

## 'FREEDOM NOT REGIMENTATION'

of Wythenshawe. He had, in fact, considered switching his party allegiance before then and it might be significant that his wife did so in 1935. Certainly, there would have been a degree of tension between the reality of a centralised, municipal bureaucracy and a Liberal belief in individual freedom.

As Wythenshawe indicated, the day of localised ventures was over. After the Second World War, social experiments were to be conducted through the state, with the post-war Labour administration setting the new pattern. Garden cities were by then seen as a concept from the past, to be superseded by a nationwide programme of new towns. For the best part of half a century that was how things were to be. More recently, however, opposition parties in a long period of Labour government are pointing once again to the limitations of the state. With sustainability at the top of the planning agenda and community an essential means of securing social change, environmental politics is taking on a new meaning; in this changing context, local as well as national Liberal politicians can again assume an important role. A glance back at the contribution of their predecessors in the pioneering days of planning might offer a timely source of inspiration.

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*Acknowledgement: In writing this paper I am most grateful for helpful comments provided by three anonymous referees.*

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- 1 Ebenezer Howard, in *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (facsimile edition, London, Routledge, 2003), pp. 2–3.
- 2 Howard includes this quote from a *Daily Chronicle* article at the start of Chapter 9 of *To-Morrow*; the article is discussing ways of reconciling Socialism and Individualism.
- 3 For this and other parliamentary records, see M. Stenton and S. Lees (eds.), *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament*, Vol. 2, 1886–1918 and Vol. 3, 1919–1945 (Sussex: Harvester, 1978 and 1979).
- 4 Mervyn Miller, *Letchworth: The First Garden City*, (Chichester, Phillimore, second edition 2002), p. 115.
- 5 George Orwell, in Aileen Reid, *Brentham: A History of the Pioneer Garden Suburb 1901–2001* (London, Brentham Heritage Society, 2000), p. 93.
- 6 The full title was the Labour Association for Promoting Co-operative Production Based on Co-Partnership of the Workers.
- 7 Raymond Unwin, 1910, in Dennis Hardy, *From Garden Cities to New Towns* (London, Chapman & Hall, 1991), p. 90.
- 8 Roy Douglas, *History of the Liberal Party 1895–1970* (London, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1971), p. 140.
- 9 J. A. Hobson, in Chris Cook, *History of the Liberal Party 1895–1970* (London, Macmillan, 1976), p. 48.
- 10 Chris Cook, *History of the Liberal Party 1895–1970* (London, Macmillan, 1976), p. vii.
- 11 Henry Vivian, in Dennis Hardy, *From Garden Cities to New Towns* (London, Chapman & Hall, 1991), p. 40.
- 12 John Burns, in Gordon E. Cherry, *Pioneers in British Planning* (London, Architectural Press, 1981), p. 12.
- 13 Michael Simpson, *Thomas Adams and the Modern Planning Movement* (London, Mansell, 1985), p. 55.
- 14 See, especially, Andrzej Olechnowicz, 'Civic Leadership and Education for Democracy: The Simons and the Wythenshawe Estate', *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 3–26.

# REPORT

## Defender of Liberties: Charles James Fox

Fringe meeting, March 2006, Harrogate, with Professor Frank O'Gorman and Dr Mark Pack; Chair (Lord) Wallace of Saltaire

Report by **Graham Lippiatt**

On 13 September 1806, Charles James Fox, Whig statesman, defender of civil liberties, champion of the American and French revolutions and advocate of the supremacy of parliament, died aged fifty-seven. Determined to commemorate Fox's achievements and celebrate his liberal heritage in the 200<sup>th</sup> year since his death, the History Group was especially pleased to welcome Frank O'Gorman,

Emeritus Professor of History at Manchester University, together with History Group committee member Dr Mark Pack, to tell us about Fox the man, the politician, the liberal and his legacy.

Professor O'Gorman opened by acknowledging that Fox was regarded as one of the founding fathers of Liberalism, operating at the same time that Edmund Burke and Pitt the Younger were staking their claim to be founding fathers

of Conservatism. But Fox was not really a Liberal. As a political party the Liberals were not formed until the 1850s and the word Liberal as a noun was unknown before the 1820s, long after Fox died. The concept of the liberal reformer was known, although not common, and Fox, if asked, would have classified his politics as Whig.

Whiggism was the predominant political philosophy in the second half of the eighteenth century, based on the values of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Whigs believed in the rights of parliament, a constitutional monarchy, regular elections, accountable government, freedom of speech and religious tolerance. According to Professor O’Gorman, however, Fox was a Whig of a distinctive kind and he turned our attention to the different elements of this distinctiveness.

Fox was born in 1749, the son of Henry Fox, Lord Holland, one of the great fixers of the eighteenth-century Whig state. He entered parliament in 1768 for Midhurst, a rotten borough secured for him by his father. In less than two years he had become a junior minister at the Admiralty but resigned in 1772 and went into opposition.

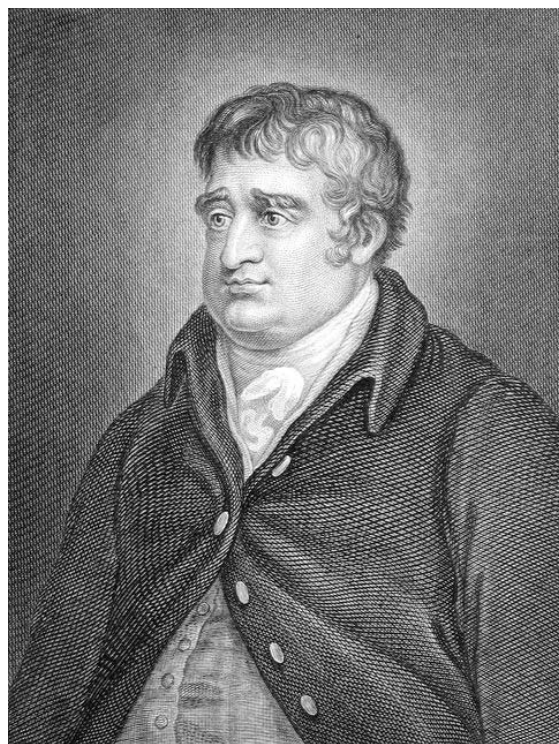
Opposition defined Fox. With only three brief periods in government, he remained in opposition for over thirty years until his death. Fox sacrificed a career in government for a career in opposition and giving up office was rare in the politics of the day. Fox had inherited many of his father’s political attitudes, including an instinctive hostility to the monarch. He voted against the Royal Marriages Act of 1772, introduced at the behest of George III (designed to restrict the freedom of the monarch’s children to marry). Also, although he had been given office, he found he was not really interested in it, preferring the theatre and card

table to government business. He returned to the Treasury in late 1772 but continued his casual attitude and was dismissed in 1774. He discovered that his fantastic oratory, his ability to attract friends and create groups around him and his wealth – especially after the death of his father in 1774 – destined him for a celebrity that flourished more in opposition than in power.

Fox famously opposed the war with the American colonies between 1775–83, stating that countries must be governed by the will of their people. He believed that the war was wrong and that the colonies should achieve independence. He was an early supporter of campaigns for parliamentary reform. He gained a reputation as a rabble-rouser and was designated ‘Man of the People’, possibly the first English politician to be so described. His election to parliament as member for the populous and politically aware constituency of Westminster after 1780 boosted his popularity further. He consciously identified his politics with his party and after 1782–83 he played on his pre-existing anti-monarchism.

Fox came back briefly into government for a couple of occasions, lasting a few months, when George III’s chosen ministers fell, but he could not work with the King, who wanted a say over men and policy while Fox believed in working through the majority party in parliament. Fox mistrusted the King. He thought George III was trying to turn the clock back to seventeenth-century patterns of politics.

But Fox had his faults. He was indolent and self-indulgent, a notorious and prodigious gambler who often preferred pleasure to business. He also suffered from lapses in judgment, sometimes overestimating his own abilities and underestimating those of others.



**Charles James Fox (1749–1806)**

He could misjudge public opinion too and failed to appreciate the hold the monarchy could have over the people, as in the Regency Crisis of 1788–89.

Fox came fully of age as a politician over the issue of the French Revolution, pioneering a concept of Whiggism far removed from the aristocratic and elitist politics of his age. Fox welcomed the Revolution instinctively, describing it as ‘much the greatest thing that ever happened in the history of the world and how far the best.’ Using the ideals of the Revolution and attacking the French feudal system it swept away, Fox developed the idea of a political movement based on freedom, anti-monarchism, political and civil rights, parliamentary authority, and something resembling a modern nationalism. He supported popular rights and parliamentary reform with renewed energy, defending radicals from Pitt’s Acts of 1795 restricting civil liberties and other such legislation banning meetings and gagging the press. He encouraged protests and popular mobilisation on a nineteenth-century scale and became more of a party

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politician, giving the Whigs more centralised leadership and organisation and a party press. He introduced popular subscriptions and reduced the aristocratic influence in the party. It was a tragedy for Fox that the strains produced by the French Revolution broke his party in two, with the aristocratic wing joining Pitt's government in 1794, leaving Fox, in the great battle of principle with Pitt, leading the rump of a party.

Fox attacked Pitt's war against France, first in the Revolutionary phase and again in the struggle with Napoleon. Although he thought it justifiable to fight against an aggressive revolution, Fox believed that the anti-revolutionary stance of George III and the other monarchs of Europe had driven the French revolutionaries to defend themselves. He thought that England should fight a defensive war only and not try to reverse the French Revolution by restoring the monarchy and aristocracy. But Fox was becoming increasingly isolated and weary of being in small minorities. In 1797–1801 he ceased attending parliament, preferring to leave it to events to justify him. Nevertheless, in 1801, when Pitt fell from office, Fox rushed back to Parliament even though in the last five years of life, his habits were taking their toll. His big idea was peace with Napoleon. In the last months of his life, when he was in office as Foreign Secretary, he tried to negotiate such a peace and was devastated when Napoleon refused to take him seriously. He died in September 1806, a broken man.

Professor O'Gorman then summarised Fox's life and legacy. He was essentially a man of the eighteenth century, an aristocratic politician, accepting that the aristocracy dominated society with patronage, places and political fixing. He did not believe in social reform and was not really a democrat at all. His political ideal was not

progressive improvement but a balance between King, Lords and Commons. Despite his success in opposition, where he felt so comfortable, he never thoroughly grasped the idea of a permanent, developing opposition party, lacking sufficient perspective of the future.

Although he was a forerunner of liberal developments, not all nineteenth-century liberals took their inspiration from him. Foxite Whiggism was at heart a secular creed, and much future Liberal support derived from the religious circumstances of Nonconformity and Protestant dissent (although Fox did defend the right to religious tolerance). And the economic origins of nineteenth-century liberalism lay in the works of Adam Smith.

Like many great politicians, Fox became more influential after his death than during his life. Fox Clubs sprang up to keep the great man's legacy alive and a vast amount of commemorative art and sculpture was dedicated to him. Fox became massively popular in the nineteenth century. Bit by bit in the 1810s and 1820s his ideals permeated politics and their time came within two decades of his death. His antipathy to the powerful role of the monarch in politics was to establish itself as a Liberal idea; Foxite Whigs and their successors were never really comfortable with the crown.

Although not a democrat, Fox deserved the designation 'Man of the People'. The idea of parliamentary reform that he championed came to fruition in the nineteenth century and it was no surprise that it was Fox's heirs who passed not only the Great Reform Act but also the Municipal Corporation Act and abolished slavery, all in the 1830s. Fox championed free speech, religious tolerance and tolerance for minorities. He supported the rights of people to elect their own governments, even though his definition of the 'the people'

was the educated middle classes rather than the inarticulate masses. As to the question of whether Fox was the founding father of Liberalism, the answer is 'yes'. He was one of many, including J. S. Mill, Grey, Russell and Macaulay, but he was the earliest and finest and, before Gladstone, he was Liberalism's greatest statesman. If he was not a man of the nineteenth century, his politics foreshadowed many of its main features. Foxite Whiggism had the future, however uneven and unfinished a Liberal product it might have been.

Mark Pack opened his talk by reminding us that our meeting was taking place the day after the Liberal Democrats had elected a new leader to replace Charles Kennedy and that it was worth starting with some thoughts on what lessons there were to draw from Fox's life for the present times. He teased the audience by recapping the position Charles was in – leader of a party of over fifty MPs, opposed to a controversial foreign war, standing up for civil liberties at home and dogged by accusations of being a dilettante and a man with a drinking problem. He meant Charles James Fox, of course, and began an exploration of Fox's legacy for liberalism and the Whig party.

Fox's death on 13 September 1806 occurred just a few months after he had become Foreign Secretary and it had been a quarter of century earlier that Fox had last held government office; truly tragic timing, struggling to regain office for twenty-five years only to die a few short months after finally doing so. Yet while other leading politicians' deaths are regularly described as tragic and trigger 'what if' hypothesising, reactions to Fox's death both then and since have been rather muted in that respect. Speculations over 'what if' he had not died do not make it into the counterfactual history publications and his death did

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not lead to an immediate public upsurge of emotion and statue-raising that the later demise of Peel, for example, did. The setting up of clubs dedicated to Fox's memory was delayed and then their establishment was conducted in competition with clubs commemorating Pitt, who also died in 1806.

In part this low-key response was because it had been the death of Pitt the Younger, the Conservative who had regularly bettered Fox in their political duels and who had served for many years as prime minister, a post Fox never achieved, which had allowed Fox the opportunity to regain office. In addition the government in which Fox was serving – the so-called 'the Ministry of All the Talents' – was seen as a rather unlikely, over-broad coalition. It is probable that, had Fox not died, he would have been out of office again soon enough, as the Ministry broke up in March 1807 and its Whig members were to see only the rarest flicker of hope of office for twenty-odd years afterwards. Fox's death was not seen, therefore, as cutting him off from a long period of office or in the midst of a successful political prime.

Indeed, it is easy to come to a negative interpretation of Fox's legacy. Although Fox was the first acknowledged 'leader of the opposition', when he squared up to Pitt in Parliament, it really was not much of an opposition for most of the time. Whereas today to lead a party of fifty or so MPs for many years in a three- or four-party system may be a respectable position, to do so in the late eighteenth century in a system that was broadly just government and opposition in a House of Commons roughly the same size as today, is rather less of an achievement. Not only did Fox not leave the Whigs in prosperous political shape, it was not even as if, like Neil Kinnock and Labour, he had clearly put them on the road to political recovery for a successor

to finish the job. There was no sustained growth in the number of MPs under Fox's leadership in those long lean years out of power. The numbers grew or decreased as factional boundaries shifted but there is no picture of a united hard core of MPs building up under Fox and for many years after his death they were out of office, apart from those who chose to join in supporting a Tory prime minister. So if he did not leave a legacy of Whig political power and success, what about the man and his beliefs?

Fox was born into the political establishment to a mother who was a great-granddaughter of Charles II and a father who had served the country's first prime minister, Walpole, for many years. From an early age he mixed an aptitude for hard work with bouts of dissolute behaviour and extravagant gambling. He broke the law by being under-age when he first stood for parliament and when elected he initially supported many conservative, even reactionary, causes. He most notably opposed press freedom, albeit on the basis of defending Parliament's supremacy and freedom. He never changed this opinion but later in his career his approach was more liberal, emphasising the protection of parliament from other forces such as the power of the King. The issues that radicalised Fox were the Royal Marriage Bill and the American War of Independence. Both brought him into conflict with the monarchy and he increasingly came to believe in the need for radical reform to trim monarchical power whilst strengthening and invigorating parliament.

In the 1770s, Fox was persistently one of the most radical Whigs, holding beliefs that a modern liberal would recognise – that power stems from the people and that government could be improved by large-scale reform, together with an

**Fox was persistently one of the most radical Whigs, holding beliefs that a modern liberal would recognise – that power stems from the people and that government could be improved by large-scale reform, together with an optimistic belief in the possibility of progress.**

optimistic belief in the possibility of progress. During the 1780s Fox served in government. He served as Foreign Secretary under Rockingham and made a notorious coalition with his former adversary, but fellow-opponent of the monarch, Lord North. This was not a success; they were out-manoeuvred by the King and his new favourite, Pitt the Younger. Pitt became prime minister and turned a minority administration into one commanding a comfortable majority. There then followed Fox's long decades out of office.

In those years, war and civil liberties dominated politics. The French Revolution occurred and swiftly descended into extreme violence, producing polarised responses in Britain. Some opposed the revolution from the start; others who had initially welcomed the overthrow of despotic monarchy were scared off by the violence and extremism and became increasingly opposed to any sniff of reform in Britain. In the face of what was happening in France, only a small group of parliamentarians (albeit with probably rather more support in the country as a whole) were willing to argue consistently for reducing the King's power and for franchise reform to give more people the vote.

Fox regularly led the parliamentary opposition to the government's repressive measures, brought in ostensibly to secure the country against violence. The alleged threats at the time were those of revolutionary plotters, perhaps with French backing or aid. The evidence as to how numerous or how much danger the plotters ever really represented is uncertain and has been a source of debate amongst historians. In public Fox and his supporters flirted with some of the radicals but it is not clear what links they had with the real extremists. The deliberate destruction of some key private papers of Fox's supporters certainly hints at connections it



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was later felt better to draw a veil over.

Pitt had no doubts about the threat of revolution and took a hard line on civil liberties. In April 1794 his government moved to suspend Habeas Corpus, effectively permitting imprisonment without trial. During the debate in parliament, Pitt claimed there were groups plotting a 'whole system of insurrection ... under which the weak and ignorant, who are most susceptible of impression from such barren abstract positions, were attempted to be seduced to overturn government, law, property, security, religion, order and every thing of value in this country.'

In response, Fox made one of his most famous speeches, underlining his reputation as one of the leading orators of his generation. As a speaker the force of his speeches was based more on clear arguments and nimble, humorous debate than any original thought or great rhetoric. The impact of his speeches made him a significant figure in parliament but his style meant that he left behind few oratorical flights to catch future imaginations. This should not diminish the importance of Fox's stance at the time, his willingness and ability to find the phrases and formulations to make the case for civil liberties and to argue that measures proposed in the name of protecting liberty and the British constitution in fact threatened both.

Fox believed that freedom and the liberties of the individual were to be valued in themselves and that encroachment upon them ran grave risks of encouraging even more damaging violations. This has become a persistent feature of liberal thought and was a defining element of the philosophy of the Liberal Party that emerged in the 1850s. Fox bequeathed to the Whigs and, later, Liberals, a clear legacy in favour of civil liberties and

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was increasingly associated with views that modern liberals would recognise; belief in power stemming from the people, desire for wide-ranging reform, strong preference for peace rather than war and an optimistic belief in progress through appropriate policy.

For Fox, the correct response to trouble was tolerance and liberalism rather than repression and crack-down. He believed that the latter were more likely to trigger revolution than the former. In addition he thought it was important to restrain the power of the monarchy, not just because of any monarch's potentially despotic tendencies but also because financial waste and corruption could too easily follow. In his speech on the suspension of Habeas Corpus Fox warned of the 'despotism of the monarchy' and against a situation where 'our pretended alarms were to be made the pretexts for destroying the first principles of the very system which we affected to revere.' Fox lost the vote at the end of the debate by 183 votes to 33 – a crushing but not unusual defeat.

His defences of civil liberties were frequently based on a desire to protect the constitution, especially the supremacy of parliament. This also meant he was not an enthusiast for democracy in the modern meaning of the term and he opposed more radical notions of democracy such as those advocated in Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*, believing they would weaken parliament. As a result, other radicals of the time, like William Cobbett, were often suspicious of Fox, even though the Tories tended to pigeonhole Fox and the radicals together as untrustworthy.

As well as speaking out on civil liberties Fox attacked the alleged misuse of public money, demanded cuts in the Civil List and supported the idea of annual parliaments, all of which

brought him a popular following outside parliament. But Fox always saw parliament as the primary political stage.

Politics, however, was never the only part of Fox's life. He enjoyed the good life hugely, often gambling and drinking to wild excess. He was a flamboyant playboy. There is a trace in his character of an instinctive contrariness – a desire to be different just for the sake of being different; an intuitive seeking of the opposite point of view to that held by the incumbent majority, usually for principled reasons but sometimes just for the hell of it. Fox has bequeathed that instinctive contrariness to liberals down the years. If you think of a liberal as someone who, finding themselves in a minority of one, is not put off but rather rubs their hands with glee and thinks 'what fun', then Fox was certainly in that category. Although Fox's gambling made him a somewhat disreputable figure in the eyes of many, he was also a loveable and indeed principled character to others, standing by his views rather than desperately seeking power and the money which would come with it – even when he needed cash to pay his large gambling debts. Even the apparently cynical power-seeking coalition with North earlier in his career was motivated largely by a shared hostility to the monarch.

Fox also had an impact on two other important matters. His eloquent arguing of the case against slavery almost certainly had an effect in helping reduce its extent and impact, no small thing given the amount of human misery slavery produced. He also secured the passage of the Libel Act to restore significant power to juries to determine what was or was not libellous, an issue dear to the hearts of contemporary leaflet writers.

In final summary, Dr Pack said that Fox was greatly liked as

a human being by many of his contemporaries. He was charming, lively, quick-witted, funny and good company (if you did not worry about being corrupted in drunkenness or gambling).

He ended up a champion of press freedom, an opponent of despotic regal powers and an advocate of personal liberty. He argued these great causes, which were later seen as progressive and

correct, even if he secured only limited support for them at the time. But then, liberals frequently know all about arguing valiant causes and being in the minority when the votes are counted.

*Graham Lippiatt is Secretary of the Liberal Democrat History Group.*

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

If you can help any of the individuals listed below with sources, contacts, or any other information — or if you know anyone who can — please pass on details to them. Details of other research projects in progress should be sent to the Editor (see page 3) for inclusion here.

**Hubert Beaumont MP.** After pursuing candidatures in his native Northumberland southward, Beaumont finally fought and won Eastbourne in 1906 as a 'Radical' (not a Liberal). How many Liberals in the election fought under this label and did they work as a group afterwards? *Lord Beaumont of Whitley, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW; beaumontt@parliament.uk.*

**Letters of Richard Cobden (1804–65).** Knowledge of the whereabouts of any letters written by Cobden in private hands, autograph collections, and obscure locations in the UK and abroad for a complete edition of his letters. (For further details of the Cobden Letters Project, please see [www.uea.ac.uk/his/research/projects/cobden](http://www.uea.ac.uk/his/research/projects/cobden)). *Dr Anthony Howe, School of History, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ; a.c.howe@uea.ac.uk.*

**Cornish Methodism and Cornish political identity, 1918–1960s.** Researching the relationship through oral history. *Kayleigh Milden, Institute of Cornish Studies, Hayne Corfe Centre, Sunningdale, Truro TR1 3ND; KMSMilden@aol.com.*

**Liberal foreign policy in the 1930s.** Focusing particularly on Liberal anti-appeasers. *Michael Kelly, 12 Collinbridge Road, Whitewell, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT36 7SN; mmjkelly@msn.com.*

**Liberal policy towards Austria-Hungary, 1905–16.** *Andrew Gardner, 17 Upper Ramsey Walk, Canonbury, London N1 2RP; agardner@ssees.ac.uk.*

**The Liberal revival 1959–64.** Focusing on both political and social factors. Any personal views, relevant information or original material from Liberal voters, councillors or activists of the time would be very gratefully received. *Holly Towell, 52a Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3BJ; his3ht@leeds.ac.uk.*

**The rise of the Liberals in Richmond (Surrey) 1964–2002.** Interested in hearing from former councillors, activists, supporters, opponents, with memories and insights concerning one of the most successful local organisations. What factors helped the Liberal Party rise from having no councillors in 1964 to 49 out of 52 seats in 1986? Any literature or news cuttings from the period welcome. *Ian Hunter, 9 Defoe Avenue, Kew, Richmond TW9 4DL; 07771 785 795; ianhunter@kew2.com.*

**Liberal politics in Sussex, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight 1900–14.** The study of electoral progress and subsequent disappointment. Research includes comparisons of localised political trends, issues and preferred interests as against national trends. Any information, specifically on Liberal candidates in the area in the two general elections of 1910, would be most welcome. Family papers especially appreciated. *Ian Ivatt, 84 High Street, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3JT; ianjivatt@tinyonline.co.uk.*

**Liberals and the local government of London 1919–39.** *Chris Fox, 173 Worplesdon Road, Guildford GU2 6XD; christopher.fox7@virgin.net.*

**The Liberal Party in the West Midlands from December 1916 to the 1923 general election.** Focusing on the fortunes of the party in Birmingham, Coventry, Walsall and Wolverhampton. Looking to explore the effects of the party split at local level. Also looking to uncover the steps towards temporary reunification for the 1923 general election. *Neil Fisher, 42 Bowden Way, Binley, Coventry CV3 2HU; neil.fisher81@ntlworld.com.*

**Recruitment of Liberals into the Conservative Party, 1906–1935.** Aims to suggest reasons for defections of individuals and develop an understanding of changes in electoral alignment. Sources include personal papers and newspapers; suggestions about how to get hold of the papers of more obscure Liberal defectors welcome. *Cllr Nick Cott, 1a Henry Street, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 1DQ; N.M.Cott@ncl.ac.uk.*

**Life of Wilfrid Roberts (1900–91).** Roberts was Liberal MP for Cumberland North (now Penrith and the Border) from 1935 until 1950 and came from a wealthy and prominent local Liberal family; his father had been an MP. Roberts was a passionate internationalist, and was a powerful advocate for refugee children in the Spanish civil war. His parliamentary career is coterminous with the nadir of the Liberal Party. Roberts joined the Labour Party in 1956, becoming a local councillor in Carlisle and the party's candidate for the Hexham constituency in the 1959 general election. I am currently in the process of collating information on the different strands of Roberts' life and political career. Any assistance at all would be much appreciated. *John Reardon; jbreardon75@hotmail.com.*

**Student radicalism at Warwick University.** Particularity the files affair in 1970. Interested in talking to anybody who has information about Liberal Students at Warwick in the period 1965-70 and their role in campus politics. *Ian Bradshaw, History Department, University of Warwick, CV4 7AL; I.Bradshaw@warwick.ac.uk*

**Welsh Liberal Tradition – A History of the Liberal Party in Wales 1868–2003.** Research spans thirteen decades of Liberal history in Wales but concentrates on the post-1966 formation of the Welsh Federal Party. Any memories and information concerning the post-1966 era or even before welcomed. The research is to be published in book form by Welsh Academic Press. *Dr Russell Deacon, Centre for Humanities, University of Wales Institute Cardiff, Cyncoed Campus, Cardiff CF23 6XD; rdeacon@uwic.ac.uk.*

**Aneurin Williams and Liberal internationalism and pacificism, 1900–22.** A study of this radical and pacifist MP (Plymouth 1910; North West Durham/Consett 1914–22) who was actively involved in League of Nations Movement, Armenian nationalism, international co-operation, pro-Boer etc. Any information relating to him and location of any papers/correspondence welcome. *Barry Dackombe, 32 Ashburnham Road, Ampthill, Beds, MK45 2RH; dackombe@tesco.net.*