

30 Holford Square, St Pancras, London — 1902

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and his wife Nadezhda Krupskaya resided at **30 Holford Square** from **April 1902** until **May 1903**. As Bob Henderson's seminal article, *Lenin and the British Museum* (Solanus, Vol 4) points out, it was from this address that Lenin, using his now customary pseudonym, Jacob Richter, first wrote to the Director of the British Museum asking permission to study in the museum library. St Pancras Station was approximately ten-minutes walk east of the property and Kings Cross Station was just a few minutes around the corner. According to James Maxton's *Lenin* (1938) the only special advantages the house had were that it is situated 'between the British Museum and Highgate Cemetery, where Karl Marx was buried.'

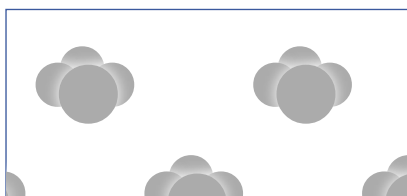
As the spies of Russia's secret police were everywhere, it's unlikely that Lenin took any risks, so it may be safe to assume that the house and its occupants had been screened ahead of his arrival and were part and parcel of a trusted support network. Lenin would be hosting group meetings here, so secrecy would have to be maintained. As Maxton points out, 'the care with which Lenin concealed his identity was no mere stage-trick, but an absolutely necessary precaution for the safety of his lieutenants and followers in Russia itself.' (*Lenin*, 1938, p.58). And on a salary of £6 a year, Lenin and his wife would have to live as cheaply as possible. Nadezhda Krupskaya would later recollect that it was 'the Takhtariyevs' who fixed them up with the property (Apollinaria Alexandrovna Yakubova and her husband, Konstantin Takhtarev — *Memories Of Lenin*, Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, 1930).



The house's proximity to Harry Quelch's printing offices at **37a Clerkenwell Green** meant it was ideal for managing Lenin's *Iskra* newspaper. Harry Quelch, the former secretary of *The London South Side Labour Protection League* who stood as candidate for *Labour and the Social Democratic Party* in 1906, had been handed the premises by William Morris and it was from here that Quelch produced his *Chants of Labour* and *Justice* newspapers. Quelch extended the same generosity to Lenin for the purposes of managing *Iskra*.

There's a possible connection between the Holford Square property and Lenin's 1905 address, 16 Percy Circus home to **Philip Whitwell Wilson**. Wilson, the MP for St Pancras South recalibrated Quelch's 1909 speech, *The War and Social Revolution* just a few years after its debut. Wilson had provided Lenin with accommodation at Percy Circus during his 1905 visit (see *The War and Social Revolution*, Philip Whitwell Wilson, *Fortnightly Review*, Volume 22, October 1915). By 1918 the printing offices of 37 Clerkenwell Green were being used at the headquarters of Ben Tillet, Wily Thorne and James O' Grady's *National Socialist Party*.

Originally, 37 Clerkenwell Green had been home to the **London Patriotic Club**, one of a number of groups attempting to form alliances between the radical liberal movements demanding votes for women and those supporting Irish Home Rule. Patrons at this time included **Prince Peter Kropotkin**. Membership consisted of everyone from Socialists and Liberals to followers of *Narodnaya Volya*, the Russian Revolutionary group responsible for the murder of Tsar Alexander II.

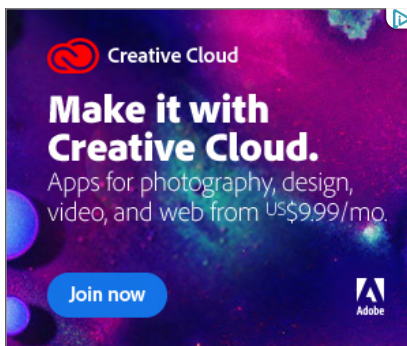




At 30 Holford Square Lenin would nourish and entertain a train of regular visitors including Trotsky, Plekhanov, the Takhtarevs and Novaya Zhizn editor, Maxim Litvinoff. Litvinoff remembers being taken to “two shabby little rooms ... so meagerly furnished that there were not enough chairs for those present.” (*Maxim Litvinoff Voll. II*, Arthur Upham Pope, 1943). Their contact with English Socialists came primarily through the Takhtarevs. By their own admission Lenin and Krupskaya knew little about the home life of the English Social Democrats. They found them to be a reserved people “who regarded the Bohemian life of the Russian emigres with a naive perplexity.” (*Memories Of Lenin*, 1930). They were just as critical of the Social Democrats they found themselves lodging with. Here, according to Krupskaya, “they sampled the whole bottomless inanity of petty bourgeois life.” (*Memories Of Lenin*, 1930, p53). Petty or not, it didn't stop the future Soviet leader from knitting himself and his plans into the warm fabric of bourgeois sympathies *

Samuel F. Deering & the Mysterious Fortunes of Frederick Case

The official occupants at 30 Holford Square at the time of Lenin's visit in 1902 were **Samuel Frederick Deering**, a 60-year old Solicitor's Clerk/Civil Servant living with his wife Sarah and 48-year old **Thomas Camps** and his wife Emily. Deering had been brought up at **4 Sidney Square** in Whitechapel, Stepney. He and his family had lived just yards from the infamous Sidney Street, scene of the revolutionary siege in 1911 (the siege took place at no.100 Sidney Street, see map below). According to *Lenin and the Revolution* (1947) by Christopher Hill the landlady's name was Mrs Emma Yeo of 24 Grafton Place, whose recently deceased husband Daniel had been a 'printing compositor' or 'typesetter' (Lenin's co-lodger in 1911, Winifred Gottschalk would use 9 Grafton Street on her marriage certificate). In fact, looking at their record in the 1901 Census it's clear that the Yeo family were all in publishing and that their Grafton Street abode had at one time been the premises of a Swedenborgian Church (Junior Members Society).



Little is known about Deering's earlier life. He disappears from the census of 1861 and 1871, so it may be he is the same Samuel Deering who becomes a Merchant Seaman on the 'Kangaroo' in 1853 and the same Samuel Frederick Deering who starts appearing at 4 Queen Street in Soho in the *Westminster Rates Books* (1634-1900) from 1873 onwards. At this time 4 Queen Street were the premises of the **Kopenhagen Brothers** (German tobacconists/cigar importers), represented by Leon, Julius and Jacob Kopenhagen. Julius Kopenhagen subsequently partnered Whitechapel's Joseph Gluckstein (b.1856) at the *Imperial of the Imperial Tobacco Company*. Joseph went onto father Sir Louis Gluckstein MP.

In 1916 Samuel Frederick Deering is drawn into a mysterious inheritance story featuring *Whitechapel Board of Guardians* and one of their patients, 79-year old **Frederick Case** who has died whilst in the care of their Infirmary. Here's what we know:

- Whitechapel health visitors find Frederick Case (b.1841) starving in his room in White Lion Street, Bishopsgate. According to a report in the *East London Observer* of January 1916, the old man is a recluse with no family or friends to speak of. He is befriended by a lady who owns the shop downstairs and she prepares his only known meals. She claims Case's days were spent chiefly at his desk

performing monetary calculations. The old man is found to be suffering 'mania and bronchitis' and taken into care at Whietchapel

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• After his death at the workhouse some weeks later, it is discovered that the 'impoverished' Frederick Case had over £10,000 invested in Consols, £4,000 in other securities and over £1,000 in the National Providential Bank. This amounts to nearly £890,000 in today's money.

- It is known that he would withdraw sums of money as large as £50 and £100 at intervals each month and would regularly cash his Consols dividends. What he did with this money remained a mystery as he appeared to be living in abject poverty (£50 is about £3,000 in today's money).
- His father **William Henry Case** (b.1812), the *Ward Beadle* of Bishopsgate, died in 1901 Frederick had left no will.
- The story goes nationwide and there is a significant volume of claims. The money is held by the trustees at the Board of Guardians.
- After a successful appeal featuring solicitors *Proudfoot & Chaplin* he money is eventually awarded to **Samuel Frederick Deering** who the Guardians believe to be a cousin of the deceased (see *Public Trustee Vs Deering*, 1916 C.903)
- Starting life as Oil & Colour Merchants Frederick and his father William become Rate Collectors in Bishopsgate during the mid-1880s. As Ward Beadle his father would have been responsible for coordinating and managing local elections.
- Frederick Case's brother William is believed to have left for South Africa some twenty years earlier.
- There are a number of years in the census in which Frederick Case cannot be accounted for.
- The women who attend his funeral are a Miss Siebert and her niece, Miss Emery & a Miss Keeler.

* In her memoirs Krupskaya talks of a 'Mr Raymond' who takes lessons in Russian at Holford Square and who at one time managed a bookshop. Many academics believe this to be 'Henry Rayment'. Henry's father George Rayment and grandfather Ebenezer Rayment ran the *Regent Park Boys Home* at 44 Euston Road in St Pancras. The home was founded in 1858 by publisher George Bell & Sons. Rayment's father had been born into the nonconformity movement that provided so much succour to the revolutionaries. Despite what Krupskaya claims in the book it's difficult to imagine the publisher George Bell ordering the young Rayment to keep his Socialism to himself. Rayment had been supporting Edward Bell in the purchase of a German library (Henry George Bohn, so adored by Thomas Carlyle) and Edward's father George Bell is said to have been very reassured by the philanthropic background of the young Rayment. Were Krupskaya's disparaging comments about the English Socialists designed to protect the trusted network they had benefitted from in London and who still remained so central to Soviet dreams of an Internationale? The fact that their publishing house occupied the property once owned by the freewheelin' opium-eater, Thomas de Quincey might offer a clue and it's interesting to note that he had journalistic concerns in Kendal, the home of Lenin's 1905 host, Philip Whitwell Wilson. But something else, far more murky and complex could be at work here.

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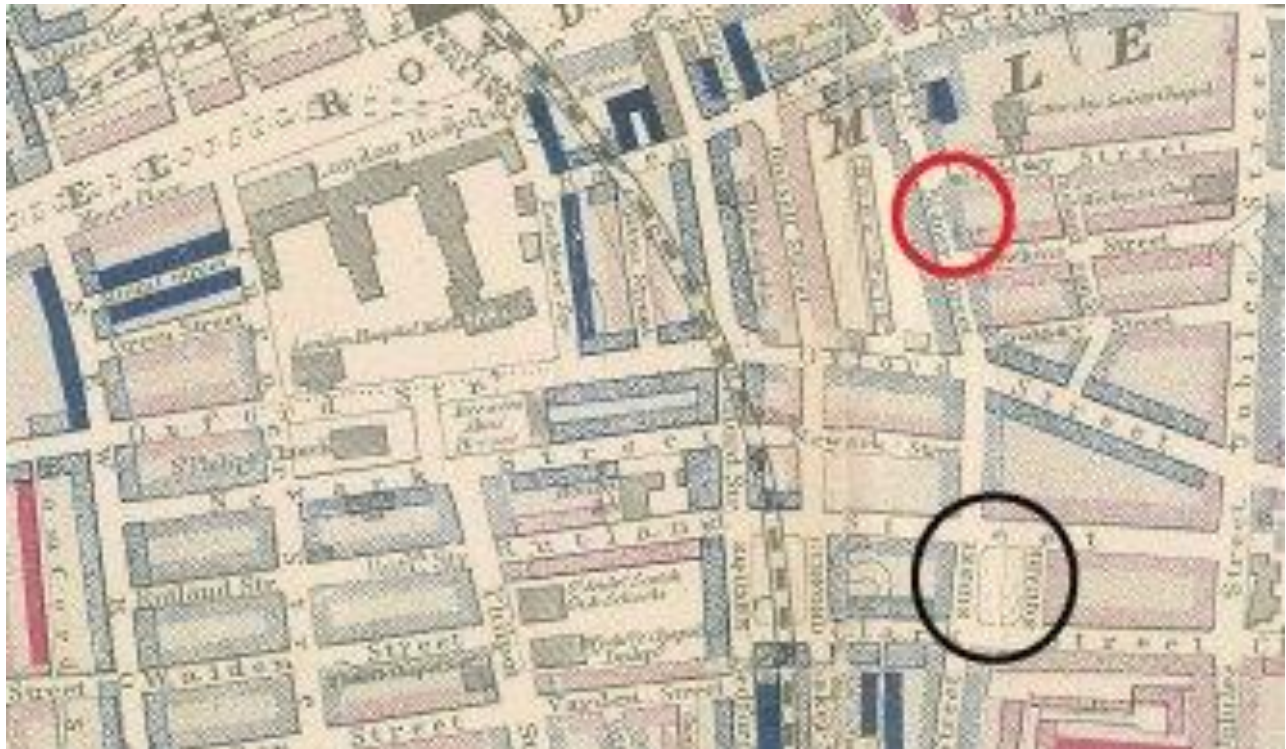
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Old map of Whitechapel and Stepney showing Sidney Street and Sidney Square

There has just died in Whitechapel Infirmity an old man named Frederick Case, who was found starving in his rooms over a shop in White Lion-street, Bishopsgate, E.C., where he had lived alone. He was an old man who never smiled, and his only friend was a woman who took compassion on him because of his poverty and loneliness, and used sometimes to bring him food. His days were spent chiefly at a desk making money calculations.

It has now been discovered, relates "Lloyd's News," that Case had £10,000 invested in Consols, £4,000 in other securities, and nearly £1,000 in the National Provincial Bank of England. The old man's father, who died 15 years ago leaving no will, used to live over a pork butcher's shop in Bishopsgate. No will of the son has yet been found.

At intervals of a month or so it was his custom to withdraw sums of as much as £50 and £100 from his current account at the bank, and he regularly cashed his Consols dividends. What has become of this money is a mystery.

His income from investments—apart from withdrawals at the bank—was approximately £300 a year, and his living expenses only a tenth of that amount.

Inquiries are being made to ascertain if any relatives of Case are living.

30	1	Joseph S. Deering	Head	m	59	Widow's Club	City of London
		Jared B.	Wife	m	62		Edg.
		Hannah Sampson	Head	m	48	Widow's Club	Bullman Bank
		Paul Meyer	Wife	m	48		S. Parson London

1901 Census

The will (dated May 5, 1892), with a codicil (dated Feb. 2, 1893), of Mr. Joseph Oppenheimer, late of Manchester, merchant, and of The Bower, Ashley Road, Bowdon, Cheshire, who died on Feb. 8, was proved at the Chester District Registry on March 17 by Miss Hannah Sampson and William Hughes Hilton, the executors, the value of the personal estate amounting to over £27,000. The testator bequeaths £200 each to the Jews' School (Cheetham, Manchester), the Congregation of British Jews (York Street, Cheetham, Manchester), and the Manchester Royal Infirmary; £3000 to his housekeeper, Hannah Sampson; £2000 each to his nephew Paul Meyer, and his friend Samuel Deering; £1000 each to his niece Jenny Heilbron, and Mrs. Margaret Elizabeth Cracknell; and legacies to other of his relatives and others. The residue of his property he gives to the said Hannah Sampson.

The will and codicil (both dated April 28, 1892) of François Pierre Benoit Victor Léon Sauvaire, Marquis de Barthélemy, Knight of the Legion of Honour, late of 15, Rue Cambacérès, Paris, who died on Jan. 17, were proved in London, in respect of his English property, on April 7 by Paul Lelièvre de la Morinière, the sole executor, the value of the personal estate amounting to upwards of £25,000. The testator bequeaths 1,000,000 f. each to his nephew Pierre and his niece Henrietta as wedding gifts;

Frederick Case's Fortune

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1902.

UNIVERSITY MAN, speaking French, Russian, knowing German, desires a POST as PRIVATE SECRETARY, Assistant in Scientific and Literary Researches, Master to a Pupil, or Companion - Traveller. Russian Lessons also. - Letters, A. A., 16, Camden Street, N W

A RUSSIAN LL.D. (and his Wife) would like to EXCHANGE RUSSIAN LESSONS for ENGLISH with an English Gentleman (or Lady). - Address Letters Mr. J. RICHTER, 30, Holford Square, Pentonville, W.C.

ST. DAVID'S COLLEGE, LAMPETER.

Lenin advertises in the May 1902 edition of Athenaeum. Following: Jacob Richter was Vladimir I. Lenin's alias.



30 Holford Square (lady on balcony)

J. Richter. (May 10, 1902). Personals Section, A Russian LL.D (and his Wife [Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya]) would like to EXCHANGE RUSSIAN LESSONS for ENGLISH with an English Gentleman (or Lady). -- Address Letters Mr. J. RICHTER [Vladimir Ilyich Lenin], 30 Holford Square, Pentonville, W.C. [Homw of Samuel Frederick Deering, Solicitor's Clerk/Civil Servant]. The Athenæum.

THE ATHENÆUM

Journal of English and Foreign Literature, Science, the Fine Arts, Music and the Drama.

No. 3889.

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1902.

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HUBERT HALL, Director and Hon. Secretary.

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J. F. HUGHES, Secy.
J. S. KELLIE, Secretary.

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B. DAYTON JACKSON, Secretaries.
G. A. HOWES

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Town Clerk's Office, West Hartlepool, April 25, 1902.

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HENRY COPPLAND, Agent-General for New South Wales.
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Aldine House, Bedford Street, London.

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Posted by Oleg-Kerziouk

05 OCTOBER 2015

I beg to apply for a ticket: Lenin [pseudonym Jacob Richter] at the British Library

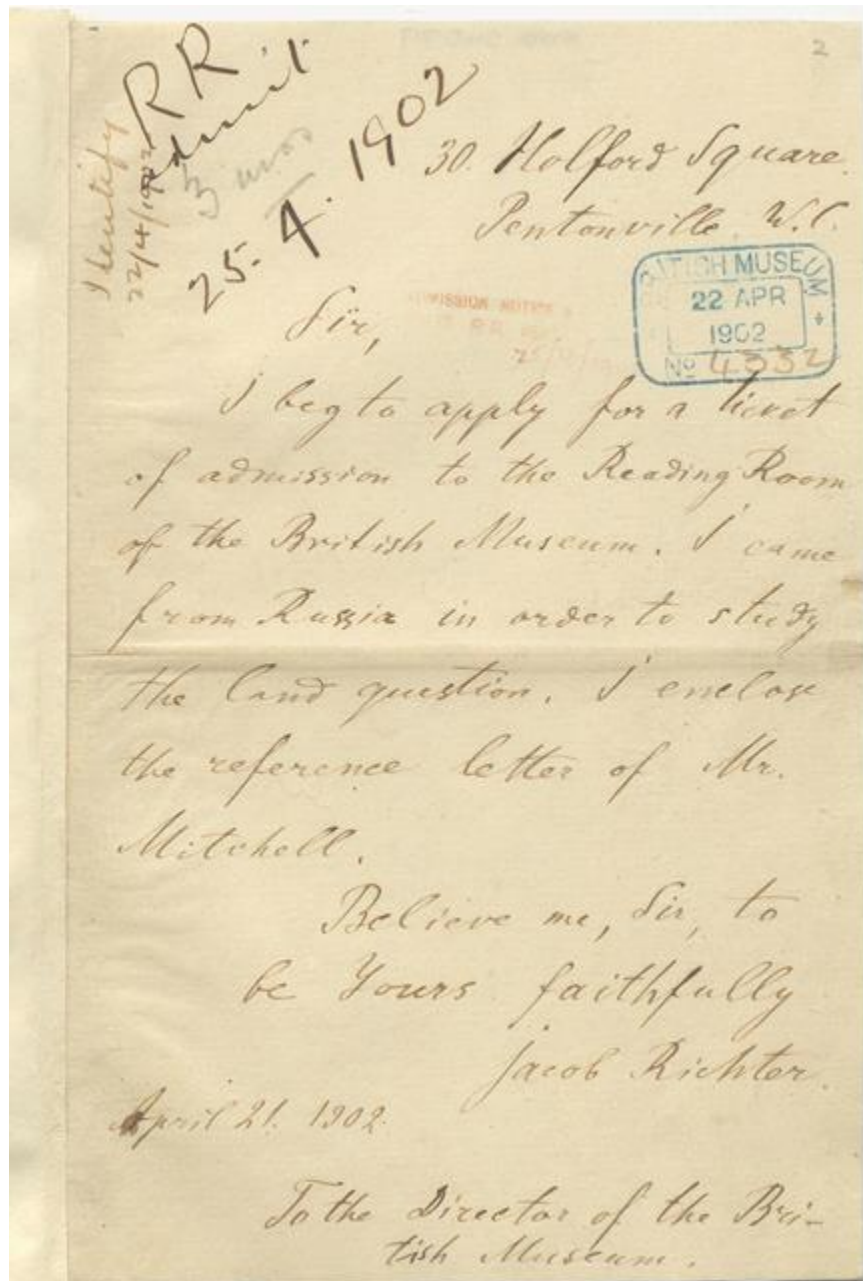
The founder of the world's first socialist state, Vladimir Il'ich Lenin, visited London six times between 1902 and 1911, and on at least five of these occasions found the time to call into the British Museum whose Library collections were in his view unparalleled. At the time of his 1907 visit he said:

It is a remarkable institution, especially that exceptional reference section. Ask them any question, and in the very shortest space of time they'll tell you where to look to find the material that interests you. ... Let me tell you, there is no better library than the British Museum. Here there are fewer gaps in the collections than in any other library.

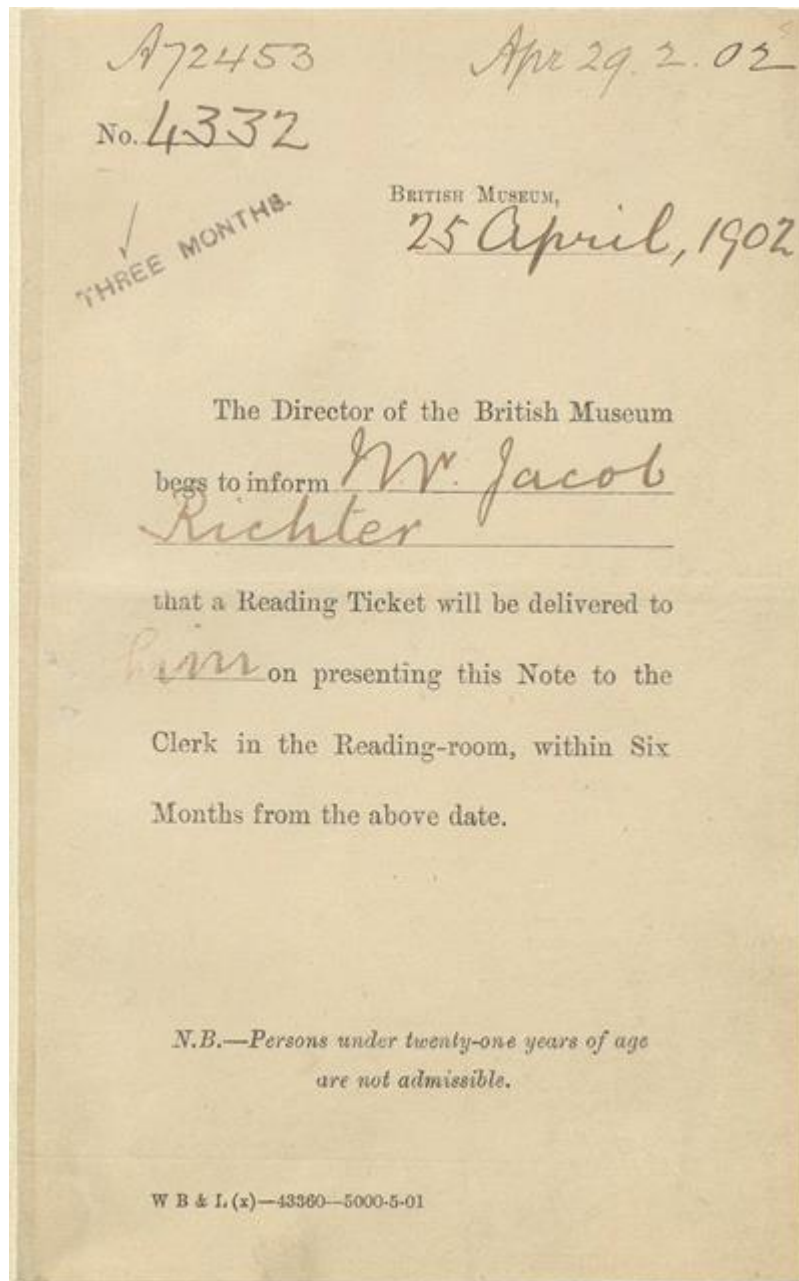
Praise indeed from a man who was already well acquainted with many of the major libraries of Europe and Russia.

His attachment to the Library dates from 29 April 1902, when he first entered the [Round Reading Room](#) to commence his studies. He had arrived in London with his wife, [Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaja](#), earlier that month in order to set up publication of *Iskra*, the newspaper of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP). The Twentieth Century Press had agreed to carry out the printing at 37a Clerkenwell Green, (now the [Marx Memorial Library](#)), and soon accommodation was found for the new arrivals not far from there, at 30 Holford Square, Pentonville.

It was from this address that Lenin first wrote to the Director of the British Museum requesting permission to study in the Library. The documents related to this episode are held in the British Library (Add. MS.54579.)



The letter (above), dated 21 April 1902, bears the signature “Jacob Richter”, the pseudonym Lenin had adopted to throw the Tsarist police off his track. The reference required was supplied by the General Secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, I. H. Mitchell, but this did not satisfy the Admissions Office as Mitchell’s home address could not be found in the London street directories. Lenin wrote again enclosing another recommendation from Mitchell, who this time used the address of his union’s headquarters. The following day Lenin was informed that a Reader’s Ticket would be granted to him, and four days later he signed the Admissions Register and was issued with ticket number A72453 (below).



The ticket was valid for three months only, but the period was extended, first by three months, and then by a further six . Finally, on 29 April 1903, exactly one year after entering the Library for the first time, he surrendered his ticket and a few days later left England for France.

In August of the same year he returned for the famous 2nd Party Congress, during which the RSDLP made its historic split into “menshevik” and “bolshevik” factions, but there is no evidence to suggest that Lenin found the time to visit the Museum on this occasion, despite the fact that he said he used the Library whenever he was in London.

However, during the 3rd Party Congress, which again took place in London (from 25 April to 10 May 1905), it is known that he paid a visit to Great Russell Street, and there

copied out extracts from the works of Marx and Engels. Unfortunately, there is no record of this in the Museum archives.

His next visit to London took place in early summer 1907, and from the reminiscences of his colleagues we know that he spent roughly a week in the Library at the beginning of June. The Temporary Admissions Register does mention that a J. P. Richter was admitted in May 1907 (no.3782), but one cannot be sure whether this was Lenin – Richter was not a particularly uncommon name. However, we can be quite sure about the details of his visit the following year. In mid-May 1908 he arrived in London with the express intention of spending a month in the Museum to work on his book, *Materializm i empiriokrititsizm*, and fortunately, his correspondence with the Museum authorities survives in the Library archives.

On 18 May 1908 under his real name, Vladimir Oulianoff, he wrote to the Director of the Museum requesting permission to study in the Library and referring to an earlier donation of two of his books. His recommendation came from a certain J. J. Terrett, an English Social Democrat, but history repeated itself, and just as in 1902, he was refused admission. Two days later he wrote again enclosing a second reference, this time from his old friend, the manager of the Twentieth Century Press, [Harry Quelch](#). This proved sufficient, and as in 1902, he immediately received instructions to call into the Library to collect his Reader's Ticket. On 22 May, he signed the Admissions Book, and was issued with a three-month pass, number A88740.

Lenin made use of the Library's collections only once more, during his lecture-tour of 1911, when he visited several European cities to deliver his paper on "[Stolypin and Revolution](#)". The London reading took place on 11 November in the New King's Hall, Commercial Road, Whitechapel, and on the same day the Museum issued a temporary pass to Mr. Vladimir Oulianoff, making a note of his address, 6 Oakley Square, N.W., in their Card Index.

Although Lenin may indeed have had a favourite seat in the Reading Room, neither he nor anyone else has left any indication of which seat that may have been. Several numbers have been suggested, including: G7, H9, R7, R8, and L13. In fact, the latter is probably the most likely, positioned, as it was then in a row opposite the reference works on British and European history, which he doubtless made use of on several occasions.

R. Henderson, Honorary Research Associate, School of History, Queen Mary University of London

Posted by Olga Kerziouk at 10:00 AM

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