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# LLOYD GEORGE ARCHIVES

by J. Graham Jones

## Parliamentary Archive, House of Lords

At his death in March 1945, Lloyd George bequeathed to his second wife Frances, Countess Lloyd-George of Dwyfor, a substantial archive of both political and personal papers, primarily the former. She then sold the entire archive in 1949 to Lord Beaverbrook. The papers are still owned by the Beaverbrook Foundation, but since 1975 they have been deposited at the House of Lords Record Office (now called the Parliamentary Archive). Substantial numbers of official papers survive among the Lloyd George Papers at the House of Lords.

The archive runs to no fewer than 1041 boxes. They have been listed, divided into nine series, each distinguished by a letter of the alphabet; the first seven series correspond to the main divisions in Lloyd George's political career:

### Political Papers

- Class A Member of Parliament, 1890–1905 (13 boxes)  
 Class B President of the Board of Trade, 1905–08 (5 boxes)  
 Class C Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1908–15 (36 boxes)  
 Class D Minister of Munitions, 1915–16 (27 boxes)

- Class E Secretary of State for War, June – December 1916 (10 boxes)  
 Class F Prime Minister, 1916–22 (254 boxes)  
 Class G 1922–45 (264 boxes)  
 Class H Press cuttings (390 boxes)

### Personal Papers

- Class I Personal correspondence and papers (42 boxes)

Also deposited at the Parliamentary Archive at the House of Lords is a substantial group of the papers of Frances Stevenson, Lloyd George's secretary, mistress and eventually

his second wife. Many of these relate to Lloyd George. These papers include many photographs, some personal correspondence, and a draft of Frances's autobiography (published as *The Years that are Past* (Hutchinson, 1967)). There is also Frances's correspondence with Lloyd George (extracts published as A. J. P. Taylor (ed.), *My Darling Pussy: the Letters of Lloyd George and Frances Stevenson, 1913–41* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975)), and her diaries for the years 1914 to 1944 (extracts published as A. J. P. Taylor (ed.), *Lloyd George: a Diary by Frances Stevenson* (Hutchinson, 1971)).

**National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth**

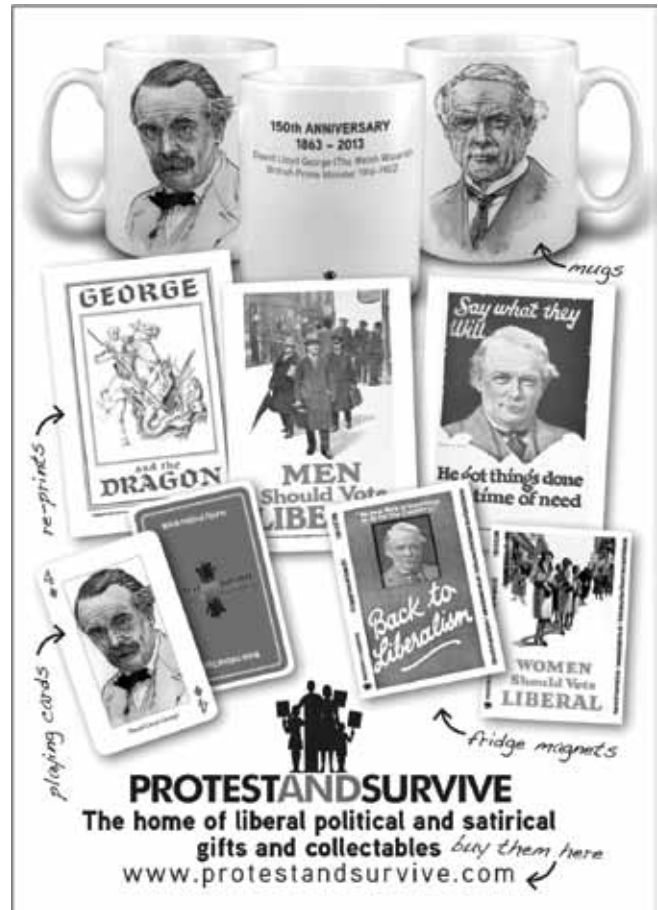
*Brynawelon group (NLW MSS 20,403–93)*  
The first major Lloyd George archive to be purchased by the National Library of Wales (in 1969) was the substantial group of correspondence and papers, running to almost 3,500 items, which had been assembled at the family home at Brynawelon, Criccieth. By far the most important part of the archive is the long series of just over 2,000 letters or notes from Lloyd George to Dame Margaret, beginning in 1886, just before their marriage, and continuing until 1936. These have been catalogued as NLW MSS 20,403–42. Until about 1917 Lloyd George spent long and frequent periods away from his family, and wrote home almost daily, occasionally more than once a day. This magnificent sequence of letters casts light on Lloyd George's personality and viewpoint in a number of ways. They are especially full (over 1,000 letters) from the time of his first election to Westminster in April 1890 until the period of the Boer War. From about 1902 onwards they become notably more episodic in character. But the diary-like quality of the early letters is perhaps some recompense for the realisation that most of the later epistles

are disappointingly brief and much less informative.

Other items of interest in this group include NLW MS 20,443A, a stray diary kept intermittently by Lloyd George between January and November 1887 when he was already taking a keen interest in political life. NLW MS 20,444A is a diary containing only two entries for January 1889. NLW MSS 20,444A–52A, and 20,454–55E are mainly notebooks and bound volumes of speech notes prepared between 1885 and the 1930s. The great majority of these are in the hand of David Lloyd George. NLW MS 20,451A is a notebook kept by Dame Margaret Lloyd George and contains fairly detailed notes of a family tour on the Continent during August and September 1929. NLW MS 20,455E comprises a miscellaneous group of political papers, a few concerning the Irish question, 1916–22 (including Asquith's notes for a speech in the House of Commons during 1916), and some deriving from the general election of October 1922.

NLW MSS 20,462–63C comprise a miscellaneous group of 160 letters addressed to Lloyd George, mainly from politicians and other prominent individuals. Many of these correspondents are represented by only a single letter. These volumes also include a small number of drafts and copies of letters penned by Lloyd George, and a handful of letters which simply refer to him, perhaps originally enclosures. NLW MSS 20,469–71C comprise three volumes of more than 300 letters to Dame Margaret, mostly relating to her social and public life. The numerous correspondents include a wide range of figures in English and Welsh public life. NLW MSS 20,475C and 20,482C are bound volumes of letters to Lady Megan Lloyd George. The former includes several letters from both her parents and, among others, Clement Attlee, Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, Lord Dawson of Penn and Dingle Foot.

**Sales advertisement**



*Earl Lloyd-George Papers (NLW MSS 21,787–92, 22,514–37 and NLW ex 1069)*  
The Library was able to purchase in 1982 and 1987 two groups of correspondence and papers from the third Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor which he, in turn, had inherited from his father, Richard Lloyd George, the second earl. Richard had presumably collected these papers during the course of his lifetime. The material acquired in 1982 now forms NLW MSS 21,787–90E, 21,791C and 21,792E. There are some 200 letters and papers, most of these addressed to Lloyd George, together with a few notes in his hand. The bulk of the correspondence concerns Welsh affairs, mainly the Disestablishment and Disendowment question, and the highly contentious Welsh Church Commission of 1906–07. Some of the letters also refer to educational matters, the investiture of Prince

Edward as Prince of Wales at Caernarfon Castle in 1911, and the First World War.  
*William George Papers*  
The largest and perhaps the most significant of all the Lloyd George archives in the possession of the National Library became available for purchase in September 1989 – the magnificent collection of correspondence and papers accumulated by Lloyd George's only brother William George (1865–1967). Quite apart from the immensely rich runs of correspondence, the William George Papers include ten pocket diaries kept by the young Lloyd George between 1878 (when he was only fifteen years of age) and 1888, together with a stray volume bearing but very brief notes for the year 1892. The very informative pocket diary for 1885 was acquired some years later.  
The backbone of the William George Papers is the long series of 3,292 letters

## LLOYD GEORGE ARCHIVES

from Lloyd George to William, spanning the years 1886 to 1943, but containing only a tiny handful of letters after 1917. Many of the early letters to William George discuss legal cases in some detail and the affairs of the family-run legal firm Lloyd George & George more generally. Again the key turning points in Lloyd George's political career are graphically illustrated in these letters. Subsequent letters refer to the course of the Boer War and the campaign against Balfour's Education Act of 1902. The long sequence of letters also abounds with references to contemporaries, notably fellow Liberal politicians.

The William George Papers 3302–458 comprise letters, 1887–1916, from Lloyd George to his uncle Richard Lloyd, again containing an interesting intermingling of local and domestic news and political comment. The William George Papers 3302–458 comprise letters, 1887–1916, from Lloyd George to Richard Lloyd, again containing an interesting intermingling of local and domestic news and political comment. There are also many interesting letters penned by Dame Margaret to, in turn, Richard Lloyd, Lloyd George and William George, together with a substantial group of letters, 1887–1926, from William George to his brother (numbers 5138–556).

*Olwen Carey-Evans Papers* (including NLW MSS 22823–27) Olwen Carey-Evans (1892–1990) was the third child of David Lloyd George. This collection, purchased in 1990, includes many miscellaneous items relating to Lloyd George, 1898–1970, among them a large number of invitations to, and souvenirs of, national events, while among the correspondents to Lady Carey-Evans herself are Clough Williams Ellis, Dingle Foot, Michael Foot and Andrew Bonar Law. NLW MS 22,823C comprises letters written by Lloyd George, mainly to Dame Margaret, 1894–1942, filling some of the gaps in the Brynawelon group of letters.

The letters, 1890–1942, to Lloyd George within NLW MS 22,824C are not generally of great political significance.

*A. J. Sylvester Papers* In November 1990, the National Library purchased a substantial group of the papers of Albert James Sylvester (1889–1989), who had served as principal private secretary to Lloyd George from 1923 until his death in March 1945. Class A in the Sylvester Papers comprises typescript drafts of his diaries running from 1924 until 1945. There are several copies of some of the diaries. These are much fuller than the published version *Life with Lloyd George* which appeared in 1975, edited by Colin Cross. Class B consists of eighty-two subject files, spanning the period from 1914 until 1948. Class C comprises correspondence, including a long series of letters between A. J. Sylvester and his wife Evelyn, 1914–58. There are further family letters, and a substantial group from various members of the Lloyd George family.

*Viscount Tenby Papers* (NLW MSS 23657–71 and NLW ex 1972) The most recent major acquisition of Lloyd George material was purchased from the third Viscount Tenby in 1996. Apart from correspondence and papers concerning Lloyd George himself, there are papers relating to Gwilym Lloyd-George, first Viscount Tenby (1894–1967), and to his brother-in-law Sir Goronwy Owen (1881–1963), Liberal MP for Caernarfonshire, 1923–45. These have been designated NLW MSS 23,657–71 and NLW ex 1972.

*Frances Stevenson Family Papers* In January 2000 the National Library purchased what must be the final Lloyd George family archive which had hitherto remained in private hands: a small residue of the papers of Frances Stevenson, the Dowager Countess Lloyd-George of Dwyfor (1888–1972). The papers had been inherited by Jennifer Longford, Frances's daughter (born in 1929), upon her death in 1972.

*Other archives of Lloyd George interest at the National Library of Wales*

Many other archives held within the Library include correspondence and papers relating to David Lloyd George. This is especially true of the personal archives of the politicians and associates who were his comrades-in-arms in the *Cymru Fydd* movement between 1886 and 1896, among them D. R. Daniel, Thomas Edward Ellis, Sir John Herbert Lewis, Stuart Rendel, A. C. Humphreys-Owen, Glansevern, and Sir Samel T. Evans.

For the later period of Lloyd George's life and career, by far the most important archive in the custody of the National Library is the Dr Thomas Jones CH Papers. Thomas Jones was the highly distinguished deputy secretary to the Cabinet from 1916 until 1930.

There are further letters from Lloyd George, papers relating to him and references to him in many other collections in the custody of the National Library, among them the papers of Clement Davies, George M. Ll. Davies, W. Watkin Davies, Sir Ellis

Jones Ellis-Griffith, W. J. Gruffydd, E. T. John, Lord Morris of Borth y Gest and A. J. Williams, as well as in several items in the general series of NLW Manuscripts, including the Thomas Gee Papers and the W. J. Parry Papers. The National Library also holds a large number of photographs and cartoons, many of which have never been published. The Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, also located at the National Library, has among its extensive holdings many memorabilia and recordings of sound and television broadcasts concerning Lloyd George.

### Other sources

The extensive holdings of the National Archive at Kew include a vast amount of material relating to Lloyd George's political career. The National Register of Archives has references to sixty archives which include correspondence and papers relating to David Lloyd George. There is an interesting miscellany of papers, photographs and memorabilia at the Lloyd George Museum at Llanystumdwy, Gwynedd, while the Caernarfon Area Record Office holds some material relating to Lloyd George, including speech notes, a small group of correspondence, 1912–16, sound interviews of some of his speeches, and interviews with Lady Olwen Carey-Evans.

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