

# COALITION IN A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PA

The papers of the Liberal activist Frances Josephy, held at LSE Archives, have recently been catalogued.<sup>1</sup> The collection has much of interest to those studying Liberal history in the inter-war years.<sup>2</sup> It is particularly useful as Josephy was a woman of forthright views which she was not afraid of expressing. Although she did not make it to parliament, her central role on the National League of Young Liberals (NLYL) is another reason to study these papers. Indeed, one of the stories of the inter-war period is the ever-growing number of Liberal activists who did not become MPs. **Nick White** uses the archives to tell the story of Frances Josephy.

GENERAL ELECTION, MAY 30th, 1929.



Vote for  
**JOSEPHY**  
AND  
**CONQUER**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT.**

MISS F. L. JOSEPHY.

Printed by C. G. Mills, Cathedral Press, Winchester. Published by A. J. Plake, Election Agent, 9a, Jewry Street, Winchester.

**F**OR THIS paper the archive has been used to ask two questions regarding her views, mainly for the period from around 1925–35. First, does she have any opinions on working with other parties? Second, what views does she express about the National Government, particularly in relation to the Liberal Party?

Frances Louise Josephy was born in 1900 and was educated at St

Andrews University and Newnham College, Cambridge. By the mid-1920s, Miss Josephy was already an active member of the NLYL, speaking at events across the country and moving resolutions at the League's annual meetings. Her speeches from 1925 were on various aspects of industrial policy, but by the end of the decade the range of topics widens, from the need for free trade to her defence of Liberalism. Josephy also wrote articles, especially for

# THE ARCHIVES

## PAPERS OF FRANCES JOSEPHY

the Young Liberals' newspaper, the *Forward View*. Her organisational skills were not wasted either, as she arranged conferences and other events for the Young Liberals and the International Young Liberals.

Josephy did not limit her involvement in politics to the NLYL. In the mid-1920s, Josephy was also secretary of the Parliamentary Radical Group. The *Manchester Evening News* (2 December 1926) reports that this was an 'exacting' position, 'being responsible for much of the information which enables members of the group to ask pertinent questions in the House of Commons and to make speeches supported by facts and figures.'<sup>3</sup> She was secretary to Frank Murrell (Liberal MP for Westonsuper-Mare, 1923–24). She was also a member of the Eighty Club and the League of Nations Union.

In 1929, she contested her first election by standing as a Liberal candidate in Winchester during that year's general election. She was to fight – unsuccessfully – in various constituencies, in all the general elections up to, and including, 1951. However, from the 1940s onwards, Josephy focused more on European relations than Liberal politics. She was on the Federal Union Executive Committee for over twenty years from February 1940. She was also active in the European Union of Federalists and the European Movement. She died on 6 January 1985.

In total, her archive consists of over fifty boxes of documents. Most

of the papers relate to her European work. However, ten boxes of material do relate to Josephy's political career from the 1920s through to the fifties. The political papers consist of material such as:

- Draft speeches (some are very rough notes, and others are more detailed);
- Press cuttings containing reports of speeches made by Josephy or on events attended by her;
- Typescript draft articles (many annotated) on a variety of topics, especially relating to politics, industrial policy and international relations;
- Cuttings of published articles by Josephy;
- Election ephemera, such as flyers, leaflets and posters;
- Liberal pamphlets and other publications, including speakers' notes published by the Liberal Publication Department (1920s–30s).

In terms of its limitations, the archive has little private material such as correspondence or family papers. This means that there is limited information on Josephy's private life and family background. Also, most of the material was meant to be made public, such as speeches and articles (or drafts of them). So, for example, there is little about her private thoughts or about her personal links with other Liberal politicians.

Josephy's political papers start with a note that on 16 October 1924

she had spoken at a women's meeting in Yatton on 'F. M.'s [Frank Murrell's] work in parliament.'<sup>4</sup> In June 1925, there is a typescript version of an article Josephy wrote for the *Weekly Westminster* called, 'What is wrong with the Liberal Party.'<sup>5</sup> In it, she does point out that the party had started the reorganisation which was necessary for any return to power. However, she noted that there were other deficiencies in the party, particularly in relation to internal divisions. She claims the party still had too many Tory sympathisers in it, and that pacts with the Conservatives at constituency level were a sign of inherent weakness. This fear that some Liberals were too close to the Tories is a theme which Josephy frequently returns to.

In the general election of May 1929, candidates from all three main parties fought Winchester. The Conservative candidate, Sir George Hennessey, eventually won with 44 per cent of the vote; Labour came second (36 per cent); and Miss Josephy came third with 18 per cent.<sup>6</sup>

The views of several unsuccessful Liberal candidates in that election were aired during a discussion at the Liberal Summer School held at Cambridge later that year. On Saturday 3 August, three women candidates (described as the 'Three Graces' by one admiring reporter<sup>7</sup>) addressed the conference on the theme of 'Young people

Left: Election leaflet, 1929

and the progressive parties'. One of these unsuccessful candidates was Josephy, who complained that campaigning in a three-party political system was like fighting with an eel. She claimed that younger voters were apt to go to the extremes of socialism or conservatism: 'Our difficulty, under the three-party system, is that people cannot see the top peak for looking at the bottom two.'

During this address, Josephy argues that the Liberal Party must change and that activists should work for the return to two-party politics. She states that a party could be created if those two-thirds of the Liberal Party who were progressives joined forces with the three-quarters in the Labour Party who were moderates. This would leave hardcore socialists as a 'small fag-end ... which does not count one way or another.' She does not say what the other third of the Liberal Party would do, nor does she provide details on how this party could be formed. She was clear, however, that the Labour Party must come 'our way; we are not going theirs.'

The *Forward View* article, makes it clear that Josephy's opinions were not favourably received by all of the delegates. In the discussion which followed the addresses she was subjected to 'sundry attacks' and she felt it was necessary to make a further statement clarifying her position:

I do not want to suggest that we should join Labour, or co-operate with Labour, or that there is any question of alliance with Labour in Parliament. What I did suggest was that we should get rid of this artificiality in politics. It should be made easier for those who think the same to work together. I want to see that we do not fall at the fence of a name.<sup>8</sup>

In this statement, Josephy makes it clear that she does not want any closer involvement with the minority Labour government. Also, it can be deduced from her speech that Josephy would not be too comfortable in a coalition with the Conservative Party.

Her views on working with the Labour Party are further clarified in an article written by her for the November 1929 issue of *Forward View*. Josephy makes it clear that a merger between the Liberal and the Labour parties could not be further

from her thoughts. She states that she has no liking for the three-party system but believes the Labour Party will split, leaving two great parties and a small 'fanatical tail' of socialists. She says that the name of the Liberal Party should be changed to encourage non-socialist Labour politicians and voters away from the Labour Party:

I would rather see the Party that stands for Liberalism called by some other name – Radical, if you like, or Progressive – than, for the sake of a name, force the country to an eternal choice between Conservatism and Socialism... and personally I can see no other future for the Liberal Party than as a body representing the radical-minded, non-Socialist alternative to Conservatism.<sup>9</sup>

In the first issue of *The Liberal Whip* (October 1929), a newsletter issued by the Winchester Division Liberal Association, Josephy writes about the role of the small band of Liberal MPs. She claims that they have an influence greater than their numbers would suggest (she says fifty-eight<sup>10</sup>), for 'unless the Government have the Liberals on their side they can do nothing.' She adds that MacDonald and his Cabinet:

are very well aware that only such progressive measures as are in accordance with Liberal principles will ever get through this House of Commons. In Parliament the Liberal Party stands between the country and out-and-out Socialism. In the country the Liberal Party gives to the electorate the opportunity of expressing at the same time their dislike of Conservatism and their distrust of Socialism. Undoubtedly the Liberal Party is still a national necessity ...

Liberalism cannot die, nor the Liberal Party, for it *must* exist as the national watch-dog to guard the national interests, [and] prevent revolutionary or reactionary legislation ...<sup>11</sup>

In articles written before the collapse of the Labour government in August 1931, Josephy writes that any imminent election should be avoided as she predicted such a contest would result in a strong Conservative government. In that scenario, she believes, Liberals would have no influence

over policy. However, it could be counter-argued that the influence Liberals had on the minority Labour government was itself limited. Labour politicians would have been aware that Liberals were as unlikely to want an election as themselves.

In August 1931, the National Government was formed. A general election was soon called and Josephy contested Basingstoke. In her election leaflet, Josephy claims to be the only 'real' National Government candidate. In another bold phrase, she makes it clear also that she is the 'Free Trade' National Government candidate. This suggests she sensed that the public were in favour of some sort of coalition government to get the country out of its economic predicament. However, she claims that the election itself was unnecessary and was called by Conservatives for purely party political reasons, so they could impose protectionist measures.<sup>12</sup> Her electioneering did not persuade the voters of Basingstoke and the Tory candidate won securing nearly 70 per cent of the poll. In this three-way contest, Miss Josephy did at least manage to come second.<sup>13</sup>

Josephy writes about her experiences of the 1931 campaign in a typescript article for *Forward View* called, 'Unborn tomorrow and dead yesterday'. In her article, written within a month of the election, she writes:

'Le roi est mort! Vive le roi.' The old Liberal Party is dead. Long live the Radical Remnants! If the mountain will not leave Mahomet, Mahomet must leave the mountain.<sup>14</sup>

She calls for these Radical Remnants to rename themselves, to make it clear to voters that they had nothing in common with the Liberal Nationals or other Liberals with Conservative and protectionist leanings. Otherwise she predicted that at the next election 'the aforementioned apostates will hang like a millstone round our necks.' She points out that even in the 1929 election Liberal candidates had to answer 'devastating questions' about the divisions within their party. She predicts that if the Radical Remnants did not take 'a new title', arguments over who were the true Liberals would dominate the next election.

**She calls for these Radical Remnants to rename themselves, to make it clear to voters that they had nothing in common with the Liberal Nationals or other Liberals with Conservative and protectionist leanings.**

REMEMBER  
when you go to vote

**JOSEPHY**  
is the ONLY real  
National Government Candidate.

Free Trade means cheap  
living and better trade.  
The Conservatives want to  
abolish Free Trade.

A Vote for Lymington  
is a vote for Protection.  
A Vote for Goatcher  
is a vote wasted.

**Vote for JOSEPHY**

**JOSEPHY FOR JUSTICE**

Please put this in your window.

**GENERAL ELECTION 1931.**  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27th.



**VOTE FOR  
JOSEPHY**  
Free Trade National  
Government Candidate.

**WHAT THE TORIES DON'T TELL YOU**

1.—**GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO, 1931.**—  
‘We seek in the course of the next few years the  
what is necessary to repair the gaps in our  
resources which have accumulated over the past  
decade.’  
Britain has spent £1,200 millions on her defence  
forces in the last ten years. During eight  
of these years, there has been Tory Govern-  
ment.  
If there are gaps, what has been done with the  
money?

2.—**OVERSEAS TRADE.**  
1931—£1,215 millions.  
1924—£1,100 millions.  
A DROP OF £115 millions.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain in the City of London,  
Oct. 30th, 1931—  
‘We cannot help seeing that there has been a  
recovery in the position of the country as remark-  
able that if in 1931 we had ignored the  
elections we would bring it about, we should have  
been accused of pretending we could work  
miracles.’  
During the next period of four years we may  
safely anticipate a further steady progress in the  
same direction.’

3.—During 1931 five million persons claimed unem-  
ployment pay.  
Average period of unemployment—five months.  
At least five million people, including black-coated  
men, are still out of work.  
Persons referred by Poor Law on account of unem-  
ployment in 1931—42,572—the highest figure  
on record since 1927.  
Total number on Poor Law relief, 11 millions, a  
record figure and an increase of 85,000 since the  
Government took office.

When asked in the House of Commons on  
December 21st, 1931, what was the Govern-  
ment's Unemployment Policy, Mr. Neville  
Chamberlain replied:  
‘Our unemployment policy is to continue as  
we have been doing.’

4.—**GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO, 1935.**—  
‘The estimates in the Budget have been able this year  
to lay more food for 15½ days than the Budget  
for £1 when the Government took office.’  
Increase in food prices since the Government  
took office—  
Milk—4.3 per cent. Bacon—10.6 per cent.  
Bread—14.8 per cent. Flour—16.2 per cent.  
Ministry of Labour Gazette.

**JOSEPHY for ACTION**  
PLEASE PUT THIS IN YOUR WINDOW.

**GENERAL ELECTION 1935**  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14th.



**VOTE FOR  
JOSEPHY**  
Peace  
and Reconstruction.

*Fell favored*

About the 1931 election campaign itself, Josephy writes, ‘What a dirty Election this has been.’ It seems the Basingstoke campaign was not fought in a friendly manner by the two candidates who represented parties who were both part of the same National Government. She states that she was beaten in her constituency ‘by three things (in the reverse order): – organisation, intimidation, and misrepresentation.’ She does believe that some voters had been intimidated by landlords into voting Tory. She states, however, that her greatest difficulty was in persuading voters that she did support the National

Election leaflets, 1931 and 1935 elections. On the 1935 election, someone – presumably rather later – has crossed out ‘Peace and reconstruction’ and written ‘and full Beveridge’.

Government, despite the fact that she was a free trader. She believed that by the time of the election, the National Government had not yet firmly committed itself to protection, as MacDonald had called for an impartial inquiry into the matter. Such an inquiry, Josephy thought, would be on the side of free trade if really impartial. However, her support for the National Government was questioned during the election campaign, as many voters believed that the government was protectionist and that that was what the election was about.

Josephy also makes it clear in her article that she thinks the National Government is not a true coalition because it is overwhelmingly composed of Conservative MPs. ‘The country voted National (as it thought) and has got a predominantly Conservative Government ... and Conservatism we shall get.’ However, as in many of her pronouncements, Josephy maintains her optimistic outlook. She claims that this Conservative domination would split the National Government, as the protectionists would see their opportunity to get their way without an impartial enquiry. Such an attempt, she predicted, would create a split. Even Baldwin, ‘honest man that he is, will come out of the Government if the Tory Tariffists force Protection without an impartial inquiry, having, as he says, no mandate from the country. So may Mr Macdonald. So – at least we confidently expect so – will Sir Herbert Samuel.’

Josephy states that these leaders and their followers could form the ‘nucleus of the new Radical Opposition.’ However, ‘National Labour, Baldwinian Tory have no real organisation of their own.’ There would need to be a party structure behind it and, ‘That is where the Radical Remnants come in, and there, I am convinced, is where the National League must take the lead.’ It is interesting to note that Josephy believed it was the National League of Young Liberals who would provide this role rather than the Liberal Party itself. As she says, ‘We have an organisation, we have always maintained our independence from party headquarters – now split from top to bottom – we have men within our ranks who can lead, and more outside would, in

those circumstances, be only to glad to come in.’<sup>15</sup>

Her hope that National Labour and Baldwinian Tories could join forces with progressive Liberals to create a Radical Party was not to be. There appear to be many reasons for this – one was that political momentum for the progressive vote was still with Labour despite their setback in 1931. Another was that the National Government did not split to the extent that Josephy had predicted: although the Liberals did leave the government, the mass of Conservative MPs and the Liberal Nationals stayed with it. Finally, the Liberals themselves remained deeply divided.

In March 1932, a resolution calling for Liberal ministers to resign from the government over the issue of free trade was passed at the NLYL’s annual conference at Bradford. The resolution was supported by Josephy, who stated that, ‘Opposition is the only way to rebuild the Liberal fortunes and to give a sadder and wiser electorate, who distrust the Socialists and have found out the Tories, an opportunity for voting for a real party.’<sup>16</sup> According to the Yorkshire Observer, Josephy also attacked Lloyd George in the speech by describing him as a liability inside the party and a danger outside the party.<sup>17</sup>

Evidence in her writings suggests that her view that the National Government was really only a Conservative government do not change. Even when the Liberals were part of that government, Josephy feels that they had no influence over it. For example, in ‘Seen from the gallery’ (May 1932), Josephy writes of the futility of Sir Herbert Samuel’s speech in the House of Commons in support of free trade. In fact, she points out, his freedom to oppose protection was actually limited because he was a minister in that government.<sup>18</sup> Josephy writes about her thankfulness when Liberal ministers do finally see the light and resign from the government in September 1932: ‘let us go ahead now and show the people of this country that there is at any rate one party to which they can turn when the Hungry Thirties have taught their bitter lesson.’<sup>19</sup>

In 1935, Josephy contested Devizes in Wiltshire. This time it was a straight fight with the sitting

MP, Sir Percy Hurd (grandfather of the future foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd). The election leaflets for both candidates reveal a lot about the difficulties Liberals had when contesting National candidates. Sir Percy's leaflet proclaims he is the National Government candidate: there is nothing on it which states that he is a Conservative. Instead it highlights his coalitionist credentials, with brief statements of support from Baldwin, Ramsay Macdonald and two erstwhile Liberals – Sir John Simon and Sir James Currie (an 'ex-President of the Devizes Division Liberal Association'). In his statement, Simon encourages electors to vote National, as the only possible alternative government would be an extreme socialist one. Meanwhile, Currie claimed that Hurd's record in parliament since 1931 had showed clearly that he had abstained from partisan politics. Currie felt confident that the majority of voters in the area would take the line he proposed to do – and vote for Hurd.<sup>20</sup>

In her own leaflets, Josephy highlights her view that the National Government is really a Conservative one, but under a different name. She points out that the government is a threat to liberty and is 'moving along the road leading to dictatorship.' This was partly due to the huge majority it received in 1931: 'A swollen majority, such as that given to the last Government, leads to stagnation and is the first step in the downfall of democracy.' Josephy claims that the National Government's methods, too, were an attack on Liberalism. For example, she points out that legislation was often forced through without adequate discussion. To Josephy, these were hardly the actions of a government who could justly claim to be Liberal.<sup>21</sup> However, Josephy did not convince the electors of Devizes of the need to vote for her. Yet again, the Conservative was victorious, and Sir Percy Hurd held on to the seat with almost 60 per cent of the vote (down slightly from 66 per cent in 1931).<sup>22</sup>

There is some insight into Josephy's own views on the election campaign in a short typescript article by her entitled, 'Devizes'. She notes that until the campaign there had been little organisation in the constituency, with only a 'W.L.A.' (Women's Liberal Association) and

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two local branches. Despite this, Josephy and her colleagues managed to hold seventy-two meetings during the twelve days of the campaign. All but one was well attended. She also records a visit to the constituency from Sir John Simon, who was campaigning in support of Hurd. On the platform with him were all the Liberal candidates who had fought in Devizes since the war (excluding one). She must surely have been bitter, although in her article the occasion is humorously dismissed by her noting that a poster announcing that she was winning had been pinned up 'in triumph just outside the Corn Exchange where everyone going in to the Tory meeting must see it.'<sup>23</sup> So although Liberal National candidates did not fight Liberals in many seats in this election (except in two constituencies<sup>24</sup>), it is clear that Liberal Nationals were actively campaigning against the 'Samuelite' Liberals.

The papers of Frances Josephy are useful as they provide an individual perspective to add to the national and parliamentary viewpoint. In the mid-1920s, Josephy was stating that many Liberals were too close to the Conservatives – whereas she wanted the Liberal Party to be the non-socialist opponent of the Conservative Party. It is also apparent that activists such as Josephy realised by the end of the 1920s that the party would need to change if it was ever to form a government again. At this time, Liberals were considering how best to respond to the new reality of three-party politics. Josephy thought the best outcome for the Liberal Party would be a return to the two-party system. She thought this would come about because the Labour Party would split between its socialists and moderates. She believed the latter grouping could join with Liberals to form the main party to oppose the Conservatives – even if this meant changing the Liberal Party's name.

Josephy believed the Liberals held some leverage over the second minority Labour government, as it could not function without Liberal support. However, Josephy predicted that the next election would bring the Conservatives to power with a large majority. She thought that the Liberals would have little influence on such a government.

In the event though, a National Government was formed instead. Even though the Liberals were initially within this government, she was convinced that in reality it was so dominated by the Conservatives that it could not be considered a true coalition. She believed the Tories were very effectively using the label 'National' to deceive the public into believing that the government was acting in a non-partisan way. She argued that Liberals had no influence on such a government, as proved by the passing of Tory protectionist measures. Indeed, worse than that, the Liberal Party suffered when it was part of that government, as it could not effectively oppose such legislation. Josephy was one of the Young Liberals who called for Liberals to leave the National Government at the NLYL annual conference in March 1932 (less than six months after the 1931 general election).

Josephy initially thought the formation of the National Government might be positive for progressive Liberals like her. For a start, some of the Conservative-leaning Liberals whom she had complained about since the mid-1920s had now become Liberal Nationals. In addition, she thought protectionists would overplay their hand and split the government. However, she did not believe the Liberal Party would benefit from that split as they were far too divided. Instead she hoped that the Young Liberals could form the core of a radical party which could challenge the Conservatives for power. This was not to be, mainly because Conservatives and Liberal Nationals remained loyal to the government. I think it is fair to say that from our vantage point, the creation of a Young Liberal-led radical or progressive party at that time seems highly improbable. Without more Liberals with the vision, optimism and energy of activists like Josephy, surely it was impossible.

I will leave the final words of this article to Josephy, who writes about how divided Liberals were in the mid-1930s. In an article from 1937 entitled 'The insolence of office', she writes that the split between the Liberals and Liberal Nationals:

... is confusing in the extreme to the ordinary man in the street and heart-breaking to Liberal organisers. In many constituencies the

associations are genuinely Liberal but feel bound in loyalty to their Simonite Members. In others the official associations are no more Liberal than their Members, and such real Liberals as survive in the division are forced to seek political salvation in the League of Young Liberals or to start opposition associations for themselves. The worst cases are those in which genuinely Liberal associations are dominated by Simonite officers, and Liberalism is being lost in a welter of Tory propaganda. For the Simonite, though he still finds virtue in the name Liberal, is quite indistinguishable from his Conservative colleague.<sup>25</sup>

*Nick White is Assistant Archivist at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is currently cataloguing the William Beveridge papers.*

- 1 The catalogue is available online at <http://archives.lse.ac.uk>
- 2 For a survey of papers held at LSE Archives relating to Liberals in the inter-war years see [http://www2.lse.ac.uk/library/archive/leaflets/liberal\\_party\\_1918\\_39.pdf](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/library/archive/leaflets/liberal_party_1918_39.pdf)
- 3 LSE Archives, JOSEPHY/17/1
- 4 JOSEPHY/17/1
- 5 JOSEPHY/14/6
- 6 Liberals did not contest the seat again until 1964. Figures from F. W. S. Craig (ed.), *British Parliamentary Election Results 1918–1949* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Parliamentary Research Services, 1983), p. 368.
- 7 ‘Crusader Junior’ in the *Yorkshire Evening News*, 5 August 1929. The reporter added that Miss Josephy ‘is a whirlwind of energy’ (JOSEPHY/17/1).
- 8 *Forward View*, September 1929 (JOSEPHY/17/1).
- 9 ‘A reply to Mr Bernays’, typescript article for the *Forward View*, November 1929 (JOSEPHY/14/6).
- 10 Fifty nine Liberal MPs were elected in the 1929 general election. However, one Liberal, William Jowitt resigned his seat (Preston) when he was appointed Attorney General in the Labour government. Jowitt retained his seat as the Labour candidate in the subsequent by-election on 31 July 1929.
- 11 ‘The national watchdog’, in the *Liberal Whip*, October 1929 (JOSEPHY/13/2).
- 12 Frances Josephy’s general election leaflet, 1931 (JOSEPHY/13/3).
- 13 Craig, *Election Results*, p. 364.
- 14 Typescript article for *Forward View*, November 1931 (JOSEPHY/14/6).
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 *News Chronicle*, Manchester edition, 28 March 1932 (JOSEPHY/17/5).
- 17 *Yorkshire Observer*, 28 March 1932 (JOSEPHY/17/5).
- 18 Typescript article for *Forward View*, May 1932 (JOSEPHY/14/6).
- 19 ‘The real meaning of Ottawa’, typescript article for *Forward View*, November 1932 (JOSEPHY/14/6).
- 20 Sir Percy Hurd’s election leaflet, 1935 (JOSEPHY/13/4).
- 21 Frances Josephy’s election leaflet, 1935, (JOSEPHY/13/4).
- 22 Craig, *Election Results*, p. 496.
- 23 ‘Devizes’, undated typescript (JOSEPHY/14/6).
- 24 Chris Cook, *A Short History Of The Liberal Party* (7th edn., Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 121.
- 25 Undated typescript article, c.1937 (JOSEPHY/14/6).

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

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

### Letters of Richard Cobden (1804–65)

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

### The political career of Edward Strutt, 1st Baron Belper

Strutt was Whig/Liberal MP for Derby (1830–49), later Arundel and Nottingham; in 1856 he was created Lord Belper and built Kingston Hall (1842–46) in the village of Kingston-on-Soar, Notts. He was a friend of Jeremy Bentham and a supporter of free trade and reform, and held government office as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Commissioner of Railways. Any information, location of papers or references welcome. Brian Smith; [brian63@inbox.com](mailto:brian63@inbox.com).

### Liberal Unionists

A study of the Liberal Unionist party as a discrete political entity. Help with identifying party records before 1903 particularly welcome. Ian Cawood, Newman University College, Birmingham; [i.cawood@newman.ac.uk](mailto:i.cawood@newman.ac.uk).

### Liberal policy towards Austria-Hungary, 1905–16

Andrew Gardner, 17 Upper Ramsey Walk, Canonbury, London N1 2RP; [agardner@ssees.ac.uk](mailto:agardner@ssees.ac.uk).

### Recruitment of Liberals into the Conservative Party, 1906–1935

Aims to suggest reasons for defections of individuals and develop an understanding of changes in electoral alignment. Sources include personal papers and newspapers; suggestions about how to get hold of the papers of more obscure Liberal defectors welcome. Cllr Nick Cott, 1a Henry Street, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 1DQ; [N.M.Cott@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:N.M.Cott@ncl.ac.uk).

### Beyond Westminster: Grassroots Liberalism 1910–1929

A study of the Liberal Party at its grassroots during the period in which it

went from being the party of government to the third party of politics. This research will use a wide range of sources, including surviving Liberal Party constituency minute books and local press to contextualise the national decline of the party with the reality of the situation on the ground. The thesis will focus on three geographic regions (Home Counties, Midlands and the North West) in order to explore the situation the Liberals found themselves in nationally. Research for University of Leicester. Supervisor: Dr Stuart Ball. *Gavin Freeman*; [gjf6@le.ac.uk](mailto:gjf6@le.ac.uk).

### ‘Economic Liberalism’ and the Liberal (Democrat) Party, 1937–2004

A study of the role of ‘economic liberalism’ in the Liberal Party and the Liberal Democrats. Of particular interest would be any private papers relating to 1937’s *Ownership For All* report and the activities of the Unservile State Group. Oral history submissions also welcome. *Matthew Francis*; [matthew@the-domain.org.uk](mailto:matthew@the-domain.org.uk).

### The Liberal Party’s political communication, 1945–2002

Research on the Liberal party and Lib Dems’ political communication. Any information welcome (including testimonies) about electoral campaigns and strategies. *Cynthia Messeleka-Boyer*, 12 bis chemin Vaysse, 81150 Terrasac, France; +33 6 10 09 72 46; [cynthia.boyer@univ-jfc.fr](mailto:cynthia.boyer@univ-jfc.fr).

### The political career of David Steel, Lord Steel of Aikwood

David Steel was one of the longest-serving leaders of the Liberal Party and an important figure in the realignment debate of the 1970s and ‘80s that led to the formation of the Liberal Democrats. Author would like to hear from anyone with pertinent or entertaining anecdotes relating to Steel’s life and times, particularly his leadership, or who can point me towards any relevant source material. *David Torrance*; [davidtorrance@hotmail.com](mailto:davidtorrance@hotmail.com).

### The Lib-Lab Pact

The period of political co-operation which took place in Britain between 1977 and 1978; PhD research project at Cardiff University. *Jonny Kirkup*, 29 Mount Earl, Bridgend, Bridgend County CF31 3EY; [jonnykirkup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jonnykirkup@yahoo.co.uk).