

- References will include a brief description rather than any catalogue number.
- 2 *Western Morning News*, 4 October 1915.
 - 3 For a more detailed history of the house and family see Paul Holden, *Lanhydrock House-Book of the House* (National Trust, 2007).
 - 4 'Memorial to Captain the Hon. T.C.R. Agar-Robartes', Liskeard Liberal Club, 30 September 1916 – speech made by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch.
 - 5 *The Sketch*, 'The Primrose Path to Matrimony', 14 April 1915. Primrose died in 1917 during the campaign in Palestine. Both men's heraldic crests were originally mounted in the old Commons Chamber and were reinstalled below the new South Gallery after enemy bombing in 1941.
 - 6 *Western Daily Mercury*, 16 March 1903.
 - 7 Ibid.
 - 8 Election leaflet: 'Vote and Work for Robartes: The Liberal and Free Trade Candidate', 1906. Election leaflet, 'To the Electors of the Mid or St Austell Division of the County of Cornwall', 8 January 1910.
 - 9 *Cambridge Independent Press*, 11 August 1905.
 - 10 LHA. Rosebery's actions have been discussed further in David W. Gutzke, 'Rosebery and Campbell-Bannerman: the Conflict over Leadership Reconsidered', *Historical Research* 54, 1981, pp. 241–50 and Leo McKinstry, *Rosebery*, London, 2005, pp. 469–75.
 - 11 *Cornish Guardian*, 8 October 1915.
 - 12 'Lord Rosebery and the Liberal League: Justification of the Bodmin Speech', *The Times*, 12 December 1905.
 - 13 'Vote and Work for Robartes: The Liberal and Free Trade Candidate', election leaflet 1906.
 - 14 LHA undated draft speech. See also *Cornish Guardian*, 26 January 1906 and *Cornish Times*, 26 January 1906.
 - 15 LHA undated newspaper clipping.
 - 16 *Cornish Guardian*, 26 January 1906.
 - 17 Ibid.
 - 18 *Lostwithiel Guardian*, 24 May 1906.
 - 19 Peter Stephens, 'Alfred Browning Lyne, a Man of Conviction!', *Cornish Guardian*, 11 August 2005.
 - 20 *Daily Chronicle*, 21 July 1906.
 - 21 *Daily Mail*, 21 July 1906.
 - 22 *The Daily News*, February Editions 1906.
 - 23 *Cornish Guardian*, 21 July 1906.

'No man in this adventure of life, at any moment, weighed danger more cheaply against what I may call the "fun of it" ... He went out in just that way – gallantly out to France to the trenches just as if he were taking a fence or a hedge ...'

- 24 *Hansard*, 20 October 1909, p. 419.
- 25 LHA undated draft speech.
- 26 *Cornish Guardian*, 13 August 1909.
- 27 *Cornish Guardian*, 12 November 1909.
- 28 *Cornish Guardian*, 8 October 1909.
- 29 'To the Electors of the Mid or St Austell Division of the County of Cornwall', election leaflet, 1910.
- 30 LHA undated draft speech. In Arthurian legend Dozmary Pool on Bodmin Moor was where King Arthur requested Sir Bedivere to return Excalibur to the Lady of the Lake.
- 31 'To the Electors of the Mid or St Austell Division of the County of Cornwall', election leaflet, 1910.
- 32 LHA.
- 33 *Cornish Guardian*, 28 January 1910.
- 34 *St Austell Star*, 17 December 1910.
- 35 *New York Times*, 7 November 1910. Tommy was reported as a guest at Tammany Hall with Neil Primrose, Murray Graham, James de Rothschild and Cecil Grenfell.
- 36 *Somerset Gazette*, undated cutting in Lanhydrock collection.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 *Hansard*, 2 April 1914, p. 1467.
- 39 Thanks to Chris Collins for drawing my attention to this.
- 40 LHA undated draft speech.
- 41 'The Liberal cave and the 1914 Budget', *English Historical Review*, June, 1996, p. 632.
- 42 *The Liberal Magazine*, February 1913, p.49. *Manchester Guardian*, 8 July 1914. *British Weekly*, 7 October 1915.
- 43 National Archives, WO 337/42464.
- 44 Whilst in London he resided at 1 Great Stanhope Street, Mayfair, Middlesex. He left £3,688 6s 6d. (£158,820 equivalent in 2010) at the time of his death.
- 45 Thanks to the Regimental Headquarters Coldstream Guards for this information. The 'Intelligence Summary' (National Archives, WO95/1219) recorded on 28 September 1915 also lists 'Cpt Hon T. C. Agar-Robartes MP (wounded)' amongst 229 casualties.
- 46 National Archives WO 337/42464. *London Gazette*, 1 January 1916. He was posthumously awarded the 1914–15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal in 1922.
- 47 *Cornish Guardian*, 8 October 1915.
- 48 *Western Morning News*, 11 October 1915.
- 49 *London Opinion*, 10 October 1915.
- 50 *Manchester Guardian*, 18 January 1915.
- 51 *London Opinion*, 10 October 1915.
- 52 *Manchester Guardian*, 18 January 1915.
- 53 'Memorial to Captain the Hon. T.C.R. Agar-Robartes', Liskeard Liberal Club, 30 September 1916.

REPORT

What's left of Gladstonian Liberalism in the Liberal Democrats?

Evening meeting, 25 January 2010, with Dr Eugenio Biagini and Chris Huhne MP. Chair: William Wallace (Hon. President, Liberal Democrat History Group)

Report by Mark Pack

WILLIAM GLADSTONE'S legacy for modern political parties was the subject for discussion at the January meeting of the Liberal Democrat History Group. The

meeting was addressed by both Eugenio Biagini, of Cambridge University, and Chris Huhne MP, the Liberal Democrat Shadow Home Secretary and keen collector of Gladstone memorabilia.

Dr Biagini highlighted the contradiction at the heart of Gladstone's reputation. He is seen both as a quintessential Victorian – more Victorian than Queen Victoria – but also as someone who has continued to be sufficiently revered by the National Liberal Club (where the meeting was taking pace) for its premises to be decorated with paintings and statues of the man. He was both a man of his times and a hero for our times.

Gladstone's political legacy has variously been claimed by people across the political spectrum. Although neither speaker directly made this point, this is perhaps unsurprising for a politician who predated the modern party system and was a member at different times of the Conservatives, a centrist group (the Peelites) and then also the Liberals. Biagini highlighted two of these claims in particular – that of the Conservative Keith Joseph, appropriating his economic liberalism, and that of the *Economist*, labelling him a 'prophet for the left' – a progressive free of class – in a 1992 editorial.

His own explanation of the eclectic appeal of Gladstone's legacy is that a man prominent in politics for over sixty years, and who reshaped the Liberal Party during that time, was bound to leave behind a wide range of actions and beliefs for different people to pick and choose from. In particular, Gladstone mixed a belief in free trade and laissez-faire economic policies with, over the years, increasing support for the new forms of regulation required by the country's swift social change – a mix which cuts across conventional left/right dividing lines but sits comfortably with many modern Liberals and then Liberal Democrats.

Both Biagini and Huhne picked out Gladstone's readiness to nationalise the railways – putting a provision for this into railways legislation – as an example of his willingness to be pragmatic when it came to laissez-faire beliefs. He did not in the end nationalise the railways, but wanted the powers to do so, as he could envisage circumstances in which that would be the right thing to do.

This was not a one-off aberration. Gladstone did nationalise the telegraph system and was fully in tune with the increasing municipalisation (nationalisation at a local level) of gas and water supplies.

As Biagini put it, Gladstone gave the needs of people priority over ideology and economic dogma. He was willing to tackle natural monopolies with government intervention and to provide public goods via the state.

In addition to echoing these views, Chris Huhne emphasised the two phases in Gladstone's career as Chancellor and Prime Minister when it came to national debt. Gladstone initially halved the public debt to GDP ratio, in dealing with the huge debt left over from the Napoleonic wars. But then in the second half of his career Gladstone instead emphasised spending on social causes, and the debt ratio stayed largely static. This reversal of Gordon Brown's record – who spent first and is now worrying about cutting debt – reflected the increasing demands on the state to respond to the social strains and challenges of the industrial revolution as the nineteenth century progressed.

The Gladstone who initially sought to abolish income tax was by the end sufficiently keen on spending in areas such as education that Huhne even argued that the New Liberals were not a radical departure from his policies. As he aged, Gladstone left behind his initial near-obsession with thrift – well illustrated by Huhne's account of how Gladstone had bemoaned the Foreign Office's use of thick sheets of notepaper instead of thinner paper – but through his career he retained an interest in transparency and control over spending. Gladstone may have become keen on spending, but he was not slapdash with it and the financial controls he introduced, such as the Public Accounts Committee and the Auditor-General, still heavily shape our contemporary systems.

Gladstone's emphasis, by the end, on wise public spending is not the only respect in which his policies sit comfortably with Liberal Democrats. Both Biagini and

Huhne spoke of how Gladstone's emphasis on humanitarian concerns in foreign policy are echoed by the more modern concerns such as those of Paddy Ashdown over the Balkans. Huhne also noted that William Gladstone was the first western statesman willingly to take part in decolonisation, in his case of the Ionian Islands.

The application of moral principles and the international rule of law to matters of foreign policy, as pioneered by Gladstone, has been repeatedly followed by his successors as party leader – and so too, as Biagini pointed out, has Gladstone's emphasis in foreign affairs on working with other countries and appreciating the European context. Huhne agreed, and extended the point by reminding the audience that all three parts of Gladstone's famous trio – peace, retrenchment and reform – were still very much applicable to the party's approach. Having already talked about peace and retrenchment, Huhne pointed out that Gladstone was a keen reformer of the political system. His strident belief in devolution was married to major efforts to introduce a politically impartial civil service, changes to the electoral system and more.

During questions from the audience, it was pointed out (by William Wallace) that even the new Supreme Court being brought into existence at the time was originally proposed in the Supreme Court Act of 1873, a measure which was then stymied by the fall of Gladstone's first government.

Both Huhne and Biagini concluded that the overall shape of Gladstone's policies – economic responsibility married with willingness to mend market failures, concern for social reform, a humanitarian foreign policy and political reform – have all been followed by subsequent party leaders, right through to the present. Gladstonian Liberalism is alive and well in the modern Liberal Democrats.

Mark Pack is co-editor of Liberal Democrat Voice (www.LibDemVoice.org) and a member of the Journal's Editorial Board.

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