

Records Dept of  
G. A. BLAIR  
@ G. ORWELL  
301/NW9683

Please notify S.B.Registry (by pinning a note on front of docket) of any alterations, additions or amendments to this record.

Record Sheet of :-

Eric Arthur BLAIR.

(301/NWC/683)

@ George ORWELL

Born on 25.6.02.

8/3/37	Author of "The Road to Wigan Pier"	<del>301/111/689</del> D
18/11/39	Supporter of National Council of Supporters, Jewish Arab Solidarity in Palestine	<del>320/GVI/212</del> D
10/3/41	His reply to a book entitled "The Job in Britain" sent him by Richard TERRELL for criticism	<del>402/41/179</del> D
23/2/42	Mentioned in a report re A.SUBRAMANIAN, an Indian	<del>404/41/64</del> D
14/2/44	Letter from him on subjects of broadcasts read by Fenner-Brockway at meeting of Federation of Indian Associations in Great Britain, Holborn Hall 13/2	<del>400/44/12</del> D
16/2/44	Invited to lecture at International Youth Centre, Pont Street, S.W.1.	400/42/53 ✓ World Federation of Democratic Youth
8/3/44	Corres with-on subject of S.VAIDYA's broadcast referred to at meeting of F of I.A. in G.B. at Swaraj House on 5/3	<del>400/44/12</del> D
14/12/44	Promised to speak at Conference of British & Indian Journalists to be held next January	<del>400/44/79</del> D
29/8/45	Potted Biography of	<del>347/44/29</del> D
,,	Sponsor of London Committee, Freedom Defence Cmtt'ee	—, —
7/11/45	Speaker at Freedom Defence Committee meeting, held in Conway Hall, Red Lion Sqre, W.C.	400/40/34 Anarchist Foundation of GB
A.M.B.		
26/3/46	Speaker at Freedom Defence Cmttee meeting, Holborn Hall	,,
4/4/46	Guest of Honour at London Majlis Dinner, Chinese Res, Wardour St on 28/3, spoke	<del>400/41/134</del> D
15/3/46	Vice President of Freedom Defence Committee	<del>400/46/37</del> D
23/7/47.	Vice chairman of Freedom Defence Committee.	—
29/12/47.	Helped to form "DESERTERS AMNESTY CAMPAIGN"	— (5A)
31/3/48.	Vice-chairman of Freedom Defence Committee, sub	<del>400/46/37</del> (9A)
14/10/48.	Member of Freedom Defence Committee.	— (11A)

Page No. 2

preparatory schools, but gave up this work in 1933 owing to ill-health, and from 1934 devoted himself to literary work. A subsequent report on the file shows that in March, 1937, BLAIR was fighting in Spain with the P.O.U.M. contingent.

BLAIR is also mentioned on Special Branch report, 402/41/179 dated 10th March, 1941, (copy sent to M.I. 5), as having reviewed a book written by Richard TERRELL, a well-known communist, on whom M.I.5 asked for a report.

*[Signature]*  
Sergeant.

Submitted.

*[Signature]*  
Inspector.

*[Signature]*  
SUPERINTENDENT

S.B. No. 1 (Plain).

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

5a

Special Report }

SPECIAL BRANCH,

Metropolitan Police,

Scotland House,

INDEXED

SUBJECT E.A.

30th day of March 1937

Blair @ G.

Orwell.

Reference to Papers.

301/NWC/683.

Submitted herewith is a review by Ethel Mannin of a book called "The Road to Wigan Pier" by George Orwell, taken from the New Leader of 12-3-1937.

Orwell's correct name is Eric Arthur Blair, and he is the subject of Special Branch file 301/NWC/683, which gives particulars of his career etc.

It is of interest to note that according to Ethel Mannin's review, Blair is now fighting in Spain with the P.O.U.M. in Bob Edwards' contingent.

Edwards left this country on 10-1-37 in charge of a party of I.L.P. recruits who were proceeding to Spain to fight for the Government Forces. Special Branch file ~~320/SE/481~~ refers.  
*destroyed*

*H. Little*  
P.S.

Submitted.

*Whagen*  
Inspector.

*PA*

*for S.I.*  
for Superintendent.

The "New Leader" 12-3-1937

## SENSE AND A LOT OF NONSENSE

**G**EORGE ORWELL is an author who has an immense gift for translating acute observation into the living word, as in the autobiographical "Down and Out in London and Paris," and that quite brilliant study of graft, "Burmese Days," a novel; and it is a great pity that in **The Road to Wigan Pier** (Gollancz, 10s. 6d.) he did not confine himself to facts and figures and his own observation of housing and living conditions, and human nature, in the slums and industrial areas of this country. His book provides vivid pen pictures—as well as photographs—of the appalling housing conditions prevailing on Tyneside, in South Wales, in Stepney, Bethnal Green, Limehouse, and other London slum districts. He has been to some pains to get the facts, and he writes with vigour and with feeling. All this first part of the book is admirable; if only the smugly comfortable middle-class will read it, it might shock them into a realisation of the two nations living within this England. It is, in fact, a treatise on poverty which the bourgeoisie should be compelled to read—though the author would quarrel with me violently over the use of the word "bourgeoisie." For in the second part of the book, which is taken up with his conception of Socialism and Socialists, he objects, and that strenuously, to what he calls "bourgeois baiting," and such expressions as "the proletariat," "class-consciousness," "workers' solidarity."

★

George Orwell believes in Socialism, though—as Victor Gollancz points out in his good, commonsense introduction to the Left Book Club edition of the book—he does not define what he means by Socialism, and has curious fixed ideas that Socialists are "bearded fruit-juice drinkers," "sandal-wearers," nudists, sex-maniacs, and heaven knows what. (He even has an odd idea that they are all vegetarians, and that vegetarians are so in order to prolong their lives!) He has a particular aversion to the I.L.P., it would seem, regarding it as middle class and snobbish, and in sympathy with the proletariat only intellectually and at a distance. He asserts that at

an I.L.P. branch meeting he once attended the members would have been "embarrassed, angry, and disgusted" had "a real working man, a miner dirty from the pit, for instance . . . walked into their midst." George Orwell should be informed that not all members of the I.L.P. are black-coat workers—not by a very long chalk. And aren't clerks and shop assistants and typists "real" workers, too?

Now, in actual fact, George Orwell is a good Socialist. He is at this moment fighting with P.O.U.M. (in Bob Edwards'

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By **ETHEL MANNIN**

---

contingent) on the Aragon Front, and it may well be that he has already outgrown the confused and contradictory ideas set forth in the second part of this book. All the way through this section one feels that he is a man with basically the right ideas, one who would be with the workers in a revolutionary situation, but whose mind is muddled with middle-class prejudices from which, with the best will in the world, he has been unable to escape. On one page he urges that the middle-class must be attracted to the Socialist ideal and not frightened away from it into a self-protective conservatism, and on the next accuses the I.L.P. of being middle-class, and remarks that "the first thing that must strike any outside observer is that Socialism in its developed form is a theory confined entirely to the middle-class."

He has the odd idea that Socialists despise those who do not work with their hands (despite the fact that the bulk of Socialists, as he sees it, are middle-class), and refers to the "class-stigmata" of accents, taste, and beliefs. He protests that, being of middle-class origin, he cannot alter this in himself; though economically he is "in the same boat with the miner, the navy, the farm-hand," culturally he regards himself as different from them. George Orwell has evidently forgotten the navy poet, Patrick Magill; the colliers, Boden and Dataller; the mill-hand, James Whittaker; does he really imagine that all culture springs from the middle and upper classes?

There is a great deal in this book which the informed Socialist will find irritating, and even infuriating; sheerly silly, and a tilting at windmills. But it is very worthwhile for its first part; and because, if only they can be persuaded to read it, it will do a great many people who see no case for Socialism so much good.

S.B. No. 51 (Plain).

## METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Special Report }

SPECIAL BRANCH,

Metropolitan Police.

Scotland House,

INDEXED

SUBJECT E.A.

25th day of August 1936

BLAIR @

G. ORWELL.

Reference to Papers.

301/NWC/683.

With reference to minute 2 of the attached file respecting Eric Arthur Blair @ George Orwell and premises at 1, South End Road, Hampstead, occupied by Francis Gregory Westrope who carries on business at that address as a bookseller under the style of 'Booklovers' Corner' :-

The name 'Booklovers' Corner' and the name Francis G. Westrope is painted over the address in question. The name 'Booklovers' Corner' is also shewn on stationery used by Westrope, a specimen of which is submitted.

The Registrar of Business Names has been consulted, and states that in his opinion, the words 'Booklovers' Corner' do not constitute a Business Name, and he does not consider that Westrope is contravening the Registration of Business Names Act, 1916.

Prior to giving this opinion, the Registrar had said that stationery bearing a Business Name brought the user within the Act, and in view of this, Westrope was instructed to register the name 'Booklovers' Corner'. He has not yet done so, but the Registrar states that if he makes application to register the name, his application will not be refused.

In these circumstances, I respectfully suggest that no further action be taken by police.

Submitted

Inspector.

Chief Constable.

P.S.

M.P.-36-9199/10M B43(4)

Catalogue Reference:MEPO/38/69

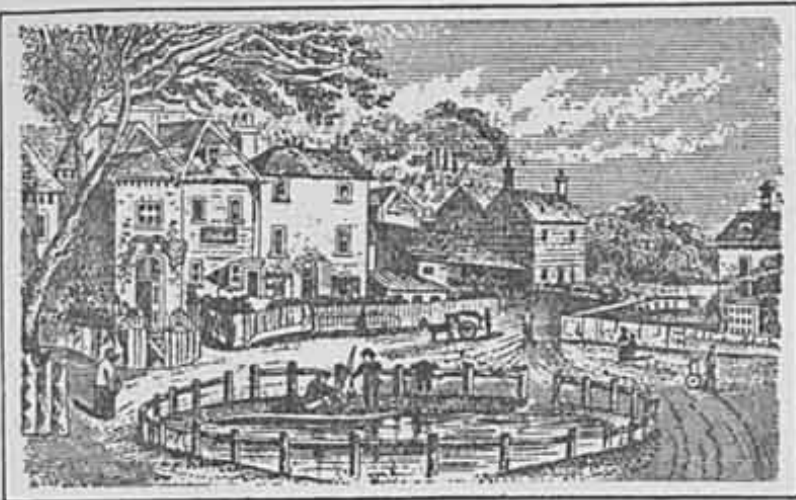
Image Reference:2

# BOOKLOVERS' CORNER

Phone, HAMPSTEAD 2153.

1, SOUTH END ROAD,  
HAMPSTEAD, N.W.3.

FRANCIS G. WESTROPE,  
Bookseller, &c.



SOUTH END GREEN IN 1835.  
NOW THE TRAM TERMINUS.

.....193

36

TELEPHONE NO 2214.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE.



THOMAS PEY, O. B. E.  
CHIEF CONSTABLE.

# County Borough of Wigan

Chief Constable's Office.

REFERENCE	
YOURS	OURS
	DO.

301/NWC/683 SB

13th March, 1936.

Wigan.

Sir,

re ERIC A. BLAIR or GEORGE ORWELL.

-----

With reference to your letter of the 12th inst., together with enclosures, respecting the above named, I have to inform you that the photograph has been definitely identified as being that of Eric A. Blair the subject of my enquiry.

Blair has since left this Borough and his whereabouts unknown.

As you forwarded to me two photographs and two reports concerning Blair I am returning to you, herewith, one of the photographs and one of the reports.

Thanking you for the valuable assistance you have rendered in this matter.

I am, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,

*Thos. Pey*  
Chief Constable.

The Commissioner of Police  
of the Metropolis  
(Special Branch),

Catalogue Reference: MEPO/38/69 New Scotland Yard,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

Image Reference: 2

SPECIAL BRANCH REGISTRY  
RECEIVED  
14 MAR 1936

3A.

301/NWC/683. SB.

12th March 1936.

Sir,

I am directed by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis to acknowledge, ~~with thanks~~, receipt of your letter of the 24th February 1936, concerning Eric A. BLAIR, and to forward, herewith, copy of a police report of enquiries made in the matter.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

*Sgd. A. G.*

for Assistant Commissioner.

The Chief Constable,  
County Borough of Wigan,  
Chief Constable's Office,  
WIGAN.

M.I.5. were approached in this case, and requested that a copy of this report be sent to them.

M.I.5

Catalogue Reference:MEPO/38/69

Ir

Photographs.

Eric Arthur BLAIR @

George ORWELL.

*or*

Catalogue Reference:MEPO/38/69



Catalogue Reference:MEPO/3

S.B. No. 1 (Plain).

## METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Special Report }  
}

E SPECIAL BRANCH,

Metropolitan Police,

Scotland House,

SUBJECT Eric

.....11th day of.....March.....1936..

Arthur BLAIR

@ George

ORWELL.

Reference to Papers.

301/NWC/683.

With reference to the attached correspondence from the Chief Constable, Wigan, respecting Eric A. BLAIR, alias George ORWELL :-

Enquiry shews that this man's correct name is Eric Arthur Blair. He is by occupation a journalist and author, and writes under the name of George Orwell.

He was born at Motihari, Bengal, India, on 25-6-1902, his father being Richard Walmesley Blair, a former Indian Civil Servant, who on retirement settled at Southwold, Suffolk.

Blair was educated at St. Cyprian's School, Eastbourne, from September 1911 until December 1916, and for a short time in 1917 he was at Wellington College. Later in the same year he went to Eton College, and remained there until December 1921.

On leaving Eton, he applied for employment in the Indian Police Service, and in 1922 he was appointed an assistant superintendent of police in Burma. He served in this capacity until the latter part of 1927, when he returned on leave to England. Whilst on leave, he telegraphed direct to his local government in India for permission to resign his appointment, and with the authority of the Secretary of State for India, this was granted, his resignation dating from 1-1-1928. Blair gave no official reason for terminating his appointment, but he is reported to have told his intimate friends that he could not bring himself to arrest persons for committing acts which he

M.P. 35-7382/10M B43(4)

Catalogue Reference:MEPO/38/69

Image Reference:3

All minutes to be numbered in consecutive order.

No. 729

(Unruled).

did not think were wrong.

Shortly after resigning from the Indian Police, Blair went to France, and for some time eked out a precarious living as a free lance journalist. Whilst in Paris, he took an interest in the activities of the French Communist Party, and spent a good deal of time studying "La Humanité". Information is not available to shew whether he was an active supporter of the revolutionary movement in France, but it is known that whilst there, he offered his services to the "Workers' Life", the forerunner of the "Daily Worker", as Paris correspondent.

During his stay in Paris, he also collected part material for a book entitled "A Down and Out in London and Paris", which he wrote under the nom de plume, G. Orwell. Under the same style, he has recently completed a book called "Burmese Days", which deals with his experiences in Burma. Both the above books are published by Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 14, Henrietta Street, W.C., a firm which specialises in Left Wing literature.

Following his stay in Paris, Blair returned to London, and spent some time living the life of a 'down and out' to obtain the necessary material to complete the book mentioned above.

In 1932, he became a master at a preparatory school known as "The Hawthorns", Church Road, Hayes, Middlesex, and remained there for a year, leaving at the end of this period to take a similar position at another preparatory school known as Fray's College, Harefield Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex. He continued as a master at this school until the end of 1933, when he became ill, principally through his experiences as a 'down and out', and for a time he was a patient at the Uxbridge and District Cottage Hospital.

On being discharged from hospital in January 1934, Blair went to Suffolk to recuperate, and gave his address

All minutes to be numbered in consecutive order.

No. 729

(Unruled).

as 36, High Street, Southwold.

He later returned to London, and has since devoted himself to literary work, and for some time has been living with a Mrs. Rosalind Harriet Obermeyer and a woman named Janet Gimson at 77, Parliament Hill, N.W.

Special Branch records contain no reference to Gimson, but Obermeyer is reported to have left for Russia on 11-6-1932.

On 7-7-1927, Blair was issued with British Indian passport No. 11542 at Rangoon, valid until 7-7-1932. On 16-7-1932, he submitted this document to the Passport Office, London for renewal, and was sent the usual renewal form for completion. This has not been returned, and his passport is still at the Passport Office.

The address, 1, South End Road, Hampstead, is a lock-up bookshop carried on under the style "Booklovers' Corner" by Francis Gregory Westrope, who resides above the shop at No. 3, Warwick Mansions. Enquiry has revealed that Westrope and Blair are on friendly terms, and the latter is known to spend a good deal of time at the shop; he has, on occasions when Westrope has been away, conducted the business.

Metropolitan Police records contain no reference to either Westrope or Blair. The former, however, is known to hold socialist views, and considers himself an 'intellectual'.

Westrope is not registered as conducting an accommodation address, and there is no reason to believe that he is doing so for reward. The amount of correspondence delivered to him is small, but it is possible that he forwards letters to his socialist acquaintances without payment, as he no doubt did for Blair.

The name "Booklovers' Corner" is not registered

M.P.-35  
0466/200x  
G31 (4)

4.

All minutes to be numbered in consecutive order.

No. 729

(Unruled).

"A" | under the Registration of Business Names Act, 1916. Westrope has not been approached, and no enquiries have been made at 77, Parliament Hill. In view of the possibility of Westrope handling correspondence of a revolutionary character, it is respectfully suggested that the question of his registering the name "Booklovers' Corner" be held in abeyance.

The passport description of Blair is :-

born 25-6-1902, height 6' 2", eyes grey, hair brown, tattoo marks on backs of hands.

Six copies of his passport photograph are submitted.

*J. Sutcliffe*  
P.S.

Submitted.

*J. Sutcliffe*  
Inspector.

*C. S.*  
for Superintendent.

a

PHONE NO. ~~2891~~ 2891-2.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE.



# County Borough of Wigan

INDEXED

## Chief Constable's Office.

### Wigan.

THOMAS PEY, O.B.E.  
CHIEF CONSTABLE

REFERENCE	
YOURS	OURS
	DO/M.

24th February, 1936.

7 REGISTRY. *sb*  
 25 FEB 1936 10. A.M.  
 GEN. (CURRENT) *Sir,*  
 SEC. CRIME 1917-21  
 INDEX 1809-18  
 OTHER SECTIONS

re ERIC A. BLAIR.

I herewith enclose a copy of a Police report respecting the above named which is self explanatory.

I shall be obliged if you will cause enquiries to be made and inform me of the result in due course.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

*Thomas Pey*  
Chief Constable.

NO TRACE  
"R" Beh. (S.B.)

The Commissioner of Police  
of The Metropolis,  
New Scotland Yard,  
LONDON.S.W.1.

*Handwritten signature/initials*

SPECIAL BRANCH REGISTRY  
RECEIVED  
25 FEB 1936

910. 3/35. P.&amp;S.6749.

No. 1.

File No. 16

## COUNTY BOROUGH OF WIGAN.

INDEXED

Date 22nd February, 1936.

Central Police Station.

From John Duffy. D.C.79.

To Det. Insp. Cockram.

Subject

ERIC A. BLAIR or GEORGE ORWELL,  
about 35yrs, 6', slim build, long  
pale face.

With reference to the above named, I beg to report that this man has been staying in Wigan from Monday, the 10th instant at an apartment house in a working class district in this Borough.

I understand that a member of the local Communist Party was instrumental in finding Blair accomodation. Blair attended a Communist meeting in this town addressed by Wal. Hamington on the 10th instant.

It would appear from his mode of living that he is an author, or has some connection with literary work as he devotes most of his time in writing.

He has also collected an amount of local data, e.g. numoer of churches, public houses, population etc, and is in receipt of an unusual amount of correspondence.

One of his letters was addressed "Eric Blair, Esq, 1 South End Road, Hampstead, N.W.3", and another addressed "George Orwell".

In addition to correspondence from England, he is also in receipt of letters from France and I saw a newspaper which appeared to be the French counterpart of the "Daily Worker".

In view of the association which this man has formed with the local Communist Party during his visit to Wigan, I respectfully <sup>suggest</sup> that further enquiries be made with a view to establishing his identity.

I wish to add that he has also been making enquiries respecting local industries, Coal Mines, Factories etc, and that he is to visit a Mine in the Wigan area on

/cont'nd

SPEC  
25 FEB 1936

/ Cont'd.

on Sunday, the 23rd of February, 1936 - I do not know which mine he is to visit.

He has also received correspondence from Victor Gollancz, Ltd, 14 Henrietta St, Covent Garden, W.C.2., who I understand are a firm of publishers.

Signed, John Duffy. D.C.79.

Submitted 22.2.36.

*A*  
I respectfully suggest that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, New Scotland Yard, with a view if possible of establishing the identity of Blair and ascertaining as to whether he is known to be associated with the Communist Party.

Submitted J.Cockram. Det. Insp.

" H.Rigby. Supt.

301 NWC 683

SPECIAL BF II

No. 301/NWC/683

DIVISION .....

CP1977  
1942

Doyle  
C. C. Wigan

2 1936

2512136  
papers.

BLAIR Eric A  
or George ORWELL.

Submit information regarding

RECORD FILE

The Registry should be notified if this file is passed direct to another branch or if any file is attached to it or detached from it.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>SB</del>	<del>25/1/36</del>				
<del>D</del>	<del>22/2/36</del>				
<del>ADY</del>	<del>11/3/36</del>				
<del>ADY</del>	<del>11/3/36</del>				
<del>D</del>	<del>5/8</del>				
<del>SB</del>	<del>20/1/36</del>				
<del>SB</del>	<del>7/1/36</del>				
<del>of Whitehead</del>	<del>28/8</del>				
	45				
Repair	17.4.72				
Condr Admin.	12/1/77				
Rec	3.5.77				
Notes	7.5.77				
OSR	21.6.77				
REC	23.6.77				
Notes	28.7.77				
1918	20/1/72				

398  
RETAIN

For Authority to P.A.

Handwritten notes and signatures in the bottom right section, including dates like 10/5/77, 17/1/72, and 24/9/50.

Letter & reply  
Tobin (1a-b)  
IR for enquiry.

Wigan

IR  
25/2

Bill  
C.I. for Supt

2

Report att'd 2a.  
Send copy to Wigan Police & to  
M.S. with photos. Done  
8/25/36  
R.B. Y. 1/8/36 re "A".

113

Bill  
C.I. for Supt.

3

Letter to G. B. Wigan, 3<sup>A</sup> attached.

12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>26</sub>

Reply

3b. att'd.

4

Report attached 4<sup>A</sup>.  
Send copy to M.S. Done  
"A" approved

12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>26</sub>

Bill  
C.I. for G.B. Constable

5

Special Branch report att'd 5a  
newspaper cutting 5b.

*Chas B. Jones*

*S.O. 2-11/42*

*Supt.*

- 7 -

Memo from the Chief Registrar	.....	7A
SB TM (action thereon)	.....	7B

- 8 -

Letter from the India Office Library and Records	.....	8A
P.A.		

SB. 21-6-77.

*H. King*  
Det. Supt.

8A1

Noted  
2/8/77



INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY AND RECORDS  
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE  
197 BLACKFRIARS ROAD · LONDON SE1 8NG  
01-928 9531

from the Director

FL3/TP/1/8

16 June 1977

R3 Ls 17.6.77

Dear Commander Saunders,

Superintendent Livings has suggested that I should write to you, setting out for the record the action which he and I have agreed on a copy of a Special Branch report of 11 March 1936 on Eric Blair (George Orwell), which is among a small collection of papers relating to Eric Blair in the India Office Records.

301 NWC 683 ✓

The matter arose over a request from Professor Bernard Crick, Professor of Politics at Birkbeck College, University of London, to see papers in an India Office Records file which is at present subject to a 100-year ban. Since it was possible that the FCO might agree to the release of a few of these papers which hold no security problems, I felt it necessary to approach New Scotland Yard about the copy of the SB report mentioned above.

I accept Superintendent Livings's decision that it is not possible to make any exception to the ban of 75 years on access to SB reports and I have therefore agreed to ensure that our copy of the report, together with the few papers which refer to it, is placed until the 75 years are up with the papers still subject to a 100-year ban in our own security file.

- 371.70.47 (73) Part Report
- 371.70.56 (6) Part Report
- 347.62.6 (23A) ✓
- 371.73.38 (148) Part Report
- 588 WIRESS 908m (155)
- 400.72.253 (A) (50) ✓
- 301 NWC 683 (7A1B) ✓

Commander P Saunders,  
Special Branch  
New Scotland Yard  
Victoria Street  
SW1

Yours sincerely  
Joan C. Lancaster

Livings  
Lindsay  
J.C.L.

INDEXED  
Date: 28/7/77 Initials: JCL

(NOTED)  
10.5.77  
Cg

70

**METROPOLITAN POLICE—SPECIAL BRANCH**

**TELEPHONE MESSAGE**

From Commander SB (Supt. Livings)

Serial No.....

Date..... 18th April, 1977.

To Miss Lancaster, India Office  
928-9531 ext. 10

Time..... 1100 hours.

With reference to your telephone call to the Chief Registrar (Mr Harvey) on 12-4-77 regarding Eric BLAIR @ George ORWELL, and in particular to the Special Branch report dated 11-3-36 on your file which Prof. Bernard CRICK wishes to see in connection with a biography he is writing.

As mentioned by Mr Harvey, we are reluctant to release any material prior to the end of the time limit. I suggest that if Prof. Crick wishes to see your main file on this man, the SB report should be removed from it and returned to us.

INDEXED  
5/5M  
al

*M. Livings*  
Det. Supt.

S.B.(R) references:

**ACTION/REPLY** same time: I will remove the SB report from the file and place it with others on a secret file with papers that will not be available to Prof. Crick. I will confirm in writing that this has been done.

**Distribution**

Original to:—Ch. Supt. Squad

1. Cdr. Admin. to see, please.
2. P.A. pending arrival of letter.

Copies to:—

A	B	C	D	E	R	SO	PORTS	A8
---	---	---	---	---	---	----	-------	----

SB. 18-4-77.

*M. Livings*  
Det. Supt.

Initials of Reserve Sergeant/Duty Officer.....

7A,

METROPOLITAN POLICE

No. 143

MEMORANDUM

From Chief Registrar & D Ro  
Room 109 T

To Commander SB (Admin) 12/4/19))

Ext 3596

M.P.-65-

301-NWC-683

Eric A. BLAIR @ George ORWELL

At about 3pm today Miss Jane LANCASTER at the India Office Library & Records (928-9531 Ext 10) telephoned me to ask about the release of a copy of an SB report dated 11/3/36 concerning the above-named (she had obtained my name etc from the Public Record Office as a person who might be able to assist), what is on her India Office file.

Blair was in Burma from 1922-1927 and about 1938(?) wanted a post as a journalist with an Indian Newspaper.

A Professor Bernard CHICK of Bedford College (writes on Blitics?) is doing research for a Biography.

371-70-47 (13) 400-72-252A (50)  
371-70-86(6)  
347-62-6(22)  
371-72-38 (148) Image Reference:1  
588-NWC-908 N (192)

(PTO)

Catalogue Reference:MEPO/38/69

I said that we would be reluctant to agree  
to release of this report, especially as the time limit  
is so far ahead, and in any event the character of  
the documents would be for SB consideration.

May I now leave this enquiry for you to pursue please

A handwritten signature, possibly "C. H. ...", written in dark ink. The signature is somewhat stylized and appears to be written over a horizontal line.

S.B. No. 1 (Plain).

## METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Special Report }

SPECIAL BRANCH,

Metropolitan Police,

Scotland House.

SUBJECT

20th day of January, 19 42

Eric BLAIR.

The following information has been received:

Reference to Papers

301/NWC/683.

"Eric BLAIR, who is in the Indian Section of the Middle East Department of the B.B.C., and, under the direction of Z.A.BOKHARY (a Punjabi from Lahore), is in charge of broadcasts in English to India, has been telling some of his Indian friends that his department was endeavouring to get Mulk Raj ANAND on the staff, but that the India Office was strongly opposed to the appointment. He assured his friends, however, that he was going to challenge the right of the India Office to dictate as to which people should be employed in his department. BLAIR considers that M.R.ANAND is a well-qualified candidate for the post.

BLAIR was at one time in the Burma Police. He left that service for some unknown reason, and drifted to Paris and London, and has written a few books on his experiences, under the name of ORWELL. He was practically penniless when he found work with the B.B.C.

This man has advanced communist views, and several of his Indian friends say that they have often seen him at communist meetings. He dresses in a bohemian fashion both at his office and in his leisure hours. He is particularly friendly with A.SUBRAMANIAN, and has been instrumental in securing occasional broadcasts (presumably in Tamil) for the latter.

BLAIR has also offered employment at the B.B.C. to K.S.SHELVANKAR and Iqbal Gur Partab SINGH; the former turned it down as he did not think he would pass the "India Office security test", and the latter declined the invitation as he felt it might re-act unfavourably on his political career".

Special branch records show that BLAIR is identical with Eric Arthur BLAIR, subject of 301/NWC/683.

This file shows that BLAIR first came under notice of the Wigan Borough Police in February, 1936, in connection with his communist activities in Wigan. Special Branch report dated 11th March, 1936 on 301/NWC/683 (a copy of which was supplied to M.I.5), shows that BLAIR was born at Motihari, Bengal, India, on 25th June, 1902, his father, Richard Walmesley BLAIR, being a former Indian Civil Servant. BLAIR junior was educated in this country (at Wellington and Eton) and in 1922 was appointed Assistant Superintendent of Police in Burma, but resigned in 1927 without giving any official reason for terminating his appointment, but is reported to have told his intimate friends that he could not bring himself to arrest persons for committing acts which he did not think were wrong. After resigning from the Burma Police, he seems to have eked out a precarious living as a free-lance journalist in France and wrote two books published by Victor Gollancz, Ltd. of London. After his return to England he became a master at several

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