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| Webb, Beatrice (1858-1953) and Sidney (1859-1947) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Beatrice and Sidney Webb were leading intellectual advocates of socialist reform in England. Beatrice Webb (néePotter) was born into a wealthy family, but her early experience as a researcher studying poverty in London with Charles Booth (1840-1916) confirmed her commitment to sociology and socialist values. Sidney Webb was from a lower middle-class family and entered civil service as a progressive member of the London County Council just before the two married in 1892. The Webbs advocated for a transition from capitalism to socialism through evolution rather than revolution, and believed that this was best achieved using scientific approaches to the study of social problems. Rejecting Marxist formulations of class struggle until late in their lives, the Webbs were associated with the Fabian Society, established in 1884, which advocated moderate, anti-Marxist socialism. The first of many collaborative efforts, the Webbs produced their authoritative *History of Trade Unionism* in 1894, and next co-founded the London School of Economics (LSE) in 1895, with a central mandate of research and instruction in sociology. Although Sidney Webb eventually accepted a peerage, becoming Baron Passfield, Beatrice Webb never adopted the title of Lady Passfield, using the opportunity to undermine British investments in rank. |
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| Further reading:  (Beilharz and Nyland)  (Harrison)  (Romano) |