

Vera Volkhovsky (1881- 1966))

Vera was born in Takalinsk in Siberia and smuggled out of Russia, at a very early age, disguised as a boy. Her mother had committed suicide and her father, Felix, a well-known dissident, was already living abroad, having left Russia a few years earlier because of his political views.

Vera attended St Felix School, Southwold and then spent two years at Somerville College, Oxford, before embarking on her training at Madame Österberg's college in 1903. In 1907, Ethel Adair Roberts, the Principal of Dunfermline College of Hygiene and Physical Training, appointed Vera to her staff. Vera went to teach at St Paul's School for girls in 1910 until about 1913. In January 1917 she joined the teaching staff at Dartford. As senior members of staff, Vera and E.R. Clarke were presented to H.M. King George V and H.M. Queen Mary when they visited Dartford in 1918.

Vera moved in unexpected circles. Early in 1914 she went to stay with D.H. Lawrence for a month in Albergo delle Palme. She fell in love with Bertrand Russell who did not return her interest. In *Bertrand Russell and the Volkhovsky letters* it records that she worked in the Women's Land Army during WWI and also engaged in Russian émigré politics. She was the representative of the Social Revolutionary Party and on the Committee of Delegates of Russian Socialist Groups in London. Vera married Montague Fordham in 1921 but it was not a happy relationship and they separated. Vera obtained permission to go to Russia in 1923 and during her year there she adopted two Russian Civil war orphans, a boy and a girl. Vera translated many of her father's books but very little is known about her subsequent life. She dropped out of Russian émigré circles, with which she had been proud to be involved, and died in London in 1966.