

Principally, she acted for her father in ecclesiastical appointments – a subject in which he probably took more interest than any other premier and in which she was able to rely on the assistance of her friendship with Henry Scott Holland.

In many ways, Gladstone's government of 1880–85 was the most frustrating of his periods as Prime Minister – its achievements modest compared to the scale of its majority. Gladstone's colleagues regularly threatened to resign and Gladstone himself was apparently always on the verge of retirement. To what extent did Mary's diplomatic skills prevent matters deteriorating even further? Sheila Gooddie apparently does not ask herself what difference Mary made; for her the achievement of a female working at No. 10 is enough in itself, and we are left with little clear impression of Mary's impact 'at the heart of politics'. Rather she focuses on the passage of the well-known events of the second government and on the passing comments of Mary on these events or, more naturally, on the devastating impact on the family of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the husband of her close friend Lucy Lyttelton.

In 1886, at the age of 39, Mary surprised the family by

marrying a man nine years her junior, Harry Drew, the curate at the parish church of Hawarden. She married as she always intended: for love rather than position. The shock over the age difference and relative poverty of her husband appeared to horrify her cousins and her maid more than her parents, for whom a clergyman had much to recommend as a suitor. The wedding, in February 1886, was fitted in around the Home Rule crisis and, although initially she remained with the family, the chance of Harry running the parish of Buckley allowed the creation of a separate household, albeit one only a few miles from Hawarden. Unfortunately this was at the expense of Helen's career, as she left Cambridge to take over the care of her parents.

Despite her age and a number of miscarriages, Mary was blessed with a daughter. Harry Drew remained at Buckley until 1905 and then became rector of Hawarden where he died in 1910. Mary survived until New Year's Day in 1928 and in her last few years contributed articles to *Nineteenth Century* on her father's library, published her reminiscences of Acton and wrote a biography of her mother.

One is used to Victorian biographies, whoever their

**One gains an impression that she preferred the time she spent in the ladies' gallery of the House of Commons to the time spent at balls and entertainments.**

subject, being defined in relation to Gladstone, and it is pleasantly surprising to find that this one is not. With the Grand Old Man shooed off into his 'Temple of Peace' the rest of the family suddenly come to life. The glimpses thus granted are not always comfortable. The inconveniences portrayed range from the minor, such as the degree of organisation required for travel in Victorian Europe, to the always present risk of premature death, even among such well-cosseted families, in childhood and childbirth.

Mary Gladstone wrote of her planned biography of her mother, 'it was not so much a question of greatness as of unusualness, distinctiveness' that were needed for a biography. As Sheila Gooddie concludes, this is as true of Mary as of Catherine. The Mary portrayed in this biography was obviously bright, perceptive and passionate in her politics. It would have been nice to have heard from her more directly than Sheila Gooddie allows.

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- 1 P. Magnus, *Gladstone* (John Murray, 1954), p. 38. The letter is quoted in Magnus.

catalogued. They are stored in some 400 boxes and include correspondence, MS notes, memoranda and reports, committee papers, speech transcripts, news cuttings, publications, campaign material, photographs, cartoons, video and cassette recordings. These cover David Owen's political career from his early Labour Party membership until his resignation from the House of Commons in 1992. The main body of records date from c.1962–92, although the collection also contains some earlier material relating to David Owen's family life and education.

The papers are arranged in four groups, broadly reflecting

# ARCHIVES

## The David Owen Papers at Special Collections and Archives, University of Liverpool Library

by **Maureen Watry**

In July 1996 the Rt Hon the Lord Owen CH was installed as the Chancellor of the University of Liverpool. At that time

his papers were transferred to the University Library.

Over a period of two years the papers were sorted and

# WINSTON CHURCHILL — LIBERAL POLITICIAN

It is often forgotten that Winston Churchill served in four different governments as a Liberal minister, between 1905 and 1922. Indeed, the year 2004 sees the centenary of his joining the Liberal Party, when he crossed the floor of the Commons in protest at the Conservatives' lurch away from free trade. This meeting will examine Churchill's Liberal legacy.

Speakers: **Keith Robbins** (former Vice Chancellor of the University of Wales at Lampeter and author of *Churchill*) and **Paul Addison** (Director of the Centre for Second World War Studies and author of *Churchill on the Home Front 1900–1945*).

**7.00 p.m., Monday 2 February** (following the History Group AGM, at 6.30 p.m.)  
Lady Violet Room, National Liberal Club. 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1

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the chronological structure of David Owen's life and work:

#### **Personal and Family**

**Papers, D 709/1:** a small section that includes: Correspondence; General papers; Photographs.

#### **Labour Party Papers**

**1960–81, D 709/2:** covers a wide range of material including correspondence, speech transcripts, articles, memoranda and reports, campaign material, news cuttings, and photographs: Early Labour Party membership: related papers (1962–66); Labour MP for Plymouth: constituency papers (1966–81); Papers as Minister for the Navy (1968–70); Papers as member of Opposition: Shadow Defence spokesman and defence issues (1970–73); Papers as member of Opposition: Children Bill (1974); Papers as Minister of Health (1974–76); Papers as Foreign Secretary (1977–79); Papers

as member of Opposition: Shadow Energy spokesman (1979–81); Speeches: general; Articles: general; Day files; Diaries; David Owen's publications; Photographs and cartoons; Personal policy papers and general correspondence; News cuttings and publications; Papers on leaving the Labour Party.

#### **SDP Papers 1981–92: D**

**709/3:** Papers on the formation and launch of the SDP; Committee papers; Policy records; Council and Conference papers; Election and campaign material; Publicity and fund raising records; Regional organisation records; Associated groups and organisations; Parliamentary business papers; Personnel and general administration papers; Papers relating to the SDP/Liberal Alliance; Papers relating to the SDP and Liberal Party merger and the re-establishment of the SDP; SDP MP

for Plymouth: constituency papers; General correspondence; Day files; Policy: private and reference papers; Speeches; Articles; David Owen publications; Diaries; Photographs and cartoons; Audio-visual material; SDP newspapers and publications; News cuttings collection; SDP: general and historical reference material; Papers on the winding down of the SDP.

#### **Papers relating to independent organisations:**

D709/4: Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues; World Security Trust; Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues.

The full finding aid for the David Owen Papers is available under the heading 'Access' at: <http://sca.lib.liv.ac.uk/collections/Oweb/index.html>.

The majority of materials in the David Owen papers are available for consultation by researchers, but some files are closed or only available with permission from the donor.

Researchers visiting Special Collections and Archives are able to take advantage of the Reading Room reference collection and the University Library's general collections which, taken together, provide a broad range of printed materials that complement subjects covered in the David Owen Papers.

Enquiries about access to the David Owen Papers should be directed to Dr Maureen Watry, Head of Special Collections and Archives, Sydney Jones Library, University of Liverpool, PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA; tel: 0151 794 2696; fax: 0151 794 2681; email: [mwatry@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:mwatry@liverpool.ac.uk)