LLOYD GEORGE: THE FINAL ARCHIVE

Over the years the National Library of Wales has acquired a number of important and extensive Lloyd George archives. In 1969 the family papers which had accumulated at Bryn Awelon, Crichieth, were purchased following the death of Lady Megan Lloyd George.

In 1982 and 1987 a significant group of letters, speech notes and other papers was purchased from the present Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor.

Shortly afterwards there came to hand the magnificent archive built up by Lloyd George’s brother, William, a Crichieth solicitor who was responsible for running the family legal firm, Lloyd George and George. It includes an unrivalled run of some 4,000 letters from Lloyd George to his brother and twelve early Lloyd George diaries, 1878-88.

Following the death of Lady Olwen Carey-Evans in 1990 a fourth group was purchased comprising correspondence, speech notes and family memorabilia; and at about the same time the papers of Lloyd George’s trusted private secretary, A. J. Sylvester (1889-1989), were purchased from his family, an extensive group including numerous drafts and copies of Sylvester’s diaries.

Now the Library has been able to purchase from the present Viscount Tenby two small groups of papers which constitute what is believed to be the last Lloyd George archive remaining in private hands.

The first relates to David Lloyd George and consists of about 300 letters (mostly addressed to Lloyd George or his secretaries), speech notes and family photographs. Especially interesting groups of letters concern the National Insurance Bill 1911 and events in Ireland in 1917. A few relate to Welsh affairs, and there are four letters from Frances Stevenson to Lloyd George dated May 1922.

The second group concerns the vendor’s father, Gwilym Lloyd-George, the first Viscount Tenby (1894-1967), who was Liberal (later National Liberal and Conservative) MP for Pembrokeshire, 1922-29 and 1929-50, and Conservative MP for Newcastle upon Tyne North, 1951-7. He served as Minister of Food, 1941-2, and Minister of Fuel and Power, 1942-5, in the wartime Coalition Governments and as Home Secretary and Minister for Welsh Affairs from 1954 until 1957 under Prime Ministers Churchill and Eden.

The archive includes letters from a number of prominent politicians including Neville Chamberlain, Winston Churchill, Hugh Dalton and Harold Wilson. There are also three chapters of an unpublished autobiography by Gwilym Lloyd-George and a file of papers relating to the First World War.
FATHER AND SON

Through the kindness of Mrs Mari Ellis of Aberystwyth, a large and important archive of the papers of her late husband Dr Thomas Iorwerth Ellis (1899-1970), previously held on deposit in the department, has been donated to the Library.

Career

During a rich and varied career Dr Ellis served as schoolmaster and university lecturer in Classics and rendered sterling service to many bodies including Undeb Cymru Ffodd, the Welsh Book Club, the National Library, the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and the University of Wales, as well as the Governing Body and the Representative Body of the Church in Wales.

A prolific writer and reviewer, he was the author of a number of highly acclaimed volumes in the Welsh county Crwydro series and of important biographies of his father, T E Ellis, J H Davies, Cwrtmawr, and Sir Ellis Jones Ellis-Griffith.

Papers

The archive is full and wide-ranging, comprising correspondence files, family papers (including those of Dr Ellis’s mother and stepfather, Mrs Anice and Rev Peter Hughes Griffiths), scripts and business agreements for the BBC and HTV, typescripts and research notes for publications and an array of administrative records, most notably those relating to the government of the Church in Wales.

T E Ellis

At the same time Mrs Ellis has converted into a donation the important groups of papers of Thomas Edward Ellis, (1859-99), Liberal Member of Parliament for Merionethshire, 1886-99, and Liberal Whip in Gladstone’s last administration of 1892.

The archive includes especially rich files of correspondence amongst them important groups of letters from Ellis’s political contemporaries D R Daniel, D Lloyd George, J Herbert Lewis and Stuart Rendel.

REGULAR DEPOSITS

Newport West Labour Party

Further papers, 1897-95, including material on local government reorganization and local and parliamentary elections.

Clive Betts

Papers accumulated as Welsh Affairs correspondent of the Western Mail, many of political interest, including files on health, housing, local government, the Welsh language and other subjects.

Lord Hooson


Lord Tonypandy

A substantial group of personal and political correspondence and other papers, 1994-5, some relating to the numerous trusts and charities with which the depositor is associated. Among the political correspondents are Tony Blair MP, Winston S Churchill MP, Lord Denning, Lord Howe of Aberavon and Jeremy Thorpe.

Dafydd Wigley

Further constituency correspondence and case papers accumulated by the depositor since 1987 as Plaid Cymru MP for Caernarfon.

PLAID CYMRU ARCHIVE

A substantial group of records, 1965-95, has been added to the Plaid Cymru archives.

This comprises correspondence files, local party records, financial papers, material relating to conferences and summer schools, membership returns, and papers deriving from the vigorous campaigns waged in parliamentary and European elections.

T E Ellis (centre) in Llandrindod, July 1950. at the first Parliament for Wales Campaign meeting with S O Davies, Megan Lloyd-George, J R Jones, R Tudor Jones, and the local mayor
JOURNALIST EXTRAORDINAIRE

One of the most influential and long-serving figures in the history of twentieth-century Welsh journalism was Edward Morgan Humphreys (1882-1955), a native of Dyffryn Ardudwy educated at Barmouth and Porthmadog County Schools.

Forced by ill-health to abandon a potentially promising legal career, he began writing for the Barmouth Advertiser in 1904. He won his spurs as a journalist by reporting on the revival meetings of Evan Roberts at Liverpool in 1905, activities which soon extended to Anglesey and Caernarfonshire.

His early work saw the light of day in Y Genedl Gymreig whose staff he soon joined. Humphreys became editor of both Y Genedl and The North Wales Observer in 1908 and also served as editor of Y Goleuad.

His resignation in 1930 enabled him to become a freelance writer, contributing regular columns and reviews to the Liverpool Daily Post and Manchester Guardian and to broadcast and lecture often.

Morgan Humphreys was an independent character of strong Liberal convictions. He was a closefriend and confidant of David Lloyd George and was acquainted with a number of Liberal politicians including Ellis W Davies, E T John, Sir Henry Haydn Jones, Sir J Herbert Lewis and Major Goronwy Owen.

A large archive of Humphreys's papers was purchased by the National Library from his widow in 1956 shortly after his death. A detailed catalogue of the archive, recently completed, shows that it includes valuable letters of political interest.

Most notable politically are long runs of correspondence from Ellis W Davies MP, 1906-39 (101 letters), and from Liberal organiser R Humphrey Davies, 1919-51 (291 letters).

There are also important groups of political letters from other individuals such as Sir E Vincent Evans, E T John, Sir H Haydn Jones, Sir J Herbert Lewis and J Arthur Price.

A feature of interest is that some of the letters from literary figures - among them 'Cynan', T Gwynn Jones and Sir John Morris-Jones - also refer to political themes.

The archive also includes many family papers and a number of Humphreys's articles and radio scripts.

ACCESSIONS

Britain's Communist Party
The latest branch records to arrive are those of the Britain's Communist Party, 1939-58. They comprise minute books, financial records and an attendance book, as well as bound volumes of the highly influential Labour Leader for 1915 and 1917.

Letter from Sir Henry
The latest donation by Mr D Elwyn Roberts, a member of the WPA consultative committee, is a letter from Sir Henry Morris-Jones (1884-1972), MP for Denbigh, 1929-50, rendering thanks for assistance given during the 1945 general election campaign, when, standing as a National Liberal and Conservative, he retained a highly marginal constituency at a time of a massive national swing to Labour. This letter is now included in NLW MS 21818E. An important archive of Sir Henry's papers is in the custody of the Flintshire Record Office at Hawarden.

Addresses from Sir Wyn
Sir Wyn Roberts, the WPA Annual Lecturer in 1998, has donated typescript copies of two of his most recent addresses. One of them, entitled 'The Welsh Office 1995: Aims, Problems and Successes,' was delivered at a seminar at Bangor in December 1995; the other - on The Wales - Baden-Württemberg Partnership - was given at the University of Tübingen in Germany in February 1996. They are now NLW ex 1713.

Welsh Districts
In the wake of the far-reaching local government reorganization of April 1996, the final deposit of records of the Council of Welsh Districts, comprising files dating from recent years, has come to hand. Dealing with all aspects of local government in Wales, they complement a number of archives deriving from predecessor bodies: the Committee of Welsh District Councils, the Council for the Principality and the Association of Welsh Local Authorities.
WOMEN MPS IN WALES

When Megan Lloyd-George was elected the Liberal MP for Anglesey in May 1929 at twenty-seven years of age, she was the first female MP to be returned by a Welsh electorate.

She has had only three successors: Eirene White (East Flint, 1950-70), Dorothy Rees (Barry, 1950-1971) and Ann Clwyd (Cynon Valley, 1984- ). Indeed, in his highly acclaimed A History of Wales (1993), Dr John Davies claims that this constitutes 'a record which is among the worst in Europe'.

Although women were first allowed to sit in Parliament from 1918 (when the vote was given to females over thirty years of age), and at least one female candidate has stood for a Welsh constituency in each subsequent general election, generally women have been inexplicably loath to stand in a Welsh division.

Even in the watershed general election of 1945, when as many as eighty-seven female candidates contested the election, a mere three surfaced in Wales. A handful of Welsh constituencies have never been contested by women candidates, and several others on only one or two occasions.

Two of the women MPs, however - Megan Lloyd George and Eirene White - enjoyed most distinguished political careers. Both, moreover, were the daughters of prominent public figures: David Lloyd George, Liberal Prime Minister, 1916-22, and Dr Thomas Jones, CH, the distinguished Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet, 1918-30, who rendered sterling service to four successive Prime Ministers - Lloyd George, Bonar Law, Baldwin and MacDonald - and whose magnificent archive of papers was donated to the WPA in 1984 by Lady White.

It could be argued that the great triumph of the Suffragette movement in 1918 has never borne fruit in female candidatures in Welsh parliamentary constituencies, but the pattern in elections for the European Parliament has been strikingly different.

A letter from Lloyd George

Through the kindness of Mr Bob Owen of Denbigh, the archive has received a photocopy of a letter written in July 1916 by Lloyd George, recently installed as Secretary of State for War, in which he pays a generous tribute to the singer James Sauvage.

The letter, now designated NLW Facs 845, was published in Baner ac Amsaru Cymru, 29 July 1916.

Denbighshire MPs

Mrs Jill Morgan of Ulverston, Cumbria, has kindly donated to the archive the text of an address by her late husband Mr Geraint Morgan, Conservative MP for Denbighshire, 1959-83, entitled 'Denbighshire Members of Parliament in the Twentieth Century'.

The letter was subsequently published in the Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions, volume 20 (1971), and includes fascinating material on a number of Denbighshire politicians including Sir George Osborne Morgan, George Kenyon, Sir John Herbert Roberts (later Lord Clwyd), Clement Edwards, Sir Henry Morris-Jones and E. Garner Evans. The text of the address is now NLW ex 1696.

Printed at The National Library of Wales

Labour's television broadcast for the 1955 general election:
James Callaghan, Herbert Morrison, Megan Lloyd-George and Hugh Gaitskell