York (*Letters* 3, 67).
6. Dated 'Sunday', this letter must have been written on 7 January 1917, the only Sunday between Mountsier's arrest and Andrews' return to London. On Saturday 13 January, Lawrence told Catherine Carswell, 'Esther Andrews has gone back to 131 Cheyne Walk...' (*Letters* 3, 75).
7. Dated 'Tuesday Eve.', this letter was probably written on 19 December 1916, the day before it was first postmarked.
8. Andrews' travel plans help to date this letter, which begins 'Thanks for the paper and the nougat....' On 'Tuesday' she informed Mountsier she would return to London either Saturday or Sunday and would do as he advised about the police. The 'Tuesday' letter must have been written on 9 January since on 'Sunday' (7 January) she was uncertain of her travel plans. In this undated letter, Andrews was more definite, stating she was going into St Ives to inform the police that she was leaving for London on Saturday. Thus, the undated letter was most likely written after the one dated 'Tuesday', that is to say, on or about 10 January.

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