

JOYCE CARY – LIBERAL

‘Britain is profoundly a liberal state. Its dominating mind has been liberal for more than a century.’ These words were written by a novelist whose works *Prisoner of Grace*, *Except the Lord*, and *Not Honour More* explore the British liberal tradition against the backdrop of the great electoral landslide which gave the Liberal Party its overwhelming majority in 1906.

Chester Nimmo, the main protagonist of this ‘political trilogy’, is a member of the resulting New Liberalism which took hold as a result.

John Morris celebrates the work of the English novelist Joyce Cary, whose work is rooted in Liberal ideas.



ERAL TRADITIONS

BORN IN Londonderry in 1888, Arthur Joyce Lunel Cary was named after his mother Charlotte Joyce in the Anglo-Irish tradition of his class. Following the Irish land reforms of the 1880s, the family, now stripped of its lands, settled in London, where Charlotte died of pneumonia in 1898 when Joyce was nine years old and his brother Jack just six.

Schooled first at Tunbridge Wells then at Clifton, at the age of sixteen Joyce spent a short period in Edinburgh and Paris in order to explore his skills as a painter. Returning to England in 1909, he joined Trinity College, Oxford where he read law. Somewhat of an adventurer, he found a new vocation in the service of the British Red Cross during the First Balkan War in 1912. The King of Montenegro himself decorated Cary for valour for his efforts in assisting the wounded. A memoir of his experiences – his first attempt at writing, which contains several sketches and diagrams – was published posthumously in 1964.

Applying for a post in the Northern Nigerian political service in 1914 so that he could afford to marry, Cary headed for new adventures but was invalided back to England in 1915. Following his permanent return in 1920 (his wife deplored his long absences), he settled in Oxford. Throughout the 1920s he wrote extensively, but was not to publish his first novel, *Aissa Saved*, until 1932 at the age of forty-four. Critical acclaim did not really come, however, until 1936 when

The African Witch was made a Book Society choice, and he was finally recognised as a fine novelist with the publication of *Mister Johnson* in 1939, which was also based on his experiences in West Africa.

Though now largely forgotten, Joyce Cary was the author of many novels which were as highly regarded as those of his contemporaries Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh. ‘The author of *Prisoner of Grace* was a “different” writer from most of his contemporaries, different in his outlook, his gifts, his variety, and in the themes of his books,’ writes Walter Allen. ‘If, as I think is true ... England and the English cannot be understood except by reference to the working of the Protestant, Nonconformist spirit, then a reading of Cary ... is essential to the understanding of the English.’¹

Though the titles of the political trilogy give away a religious theme, Cary’s primary intention was also to explore ‘the whole Liberal angle and its religious basis.’² ‘Cary was a profoundly religious spirit of that intensely individual and protestant kind which cannot find fulfilment in any corporate body; he had to carve out his creed by himself and for himself. Brought up as an orthodox Anglican, he lost all religious faith in early manhood to find a new one in mature life. It was not orthodox; it was not Christian in any substantial sense. Cary did not identify God with Christ or with any kind of personal spirit.’³ Indeed Cary admitted, ‘No church would have me’. Religion, he said in a 1954 interview he gave in the *Paris Review*, ‘is organized to satisfy

Joyce Cary
(1888–1957)

and guide the soul – politics does the same thing for the body. God is a character, a real and consistent being, or He is nothing. If God did a miracle He would deny His own nature and the universe would simply blow up, vanish, become nothing.’⁴ Cary’s conviction instead was that beauty and human love proved the existence ‘of some transcendental spiritual reality with which a man must relate himself harmoniously if he is to find satisfaction’.⁵

Cary’s interest in politics – and his ideas about the roots of English character in the Liberal and protestant traditions – resulted in an introduction to the Liberal Book Club by George Orwell, who was familiar with his novels. The club’s committee included Osbert Sitwell, and among its patrons were Augustus John, J. M. Keynes, Compton MacKenzie, A. A. Milne and C. P. Snow. The Liberal Party had invited Cary to write a treatise as early as 1931, but this new introduction resulted in a volume originally to have been entitled ‘Liberty and Freedom’. Published as *Power in Men*, it became the club’s selection for May 1939, billed as ‘an examination of the failures and disappointments of democracy in practice’. In it, Cary makes the point that both totalitarianism and anarchy lead to the same thing – to the erosion of freedom and personal choice, and to tyranny. Democracy, on the other hand, rather than being some sort of state of political bliss, is in fact a never-ending argument about ideas and direction: a debate which simply propels rather than settles anything for too long; a constant



Joyce Cary and his wife Gertrude

leader, but breaks with him ‘over ways and means’,⁹ objecting to the love of power over men which he detects in Marxist philosophy. As *Power in Men* explores these questions, so too does the trilogy tell of Nimmo’s experiments with various ideologies: ‘Cary makes an analysis of what meanings are necessary to political creativity. The argument of *Power in Men* is therefore relevant to the action of the trilogy, and in the broadest possible and most fundamental ways. That *Power in Men* and the novels rise in different directions from the same source should make us more alert in either case to what Cary’s vision of the human situation ultimately is,’ writes Hazard Adams in his 1963 introduction to *Power in Men*.¹⁰

Intrigued by the idea of returning to Africa, in late 1942 Cary agreed to travel to Tanganyika to take part in a project for a propaganda film that the Ministry of Information was producing. It was one of several designed to keep up morale, to rally the Empire to the war effort and to highlight the constructive features of the British Imperial system. The director, Thorold Dickinson, had been alerted to Cary’s knowledge of Africa through a new treatise, *The Case for African Freedom* (Cary believed in African gradualism), which had just been published. Although Cary knew nothing about films, he undertook to write the script with the director. It was not until after they had set sail for east Africa on The Duchess of Richmond, however, that either realised they had left the script behind. Talk of films was a new world to Cary, who asked cameraman Desmond Dickinson (no relation) who his favourite film star was. ‘Greta Garbo,’ was the reply. ‘Oh?’ Cary asked. ‘Who’s she?’ The crew were staggered to realise that Cary knew hardly anything about film and had in fact seen very few.¹¹

Men of Two Worlds, though not a box-office success, was received well by the critics and, more importantly, it whetted Cary’s appetite for more. His next project, begun in 1945, was to be a propaganda documentary, again directed by Dickinson, on the irrigation works the British administration had built in northern India. The film, it was hoped, would help to ‘convince the Indian population of the benefits of

conflict of ideas in a world of ‘perpetual creation’.

In *Power in Men* Cary traces, point by point, the meaning of liberty and of man’s creative power, which, he writes, is realised through education and industry. Identifying the absence of a true measurement of happiness in Jeremy Bentham’s formula – the ‘greatest happiness for the greatest number’ – Cary instead presents an alternative: the greatest liberty of the greatest number, measured by pay, leisure and education. Building on the old definition of liberty as the ‘absence of restraint’, or what Cary calls ‘freedom from’, he defines freedom as ‘the provision of the means to self-fulfilment’, or ‘freedom to’.

Power in Men was the last selection of the Liberal Book Club to reach print before the outbreak of war led to the abandoning of the project. Though Cary was unhappy with the editing of the work, the TLS commented on its chapter and verse style as an excellent idea if the book were ‘to become the philosophical basis for Liberalism reborn’ and following its publication he was offered a parliamentary candidacy by the Liberal Party leadership. It took Cary two weeks to reply to this invitation. Declining the offer and citing other ‘present commitments’, the real reason, disclosed in a letter, was that he felt he had ‘neither time nor money to fly at politics’.⁶

Cary spent the first part of the war as an ARP warden in Oxford.

After the threat of invasion receded, however, there was room for other ideas, including his most ambitious yet. *To be a Pilgrim*, the central part of Joyce Cary’s first trilogy (which includes what is arguably his most famous novel *The Horse’s Mouth*, apart from, perhaps, *Mister Johnson*) is the memoir of Tom Wilcher who reflects on a life overshadowed by his brilliant brother Edward, a Liberal member of parliament since 1906. ‘The essence of *To be a Pilgrim* is the sense of life as pilgrimage,’ wrote Cary, ‘and the whole background of the book is democratic history as facet of the protestant evangelical mind ...’⁷ Edward appears to be the prototype of Chester Nimmo, the central character of the ‘political’ trilogy which the author began after the war, in which he explores in detail the life of another fictional MP whose meteoric career as a Radical ends in failure when the Liberals were trounced in the 1922 elections.

In this, the second trilogy, Cary explores the liberal and protestant traditions of English politics. Of all his works, it is the most closely linked to *Power in Men*. ‘Chester Nimmo’s memoirs of his childhood and youth are a great departure for Cary. They suggest John Bunyan, and Charles Dickens in his tragic and comic veins,’ writes Malcolm Foster.⁸ Nimmo first hears a disciple of Proudhon, ‘a sort of Tolstoyan anarchist’ who despised religion. He then meets a Marxist labour

British rule at a time when it was very important that India remain peaceful'.¹² Cary was to handle the script, but the volatile situation that he and Dickinson encountered upon their arrival in India led them to abandon the project, the crew forced to avoid more than one riot. This did not deter their appetites for filmmaking, however. On their return to England, Dickinson began a commercial project for a feature film dealing with the process of revolution. Also written jointly by the director and Cary, the first script for *The Secret People* was an exploration of anarchist beliefs, and was set in the summer of 1914. However, Cary withdrew from the film during its production because the producers struggled with his script, which they felt was too literary. A new script, written by the director and Wolfgang Wilhelm, set the story in the 1930s, but Cary remained interested in the film's progress and visited the studios many times and it was here he met a young star making her screen debut: Audrey Hepburn. This was to be Cary's last involvement in film. Turning away from that medium to a new project that would better enable him to express his ideas, he soon began writing again, and the film's themes foreshadowed those to which he was finally able to give satisfactory expression in his political trilogy, and in a number of essays.

'Britain is profoundly a Liberal state,' wrote Cary in the essay *Britain's Liberal Influence*. 'As we know it today it has two main sources: the Protestant tradition, and the Whig revolution of 1688 with its ideals of toleration and individual right'.¹³ Originally published in French as 'L'influence britannique dans la révolution libérale' in the June 1955 issue of *Comprendre*, the essay traces the religious tradition to before the reformation. The Catholic Church, Cary points out, was a source of Liberal opinions long before, in that it was the only house of learning and the only secure refuge open to men of 'a reflective turn'. The Church taught charity, forgiveness, love of one's neighbour and even tolerance. However, men of learning naturally bred a spirit of enquiry and many inevitably became heretics in the eyes of Rome.

But it was not until the fourteenth century, Cary explains, that the first English reformer, Wycliffe,

directly challenged the tradition of the Catholic Church. It, in turn, denounced him, but Wycliffe's influence had already spread, particularly to Bohemia where it inspired the Hussites whose demands have been credited with anticipating the Reformation. By the early seventeenth century, Archbishop Laud's church, though oppressive and intolerant, begot the anarchist and republican sects that overthrew the monarchy in England. But England, writes Cary, was lucky in that the early parliamentary tradition allowed the bloodless 'glorious' revolution of 1688 which established toleration as a principle and asserted the rights of the people and freedom of religion: civil liberty. And though the revolution was not democratic, it continued to produce apostles of democracy, idealists and philosophers for the next 150 years. The great Reform Bill of 1832 made way for true democratic government and it was the new middle class of manufacturers who joined the Liberal Party (first known by that name in the early 1830s), and which also contained radicals who fought for the welfare of the masses.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, parliament steadily became more democratic and every new franchise bill meant a further devolution of power as the clamour for votes for all became louder. In the twentieth century, the Liberals were displaced by the socialists with their programme for free social services, the abolition of poverty and the redistribution of wealth which led to the welfare state. But it was the great reforming Liberal government of 1906 which was to institute the social welfare programme that introduced medical inspection and, where necessary, treatment of school children, safeguards for neglected or abused children, the old age pension and National Insurance: the social policy framework, in other words, that still exists today.

In instituting these measures, the Liberal government had moved from Victorian laissez faire towards social responsibility, but it remained opposed to the ideas of the left. Ironically, as Cornelia Cook points out, the same traditions which linked Liberalism to the labour movement 'also militated against the levelling spirit of socialism, clinging to the spirit of

self-help and divine providence', and the socialists, in the guise of the new Labour Party, became the voice of the working people because of 'the unwillingness of an economically oppressed people to await the benevolence of providence'.¹⁴

But Liberalism has bequeathed many of its attitudes – freedom for emotional fulfilment, intellectual freedom, physical security – to its successors on both left and right, asserts Cook, and this Cary explores in the novels: 'For Cary, the value of human life was supreme. In affirming the truth he and Nimmo unite to make the trilogy a statement as well as a picture of Liberalism'.¹⁵ In the novels, Cary does well to remind his readers about the truth of this legacy: 'I suppose nobody now can realise the effect of that revolution,' he wrote in the first part of the trilogy, *Prisoner of Grace*. 'Radical leaders like Lloyd George really did mean to bring in a new kind of state, a "paternal state", that took responsibility for sickness and poverty' and he directly refers to 'the true spiritual roots of the British Liberal tradition – the veritable Protestant succession of the free soul'.¹⁶

Cary believed that the Liberal revolution of the previous two centuries was no 'passing phase' and that it was the natural expression of human development, of the individual's desire for freedom. To his mind, there were only two alternatives. 'What I believe,' he said, 'is that wangle is inevitable in the modern state, that is to say, there is no choice between persuading people and shooting them'.¹⁷ By 'wangle' Cary refers to the apparently perpetual habit of the politician who can never give a straight answer, who may be economical with the truth, equivocal, and even disingenuous in the face of political pressure and the need to 'persuade'. This leads us back to the political trilogy's central theme: when persuasion leads to accusations of lying, what should our response be? Malcolm Foster summarises the problem thus: 'how can a politician achieve that elusive balance between morality and practicality?'.¹⁸ The novels tackle the natural prejudice against politicians who tell lies, which Cary believed to be an inevitable part of democratic society. This is not to say that he approved. On its publication, he felt that readers of *Not Honour More* 'completely

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misunderstood the crucial point of the trilogy', i.e. that politicians did not necessarily have to be 'crooks', especially in a democracy, saying in a radio interview, 'Now I am very glad of the chance in this broadcast to deny this because it is just the opposite I believe'.¹⁹

Foster identifies the question of whether the trilogy's main protagonist Chester Nimmo MP is 'as good as he could be in his special circumstances, and better than many were in much easier ones?' as central to the novels. Is he saved by his protestant faith in man's personal relationship to God? Or is he a crook?

The answer can only be found within the pages of the second book, Nimmo's memoir, *Except the Lord*. The quote, from Psalm 127 ('Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it') implies that Nimmo's stance is that 'government, like each life, is a house which must be built with the inspiration of – not in spite of – the Lord',²⁰ and that therefore no man or state can be absolute, and men are fallible and are required to act as they see fit.

To write the novel, and in particular to paint a credible picture of Nimmo's father, Cary turned to numerous books and essays on the Seventh Day Adventists. In addition, Nimmo as a youth is introduced to the world of play-acting through his attendance at the Lillmouth Great Fair. This 'foreshadows his own role as political orator and practitioner of deception, and the idea of class conflict'.²¹

Nimmo favours 'wangle' over 'shooting people', but this gets him into trouble. 'Persuasion is an art,' Cary said, 'but not necessarily an art of lies',²² but in the whole trilogy he attempts to demonstrate how persuasion can degenerate into lies by showing the actual unfolding of events in the continuous present, as Nimmo responds to them, using his imagination to react as he believes he should. In the *Paris Review* interview Cary said: 'In the democracies we persuade. And this gives great power to the spellbinder, the artist in words, the preacher, the demagogue, whatever you call him. Rousseau, Marx, Tolstoy, these were great spellbinders ... My Nimmo is a typical spellbinder ... Poets have started most of the revolutions, especially nationalist revolutions. On the other hand,

life would die without poets, and democracy must have its spellbinders.' Nimmo 'belongs to the type of all of them', he said, mentioning Lloyd George, Aneurin Bevan and Billy Graham among others, revealing the character type on which he based Nimmo, the 'spellbinder'.²³

Cornelia Cook writes that, though not directly based on him, Nimmo's characterisation 'was greatly facilitated by Cary's use of David Lloyd George as an historical model',²⁴ referring to his religious boyhood, opposition to the Boer War and career in parliament: 'As Lloyd George became President of the Board of Trade in 1905, Chester in that year becomes Under-Secretary for Mines. He is promoted to Asquith's Liberal Cabinet in 1908, the year Lloyd George became Chancellor of the Exchequer'.²⁵ Further similar parallels are drawn between the two careers, which end with the 1922 election defeat and both men's withdrawal from government.

Like other members of Cabinet, pacifist Chester Nimmo's moment of crisis comes in the final days before war is declared, when two his colleagues resign rather than become members of a War Cabinet. He is widely expected to resign along with the others but stays on, much to the dismay of his constituents. During the July 1914 crisis, though most leading Liberals were determined to stand by France, Liberal newspapers were against war, and at least five non-interventionist members of the Cabinet – the fictional Nimmo included – intimated that a declaration of war would lead to their resignations. Indeed Nina Nimmo expects her husband to resign. She recounts being confronted as late as 4 August – the day war was declared – with reports of the resignations of anti-war Ministers in the London papers and being asked why Chester was not among them. 'I said that it must be a mistake of the reporters, who had left him out,' she says. 'It did not occur to me for one moment that Chester would not resign. He had pledged himself never to enter a War Cabinet ...'.²⁶ The novel explores this decision and its ramifications in detail and Cary paints rather an ambiguous portrait of Nimmo, the pacifist who changes his mind without actually tendering his resignation in the process. Although the trilogy ends in the deaths of the

principal characters whose stories it retells, the work is a positive one, asserts Jack Wolkenfeld. 'It affirms important fundamental values', he writes. 'Each of the books uses the same basic standards by which to measure men, decency, truth [and] sincerity ... The man who most tries to live by these standards and who, though ultimately unsuccessful, comes closest to doing it is also the man who has greatest freedom of the mind, and who in addition is the man whose intuition [through creative imagination] has brought him closest to the spiritual reality. By these standards Chester Nimmo is not an extremely good man. But under the circumstances, he is perhaps the best man possible. He is certainly the freest'.²⁷

The trilogy was Cary's last major work. Diagnosed with motor neurone disease in 1955, Joyce Cary died two years later at his home in Oxford. As an exploration of two major influences on British political life – how the Liberal Party influenced the preoccupations of British politics and how the progress of democracy and freedom is ensured in a dangerous and confusing world – the novels are not without a fair measure of humour and are an enjoyable and enlightening read which deserve a wider audience.

John Morris received his Ph.D. at the University of Exeter in 2011. He is currently adapting his thesis, which focuses on the deployment of music in British World War Two propaganda, for publication by IB Tauris in 2013.

- 1 Walter Allen, *Writers and their Work*, No. 41, Joyce Cary (Longman, 1963), p. 29.
- 2 Cornelia Cook, *Joyce Cary – Liberal Principles* (Vision Press, 1981), p. 209.
- 3 Golden L. Larsen, *The Dark Descent: Social Change and Moral Responsibility in the Novels of Joyce Cary* (Michael Joseph, 1965), p. 193.
- 4 'The Art of Fiction No. 7, Joyce Cary', interview with Cary in the *Paris Review*, No.7, Fall-Winter 1954–55, p. 5.
- 5 Larsen, *The Dark Descent*, p. 193.
- 6 Malcolm Foster, *Joyce Cary, A Biography* (Michael Joseph, 1968), p. 337.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 407.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 483.
- 9 Joyce Cary, *Power in Men* (University of Washington Press, 1963), Introduction by Hazard Adams, p. xxxiii.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. xlv.

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- 11 Foster, *Joyce Cary*, p. 363.
 12 Ibid., p. 378.
 13 A. G. Bishop (ed.), *Joyce Cary – Selected Essays* (Michael Joseph, 1976), p. 210.
 14 Cook, *Joyce Cary*, p. 177.
 15 Ibid., p. 230.
 16 Joyce Cary, *Prisoner of Grace* (Michael Joseph, 1952), p. 383.
 17 Andrew Wright, *Joyce Cary, A Preface to His Novels* (Chatto & Windus, 1958), p. 154.
 18 Foster, *Joyce Cary*, p. 479.
 19 Ibid., p. 492.
 20 Cook, *Joyce Cary*, p. 177.
 21 Larsen, *The Dark Descent*, p. 189.
 22 Bishop, *Cary Essays*, p. 231.
 23 ‘Art of Fiction’, p. 5.
 24 Cook, *Joyce Cary*, p. 196.
 25 Ibid., p. 196.
 26 Cary, *Prisoner of Grace*, p. 259.
 27 Jack Wolkenfeld, *Joyce Cary, The Developing Style* (New York University Press, 1968), p. 187.

LETTERS

The 2010 election and the Coalition

Martin Pugh, in his review of K. O. Morgan’s *Ages of Reform: Dawns and Downfalls of the British Left* (*Journal of Liberal History* 73), states that ‘there is scant historical support for [the] view’ that an early second election following May 2010 if the Liberal Democrats had allowed a minority Conservative government to take office, ‘would lead to ... an inevitable government victory’.

Leaving aside the fact that Labour achieved a majority to last for a full term at both the 1966 and October 1974 elections, and his repetition of the error that Labour ‘lost’ the 1951 general election – when it polled its highest ever vote – the problem would have been Cameron’s opportunity to blame the Liberal Democrats’ failure to join a coalition for political instability in the face of economic crisis. Such circumstances would hardly have produced a propitious electoral atmosphere for the Liberal Democrats.

Arguably, every ‘early’ election since 1923, when the Liberal Party benefited from its apparent reunification after the Lloyd George coalition, has seen a diminution of the Liberal vote, on occasion, such as in 1924, 1931 and 1951, catastrophically so. These are not encouraging precedents.

Michael Meadowcroft

Pat Collins

I read with great interest Graham Lippiatt’s comprehensive article on the charismatic Pat Collins, former Liberal MP for Walsall (*Journal of Liberal History* 73). When I was parliamentary

candidate for the Walsall South constituency at the general election of 1987, more than forty years after his death, Pat Collins was vividly remembered by older voters of all persuasions.

One of the local party officers, the late Millicent Gray, recalled Asquith’s visit to Walsall during Collins’s brief reign as MP in 1922–24. She described Collins as being almost illiterate. This often led him into hilarious misunderstandings of vocabulary. When refurbishment of the spacious vestibule of Walsall Town Hall was being discussed, a fellow councillor suggested that a chandelier would make an attractive feature. This was instantly dismissed by Collins on the grounds that ‘We couldn’t afford to employ anyone to play it!’

Incidentally, Miss Gray, though in her eighties, was one of my keenest supporters. She had dissented from the decision of Walsall Liberals to opt for the Liberal National faction after 1931. She remained, with a handful of colleagues, loyal to the independent Liberal Party of Samuel/Sinclair/Davies until the general election of 1951, when the local party at last bravely decided to contest the seat after a lapse of twenty years. The Tory candidate still fought under the Nat-Lib-Con label. Walsall returned a Labour MP from 1945 to 1955 before being split into North and South Divisions.

Lionel King

Punch and cartoons

According to the note on the 1912 cartoon that illustrates Roy Douglas’s article on the

Lloyd George Land Taxes (*Journal of Liberal History* 73), ‘Punch cartoonist Bernard Partridge expected the competition between the Liberal and Labour candidates at the Hanley by-election to deliver the seat to the Unionists’.

Who can say what Partridge thought? The two weekly *Punch* political cartoons were devised by an editorial committee, hence their often ponderous character. The artists drew to order, though they may well have been generally comfortable with the views they portrayed.

From the 1920s and 1930s newspaper political cartoonists like David Low and Vicky were given licence to express their own convictions as forthrightly as they chose; but I don’t think *Punch* ever changed its practice.

Andy Connell

Henry George the socialist

A few comments on three articles in the *Journal of Liberal History* 73 –

Firstly, in his ‘The Lloyd George land taxes’, Roy Douglas stated that it is quite inaccurate to describe the US economist and philosopher Henry George, an early advocate of land value taxation, as a ‘socialist’. However, in George’s most significant electoral venture – as a candidate for Mayor of New York in 1886 – he ran on a Socialist ticket, with the result being Abram Hewitt (Democrat) 90,552, Henry George 68,110 and Theodore Roosevelt (Republican) 60,435.

Secondly, in his ‘Liberal National leader – Charles Kerr, Lord Teviot’, David Dutton referred to the Woolton-Teviot (Tory-Liberal National) pact of

May 1947. However, this pact only applied to England and Wales. A separate pact, between the Scottish Unionist and Liberal National Associations, was not announced until 2 December 1947.

Further, Kellie Castle (about two miles west of Arbroath in Angus (aka Forfarshire) – which was at one time owned by Captain Archibald Ramsay, the crypto-fascist Tory MP imprisoned in 1940–44 under Defence Regulation 18B – was not in Charles Kerr’s former constituency of Montrose Burghs (Montrose, Arbroath, Brechin, Forfar and Inverberrie) but in the then county constituency of Forfarshire.

Thirdly, in her ‘The Liberal election agent in the post-Reform Act era’, Nancy LoPatin-Lummis completely ignored the fact that there were three Reform Acts in 1832: one for England and Wales, one for Scotland and one for Ireland. Indeed, in two respects the Scottish Act was the most significant of the three. Not only did the Scottish electorate increase from about 4,500 to about 65,000 (with the English and Welsh electorate increasing from about 435,000 to about 652,000) but the increase in the number of Scottish MPs from 45 to 53 went a little way to reducing Scotland’s under-representation, on a population basis, in the House of Commons which had existed since 1707. However, such under-representation continued until about 1891 (with Welsh under-representation having continued until about 1861 and Irish under-representation until about 1881).

Dr. Sandy S. Waugh