The Rawnsley British Union of Fascists Collection. Catalogue

Archive reference: GB 0532 BUF

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# INTRODUCTION

This small archive offers insights into the life and motivations of Nellie Driver and other members of the British Union of Fascists (BUF) through autobiography, fiction and interviews. Nellie Driver’s autobiography in particular has been a key source for many researchers, offering a detailed, first-hand perspective on the BUF in the North-West and its place in the life of a working-class woman.

Find out more about Nellie Driver in Number 67 of the 100 Objects exhibition: From the Shadows of Exile.  
<http://100objectsbradford.wordpress.com>

This description was written in 2001. It is being made available online with minor edits as part of our Quick Wins programme.

Alison Cullingford, Special Collections Librarian.

# Collection description

## Reference code

GB 0532 BUF

## Title

The Rawnsley British Union of Fascists Collection

## Dates

1965-1981.

## Level of description

Collection.

## Extent

0.3 linear metres.

## Name of creator

Stuart Rawnsley, Peace Studies researcher

## Biographical history

Recollections of members of the British Union of Fascists, collected by Stuart Rawnsley while researching for his Ph.D. thesis, *Fascism and Fascists in Britain in the 1930s*.

The majority of this collection reflects the experiences of Nellie Driver (1914-1981), from Nelson, Lancashire. She and her mother joined the BUF in 1935, when the movement was seeking to increase its membership among unemployed textile workers in the North West. She played a key role as organiser for her district and took part in leafletting, writing to newspapers and other campaigning activities. Nellie Driver was imprisoned under Defence Regulation 18B first at Holloway and then on the Isle of Man, during which time she moved away from BUF ideas and returned to religion.

## Immediate source of acquisition

Donated to the J.B. Priestley Library by Dr. Rawnsley.

## Scope and content

*From the Shadows of Exile* (photocopy typescript of an unpublished autobiography by Nellie Driver, covering her membership of the BUF and her internment), *The Mill* (photocopy typescript of an unpublished novel, based on her experiences) and taped interviews with former BUF members, with typed transcripts.

## Access conditions

Available to researchers, by appointment. Access to archive material is subject to preservation requirements and must also conform to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act and any other appropriate legislation. There are currently no restrictions on access to this collection.

## Copyright/conditions governing reproduction

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The copyright holders for this material are currently unknown. Special Collections will assist where possible with identifying copyright owners but responsibility for ensuring copyright clearance rests with the user of the material.

## Language of material

English.

## Related archives

Sheffield University Library Special Collections and Archives : British Union Collection, Blackshirts in Kingston Project, John Beckett Collection, Fascism in Great Britain Collection, Joyce Papers, Robert Saunders Papers.

## Location of originals

Nellie Driver items in section 1 are photocopies of originals held by Local Studies at Nelson Library.

## Publication note

Stuart Rawnsley, *Fascism and Fascists in Britain in the 1930s: a case study of Fascism in the North of England in a period of economic and political change* : Ph.D. thesis (Bradford, 1982).

## Archivist’s note

Described by John Brooker, minor edits by Alison Cullingford.

## Rules or conventions

ISAD(G) 2nd ed.

## Date(s) of description

29 May 2001; minor edits May 2013.

## Indexing

### Persons

Rawnsley, Stuart J.

Driver, Nellie.

### Corporate Bodies

British Union of Fascists.

### Subjects

Fascism – Great Britain.

World War, 1939-1945 – Prisoners and prisons – British.

# Archive contents

## 1. Autobiographical material from Miss Nellie Driver

1/A *From the Shadows of Exile*. Photocopy typescript of an unpublished autobiography from her birth in Lancashire in September 1914 to her return to normal life circa 1945 after her internment as a locally-prominent member of the BUF. Written circa 1965. 2 copies, 1 bound.

1/B *The Mill*. Photocopy typescript of a novel, based largely on the experiences of *From the Shadows of Exile*.

## 2. Taped interviews, late 1970s

The tapes were copied from the originals in 1988.

2/A Nellie Driver: interviews 13 December 1976 & May 1978, two 90-minute cassettes, with transcripts.

2/B R.R. Bellamy:

2/B/1 *We Marched with Mosley*. Autobiography. Photocopy typescript of unpublished autobiography and 90-minute cassette with transcript.

2/B/2 Interview, two 60-minute cassettes.

2/C Arthur C. Collinge: interview, 60-minute cassette.

2/D William Eaton: interview, 60-minute cassette.

2/E Arthur Fawcett: interview, 90-minute cassette, with transcript.

2/F Tom Pickles: interview 10 September 1977, 60-minute cassette, with transcript.

2/G B. Row: interview 24 August 1978, 90-minute cassette, with transcript.

2/H G.P. Sutherst: interview 16 February 1977, 90-minute cassette, with transcript.