

THE KING OF PAT COLLINS, LIBERA

Graham Lippiatt tells the story of Pat Collins, King of Showland, entertainment entrepreneur – and Liberal MP for Walsall from 1922 to 1924. As this uncommon, flamboyant and colourful man stated in a summary of his life's work and Liberal political philosophy, 'I am a showman first and a politician second. I am a worker and fighter rather than an orator. There is only one object in my life and that is to see people have fair play.'



SHOWLAND AL MP FOR WALSALL

TODAY'S MEMBERS of parliament tend to be drawn from a smaller and smaller constituency of full-time politicians: people who have studied and worked in politics.¹ The main routes into the House of Commons seem to be through party or parliamentary jobs or local government party politics. The former Cabinet Secretary, Lord Turnbull, has recently characterised the route this new breed takes into government as: 'Leave university, lick envelopes at Central Office for a year; then get into a think-tank; appointed as a special adviser; get into Parliament and by the time you are 38, you have got into the Cabinet without touching the sides of real life ...'.² Professional as the contemporary crop of MPs may be, what is increasingly missing from the House of Commons, as the forum of the nation, is the richness, the breadth and the diversity of the world as experienced outside Westminster (other than the almost obligatory qualifications in the law). It was not always so, as the story of Pat Collins, the uncommon, flamboyant and colourful man, who was Liberal MP for Walsall from 1922 to 1924, demonstrates.

Patrick Collins is best known not for his politics at all but as a fairground showman, outdoor

amusement caterer, and theatre and cinema proprietor. Being a Liberal MP and local government politician was probably the most boring aspect of his remarkable life, although Collins was proud of his achievement in being the first showman to be elected as a member of parliament.³ His name is still remembered today through the company 'Pat Collins Funfairs', which operates from Collins' old stamping ground in the Black Country. At one point he was running four separate fairs a week, as well as owning cinemas and skating rinks.⁴ On his death he was described in *World's Fair* magazine as the Grand Old Man of Showland.⁵

Collins was born in 1859 on a fairground in Chester,⁶ the son of John Collins, a Roman Catholic agricultural labourer of Irish descent⁷ who also worked as a travelling peddler.⁸ There is a conflict over his exact date of birth. One usually reliable source shows Collins' date of birth as 5 April 1859⁹ but both the biography of Collins in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and a locally produced biography for the Walsall Local History Centre give his date of birth as 12 May 1859.¹⁰

The young Collins attended St Werburgh Catholic School in Chester but left at the age of ten to

go travelling with his family.¹¹ He then embarked on a highly varied working life. He worked on the travelling shows, including a spell as a Boxing Booth fighter.¹² At one time or another he was a farmer, an engineering works proprietor and, from these beginnings, he became involved in the early development of steam roundabouts and outdoor amusements in general. He later diversified, playing a role in introducing and popularising the cinema industry in Britain. He first put on moving picture shows around the year 1900 and ended up operating fourteen cinema or assorted variety establishments, including circuses.¹³ Pat Collins Ltd was created in 1899, when Collins established a round of fairs in the Black Country based on traditional 'Wakes' or local holidays or from August to October.¹⁴ Although he ran his fairs, bioscopes and cinemas across the country, his main base was in the West Midlands and the Black Country. He moved to Walsall in 1882 and located his business there. He held Wakes fairs in his home base of Bloxwich, which lies just to the north of Walsall, every August. The world moves on however and, according to the Walsall Local History Centre website, the location for the fairs is now the home of the ASDA supermarket car park.¹⁵

Pat Collins (1859–1943) in 1923

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Collins knew how to move with world in the provision of entertainment. Traditional attractions such as wild animals, mummers and freak shows gave way over the years to new thrills such as chairplanes, dodgem cars, waltzers – a constant updating to ever speedier and more adventuresome rides. Collins later diversified into cinema and built a picture house to grace his adopted home village of Bloxwich. This theatre, the Grosvenor, was designed by Hickton and Farmer of Walsall, in a classical style, and was constructed by J. & F. Wootton. It cost £12,000 and was opened on 11 December 1922.¹⁶

Collins grew to love Walsall and its people and he embarked on a civic and charitable life to the benefit of the town. Collins was a particular benefactor of the local hospitals and clinics. He made it his practice to donate the full takings from one night at Bloxwich Wakes in August to the Walsall General Hospital.¹⁷

In 1880 Collins, at the age of twenty-one, married seventeen-year-old Flora Ross from Wrexham.¹⁸ They had one son, Patrick Ross Collins (1886–1966), known as Young Pat, who carried on his father's business¹⁹ and who followed in his father's political footsteps too. Young Pat was elected a member of Wallasey Council, New Brighton Ward in 1921.²⁰ Flora died in 1933, and in 1934 Collins married his second wife, Clara Mullett, who worked for his company as his secretary and who was herself the daughter of an amusements caterer.²¹

Collins' interest in active politics probably stems from his involvement in the campaign against the introduction of a bill in 1888 to restrict the movement of travelling people, including fairground workers. The bill would have provided for the registration of all moveable dwellings, the compulsory school attendance of all gypsy and van dwellers' children and regulations about the number of people allowed in a particular living space. The local council could authorise an officer of the law to enter a van with a warrant, to inspect the dwelling for sanitation, health and moral irregularities.²² The proposers of the bill regarded travellers, many of whom were Irish, as the dregs of society and an immoral influence. Their campaign was influenced by

racial and class considerations as much as concerns for social welfare and hygiene. One prominent campaigner, George Smith of Coalville in Leicestershire, compared van and gypsy children to the children of Africa, complaining that their camps 'would disgrace the Soudanese'.²³ The measures and the language of their proponents produced widespread anger throughout the travelling fraternity. Meetings were held among the travellers; a fighting fund was set up; MPs were lobbied and showmen, including Pat Collins who was elected to the national committee against the bill, were politicised. The Moveable Dwellings Bill did not become law and the travelling community had won a notable victory. Collins had become engaged in public campaigning and in the organisations created to represent showpeople and take up the issues which concerned them.²⁴ He continued to be active in the Van Dwellers' Protection Association (VDPA), and later in the Birmingham District Committee of the VDPA's successor organisation, the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain and Ireland,²⁵ having been one of the guild's founding members.²⁶ He rose to become vice-president of the guild at national level after 1900²⁷ and then served as its president for an astonishing nineteen years.²⁸

Through these activities, Collins acquired political and administrative skills. In the promotion of his business, he learned the value of advertising and publicity as well as developing his flair for razzamatazz. Using a combination of these arts, Collins began to deal regularly with local authorities over licences, and the location of fairs and sites for show people and their equipment. He learned to handle local residents who objected to noisy fairground rides and who had worries about the character of the travellers.²⁹ In this way Collins was preparing for his career in public and political life, as a future local councillor and member of parliament.

In pursuing this career, Collins had to overcome the prejudices of the age. While there was, of course, nothing to stop working-class Roman Catholics of Irish descent from being active in public life or in the Liberal Party in the early twentieth century, it was quite unusual for Catholics to get elected as Liberal MPs. The strong connection



of the party with the Protestant dissenting tradition is well documented.³⁰ In common with many of their countrymen, many Liberals were anti-Catholic, a tradition which historians have identified as a building block of British national identity lasting well into the nineteenth century and beyond.³¹ After all, the rallying cry against the 1902 Education Act, led by the Liberal Party and their traditional nonconformist supporters was to oppose 'Rome on the Rates'³² and Sir Clifford Cory (Liberal MP for St Ives, 1906–22 and 1923–24), a contemporary of Collins in parliament, was a leading light in the organisation the Welsh Protestant League which had a reputation for being rabidly anti-Catholic.³³ Of Liberal MPs entering parliament between 1910 and 1914, 47 per cent were estimated to be nonconformist, 36 per cent were Anglican, 8.5 per cent were Church of Scotland and only 8.5 per cent were recorded as being of another or of unknown religion.³⁴ In his religion, then, Collins was certainly not typical of the usual stamp of Liberal MP and neither was it common for men of labouring origins to make it to the top. The average Liberal MP in the early twentieth century was middle class, a lawyer or businessman, a nonconformist with university or public school education – although this model was less prevalent after 1910.³⁵ In one respect, however, Collins did conform to the pattern for Liberal success. He had a background of strong local service to his community through engagement in local politics, and this was a route into selection as a parliamentary candidate for many Liberals who had served on county or town councils, school boards or boards of guardians.

Collins first became a member of Walsall Council in April 1918 when he was co-opted to fill a vacancy in the Birchills Ward created by the election of William Halford to become an alderman. Although Collins was a Liberal by conviction, he later described himself as someone whose Liberalism was 'born in him' and whose Liberal principles were 'marrow to his bones',³⁶ he does not seem to have had political ambitions but he was invited to join the council because of his role as a public benefactor and his financial generosity to the Walsall Liberals having provided funds to



acquire a building as a headquarters for the local party.³⁷ Collins was himself created an alderman in 1930 and, during his long career on the council, he served on many of its committees including: Baths, Parks and Cemeteries; Electricity Supply; Gas; Health; Free Library and Art Gallery; Old Age Pensions; Property; Public Assistance; Public Works; Trade Development; Maternity and Child Welfare; Mental Welfare; Transport and the Watch Committee. In 1938, at the age of eighty, he was elected mayor of Walsall. Soon after becoming mayor, Collins showed he had not lost his sense of humour. He wrote in response to a well-wisher: 'Fancy me at the age of 80 taking on myself the onerous duties of Mayor of a large County Borough. I have been approached many times during the last ten years but succumbed to persistent entreaties in a weak moment. I will let you have a photo in full regalia in a few days time, when you WILL notice how young I look'.³⁸ When he became mayor no one could remember the last time a Roman Catholic had held the post. In an echo of that old prejudice, however, the vicar of Bloxwich regretted publicly that for the first time in twenty years that the mayor of Walsall had not attended Bloxwich Parish Church.³⁹ In 1939 Collins received a final tribute from his adopted home town when he was made a freeman of the Borough.⁴⁰

Such local service was not, however, seen as an inevitable stepping stone towards a parliamentary career as far as Collins was concerned. On the contrary, although

Wolverhampton funfair featuring Collins rides, from a postcard of the time.

he was elected Liberal MP for Walsall in 1922, Collins seems to have had no parliamentary ambitions in the run-up to the election and few prospects of success given that the party in Walsall was poorly organised and appeared to be in decline. In the 1918 general election, the Liberal candidate in Walsall, W. H. Brown, had come bottom of the poll in a three-cornered contest which had been won by Sir Richard Cooper, the Unionist MP for the town since January 1910. Cooper stood as a Coalition National Party candidate⁴¹ having been a joint founder of the National Party, a pro-Imperialist, right-wing splinter from the Conservatives,⁴² with Henry Page Croft in 1917.⁴³ In common with many Liberal associations in 1918, the Walsall Liberals were divided over supporting the coalition or standing their own candidate – split between a regard for Lloyd George as the man who won the war, on the one hand, and the independence of their party, on the other.⁴⁴ However by 1919, Cooper had indicated his desire to stand down at the next election and the Unionists adopted his wife, Lady Alice Cooper, in his place.⁴⁵

Left, from top: Pat Collins in 1934, on the steps of his living van. The Grosvenor Picture House, Bloxwich, in the 1930s. Pat Collins with his wife and dog in the 1930s.

When the 1922 general election was called, following the decision of the Conservative Party to end their participation in the coalition government at a Carlton Club meeting on 14 October 1922, Walsall Liberals had no candidate in place, could not find one and were seriously thinking of not contesting the election at all. They were hoping the Midland Liberal Federation or the party's chief whip in London

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might come up with a name.⁴⁶ At the last minute, Collins agreed to stand. He had the local government credentials, had lived locally for forty years, and his name was well known through his shows and entertainments. Nevertheless he was a surprise choice both nationally and locally – perhaps even to Pat himself, although as a successful businessman he certainly had the substance to maintain himself if elected.⁴⁷ On the debit side, it was thought his lack of education might tell against him in a national contest and he was said to be a poor public speaker.⁴⁸

However, when the 1922 general election came, it was Collins who was elected MP for Walsall in a three-cornered contest. In a close fight he beat the Conservative candidate, Lady Cooper, the wife of the former MP⁴⁹ by the narrow margin of 325 votes, with R. Dennison for Labour in third place.⁵⁰ This was a real achievement for the Liberal Party, leaping from third place to victory in one election. It is clear that Pat Collins' profile, personality and his reputation as a local philanthropist had a lot to do with his success.⁵¹ The election campaign did expose Collins' limitations as a public speaker but his supporters in the audience, some were probably placed there as clagues, usually came to his rescue. If he drier

up someone would invariably shout 'Good old Pat' or some other declaration of moral support, giving him the chance to recover and carry on with his address.⁵²

Another factor that Collins could capitalise upon in 1922 was the social work he had done in the Roman Catholic community, particularly in Bloxwich, his home area. Father McDonnell, the local priest, was a Liberal activist and he and Pat worked together to rally the Catholic vote, taking advantage of the presence of a large number of Irish immigrants who had been attracted to the town by work in heavy industry.⁵³

Whereas the Liberal Party in Walsall had been poorly organised and funded since 1918, the adoption of Pat Collins as parliamentary candidate produced a surge in membership, activism and income. The Showman's Guild offered to organise a procession through the town to aid electioneering, but Collins' agent had to turn the offer down for fear of exceeding the election expenses restrictions.⁵⁴

Collins published an election address that was reproduced in the local newspaper. This manifesto emphasised the traditional Liberal causes of freedom, reform and progress. He welcomed the passing of the coalition government, which had 'died a natural death', and the

reversion to ordinary party politics, claiming that only the Liberal Party could now provide strong and stable government. On foreign policy Collins favoured a revision of the Paris peace treaties, putting reparations and war debts on a reasonable and businesslike footing. He advocated universal disarmament through an effective and powerful League of Nations and supported the League as the new diplomacy – the old methods being antiquated and so discredited they must be buried forever.⁵⁵ In a later address he declared his support for 'Free Trade, Economy, Drink Reform and No to Nationalisation'.⁵⁶ Collins also stressed his local connections as a local man to represent Walsall in parliament, making much of his experience on the borough council.⁵⁷

Collins' Tory opponent, Lady Cooper, had some problems in her own campaign. She may have suffered electorally because she was a woman. Only three women had been elected to parliament since women were permitted by law to stand as candidates in 1918: Lady Astor,⁵⁸ Countess Markiewicz⁵⁹ and Margaret Wintringham.⁶⁰ At the 1922 general election, there were thirty-three women candidates: five Tories, ten Labour, sixteen Liberals and two Independents. Of these all were defeated with the exception of the two former members.⁶¹ There was still widespread opposition to women's involvement in national politics. Sir Henry Craik, member of parliament for the Combined Scottish Universities, may have typified the attitude of many men, and not just Tories, when he wrote to *The Times* saying that, in his view, not enough time had passed since the introduction of women's suffrage to justify the 'new experiment' of electing women to parliament and that 'our attitude towards women used to be that of homage and ... that fits in badly with political contentions'.⁶² Given the narrowness of Collins' majority over Lady Cooper, just 325 votes, her gender may have cost her the election. However, in pure electioneering terms, Lady Cooper faced a particular difficulty. She found much in the depressed social and economic conditions of the town which she deplored and wished to see improved. She sympathised with Collins in his exposure of

Result of the 1922 general election in Walsall			
Pat Collins	Liberal	14,674	38.6%
Lady Cooper	Conservative	14,349	37.8%
R. Dennison	Labour	8,946	23.6%
Majority		325	0.8%
Result of the 1923 general election in Walsall			
Pat Collins	Liberal	16,304	43.5%
S. K. Lewis	Conservative	14,141	37.8%
A. C. Osburn	Labour	7,007	18.7%
Majority		2,163	5.7%
Result of the 1924 general election in Walsall			
W. Preston	Conservative	15,168	37.9%
Pat Collins	Liberal	12,734	31.8%
G. L. R. Small	Labour	11,474	28.7%
Dr J. J. Lynch	Independent	622	1.6%
Majority		2,434	6.1%
Result of the by-election in Walsall, 27 February 1925			
W. Preston	Conservative	14,793	38.2%
Rt Hon. T. J. Macnamara	Liberal	12,300	31.8%
G. L. R. Small	Labour	11,610	30.0%
Majority		2,493	6.4%

the poor housing conditions of the working people of the town. She nevertheless felt constrained to electioneer around these issues because her husband had been the local MP for years and had been a supporter of the outgoing government which had failed to deal with these social problems effectively. Fighting too hard on these popular issues would simply invite criticism of Sir Richard and the Unionist Party. Lady Cooper did, however, try a little tactical voting, reminding electors that at the last election the Liberals had been bottom of the poll, behind the Labour Party, with only 17 per cent of the votes cast.⁶³ She politely asked the electorate to consider how likely it was that they could win this time.⁶⁴ The rationalism of this appeal was swept away by the tide of sentiment in favour of Collins, however. This is illustrated by an oft-repeated anecdote about an old man went into vote and was asked by the canvassers whom he wanted to vote for. 'For Lady Cooper?' 'No'. 'For Dennison?' 'No'. 'For Collins?' 'No'. 'Then who do you want to vote for?' 'Ah dunna want to vote for any of them; ah want to vote for Pat'.⁶⁵

Collins made his maiden speech in the House of Commons on 29 November 1922 during the third reading of the Irish Constitution Bill. 'As an Irishman, this is the happiest day of my life. The House has given us what we have been looking for 700 years.' He said he believed the people of England would never regret granting this measure of justice to Ireland.⁶⁶ During his time in parliament, Collins could not be described as a great House of Commons man – perhaps his old inability as an orator inhibited him – but he raised a number of important local matters concerning Walsall in questions, for example the inadequate size of the Walsall Post Office and the complaint of sixty women voters at Elmore Green that they had been denied the right to cast their vote. He also used his position as MP to secure an order for tubes for battleships for a Walsall firm thus providing employment for a large number of men in the town for some months.⁶⁷

The next general election came quickly but Collins held his seat in 1923 in another three-cornered fight. Against new Conservative and Labour candidates he increased his majority to 2,163 votes.⁶⁸

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One of Collins' key constituencies was the Irish, Catholic vote, which helped him in 1922 and 1923.⁶⁹ But by 1924 the Liberal Party nationally was facing a tougher time as it, and the electorate, struggled to come to terms with its position as the third party in a two-party system. Collins had a new Conservative opponent, Charles William Preston. He also faced a stronger challenge than previously from Labour, now represented by Mr G. L. R. Small, who was beginning to woo some of the working-class Irish, Catholic vote away from Collins. There was also the added complicating factor of an Independent candidate, Dr J. J. Lynch. Among those who came to Walsall to campaign for Pat was David Lloyd George,⁷⁰ but Collins was unable to hold on and Preston, who was described as a man of 'no political experience of any kind, although he did play cricket for Walsall'⁷¹ gained the seat for the Tories with a majority of 2,434 votes.⁷²

In an unexpected twist, however, Preston was disqualified from parliament on the grounds that he had held government contracts with the Post Office (albeit in trivial amounts) at the time of his election. Collins was the obvious candidate for the resulting by-election but he demurred on grounds of ill health.⁷³ There is some question about how ill Collins really was. It is known, for instance, that he continued to travel widely on business, adding new destinations to his fairground circuits in 1923–24. He also travelled to London for the Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 and was well enough to attend a garden party and meet the king and queen.⁷⁴ He also continued to attend large numbers of Walsall Council meetings throughout the 1920s.⁷⁵ It is recorded that Collins admitted finding the restraints of party politics at the national level irksome and time-consuming and that he was getting tired and frustrated by national politics.⁷⁶ For the by-election Walsall Liberals adopted the former Liberal MP and Minister of Labour, Thomas James Macnamara, who had just lost his seat at Camberwell North West. Macnamara was unable to win the seat back, the by-election voting figures differing little from the general election poll, with Labour appearing to pick up most of the votes from the Independent

candidate.⁷⁷ Macnamara stuck with Walsall for the 1929 general election but also without success.

Collins did not stand for parliament again, although his name was suggested as a potential candidate for the general election of 1931,⁷⁸ but another local councillor, Joseph Leckie, was chosen. Leckie had been chairman of Walsall Liberals since 1912. He was described as a man '... of the old school, valiantly holding on to Liberal ideals'⁷⁹ and he said of himself that he was 'as strong as ever on Free Trade'.⁸⁰ In the general election of 1929, Walsall had gone Labour for the first time. In the situation created by the financial crisis of 1931 the Labour MP, John James McShane, did not follow Ramsay MacDonald into the National Government and negotiations between the Liberals and Unionists in Walsall led to Leckie being adopted as the National candidate over the claims of the Conservative prospective candidate Mr W. Talbot, a local industrialist. Leckie held the seat in 1935 standing as a Liberal National but with the full support of the local Liberal Association.⁸¹ This included the support of Collins who remained president of Walsall Liberals right though until the Second World War.⁸² He also continued to sponsor the party financially. He was one of three members of the association who joined together to pay off a long-standing debt that the association owed to the Midland Bank.⁸³

On 17 August 1938, Collins presided at a Special General Meeting of the Walsall Liberal Association which was held to consider what to do following the death of Joseph Leckie. He proposed a resolution of condolence and voted for the motion to find a replacement candidate who would fight the by-election in support of the National Government.⁸⁴ The by-election took place on 16 November 1938 and was won for the Liberal Nationals by Sir George Schuster, a barrister from a wealthy family with banking and cotton interests who had already had successful careers in business, colonial government and economics.⁸⁵ Schuster was not a Walsall man and was suggested to the local association by the Liberal National leadership. Following Pat Collins' resolution Walsall Liberals had set up a selection sub-committee but they could not find a suitable local candidate. They hoped that

another prominent local councillor, long-time Chairman of the Liberal Association and Collins' successor as mayor of Walsall, Cliff Tibbits, would agree to stand but he turned the opportunity down.⁸⁶ The Walsall Conservatives were piqued that the Liberals had exercised their right to find a successor to Leckie, rather than cede the nomination on the basis of what some said was a tacit understanding that when Leckie ceased to be the town's MP it would be the Unionists' turn to put forward a National candidate.⁸⁷ In the end, however, they were told by Central Office that they regarded Walsall as a Liberal seat and reluctantly agreed to support Schuster in the by-election, which he won in a straight fight against Labour by a majority of 7,158 votes, having taken 57 per cent of the poll.⁸⁸

It was said that Collins was offered a knighthood by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain for his services to the entertainment industry but turned it down on the basis that he had been born plain Pat Collins and that's how he would die.⁸⁹ Collins died on 8 December 1943 aged eighty-four years at his home, Lime Tree House, High Street, Bloxwich and he is buried Bloxwich cemetery. It cannot be argued that Collins was a politician of real national significance. He sat in parliament for just two years, making little impact there but representing his constituency competently enough. Neither can it be said that Liberal success in Walsall at the 1922 and 1923 general elections was a pointer to electoral successes elsewhere. Like many Liberal MPs, Collins was swept from parliament at the 1924 general election. The later victories of Leckie and Schuster owed little to Collins' success and were explained by the combination of anti-Labour forces in Walsall and across the country and the electorate's desire to support the National Government at a time of economic crisis. The interesting thing about Collins was his rise to become a Liberal MP in the first place. Being the child of an agricultural labourer and travelling peddler, of Irish descent and a Roman Catholic, with little formal education, was hardly a traditional career path into parliament with the Liberal Party. Collins clearly made use of his experience as a showman and administrator with Van Dwellers'

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Protection Association to gain a foothold in local politics in Walsall and to use his celebrity to help him into parliament. But he did not really use this real-world experience in the House of Commons, if only because he was there for too short a time. As Collins himself pointed out in a summary of his life's work and Liberal political philosophy, 'I am a showman first and a politician second. I am a worker and fighter rather than an orator. There is only one object in my life and that is to see people have fair play.'⁹⁰

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- 59 Constance Georgine Markiewicz (1868–1927). Although detained in Holloway Prison at the time, accused as a participant in the Irish rebellion and of conspiring with Germany, Markiewicz was elected MP for Dublin St Patrick's at the 1918 general election. As a member of Sinn Fein she always refused to take her seat.
- 60 Margaret Wintringham (1879–1955), Liberal MP for Louth 1921–1924.
- 61 Pamela Brookes, *Women at Westminster* (Peter Davies Books, 1967), p. 33–35.
- 62 *The Times*, 2 July 1923, p. 15.
- 63 Craig, *Election Results*, p. 264.
- 64 Allen and Williams, *Pat Collins*, p. 53–54.
- 65 Homeshaw, *This Was His Life*, p. 6.
- 66 *The Times*, 30 November 1922, p. 7.
- 67 *Walsall Observer*, 24 November 1923.
- 68 Craig, *Election Results*, p. 264.
- 69 Dominicans of the English Province, *New Blackfriars*, 1973, p. 225.
- 70 Allen and Williams, *Pat Collins*, p. 44.
- 71 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 72 Craig, *Election Results*, p. 264.
- 73 Robin Betts, *Dr Macnamara 1861–1999*, p. 350.
- 74 Allen and Williams, *Pat Collins*, p. 43.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- 77 Betts, *Dr Macnamara*, pp. 350–351.
- 78 Walsall Local History Centre Archive, papers of the Walsall Liberal Association: minute book, 29 September 1931, ACC/31/1/3.
- 79 Phil Jones, *Joseph Alexander Leckie* (published privately, 1989), p. 53.
- 80 Walsall Local History Centre Archive, papers of the Walsall Liberal Association: minute book, 29 September 1931, ACC/31/1/3.
- 81 David Dutton, *Liberals in Schism: A History of the National Liberal Party* (Tauris Academic Studies, 2008), p. 92.
- 82 Walsall Local History Centre Archive, papers of the Walsall Liberal Association: minute books, 1931–1942, ACC/31/1/3.
- 83 Walsall Local History Centre Archive, papers of the Walsall Liberal Association: minute book, 29 September 1931, ACC/31/1/3.
- 84 Walsall Local History Centre Archive, papers of the Walsall Liberal Association: minute book, 26 March 1942, ACC/31/1/3.
- 85 Oliver Van Oss, 'Sir George Ernest Schuster (1881–1982)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online 2004–11 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31661?docPos=4>)
- 86 Dean, *Town and Westminster*, p. 170.
- 87 *Ibid.*, p. 169.
- 88 Craig, *Election Results*, p. 264.
- 89 Toulmin, DNB.
- 90 Allen and Williams, *Pat Collins*, p.60.

LIBERAL HISTORY QUIZ 2011

This year's Liberal history quiz was a feature of the History Group's exhibition stand at the Liberal Democrat conference in Birmingham in September. The winner was Stuart Bray, with an impressive 19 marks out of 20. Below we reprint the questions – the answers will be in the next issue.

- Which prominent Liberal politician was forced to disguise himself as a policeman to escape the mob at a meeting at Birmingham Town Hall in 1901?
- Who was the first person elected to the House of Commons as a member of the SDP, and for which seat?
- Who was the leader of the Liberal Party from 1935 to 1945?
- When the Liberal Party split over Ireland in 1886, what was the name of the party founded by Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Hartington which formed an alliance with the Conservatives in opposition to Irish Home Rule?
- For which constituency did Lady Violet Bonham Carter stand, unsuccessfully, as Liberal candidate at the 1951 general election, unopposed by the Tories and with Winston Churchill speaking on her behalf?
- What connects an SDP think tank with the rise of capitalism and the Reformation?
- Who was the Whig – later Liberal – politician who was Prime Minister in 1846–52 and again in 1865–66?
- Who won the Ryedale by-election for the Liberal-SDP Alliance in 1986?
- What is the full title and sub-title of the 2004 book edited by David Laws and Paul Marshall aimed at charting a new direction for the Liberal Democrats?
- In 1950, who told an arresting police officer, 'I am a Liberal and I am against this sort of thing', and why?
- For which general election of the Grimond era was the Liberal Party manifesto titled *People Count*?
- Who stood as Liberal Democrat candidate for Mayor of London at the first mayoral election?
- Whose autobiography, *Memoirs of a Minor Public Figure*, was published in 2011?
- Monty Python's parrot featured in Liberal history on two occasions, in 1988 and 1990. Why?
- Who connects Queen Victoria with an unloved stubborn pack animal which had provided 'much valuable service'?
- What connects Gladstone with Rosebery's final request?
- In the 2010 election, who was the moderator, for ITV, of the first televised party leaders' debate in Manchester, on 15 April?
- What do Matthew Taylor (1987), Sarah Teather (2003) and Jo Swinson (2005) have in common?
- What was the name of the organisation formed in 1960 to act as a focal point for creative policy work by younger Liberals, which took its name from a survey integrating and explaining its radical programme published by the NLYL and ULS in 1959?
- She was born in 1882 and died in 1981. Her father was a Liberal MP. She was one of the leading lights in the international women's suffrage movement, a Liberal candidate eight times and was appointed a Dame in 1967. Who was she?