

KATE SHARPLEY LIBRARY

ADDRESS:
Box KS
121 Railton Road,
London SE24
England

The Kate Sharpley Library was founded in 1979 by a group of South London based anarchists. Its purpose is to facilitate research into the past history of our movement and as a centre for the documentation of present day publications from the British and international anarchist movements.

The Kate Sharpley Library has at present in its collection over fifteen hundred books and pamphlets, and very large numbers of papers, journals, magazines, leaflets and posters in more than twenty two languages.

The library also receives on a regular basis over fifty publications, the overall majority of these are libertarian in outlook, many are local anarchist newsletters which are unknown outside their own region.

In addition to this, the library is in the process of setting up its own film and sound archives together with the Anarchist Film Society.

At present the KSL has no permanent home, the main collection of books, pamphlets, etc. are stored in private premises but the library make use of the '121 Bookshop' address in Brixton. As the library is only a reference centre the lack of public premises does not hinder its work at this stage but we hope that sometime in the near future we shall be able to provide those who wish to use its facilities with a reading and research room, until then all those who wish to use the library must write to us in advance.

The Kate Sharpley Library is always on the lookout for material relating to our movements history and we will be only too pleased to received donations of books, pamphlets, etc. The library also needs money to purchase new books and maintain its day-to-day running costs (mail, printing,

etc). The KSL is run entirely by voluntary help and receives no donations or financial assistance from any organisation.

If you would like to make use of the library please write to us stating subject required and any other details to help us narrow the retrieval down to a minimum. Please do not forget to enclose a self addressed envelope.

If you would like to help the library and become a 'Friend of the Kate Sharpley Library' the charge is £5 per year. We can offer very little in return but the knowledge that you are helping a worthwhile project and that as a 'Friend of the Kate Sharpley Library' you shall be kept informed of all new developments in the library.

All cheques, postal orders, etc. should be made payable to the '121 Bookshop', (we shall be opening our own account shortly).

kate sharpley

Sixty-five years ago Queen Mary was handing out medals in Greenwich, most of them for 'fallen heroes' being presented to the 'women-folk'. One 22-year old woman, said by the local press to be 'under the influence of anarchist propaganda', having collected medals for her dead father, brother and boyfriend, then threw them in the Queen's face, saying, 'If you think so much of them, you can keep them'. The Queen's face was scratched and so was that of one of her attendant ladies. The police, not a little under the influence of patriotic propaganda, then grabbed the woman and beat her up. When she was released from the police station a few days later, no charges being brought, she was scarcely recognisable.

The woman was Kate Sharpley, who had been active in the Woolwich anarchist group and helped keep it going through the difficult years of World War I. After her clash with the police she was sacked from her job 'on suspicion' of dishonesty' (there was nothing missing but a policeman

had called checking up on her. . .) and, selling libertarian pamphlets in the street, she was recognised by the police and warned that if she appeared there again she would be charged with 'soliciting as a prostitute' (which in those days would have been a calamity, and even today a disaster, if once convicted). Isolated from her family, and with the group broken up, she moved out of activity, away from the neighbourhood, and married.

I met her, by chance, last year (1978) in Lewisham. Twice widowed, she remembered the anarchist movement with nostalgia, and gave me a fascinating account of the local group in the years before World War I. Unfortunately, she was already very ill, and a few weeks ago she died, I was told by one of her neighbours.

I had, though, asked for for a message to the Anarchist movement today. Her answer: 'Tell the kids they're doing all right, they don't need any advice from me.' Especially she praised the young women of today: 'I wouldn't have had to take cover like I did if women of my day had any guts', she said. But she did have guts. A few only in 1917 dared take any action in bereaved England.

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index summary

1. Anarchism/Libertarian socialism

- Anarchist theory, history, biographies, etc.
- Current anarchist news/analysis
- Anarcho-syndicalism
- Anarchist feminism
- Anarchist communism
- Councilism

2 International (each sub-section includes anarchist material as well as general information and counter-information).

North America, Central America, South America, Africa, Asia, Middle East, Australasia, Soviet Union, Eastern

Europe, Poland, Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Ireland, Greece, Turkey, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, etc.

3. Left Politics/State socialism

- Marxism
- Stalinism
- Trotskyism
- Social Democracy

4. Counter-Information

- Prisons/police/law
- Fascism/anti-fascism/racism
- Sexuality/feminism
- Militarism/anti-militarism
- Capitalism/business
- Education/media
- Technology/ecology/environmentalism
- Housing/squatting
- Counter-culture

5. Trade Unions

- Trade Union organisation
- Shop Floor committees
- Strike/industrial sabotage
- Industrial/company information
- History

Yes, I would like to become a friend of the
Kate Sharpley Library:

Name: _____

Address: _____

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £ _____
(made payable to the '121 Bookshop').
