

LLOYD GEORGE'S FLINTSHIRE THE POLITICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

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tells the story of the pre-eminent Welsh Lloyd Georgian, Sir Herbert Lewis. Member of Parliament for first Flint Boroughs and then Flintshire and finally the University of Wales from 1892 to 1922, Lewis was a junior minister under Asquith and Lloyd George for the last seventeen of those years. He was a devoted servant of Welsh intermediate and higher education, the National Museum of Wales and, especially, the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. Never achieving high office, he nevertheless played a crucial role as one of those who kept Lloyd George politically – and perhaps personally – honest.



FLINTSHIRE LOYALIST MEMENTO OF JOHN HERBERT LEWIS

'HE HAD no friends and did not deserve any.' Thus A. J. P. Taylor's dismissive judgement on David Lloyd George.¹ Like several of that historian's famous aphorisms, the effect is more arresting than accurate. The comment echoes a common view, memorably reinforced by J. M. Keynes in his account of the major participants at the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, that the Welsh premier was but an unprincipled maverick, 'rooted in nothing', using people ruthlessly and callously, then throwing them away in pursuit of his career and his ambitions.² Novelists from Arnold Bennett to Joyce Cary have nurtured this view.³ To adopt the musical tribute to the late Princess Diana, LG appears at best as simply a candle in the wind. So far as he had close associates, they tended to be hangers-on rather than personal friends, on the pattern of the press lords, 'hard-faced' capitalists and adventurers like 'Bronco Bill' Sutherland, Basil Zaharoff or Maundy Gregory, in the darker phases of his peacetime premiership of 1918–22. That people like these did flit in and

out of his career at regular intervals cannot be disputed; nor can his casualness with money, principles and loyalties. His career, too, was littered with decent-minded colleagues, Charles Masterman, Christopher Addison, Llewelyn Williams, with whom he quarrelled fatally, breaking off relations with a resounding crash. The picture is all too easily drawn of the casual Welsh freebooter, aggressive, *arriviste*, contrasted with the assured Balliol values of the Asquithians on the other side.

But there is also a massive element left out in this crude pastiche – the long sequence of honourable, high-principled, intellectually respectable figures who found in Lloyd George a life-long inspiration and icon – C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, the historian H. A. L. Fisher, the pioneering Quaker sociologist, Seebohm Rowntree. And in Wales, there were a whole generation of decent, honest, moralistic Liberals for whom Lloyd George was always a hero throughout all vicissitudes, men like the preacher-poet Elfed, the very embodiment of the folk values of *y werin*. In the political realm, Sir Herbert Lewis, member for first Flint Boroughs and

John Herbert
Lewis (1858–1933)

then Flintshire and finally the University of Wales from 1892 to 1922, junior minister under Asquith and Lloyd George for the last seventeen of those years, devoted servant of Welsh intermediate and higher education, the National Museum and especially the National Library at Aberystwyth, was foremost amongst these. His unbroken attachment to the younger Caernarfonshire Liberal whom he served with total loyalty makes him pre-eminent amongst the Welsh Lloyd Georgians. With all deference to the late Eirene White, Lewis's creative relationship with his leader makes him probably the most influential Flintshire politician in modern times.⁴

Herbert Lewis's background was significantly different from that of David Lloyd George. Born in December 1858 at Mostyn Quay, the Flintshire man was brought up not in a shoemaker's cottage but in an affluent commercial family with strong connections with shipping, including the new steamships. From childhood, his life was punctuated by frequent expensive travels to the sunny climes of the Mediterranean or the Middle East during the

winter months. Dr Erasmus correctly remarks that 'there can have been few Members of Parliament that have travelled more widely.'⁵ In 1884–85 he spent a year on a world tour, travelling across the United States, and moving on to Japan, China and India. He also had a far more extensive and privileged education than Lloyd George – Denbigh Grammar School, a period in the University of Montreal in his teenage years, and finally Exeter College, Oxford, where he studied law, though without great distinction. He began training as a solicitor in 1881, first in Chester, then moving on to a more glamorous life in London.

Unlike Lloyd George, his public and private life spoke of sober respectability, as did the dapper suits, wing collars, shiny pointed shoes and trim beard which newspaper cartoons of him featured.⁶ He was an earnest Calvinist Methodist, teetotaler and public moralist. His married life was beyond the most puritanical reproach. His first wife, Adelaide ('Ada') Hughes, the daughter of a prominent Wrexham Liberal publisher, was upright and honourable – and also a vigorous Liberal feminist and advocate of women's suffrage, more forcibly so than Lewis himself. When she died, much to Lewis's distress, just before the 1895 general election, he then married in 1897 Ruth, the daughter of the temperance leader W. S. Caine. Compared with Lloyd George, his private life was a model of sobriety and restraint. Nor was he flamboyant as an orator. On the contrary, he himself lamented his lack of rhetorical flair in election meetings,⁷ especially in comparison with the meteor from Llanystumdwy already beginning to dominate the Welsh scene. His quiet personality, too, might not have been expected to endear him to Lloyd George on their various jaunts overseas. No one could accuse him of a sense of

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humour. In addition, Lewis's diaries reveal him as a persistent hypochondriac, constantly staying indoors to recover from 'chills' and other maladies, great or (usually) small. As late as 1932, Lloyd George spoke to Sylvester and other associates of how Lewis was a lifelong valitudinarian. Years earlier, when speaking at Liverpool, Lloyd George had been told of how the Flintshire man was in bed in Plas Penucha dying of tuberculosis: 'there he was, coddled and muffled up by his wife'.⁸ But the wife it was who died, not Herbert. Lewis later survived a serious fall in a quarry in 1925 which broke his spine, but he remained mentally active, even though bedridden. He wrote a letter of farewell to Lloyd George, the latter told Frances Stevenson, but then wrote for the papers and 'received medals of recognition for his work for Wales'.⁹ Sylvester observed, 'LG always said that Herbert would live to see all his contemporaries die, and write a letter of condolence to their relatives.'¹⁰

Even so, over thirty years and more, they were good friends and good travelling companions. Lloyd George lived for a time in 1895 in Lewis's flat in Palace Mansions in Addison Road in London. When he needed comfort and companionship in Cannes after the tragic death of his young daughter, Mair, it was his faithful Herbert who travelled there, leaving his own family behind in Flintshire.

The transformation of Welsh social and political life in the years following the Reform Act of 1884 and the advent of democratic politics in Wales during Gladstone's heyday, soon drew him and Lloyd George together in the pursuit of the nonconformist and Liberal objectives of the day.¹¹ Soon he became Treasurer of the North Wales Liberal Federation. It is significant, too, that an early private tutor of his was the Rev. E. Pan Jones of Cysegr Chapel, Rhewl,

radical-socialist Independent minister, proto-nationalist and land nationaliser, and the influence stuck. This radical outlook also made him close to that other youthful Welsh leader, Tom Ellis, a man whose Fabian creed of social and national improvement might have made him a more naturally appropriate colleague of Lewis's. Ellis gave Lewis powerful advice on the drafting of his forthcoming election address in October 1891: 'Nationality and Labour are our two main principles, are they not? I think we ought to make clear that, when Disestablishment is settled, Wales will throw itself heart and soul in the Labour movement', not in fact advice to which Lewis's later career showed much response.¹²

For all of them, the advent of local government reform and the political revolution of the county council elections of 1889 was an immense breakthrough. Ellis, an enthusiast for the cantons of Switzerland and the Tyrol, was the advocate of civic populism in Parliament, and from platform and pulpit.¹³ Lloyd George was too, in a more openly class-conscious fashion, and served on the first Caernarfonshire County Council as 'the boy alderman'. But Lewis was more directly involved than any of them. Elected unopposed as Liberal Councillor in the Llanasa district, he became Chairman of the first Flintshire County Council, at a meeting in Mold in January 1889 at the age of barely thirty, testimony to his already powerful local standing. He went on to become Chairman of the County Intermediate Education Committee and rapidly built up the new system of 'county schools' in his native county. Intermediate schools at Mold, Rhyl, Holywell, St. Asaph and Hawarden resulted. He also worked hard to promote technical education in the county. His achievement here showed both the careful attention to detail on committees that distinguished

his later career as a government minister and also a notable dynamism and capacity for leadership that made Flintshire foremost in getting its new network of secondary education established. He remained Flintshire County Council's Chairman until 1893 by which time he was a Member of Parliament.

It was through his pioneering efforts in local government that he became close to national politicians. He was in close contact with Tom Ellis throughout the parliamentary passage of the Intermediate Education Act in 1889, already being considered as a mature and serious politician whose judgement was valued.¹⁴ He also championed the wider 'nationalist' cause of using the County Councils as the basis of a putative Welsh National Council which would propel Welsh Liberalism into a more nationally conscious direction and promote the idea of some kind of devolution or home rule. In this connection, he urged Ellis in 1891, with characteristic insight, 'not to offend the South Wales people. They are touchy in the extreme'¹⁵ It was this nationalist initiative that particularly chimed in with the *Cymru Fydd* sentiment of the early nineties, of which the most vocal champion was David Lloyd George, elected in a dramatic by-election for Caernarfon Boroughs. By 1892 it was clear that Lewis was amongst the closest allies of the radical group of young Welsh Liberals who emerged as the new political elite of the late years of the century – Lloyd George and Ellis, of course, D. A. Thomas, Sam Evans, Llewelyn Williams, Ellis Griffith, William Jones, the most inspired generation of Welsh political leaders until the rise of Bevan, Griffiths, and the products of the Central Labour College after 1918. Herbert Lewis, always correct, modest, uncharismatic, was their enthusiastic and courageous lieutenant. Indeed, of all the younger Welsh Liberal MPs, he was perhaps the

most consistent nationalist and devolutionist of them all.

His links with Lloyd George assumed a wholly new dimension when he was elected to Parliament for the marginal constituency of Flint Boroughs. It consisted of eight small towns with a combined population of 23,251, of which Flint, Mold, Holywell and St. Asaph were the most significant, but which also included Lewis's own Caerwys. The constituency's electorate in 1892 was a mere 3,710, a thousand fewer even than Caernarfon Boroughs. Anglicised and with some landlord and Church influence, balanced to a degree by nonconformist strength in rural areas and some miners and quarrymen at Holywell and Mold, it was not a wholly secure seat for Lewis and his eventual move to the county seat from 1906 was a distinct improvement. At the same time, his remarkably rebellious career in Parliament over disestablishment and other Welsh causes in the early nineties, during the South African War and later the Welsh 'revolt' on education in 1902–05, is testimony to an uncomplicated attachment to principle whatever the possible electoral impact for himself. Like other rural Liberal solicitors, he had long visualised a parliamentary career. He had worked hard for Lord Richard Grosvenor in the 1885 election, and was only narrowly beaten for the Flintshire Liberal nomination in 1886 by the Englishman Samuel Smith, with whom he always had an awkward relationship.¹⁶ When the Flint District Liberal nomination came up in 1891 Lewis was strongly placed to win it, and in the 1892 general election he defeated the squirearchical Unionist, P. P. Pennant, by 359 votes.

At an early stage, the new Flint Boroughs member was part of the awkward squad. He was distinctly cool in his comments on Tom Ellis's agreeing to become a junior whip in Gladstone's final government in 1892, 'grasping

the Saxon gold' in the view of more extreme patriots.¹⁷ Lewis was among those who put pressure on the Welsh Parliamentary Chairman, Stuart Rendel, with whom he had a good relationship, for a Royal Commission to be appointed to investigate the Welsh land question. This was a fairly standard view amongst the Welsh Liberals at this time, and Gladstone was compelled to acquiesce.¹⁸ Far more challenging was the episode when Lewis (Joint Secretary of the Welsh Parliamentary Party by now) joined Lloyd George, D. A. Thomas and Frank Edwards in a rebellion against the new Liberal Prime Minister in April 1894. They threatened to withhold their support from the Rosebery government (whose small and diminishing majority was wholly dependent on the Irish) on the issue of Welsh disestablishment, and urged their Liberal colleagues to do the same. He told Tom Ellis, 'It is with the greatest regret that I have taken a step which means independence of the Liberal Party. My recent talks with Ministers and members have convinced me that Wales is simply being led on from step to step without any definite goal in actual view, that we have nothing to gain by subservience to the Liberal Party, and that we shall never get the English to do us justice until we show our independence of them.' He asked Ellis rhetorically, 'Will you come out and lead us?' – a pretty forlorn hope when writing to one who was now the government's Chief Whip. In this episode, Lloyd George appears to have regarded Lewis as a particularly valued ally. Whereas D. A. Thomas was a maverick coal tycoon and Frank Edwards a relative lightweight (who was to lose his seat in the 1895 general election), 'Herbert's presence amongst us will in itself be a source of great strength', he wrote to his brother William.¹⁹

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Lloyd George's new attempt to turn the 'revolt' on Welsh disestablishment into a wider campaign for Welsh home rule. Lewis was not a natural zealot for *Cymru Fydd*. For one thing, he was not anywhere as gifted in Welsh as were men like Lloyd George or Llewelyn Williams. T. Marchant Williams (with much exaggeration, admittedly) was to ridicule Lewis's attempts to give a Welsh speech during the Montgomeryshire by-election of April 1894. He speculated that Lewis's audience in Llanbryn-mair might have imagined they were listening to ancient Hebrew or modern Greek.²⁰ Lewis did improve his command of Welsh considerably as his career progressed, though it is notable that his lengthy diary, which he kept from 1888 until his death in 1933, was almost always written up in English. Even so, Lewis appears to have had no problem with Lloyd George's undoubtedly divisive tactics in trying to turn the Liberal Federations of North and South Wales into a framework for his quasi-separatist *Cymru Fydd* League. Lewis's influence was important in winning over the North Wales Liberal Federation. Meanwhile Lloyd George reassured him over opinion within the South Wales Liberal Federation. 'I do not see any reason for discouragement in the fact that South Wales has not yet "risen" to the *Cymru Fydd* movement. It is only a question of getting a thoroughly good organiser.'²¹

The sudden death of his beloved wife Ada on 7 June 1895, which left Lewis grief-stricken, removed him from the political forefront for a short time. It is significant that Lloyd George was with him in the Gwalia Hotel in Llan-drindod Wells when he heard the news, and was the first to comfort him. Indeed, it is testimony to his close relationship with Lewis at this time that he spent much time and trouble

interrogating the hapless doctor whom he correctly suspected of giving a wrong diagnosis of Mrs. Lewis's medical condition, and arranging for a *post mortem*. He described the scene poignantly to his wife: 'His grief was appalling. The poor boy was trying to pack. He was distracted. I couldn't leave him in that state, so I took charge of him. By degrees I quieted him down.' It was he who took Herbert to grieve alone in the large empty house in Caerwys.²² The whole episode casts light on a tender, gentle side of Lloyd George which his critics often miss.

Despite this bereavement there is no doubt that Lewis was totally supportive when, a few days later, Lloyd George tried to tack on a Welsh National Council to administer the secularised Church endowments, within the framework of clause nine of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill. Many severely criticised Lloyd George for his role at this time. On 20 June, the tottering government's majority fell to only seven on the Welsh bill. The next day, the Rosebery government was defeated by seven votes in the Commons on the trivial 'cordite vote'. It resigned almost in a sense of relief, amidst much criticism of Ellis's competence as party whip, while Liberals like J. Bryn Roberts and, more notably, Asquith, the former Home Secretary, condemned Lloyd George for disloyal tactics that weakened Rosebery's government at a critical time.²³

Herbert Lewis never did. On the contrary, he argued that Lloyd George was absolutely right in trying to push Welsh Liberalism in a more openly nationalist direction. After he narrowly retained his Flint District seat in the general election, he watched with consistent approval Lloyd George's autumn campaign in the south Wales valleys to win support for *Cymru Fydd*. Lewis himself gave him

frequent oratorical and tactical assistance.²⁴ He also showed a good deal of tactical shrewdness, using personal contacts and links with journalists with a skill not far behind that of Lloyd George himself. When, in the famous meeting of the South Wales Liberal Federation at Newport on 16 January 1896, Lloyd George was shouted down by the 'Newport Englishmen' and *Cymru Fydd* was rejected, Lewis took this as merely one battle in an unending campaign. 'This will be the end of the negotiations with them [the SWLF] and the WNF [Welsh National Federation] will go ahead'.²⁵ Throughout 1896 and 1897 Lewis acted as though *Cymru Fydd* was very far from defeated. He drafted a scheme for a Welsh national organisation, based on the premise that they should not be provoking the South Wales Liberals and encouraging national sentiment in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. This proposal for a Welsh National Liberal Federation, however, aroused all the old animosities of the *Cymru Fydd* episode and it finally collapsed in February 1898 in the face of further attacks from the Cardiff Liberal Association.²⁶

Lewis had been its main proponent. He showed, indeed, rather more persistence in promoting the idea of a Welsh National Federation at this period than did Lloyd George himself. In his diary in February 1899, he noted his surprise that Lloyd George was reluctant to give his backing to a Welsh amendment to the Address: 'it was curious that I should have had to argue the subject in such a quarter'.²⁷ Two months later, he turned down an offer from the new Liberal Leader, Campbell-Bannerman, that he should take up a junior whipship. In Lewis's view this would compromise his role as an independent voice for Welsh Liberalism.²⁸ The fires of rebellion still surged within him. Lewis flatly refused to fall into the same trap as his recently

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deceased colleague Tom Ellis had done when he took office under Gladstone in August 1892.

In the years of opposition after the 1895 general election, Lewis was Lloyd George's man, though not exclusively so. He remained friendly with Ellis to the extent that they travelled in South Africa in the autumn of 1895; they met Cecil Rhodes, a momentous encounter for both, though Lewis, a 'little Englander' in his view of the world, appears to have been more guarded than Ellis in his enthusiasm for so aggressive a voice for empire.²⁹ At the end of 1898 he again went on holiday with Ellis, this time to Egypt and Palestine; this was a more sombre trip in view of Ellis's delicate health, and indeed he was to die shortly after his return to Britain, at the age of only forty.³⁰ But on the great contemporary issues, Lewis was always in Lloyd George's camp and manifestly regarded his younger colleague as having unique gifts of leadership. He went on holiday with him also, to Patagonia in the autumn of 1896. Their correspondence and diaries do not shed much light on the details of their visit though Lloyd George does comment on Lewis's enthusiasm for the deck game of shovelboard.³¹ At any rate, Lewis does not show any great qualms for Lloyd George's involvement in the bizarre Patagonia gold scheme, with which he himself had an indirect financial connection.³²

On a more serious personal issue, Lewis gave Lloyd George the strongest backing during the Edwards paternity and divorce case when Lloyd George was accused in late 1896 of adultery and fathering an illegitimate child. Lewis's response was tough and to the point. He told Lloyd George: 'the line you are taking is right and necessary. I am confident you will come out of the business stronger than ever.'³³ Lewis's position was far more straightforward than, say, the Liberal member

for Anglesey, the barrister Ellis Griffith, who actually represented Dr Edwards, to Lloyd George's intense fury. Politically, Lewis was with Lloyd George at every turn. Following a jaunt to Boulogne together, they were suspended together in a parliamentary protest against the 1896 Education Bill. The Bishop, the Brewer and the Squire were constant targets of Lewis's measured oratory.

His association with Lloyd George's brand of radicalism reached a dramatic new level when the South African War broke out in September 1899. Like Lloyd George (who was in Canada when the war broke out), Lewis was an immediate and vehement opponent of the war. No one was a more consistent 'pro-Boer'. Not for a moment does he seem to have flinched from vehement attacks on the government, on Chamberlain and on imperialism. On 20 April 1900 he deplored how leading Liberals in Holywell were 'all more or less jingo. Militarism has got hold of my people in the most extraordinary way. The light of Gladstone, Bright and Cobden, is quenched in darkness.'³⁴ The precariousness of his election majority had no effect in moderating Lewis's passionate anti-war crusade. Like Lloyd George he faced danger and violence from jingo ruffians at election meetings. He spoke with Lloyd George and Bryn Roberts at a great anti-war rally in Caernarfon, which in fact proved to be distinctly more orderly than one of Lloyd George's at Bangor.³⁵ Lewis was one of four 'pro-Boer' Welsh members (Lloyd George, Humphreys Owen and Bryn Roberts being the others), in the vote on Sir Wilfrid Lawson's anti-war motion in the Commons on 25 July 1900 when the Liberal Party divided three ways.³⁶ Lewis's sense of moral outrage was such that he even considered resigning his seat rather than trim to the jingo views of some in his

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local constituency association.³⁷ It was perhaps the noblest and most selfless phase of his career, as much so as that of Lloyd George, which has been so fully recorded in relation to Birmingham Town Hall and elsewhere.

Virtue was rewarded when Lewis got home, with an increased majority of 347 (11 per cent) in the 'khaki election' for Flint Boroughs that October. But he pursued his crusade against the war to the bitter end, with all the more passion when Emily Hobhouse's account of the deaths of thousands of Boer mothers and little children in Kitchener's concentration camps in the Rand was published.³⁸ Since the effect of the war was to strengthen radicalism in the party under Campbell-Bannerman's leadership and to give the pro-Boer minority a new stature, the outcome was politically advantageous to Lewis. But there is no doubt that his approach was based solely on principle, an old Liberal's adherence to the historic imperatives of peace, retrenchment and reform.

Equally principled, though perhaps intellectually more tortuous for a member of the legal profession, was Lewis's prominent role as Lloyd George's lieutenant in the 'Welsh revolt' against Balfour's Education Act of 1902 which nonconformists bitterly condemned for favouring and subsidising the schools of the Established Church. Lewis, unlike Lloyd George, had professional expertise in the organisation of education and much technical experience in the development of intermediate schools. But he had no qualms in endorsing Lloyd George's strategy that the Welsh county councils should collectively act to thwart the operation of the Act in Wales. Indeed he often gave his friend useful tips on the legal loopholes that could be identified to their political advantage. For Lloyd George's oratory and tactics, his admiration knew no

bounds. When they both took part in meetings at Cardiff in May 1902, Lewis observed: 'I have heard Lloyd George make many brilliant speeches but the four speeches he delivered at Cardiff were a perfect *tour de force*. He did not repeat himself by a single sentence and every part of the speech was on the same high level.'³⁹ He was equally enthusiastic over Lloyd George's using the Educational Revolt to promote Welsh national objectives as over disestablishment in 1895. When the Welsh members, influenced by cautious figures like Bryn Roberts and Humphreys-Owen, were divided over tactics on 12 November 1902, Lloyd George 'swept everything before him in the most peremptory fashion and carried them in favour of the English plan'. Lloyd George's and Lewis's ultimate aim at this point appears to have been to create a Central Board for Wales for elementary schools, in addition to that already set up for secondary schools in 1896, on 'a red letter day for Welsh nationality'. 'LG showed tremendous determination and driving force in carrying the thing through.'⁴⁰

During the tortuous negotiations of the next three years, revolt against the government and default over operating the Act, combined with attempts at negotiations variously with Sir William Anson and Robert Morant at the Education Board and even with A. G. Edwards, the serpentine Bishop of St. Asaph, Lewis was constantly at Lloyd George's side. He was a shoulder to lean on when his hero was nearly roughed up by hostile crowds – admiringly, he noted how Lloyd George kept a mob at bay on St. Albans station platform by the expedient of very deliberately lighting his pipe.⁴¹ Nothing, it seemed, should come between a man and his right to smoke. When Lloyd George impatiently inquired of Lewis whether he needed a court suit when meeting the

King at a social engagement at Lord Tweedmouth's, Lewis lent him his own, since they were roughly the same size.⁴² They were also frequent partners on the golf course, notably at Lewes in matches arranged by Timothy Lewis, Liberal Welsh MP and the husband of one of Lloyd George's mistresses.

The years of Liberal hegemony begun by the election landslide of January 1906 brought a golden period for Lewis no less than Lloyd George. He observed his friend's rapid ascent to power with unbridled admiration and affection. He endorsed his attempts to sort out the Welsh clauses of Birrell's abortive Education Bill of 1906, even though this resulted in a phantom Welsh Minister of State who was soon wiped out from the Bill. Lloyd George's triumphs at the Board of Trade appeared endless. Over the 1906 Merchant Shipping Act, 'LG has succeeded where Chamberlain failed. To have brought about an *entente* between capital and labour and to have promoted a measure which is to the interest of shipowners and sailors alike has meant a display extending over several months of tact, astuteness and a power of managing men which has put LG in the front rank of constructive statesmanship.'⁴³ The President's rattling through most of the 1907 Patents Bill in three hours in committee only brought the comment: 'that wonderful man, by tact, suavity, concession, adroit manoeuvring and skilful handling very nearly got the Bill through ...'⁴⁴ In February 1908, Lloyd George, emerging from the trauma of the death of his beloved youngest daughter, Mair, triumphed in the very different sphere of labour relations. He achieved his 'third great triumph' in conciliation by settling the engineers' strike, appealing to the humaner instincts of the engineering employers' leader, Sir Andrew Noble of the munitions manufacturers, Armstrongs.⁴⁵ This followed close

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on Lloyd George's remarkable success in settling a threatened national railway strike the previous October.

Lloyd George's further advance to become Chancellor of the Exchequer in April 1908 after Asquith became Prime Minister propelled Lewis's idol to new heights of constructive statesmanship. The 'People's Budget' speech on 30 April 1909 was badly delivered, Lloyd George rattling through his lengthy text and almost losing his voice: Lewis was at hand to provide a restorative glass of egg and milk. But it was 'the most daring budget we have ever seen ... one of the most remarkable triumphs of LG's career', especially in the way he managed to arouse enthusiasm on behalf of the taxes to be levied to finance social reform.⁴⁶ Like Gordon Brown in 2002, Lloyd George had made 'tax and spend' policies popular. Throughout the prolonged crises of the Budget, the conflict with the Lords and the final passage of the 1911 Parliament Act, Lewis was an unflinching and vocal supporter at every turn. The National Insurance Act of 1911 was a further triumph – 'probably the greatest social scheme ever put forward in this or any other country'. Lloyd George had raised the idea in colourful fashion when discussing policy with Lewis at Criccieth in April 1908, immediately after he became Chancellor.⁴⁷ Lewis also sympathised with Lloyd George's troubles at the hands of the suffragettes, and was severely critical of the militant tactics being adopted by them at Lloyd George's meetings. The latter confided in Lewis his fear of being murdered.⁴⁸ Lewis, like Lloyd George, was a women's suffragist, especially when his first wife was alive, but a distinctly gradualist one. On balance, his enthusiasm for women's suffrage seemed to wane over the years; the disruption of Lloyd George's day at the Wrexham Eisteddfod

in September 1912 provoked the comment 'the usual insane suffragette demonstration'.⁴⁹ But here again Lewis was totally convinced that Lloyd George was on the right lines and would triumph in the end.

Apart from this hero-worship, his own career was also progressing, even if only as a minister of the second rank. In December 1905 he did take a whipship, as Junior Lord of the Treasury, and retained that post for four years. Lewis worked well with J. A. Pease, the Liberal Chief Whip, in trying to impose discipline on 'a great mob of new members, most of them absolutely ignorant of the ways of Parliament', and with much effect. Lord Althorp told him that he was 'the popular whip ... it is because you are a Celt', whatever that meant.⁵⁰ In 1909 Lewis moved to the Local Government Board under the unpredictable leadership of John Burns, whose egotism alternatively amused and dismayed him. It is clear that Lewis, a most capable administrator, undertook a good deal of the more difficult and detailed business in handling committees and deputations in place of his wayward President. Lewis stayed here until after the outbreak of war in 1914, on the whole a congenial role for one long versed in the minutiae of local government, and one that considerably broadened his political horizon. Thus when war broke out, he was immersed in the complexities of a committee on poor relief in London.

Many of his endeavours as a minister, inevitably, were concerned with Welsh issues, with many positive results. Lewis was heavily involved with patronage matters: for instance he persuaded Lloyd George to support the Oxford history don Owen M. Edwards for the post of Chief Inspector of Schools, when the Chancellor himself had his doubts. Lewis was inevitably prepared to accept Lloyd George's assurance over the

prospects for a Welsh Disestablishment bill in 1907 when many Welsh Liberals and nonconformist leaders were critical of Campbell-Bannerman. A strongly pro-disestablishment speech by Lloyd George in a convention at Cardiff 'restored equilibrium' in Lewis's words. There was further doubt when the Welsh Church Bill of 1909 fell by the wayside. Lewis could in the end point to the introduction of a conclusive Disestablishment Bill in 1912, on which he spoke several times, and to its potential enactment under the terms of the Parliament Act in 1914. Lewis was very apprehensive at the apparent lack of enthusiasm amongst English Liberals for the Welsh Bill. 'Many Liberal members are apathetic and even hostile to the passage of the Bill. They say it will do them a great deal of harm in their constituencies.' However, Lloyd George's 'magnificent' speech on 25 April (he accused the Cecil family of seizing Church endowments and pillaging monastic estates in the time of Henry VIII, leaving them with 'hands dripping with the fat of sacrilege') 'gave the Bill a lift which it greatly needed'.⁵¹

More constructively, perhaps, he lobbied Lloyd George with much effect on behalf of his cherished cause of the National Library, along with the Museum and the funding of the University Colleges. This was a life-long crusade of his: since his first entry into Parliament he had pursued the question of museum and library grants being applied to Wales. As champion of the new copyright National Library in Aberystwyth, Lewis was extraordinarily effective. He used his friendship with Lloyd George to excellent purpose in February–March 1909, at a time when the Chancellor was heavily engaged in dealing with the financial troubles of the naval estimates and preparing the People's Budget. Lewis noted privately that, apart from Lloyd

George, there was no one to speak for Wales throughout the entire ranks of government, but he used his powers of man-to-man diplomacy extremely well. In early March 1909 after private meetings with Lloyd George, Lewis was able to announce grants of £4,500 to the Library, £2,000 to the Museum, and £16,000 of grants to the Welsh Colleges. 'LG has behaved with great courage and determination.'⁵² A year later, there was even better news, with the Chancellor agreeing to £4,000 a year to the Library and a further grant of £500 per annum for two years towards cataloguing the manuscript collections: 'A courageous action on LG's part', given the depleted state of the nation's finances.⁵³ Lewis was able to persuade such local prima donnas as Dr John Williams, the Library's president, and John Ballinger, its imperious librarian, that there was a secure financial basis for this national treasure-house at last.

Lewis was therefore a pivotal and characteristic figure at this high noon of Welsh Edwardian Liberalism. He was involved in most of the political, social and cultural achievements of the period. He was also a voice for that style of progressive, reformist liberalism which captured the public mind before the First World War, a constructive phase in our politics to which Tony Blair amongst others has looked back nostalgically. Lewis was a perfect symbol of how the Old Liberalism gradually yielded to the New. The older issues of disestablishment, Church schools, temperance and land reform remained unfinished business. But increasingly social welfare was dominating the public agenda. Lewis viewed all Lloyd George's new enthusiasms with equanimity. At the same time, it is clear that for him the reforms served in some measure as a bulwark against socialism. The national strikes of 1911–14 disturbed him as they did other

It is clear that Lewis, a most capable administrator, undertook a good deal of the more difficult and detailed business in handling committees and deputations in place of his wayward President.

traditional liberals, with their violence and apparent threat to the constitution and economic fabric. He worried at the impact of the 1912 miners' strike, not least on the Flintshire miners in the small pits around Buckley in his own constituency. He thought an ILP socialist like Fred Jowett was callously unaware of the attachment of Welsh miners to 'home and people and language' and the importance to them of the rents they paid on their cottages.⁵⁴ Tom Ellis's old advice to him back in 1891 to focus in the longer term on labour issues did not appear to bear much fruit in Lewis's case. Other Flintshire Liberals, like Fred Llewellyn Jones, the solicitor and coroner of Isfryn, Mold, were to gravitate in time towards the Labour Party. For Lewis that could never be an option.⁵⁵

But a combination of measured social reform (Lewis became friendly with Lloyd George's reforming doctor associate, Dr Christopher Addison) and beguiling Lloyd Georgian labour conciliation would steady the ship and keep the Tories at bay. To read Lewis's diaries and letters down to August 1914 is in no sense to gain an indication of what Dangerfield so misleadingly described as the 'strange death' of Liberal England – or Wales. Lewis enjoyed power. He felt that the Liberals had control of it, deserved it, and had the greatest Welshman in history in place to ensure that they retained it. The Tories, wrong-footed on National Insurance, yoked with difficult allies like the Diehard peers, the Welsh bishops and the Ulster Covenanters, unsure in their philosophy about either the state or social cohesion,⁵⁶ were not in Lewis's view close to returning to power at all, and certainly did not deserve to.

His confidence was fortified by his strength in his new county constituency. He had been elected for Flintshire in January: his dour predecessor, Samuel Smith, had announced

his reluctant resignation in 1904 as a consequence of some tortuous local manoeuvres.⁵⁷ Apart from significant pockets of non-conformists, there was a good industrial vote for the Liberals in Connah's Quay and Shotton, and Lib-Lab miners around Buckley. Hence both the 1910 elections were won with some comfort even though 'territorial persecution was rife in some parts of the county, particularly in Maelor and the Bodfari district', and the Trade 'being very keen and active'.⁵⁸ Lewis, now into his middle fifties, was still full of zest for the fight, despite littering his diary with accounts of endless colds and 'chills', and days spent almost incomprehensibly in bed. In June 1914, when Lloyd George was shortly to tell the London Mansion House audience that 'the sky was relatively blue' in the international field, Lewis himself had a cheerful tour of Germany, going on from Hamburg and Bremen as far as Berlin.⁵⁹ His diary notes show no sign of detecting an imminent international catastrophe. For Herbert Lewis of Plas Penucha, it seemed, smiling and serene blue skies also lay ahead.

Then came the war. Of course, it brought a seismic transformation in the role of Lloyd George, coalition with the Tory enemy and an eventual almost six years in 10 Downing Street, followed by his abrupt ejection from office forever. Herbert Lewis followed him faithfully at every turn. Like his colleague, he accepted the necessity and indeed morality of the war. It was being fought, he believed, on behalf of liberal principles of self-determination and natural justice. He was fortified in this view by having to handle the reception of immigrant Belgian refugees who migrated to Britain in the autumn of 1914, which he did with characteristic efficiency. Lloyd George's growing role in war strategy as well as war finance in early 1915 evoked only further admiration.

Lewis certainly showed plenty of intellectual energy in this important new post, especially in piloting the 1918 Education Act through the Commons with much aplomb.

His friend 'has taken a greater part in the world's affairs than any Welshman that ever lived', Lewis reflected.⁶⁰

He felt apprehension at Asquith's Liberal government giving way to a coalition in May 1915, and reluctantly accepted the new post of Under-Secretary at the Board of Education on 28 May. He would have preferred a complete break from office, he confided to his diary, giving vent to his usual concern at his delicate health. But, in fact, he continued as an active, even robust minister, and was to serve in his new department for almost seven and a half years. He struck up a good relationship with his initial President of the Education Board, Labour's Arthur Henderson. This period saw Lewis launch with a grant of £25,000 the supremely important initiative of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, which he saw as bringing the universities and the business world closer together. He worked even better with Henderson's successor from December 1916, H. A. L. Fisher, the distinguished Liberal historian and future Warden of New College, Oxford.⁶¹ Lewis certainly showed plenty of intellectual energy in this important new post, especially in piloting the 1918 Education Act through the Commons with much aplomb. Like Mark Twain's death, Lewis's decline was distinctly exaggerated. After the 'coupon election' of December 1918, he continued at Education for almost four more years, his energies apparently undiminished.

Lewis followed closely the twists and turns of Lloyd George's political career during the war. As his oldest living friend, he saw the Prime Minister quite frequently: his diary records a series of lunches, breakfasts or political conversations with Lloyd George through the war years, often at Downing Street. Lloyd George saw in

Lewis a reliable, totally discreet observer of the political world in general. Lewis's expertise on the shipping industry was especially useful to him during the war years. He also introduced the Premier to the progressive young naval officer and critic of the Admiralty, Commander J. M. Kenworthy.⁶² Nearer home, Lloyd George used Lewis skilfully in March 1915 in persuading Welsh Liberals that the government intended to persevere with the disestablishment of the Welsh Church, until it came into operational effect after the war, despite the government's temporary tactical confusions. Prophetically, Lloyd George was recorded as saying that 'he believes that the great question of reconstruction which will arise after the war will peremptorily push aside sectarian controversy'. Lewis concluded: 'After all, but for him there would have been no Parliament Act and no Disestablishment Act'.⁶³

Throughout the tortuous political manoeuvres of 1916, Lewis (like Ellis Griffith but unlike Llewelyn Williams) backed Lloyd George solidly over military conscription (despite his own Gladstonian, anti-military background). He was amongst the hundred-odd who signed up secretly when Addison, David Davies and others canvassed Liberal MPs that spring about the prospects of a Lloyd George premiership in succession to Asquith. He was a wholly committed supporter of the new Prime Minister from December 1916 and stayed on at Education; if he was disappointed at failing to gain further promotion, Lewis does not show it. He backs Lloyd George at every turn, including the crisis of the Maurice Debate in May 1918 when the Prime Minister was accused of falsely representing the strength of the military reserves at the western front. Lloyd George's speech of self-defence, said Lewis, was 'a triumphant vindication' while

he dismissed Maurice scornfully as a disappointed general not worth an undue amount of bother.⁶⁴ The ferocity of Lloyd George's rhetoric (e.g. 'cocoa slop') does not seem to have disturbed him.

In 1918 he loyally accepted Coalition Liberal nomination for the new University of Wales seat: he himself had been active in alliance with Lord Kenyon in securing a parliamentary seat for the Welsh university in the Representation of the People Act, after an initial defeat on amendment.⁶⁵ With his election address rightly emphasising his long service to Welsh education, he trounced a woman Labour candidate, winning 80.8 per cent of the vote. After the election, indeed, for a time his career rose to new heights of activity. After receiving many accolades (including from Fisher himself) for his role in carrying through the new Education Act, he was also variously preoccupied with teachers' superannuation, a Libraries Act, educational grants for ex-servicemen and the Royal Commission on the University of Wales. In 1921, he told E. W. Evans, editor of the *Cymro*, that his experience at the Education Board showed how far more could be achieved for Wales within a British government rather than in independent sorties on the political fringe. Fisher's educational policies had brought tangible and measurable benefits to Wales: the 'Fisher formula' would give Wales an additional £100,000, while the Education Act of 1918 would give new educational opportunities to 20,000 boys and girls.⁶⁶ By comparison, the Secretary of State for Wales proposed in some Liberal circles by men like the shipowner MP Sir Robert J. Thomas, was a trivial matter. Manifestly, the youthful nationalist rebel of 1894 had long since vanished.

For his part, H. A. L. Fisher clearly regarded Lewis, rather than the local worthies on the

Central Welsh Board, as his most reliable sounding-board on Welsh education. It was a constructive time of change. Education, after all, was a foremost element in the government's proclaimed intention of a brave new world of social reform after the election. Things became far more difficult from 1920 with the rigours of economy and 'anti-waste' being applied to the government's educational programmes. Lewis joined Fisher in strong defence of the day continuation schools. They threatened a joint resignation against Cabinet proposals which 'would automatically have the effect of scrapping the Education Act'. He wrote to thank the Prime Minister in backing them in Cabinet in the face of economy proposals from the Chancellor, Austen Chamberlain.⁶⁷ They got their way but had an even tougher fight in resisting the Geddes Axe which loomed over education in 1921. In fact, the ministers had somewhat more success in fending off educational cuts than is frequently represented, notably over the school entry age, the size of classes, and maintaining the Burnham awards on schoolteachers' salaries. Lewis felt able to claim afterwards that the bulk of Fisher's achievement for public education remained undisturbed.⁶⁸

Politically, Lewis appeared to have no problem with the Coalition government. He saw in the Coalition a government of national unity, 'the embodiment of the spirit of accommodation'. 'Party', declared Lewis, 'would rather have no bread than half a loaf'.⁶⁹ Ever loyal to his master, he was one of the Liberal ministers who attended the meeting of the National Liberal Federation at Leamington Spa in May 1920, a famous brawl when government ministers were heckled by Asquithian partisans and walked out in collective defiance.⁷⁰ Lewis was also prepared to take part in the turbulent Cardiganshire by-election in

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February 1921 when two Liberals, one Lloyd Georgian, one Asquithian, contested the seat in a passionate atmosphere. He told his wife Ruth, 'This election is dividing up families in the most peculiar way.' The outcome was a narrow, but decisive defeat for the Asquithian Liberal candidate, Lewis's old ally of *Cymru Fydd* days, W. Llewelyn Williams, now a bitter opponent of Lloyd George, who had broken with his old friend over conscription and later Ireland.⁷¹ No doubt some of his bitterness spilled over in the direction of Herbert Lewis as well.

However there were limits to the political compromises that even Lewis might make. At the curious meeting of Coalition Liberal ministers on 16 March 1920, when Lloyd George and Churchill tried to persuade them to endorse a 'fusion' with the Coalition Unionists, Lewis was one of many who dissented – perhaps the only time in his career when he and Lloyd George were at odds. 'In Wales it would be practically impossible to get anything in the shape of fusion between the local Associations.'⁷² Even in the very changed politics of post-war, with the old aspiration of Church disestablishment now accomplished amidst a sense of anti-climax, Lewis remained the traditional Liberal of Gladstonian days. He would not give up the old faith, the old principles, certainly not the old party name. In the end, he and Lloyd George's followers were forced into a political cul-de-sac. The Liberal supporters of Lloyd George had nowhere else to turn when the rank-and-file Tories broke with them in October 1922 over Lloyd George's handling of the Chanak crisis which threatened war with Turkey. The Unionist revolt at the Carlton Club on 19 October 1922 abruptly turfed Lloyd George out of office and out of power. His political career, in the event, was far from over.

Lewis remained the traditional Liberal of Gladstonian days. He would not give up the old faith, the old principles, certainly not the old party name.

But that of Herbert Lewis, who had announced his resignation from Parliament long before and planned an extensive series of overseas tours to tropical climes to celebrate freedom at last, undoubtedly was. At least he ended up with a knighthood.

Herbert Lewis's last phase was conducted largely away from the limelight and on the margins of politics. His major public concerns now were his continuing campaign to get proper funding for the National Library of Wales, and his work for Bangor and the University of Wales.⁷³ He continued to campaign for improved grants for the National Library, he bought major collections of manuscripts from his own funds to present to its archives, and he was to serve as its President. His imposing bust casts its gaze on visitors to the library today. His tragic accident when he fell down a quarry at J. H. Davies's home in north Cardiganshire in 1925 and broke his spine otherwise effectively ended his career. Lloyd George ignored him from now on. Lewis had nothing more to offer. As has been noted, Lloyd George regarded him somewhat quizzically as a long-term survivor who was somehow miraculously still alive despite decades of alleged ill-health. Prior to his accident, Lewis toured India. He received Welsh and other honours by the score. He had become, as he approached his seventies, the classic embodiment of late Victorian and Edwardian 'official liberalism' and a conformist nonconformity, a public-service professional, a symbolic remnant of a disappearing past in a new society dominated by the polarity of capital and labour.

Many politicians kept in close touch with him, especially Fisher who developed a warm admiration for his sterling qualities, and used Lewis as a sounding-board for his concerns for the various crises of Liberalism in the twenties.⁷⁴ But Lloyd George, his inti-

mate friend for nearly forty years, the focus of so much of his energies and his admiration, simply dropped him. In the great campaign against unemployment and industrial stagnation, the crusades for the Green, Yellow and Orange Books in 1925–29, even as a name to be used in election propaganda, Herbert Lewis need never have been. He died in November 1933, almost a forgotten man.

But his achievement transcends the ages. Indeed, so many of the badges of modern Welsh nationality – Museum and Library and University; county councils, county schools and administrative devolution along with Welsh legislation from Intermediate Education in 1889 to Church Disestablishment in 1919 – are an essential part of his legacy. The Liberalism of pre-1914 remains the source of so much of the institutional and cultural distinctiveness of modern Wales, and Herbert Lewis was not the least of its architects. Indeed, his supreme objective, that devolution for which he campaigned in vain in the 1890s, has now come into vigorous fruition, a hundred years late. In accounts of the career of Lloyd George, the devoted friendship of Herbert Lewis is hugely underestimated. He sustained his tempestuous colleague in numerous crises – the 1894 disestablishment rebellion, the *Cymru Fydd* crusade, the South African War, the Education Revolt – when they were young colleagues and rough political equals. But as a source of disinterested advice and reassuring judgement, Lewis was always there whenever Lloyd George felt he needed him – and he frequently did. No doubt he had to turn a frequent blind eye as he pursued higher political causes. Neither Lloyd George's peccadilloes with money or women get a mention in his diaries. He backed his friend to the hilt when he was accused of corruption during the Marconi case

in 1912, while his observations on Dame Margaret (whom he greatly admired) never suggest that the Lloyd George family home was anything other than a nest of domestic bliss. But in the broader context, Herbert Lewis was one of those who kept Lloyd George politically and perhaps personally honest – not at all a straightforward task. He helped to ensure that, throughout all the vicissitudes of party and coalition, of industrial turmoil and economic decline, in war and in post-war reconstruction, his charismatic Welsh colleague remained at bottom the same populist democrat and committed progressive that he had always been. Men such as Lewis, like C. P. Scott, ensured that Lloyd George stayed a man of the centre-left, part of that fount of reformist energy which men like Beveridge, Keynes and Michael Young later replenished. If Lloyd George never lapsed into the fate of Joseph Chamberlain, still less of Ramsay MacDonald, if he retained his radical impulses even during the later years of Hitler-worship and the final descent into an earldom, it was decent, honest free spirits like Plas Penucha's guardian of the faith, who kept him so.

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This article originally appeared in the Journal of the Flintshire Historical Society (Vol. 36, 2003) and is reprinted here with the kind permission of the Editor, Mr G. Veysey, and of the author.

1 A. J. P. Taylor, *English History 1914–45* (Oxford: OUP, 1965), p.

73. In a foreword to a book of the present writer's, Taylor also advanced the view that Lloyd George 'was the greatest ruler of England [*sic*] since Oliver Cromwell': Kenneth O. Morgan, *Lloyd George* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), p. 8.

2 J. M. Keynes, *Essays in Biography* (London: Mercury, 1961 ed.), p. 36.

3 Arnold Bennett's *Lord Rainco* (1926) depicts Lloyd George as the Scotsman Andy Clyth, while Joyce Cary's *Prisoner of Grace* (1952) depicts him as the Englishman (? Devonian), Chester Nimmo.

4 The most helpful study of Lewis is the Welsh-language collective book edited by his daughter, Kitty Idwal Jones, *Syr Herbert Lewis 1858–1933* (Cardiff, 1961). Two of the authors wrote centenary tributes in *Flintshire Historical Society Publications*, Vol. 18 (1960) – Sir Ben Bowen Thomas, pp. 131–41, and W. Hugh Jones, pp. 142–55, the latter dealing with Lewis's work in local government. A useful thesis is Timothy P. Erasmus, *Herbert Lewis and Welsh Radicalism: A Study of the Political Career of John Herbert Lewis (1858–1933) With Special Reference to the Period 1892–1906* (Bangor: University of Wales, unpublished PhD, 1988). The author summarised his conclusions in 'In His Earnest Way: A Brief Outline of the Life and Political Career of Herbert Lewis (1858–1933)', a lecture to the Flintshire Historical Society, 31 October 1992. I should like to pay my personal tribute to the late Mrs Kitty Idwal Jones who gave me generous hospitality and guidance when I first worked on the Lewis papers in Plas Penucha in 1960.

5 Erasmus, 'In his Earnest Way', p. 4.

6 For example, a cartoon by Will Morgan in T. Marchant Williams, *The Welsh Members of Parliament* (Cardiff, 1894), p. 20.

7 Lewis's Diary, 22 January 1906 (National Library of Wales, Lewis Papers B20).

8 Colin Cross (ed.) *A. J. Sylvester, Life with Lloyd George* (London: Macmillan, 1975), p. 63.

9 A. J. P. Taylor (ed.), *Lloyd George. A Diary by Frances Stevenson* (London: Hutchinson, 1971), p. 245.

Herbert Lewis was one of those who kept Lloyd George politically and perhaps personally honest – not at all a straightforward task.

10 A. J. Sylvester, p. 63.

11 For these matters, see Kenneth O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868–1922* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1963 (new paperback ed., 1992)), pp. 76 ff.

12 Ellis to Lewis, 31 October 1891 (NLW, D.R. Daniel papers, A19k).

13 See especially his *Addresses and Speeches* (Wrexham, 1912); Neville Masterman, *The Forerunner* (Llandybie: C. Davies, 1972); and Kenneth O. Morgan, 'Tom Ellis versus Lloyd George: the Fractured Consciousness of Fin-de-siècle Wales', in *Modern Wales: Politics. Places and People* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1995), pp. 362 ff.

14 Cf. Ellis to Lewis, 24 July 1889 (NLW, Daniel Papers, A19k).

15 Lewis to Ellis, 15 August 1891 (NLW, Ellis Papers). See also J. Graham Jones, 'Alfred Thomas's National Institutions (Wales) Bills of 1891–2', *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 15. No. 2 (December 1990), pp. 230–31.

16 Cf. Samuel Smith to Lewis, 12 September 1904 (NLW, Lewis Papers, A1/173).

17 J. Arthur Price to J. E. Lloyd, 14 October 1892 (University of Wales, Bangor Library, Lloyd Papers, MSS. 314, no. 449); Lewis to Ellis, 19 May 1892 (NLW, Ellis Papers).

18 Ellis to Herbert Lewis, 7 and 18 November 1892 (NLW, Ellis Papers, 2896, 2899); Lewis to Ellis, 17 and 22 November 1892 (NLW, *ibid.*, 1403, 1404); Rendel to Lewis, 14 and 15 November 1892 (NLW, Lewis Papers). More generally, see Morgan, *Wales in British Politics*, pp. 123–26.

19 Lewis to Ellis, ? May 1894 (NLW, Ellis papers); David Lloyd George to William George, ? April 1894 (NLW, William George Papers, 252).

20 Marchant Williams, *The Welsh Members of Parliament*, p. 22.

21 Lloyd George to Herbert Lewis, 22 June 1894 (Lewis Papers). The Lewis Papers are a rich mine of information on the *Cymru Fydd* movement, 1894–96.

22 W. R. P. George, *Lloyd George: Backbencher* (Gower Press: Llandysul, 1983), pp. 168–70; David Lloyd George to his wife, 7 June 1895, in Kenneth O. Morgan (ed.), *Lloyd George Family Letters. c.1885–1936* (Oxford and Cardiff: OUP and

- University of Wales, 1973), p. 85.
- 23 J. Bryn Roberts to H. H. Fowler, 5 October 1895 (NLW, Bryn Roberts Papers, 236); Asquith to Ellis, 30 November 1895 (NLW, Ellis Papers); Morgan, *Wales in British Politics*, pp. 156–58.
- 24 Lewis's Diary, 1895 (NLW, Lewis Papers, B7); D. Lloyd George to Lewis, 5, 11 and 31 December 1895, 4 and 16 January 1896 (ibid., D/30/36–43).
- 25 Lewis's Diary, 16 January 1896 (ibid., B8).
- 26 Memorandum, Lewis to Lloyd George, 1897 (NLW, William George Papers, 4271).
- 27 Lewis's Diary, 6 February 1899 (NLW, Lewis Papers, B12).
- 28 Lewis's Diary, 27 April 1899 (ibid.).
- 29 Lewis's Diary, 1895 (ibid., B7); cf. T. I. Ellis, *Cofiant Thomas Edward Ellis*. Cyf. II (Liverpool: Evans, 1948), pp. 122–23, for Ellis's earlier enthusiasm for Rhodes.
- 30 Lewis's Diary (Lewis Papers, B11).
- 31 Lewis's Diary, 1896 (ibid., B8) refers to his enthusiasm for this (to me) incomprehensible game.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Herbert Lewis to Lloyd George, 2 November 1896 (NLW, William George Papers, 4219).
- 34 Lewis's Diary, 20 April 1900 (NLW, Lewis Papers, B13).
- 35 Lewis's Diary, 24 April 1900 (ibid.).
- 36 *The Times*, 31 July 1900.
- 37 Lewis to P. Harding Roberts, 23 July 1900 (NLW, Lewis Papers).
- 38 Lewis's Diary, 1901 (ibid., B14).
- 39 Lewis's Diary, 21 May 1902 (ibid., B 15).
- 40 Lewis's Diary, 12 November 1902 (ibid.).
- 41 Lewis's Diary, 6 February 1904 (ibid., B18).
- 42 Lewis's Diary, 6 March 1904 (ibid.).
- 43 Lewis's Diary, 16 November 1906 (ibid., B20).
- 44 Lewis's Diary, 9 August 1907 (ibid., B21).
- 45 Lewis's Diary, 25 February 1908 (ibid., B22).
- 46 Lewis's Diary, 29 April 1909 (ibid., B23).
- 47 Lewis's Diary, 4 May 1911 (ibid., B25); Bentley B. Gilbert, *David Lloyd George*, Vol. I (London: Batsford, 1987), p. 339.
- 48 Lewis's Diary, 24 November 1911 and 5 September 1912 (ibid., B25, B26).
- 49 Lewis's Diary, 5 September 1912 (ibid., B26).
- 50 Lewis's Diary, 22 March 1906 and 24 April 1907 (ibid., B20, B21); Cameron Hazlehurst and Christine Woodland (eds.), *A Liberal Chronicle: Journals and Papers of J. A. Pease. 1908 to 1910* (London: The Historian's Press, 1994), p. 14.
- 51 Lewis's Diary, 25 April and 22 May 1912 (NLW, Lewis Papers, B26); Lewis to his wife, 24 April 1912 (Lewis Papers). For Lord Hugh Cecil and Lloyd George's speeches, see *H. of C. Parl. Deb.*, 5th ser., XXXVIII, 1294ff.
- 52 Lewis's Diary, 26 February and 11 March 1909 (NLW, Lewis Papers, B23).
- 53 Lewis's Diary, 23 February 1910 (ibid., B26).
- 54 Lewis's Diary, 1 March 1912 (ibid., B26).
- 55 Fred Llewellyn Jones, later Sir Frederick Llewellyn-Jones (1866–1941), one of the last of the Liberal grandees of the Ellis-Lloyd George era, joined the Labour Party in March 1918. However, he later rejoined the Liberals and became Liberal (later National Liberal) MP for Flintshire, 1929–35.
- 56 See on this general theme, Ewen Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism* (London: Routledge, 1995).
- 57 See John Owen to Lewis, 23 June 1903, R. Llew Jones to Lewis, 22 August 1903, P. Harding Roberts to Lewis, 31 August 1903 (NLW, Lewis Papers, A/143, 150, 151) for aspects of these manoeuvres.
- 58 Lewis's Diary, 24 January 1910 (ibid., B24).
- 59 Lewis's Diary, 3–6 June 1914 (ibid., B28).
- 60 Lewis's Diary, 8 February 1915 (ibid., B29).
- 61 See H. A. L. Fisher, *An Unfinished Autobiography* (London: OUP, 1940) and the chapter by B. B. Thomas in K. Idwal Jones (gol.), *Syr Herbert Lewis*, pp. 84–95.
- 62 D. Lloyd George, *War Memoirs I* (London: Odham's Press, 1938), p. 698.
- 63 Lewis's Diary, 24 March and 15 March 1915 (NLW, Lewis Papers, B29).
- 64 Lewis's Diary, 9 May 1918 (ibid., B32).
- 65 Lewis to Beriah Gwynfe Evans, 30 January 1918 (NLW, Lewis Papers).
- 66 Lewis to E. W. Evans, 7 January 1921 (ibid.).
- 67 Herbert Lewis to Lloyd George, 13 and 20 December and 'Nadolg' 1920 (House of Lords Records Office, Lloyd-George of Dwyfor Papers, F/32/22–24).
- 68 Kenneth O. Morgan, *Consensus and Disunity: the Lloyd George Coalition Government, 1918–1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) pp. 288–94. For Fisher's comparatively successful resistance to the economies proposed by the Geddes committee and the Chancellor, Robert Horne, see 'Report, Proceedings and Memoranda of the Cabinet Committee on National Expenditure', meetings between 10 January and 17 February 1922 (Public Record Office, CAB 27/165), and Austen Chamberlain to Fisher, 13 January 1922 (Bodleian Library, Oxford, Fisher Papers, box 1). To a degree, Fisher was using statistical and other material supplied to him by Herbert Lewis.
- 69 Lewis, 'Notes on the Coalition Government, 1920' (NLW, Lewis Papers).
- 70 Morgan, *Consensus and Disunity*, p. 202.
- 71 Lewis to his wife, 17 February 1921 (Lewis Papers) and Lewis's Diary, 18 February 1921 (ibid., B35). Also see Morgan, 'Cardiganshire Politics: the Liberal Ascendancy, 1885–1923', in *Modern Wales*, pp. 242–47.
- 72 Lewis's Diary, 16 March 1920 (Lewis Papers, B34).
- 73 For important material on Lewis's work for the University College at Bangor, of which he became Vice-President in 1906, see J. Gwynn Williams, *The University College of North Wales: Foundations 1884–1927* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1985), pp. 125–27, and B. B. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 131–41.
- 74 There are several reflective letters from Fisher to Lewis in the later 1920s in the Lewis Papers in NLW, Class A.

History Group on the web

The Liberal Democrat History Group's website, www.liberalhistory.org.uk, is currently undergoing an extensive revamp and reorganisation (see also advert on page 15).

Thanks to funding kindly provided by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust for the *Liberal History Online* project, we have been able to extend the website's content well beyond our original expectations, with the result that its internal architecture was no longer able to cope well. So it has been radically redesigned to provide a more easily navigable internal structure. This is a lengthy process, however, and is not yet complete – please bear with us while it is in process!

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