WELSHMEN AND THE SUFFRAGETTES

The eleventh Annual Lecture of the Welsh Political Archive on 7 November 1997 was delivered for the first time by a lady speaker - Professor Angela John, a native of Port Talbot, who is currently Professor of History at the University of Greenwich.

A graduate of the Universities of Birmingham, Wales (Swansea) and Manchester, where she gained her doctorate, Professor John is director of an ambitious research project on Men's Support for Women's Suffrage.

She is the author or editor of seven highly acclaimed works published between 1980 and 1997, including biographies of Lady Charlotte Guest and Elizabeth Robins. She currently chairs Lliafur, the Welsh Labour History Society, and is a founder member of the editorial collective of the journal Gender and History.

Taking the title 'Chwaræ Teg: Welsh Men's Support for Women's Suffrage', Angela John analysed the role of a number of prominent Welshmen, notably D.A. Thomas MP and Walter Roch MP, brave enough to support the campaign for women's suffrage. She examined, too, the attitude of other prominent Liberal politicians such as D. Lloyd George, H.H. Asquith and Samuel T. Evans.

The lecture will be published by the National Library early in 1998.

1997 Referendum

Mr David Egan of Graigwen, Pontypridd has also generously donated a group of papers reflecting the activities of the energetic 'Pontypridd Says Yes for Wales' campaign of which he acted as chairman. The WPA would be delighted to receive further groups of papers deriving from local groups and activists. The official papers of the 'Yes for Wales' campaign are expected shortly.

The Archive also holds some items produced during the campaign preceding the fateful Referendum of 1 March 1979, literature which invites fascinating comparison between the courses of the two campaigns and their vastly different outcomes.
A Lloyd George Letter

The WPA is always most anxious to enhance its extensive groups of papers relating to David Lloyd George.

It was recently able to purchase a typescript letter penned by Lloyd George on 5 March 1917, only three months after becoming Prime Minister at the height of the First World War.

In the letter Lloyd George urges agricultural communities to make the utmost contribution to the war effort. "...The heroism of our armies at the Front must be backed by the self-sacrifice and tireless labour of everyone at home."

While recognising that the agricultural workforce had been much depleted by the introduction of conscription, he urged the farming communities 'to do all in their power to utilise their services to the best advantage', for, "The farmers of this country can defeat the German submarine and when they do so they destroy the last hope of the Prussian.'

The letter is now designated NLW ex 1824.

Viscount Tonyndy

The Welsh Political Archive was especially sorry to learn of the death in September of Viscount Tonyndy. As George Thomas, he had served as the Labour MP for Cardiff Central, 1945-50, and Cardiff West, 1950-83. He came to prominence as the third Secretary of State for Wales from 1968 to 1970, and subsequently as Deputy Speaker, 1974-6, and Speaker of the House of Commons, 1976-83.

The Archive has always been particularly anxious to receive the papers of those who served as Secretary of State for Wales, and Lord Tanyndy was one of five Labour politicians whose papers have been donated to the Library.

Lord Tanyndy first deposited in 1985 a substantial group of papers which had accumulated at London. Dating back to 1936, they comprised 460 files of papers and personal and political correspondence. Subsequently, several substantial groups of papers regularly came to hand from both Cardiff and London. At the time of his death the archive consisted of more than 1,000 files of papers.

In his will Viscount Tanyndy bequeathed to the NLW a substantial group of papers which remained at his home at Heath Hill. These will be listed in the near future, and a list of all the papers will soon appear on the shelves of the catalogue room of the Department of Manuscripts. Following Lord Tanyndy's death, the papers are no longer subject to any restriction of access.

Thomas Wood MP

The main thrust of the work of the WPA since its inception in 1983 has been the acquisition of political records from the twentieth century. It is always pleasing, however, to receive papers from earlier periods.

Recently Miss M. Elizabeth Wood of Oxford kindly donated her research papers based on her work on her great-great-grandfather Colonel Thomas Wood (1777-1860), who was the Conservative MP for Brecknockshire from 1806 until 1847.

Keynes-Jevons Letters

The Library has long housed two important groups of the papers of the distinguished economist Herbert Stanley Jevons (1835-1885).

Recently, through the kindness of Emeritus Professor R.D. Collison of Bel
Rendel Papers

One of the most significant Welsh political figures of the late nineteenth century whose papers are in the custody of the National Library is Stuart Rendel (1834-1913), Liberal M.P. for Montgomeryshire, 1880-94, and the first chairman of the Welsh Parliamentary Party in 1888.

Rendel (1889-1979), the highly respected diplomat and public servant, recently had the opportunity to purchase an additional group of Stuart Rendel's correspondence, 1882-1912, and reminiscences, 1888-98. These include typescript copies of twelve letters, 1882-4, from

ACCESSIONS

Ivor T Rees
Political Papers

Through the kindness of the Revd Ivor T. Rees of Swansea, the Archive was able to receive a large group of election addresses and political literature dating from the years after the general and by-elections of 1945. These include an array of pamphlets published by all the major political parties and some of them by minority parties.

Although the Archive has been assiduous in collecting addresses and leaflets published in general and by-elections since 1983, holdings from earlier elections are rather patchy, and the present group of papers helps to fill many a gap.

The Library also holds microfilm copies of the extensive set of British general election addresses, 1892-1931, held in the Special Collections Department of the Bristol University Library. These addresses, originally in the custody of the National Liberal Club, derive from all parts of the United Kingdom and include a large number from Welsh constituencies.

Mr Rees has also donated an extensive collection of index cards comprising details of many of the candidates who stood in British parliamentary elections between 1910 and 1983. These include valuable information on background, education, occupation and the political records of the candidates, and some also include copies of press photographs of the candidates.

Newport West Tories

The Archive already holds several important groups of the records of the Newport West Labour Party.

Recently, through the good offices of Mr Peter Davies, the Library has received the minute books and financial and other records, 1917-89, of the Newport West Conservative Association.

These include the papers of numerous women's sections, Young Conservative groups and numerous committees, together with ward minutes, account books and electoral registers.

Records less than twenty years old are subject to an embargo.

Dafydd Orwig Papers

The Archive has received a substantial group of papers spanning the 1890s to the 1990s accumulated by the late Mr Dafydd Orwig (1928-96). Most relate to Plaid Cymru, but there are also minutes and pamphlets concerning nationalism and Welsh and Irish politics and culture.

An interesting file of papers concerns the conduct of the Parliament for Wales Campaign of the 1950s, while others relate to the Welsh Economic Development Council, the status of Monmouthshire, bilingualism, the use of the Welsh language in the law courts, Tryweryn, electricity and water.

Monmouth Socialists

In 1990 the Archive was delighted to receive a remarkably complete set of the records of the Monmouth Conservative Association spanning the period 1903 to 1988.

Now, through the kindness of Ms Ginny Blakey of Monmouth, two minute books, 1961-86, of the Monmouth and District Branch of the Labour Party have come to hand. They have been designated NLW ex 1814-15.
W. Llewelyn Williams MP

and the 1916 Conscript Bill

Mr Eliyd自然界 Child of Sgeti, Swansea, has donated a small group of papers of their late father Morgan Henry Williams (b. 1869), the brother of W. Llewelyn Williams (1867-1922), the Liberal M.P. for the Carmarthen Boroughs, 1906-18, and the Independent Liberal candidate in the famous Cardiganshire by-election of February 1921.

Two letters are of especial interest. One, marked ‘Private & Confidential’, is from Thomas Edward Ellis and dated 5 November 1894, shortly after his appointment as Liberal Chief Whip in Lord Rosebery’s administration.

In the second Ellis makes a pertinent comment on the selection of Liberal parliamentary candidates in Welsh constituencies: ‘I am taking the keenest interest in the selection, though I am adhering to the sound rule never to interfere in the choice of candidates in Wales unless at the invitation of the local leaders.’

The second is a lengthy epistle in Welsh from Llewelyn Williams to his brother, dated 6 January 1916, the very day on which he was one of thirty Liberal M.P.s, including four from Wales, to have voted against the 1916 Conscript Bill on its first reading. This action heralded an especially acrimonious split between Williams and D. Lloyd George who, as Minister of Munitions, had become convinced of the necessity to enforce a measure of military conscription. In the letter Williams anticipates a political context in which Lloyd George would be hamstrung as the prisoner of the Tories in a future Coalition government, a scenario which would jeopardise the prospects of securing disestablishment of the Welsh Church.

In 1918 Llewelyn Williams failed to secure adoption as a parliamentary candidate and, bitterly estranged from Lloyd George, spent the rest of his life in the political wilderness, decisively defeated in 1921 by Captain Ernest Evans, Lloyd George’s private secretary. He died prematurely in 1922.

Liberal Candidate

The Revd Roger Roberts of Llandudno, who contested Conwy in the Liberal interest in the general elections of 1987, 1992 and 1997, has donated an interesting miscellany of political papers.

One group, 1946-92, comprises publications relevant to the Liberal Party and the SDP, in their mid-1980s manifestos and annual reports, election material, newsletters and pamphlets, constitution and policy papers, and press cuttings.

The second is made up of twenty-six files on an array of subjects ranging from animal welfare to devolution, and from student housing to proportional representation.

Cliff Bere Papers

ENGLAND can force it on us

WALES has only 35 M.P.'s

ENGLAND nearly 600

They can bring back Tory Rule to Anti-Tory Wales. Labour Votes from WALES don’t count at Westminster.

Vote for Padley, Vote in Vain

Another Welsh Vote “down the drain”

Let Democracy be REAL in Wales

Let the Voters of Wales rule an Independent Government of Wales

HOME RULE alone can guarantee the Government our people want

VOTE

WELSH SOCIALIST

VOTE RADICAL

VOTE REPUBLICAN

Vote ITHIEL DAVIES

ITHIEL DAVIES DROS OGWR, DROS GYMRU

Printed by the "Gwasg Hydref" Ltd. Swansea, Reprinted and Published by C. B. Box, 37 Nation Street, Bridgend. Agent for the Candidate.

Ithel Davies’s election leaflet when he stood at Ogmore in 1950

In May the late Mr Cliff Bere of Barry donated a fascinating group of papers accumulated by him as a founder member of the Welsh Republican Movement, including letters from several activists within the group.

Much of this correspondence, spanning the years 1947 to 1965, relates to the movement’s history and activities, including the publication of Y Gueriniaethwr - The Welsh Republican, the burning of the Union Jack at Aberdare and Caerphilly in 1950 and other republican activities. Other items of interest include papers relating to Cliff Bere’s military conscription during the Second World War, an account by Harri Webb of the February 1950 general election campaign at Ogmore, and papers, 1951-2, concerning the trial of André Geoffroy, a Breton nationalist accused of betraying two British soldiers to the Germans during the war.

Miscellaneous materials within the papers include membership cards, posters, leaflets and photographs.

Some of the documents relate to the re-establishment of the WRM in 1973, and some to other nationalist and political organisations with which Mr Bere was associated.

Sadly, Mr Bere died on the eve of the September Referendum on Welsh devolution. The story of his involvement in the important Welsh Republican Movement is available in his fascinating volume of reminiscences The Young Republicans: A Record of the Welsh Republican Movement - Mudaw Gueriniaethol Cywif (1996).