

# The Liberal Press and the South African War

It is well known that it was the Liberals who fought for and won a free press for this country by effecting the abolition of the 'tax on knowledge', an act which was in large measure responsible for the huge proliferation of cheap newspapers from the mid 1850s onward. It was Liberal theorists too who hoped that this new press would act as a force for educating the newly enfranchised masses into a full appreciation of their rights and duties as voting members within the body politic through the fulfilment of its role as 'the fourth estate'. The role of the Liberals both in theory and in practice in the development of the press in the second half of the nineteenth century has long been recognised as significant. Liberals were prominent in founding, financing and editing new newspapers, both national and provincial.

By the time of the South African War the British press, in whose efficacy as the bridge between governors and governed the Liberals believed so fervently, had almost reached its apogee. Alan Lee has reckoned that in London alone in 1900 there were 472 newspapers, mainly local. Throughout the provinces there were 1,475, while Scotland had 244, Wales 110 and Ireland 182.<sup>1</sup> These figures include all newspapers, but if one considers only the London-based national press, with which I shall be primarily concerned, when war broke out there were thirteen morning and five evening papers. In 1899, of the thirteen morning papers, only four claimed to be Liberal and of the five evening papers three were Liberal. The four morning papers comprised *The Daily Chronicle*, the *Daily News*, the *Morning Leader* and, surprisingly, the *Daily Telegraph*. The evening papers were the *Star*, a sister paper to the *Morning Leader*, the *Echo* and the *Westminster Gazette*. I would like to consider these papers individually before making some general comments about the nature of the Liberal press during the war.

## The Daily Telegraph

The newspaper which claimed the largest circulation before the appearance in 1896 of the *Daily Mail* was the *Daily Telegraph*.<sup>2</sup> Founded in 1855, it was a paper intended to have a broader and more popular appeal than the older newspapers. Its foreign news coverage was said to rival that of *The Times* and it also offered from its early days book reviews, special articles and interviews. Appealing as it did to 'the man on the knifeboard of the omnibus' it always offered a good and comprehensive city page for the many city men who bought it. The paper had been owned by the Lawson family almost from its foundation. By 1899, Sir Edward, who became Lord Burnham in 1903, had been formally in control since 1885, and informally for much longer. Although there was an editor, John Le Sage, Sir Edward was in practice both proprietor and editor; he was 'The Guv'nor'. He vetted and approved the appointment of new staff and he often decided which leaders were to be written and the line to be followed.

When J. L. Garvin became a leader writer on the paper in the summer of 1899, his appointment had to be approved by Sir Edward although he owed it to the paper's chief leader writer and literary editor, W. L. Courtney. Garvin regularly received notes from Sir Edward with instructions as to the subject and line of his leaders. He did not mind this control, for he was politically in accord with Sir Edward, a Liberal Unionist, and had respect for his judgement. Indeed he came to dread the occasions when Sir Edward was absent and the editor took charge, often aided by Lawson's eldest son, Harry. During the 1900 general election Harry Lawson was standing as a Radical Liberal while his father was, in Garvin's words, 'running about to Unionist meetings in the country'. As a result leaders were not always as consistent and clear cut as Garvin would have liked, as both members of the family had to be placated. 'I

was told to say', Garvin complained on one occasion, 'that the Government must be returned by an overwhelming majority but that the opposition were Britons after all'.<sup>3</sup> Garvin's annoyance was that of a journalist with strong opinions who had joined a newspaper which he believed to be consistent in its views. The *Daily Telegraph* had altered politically from a paper which supported Gladstone to a Unionist newspaper. Although it billed itself in such trade manuals as the *Willings Press Guide* as a Liberal newspaper, the editorial staff was Unionist and Conservative to a man – mainly Conservative.

Although the *Daily Telegraph* had no known links with any party or government department, informal links with the Conservative party did exist through a member of the editorial staff, E. B. Iwan Muller, a close associate and friend of Arthur Balfour. Muller had other contacts both in the Hotel Cecil and in government. As one of the mainstays of the Conservative Canning Club at Oxford in the early 1880s, he had known both Lord Curzon and Lord Salisbury's heir, Lord Cranborne. Curzon had helped to further his career and remained a friend. In addition, and most importantly for the paper during the war, he was an old friend of Sir Alfred Milner, the High Commissioner in South Africa, whom he had known since his school days.

Before the war the paper consistently looked to and supported Joseph Chamberlain. During the war its stance on the major issues concerning the conduct of the war was, predictably, to criticise the War Office, expose stupid generals and to defend farm burning and the concentration camps, as far as possible. Indeed, as the war progressed any pretence that the newspaper had to be Liberal became increasingly stretched and by the summer of 1901 it was attacking the pro-Boers for giving psychological support to the Boers with as much vigour as any of the Conservative newspapers and dismissing the evidence about the camps with as much evasiveness as the Minister for War, St John Brodrick. Indeed, Emily Hobhouse's report, published on June 19, was not mentioned at all.

## The Daily News

The divisions within the Liberal Party which briefly annoyed Garvin during the general election had a far more serious effect on the two leading Liberal newspapers, the *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle*. The *Daily News* was claimed to be 'the recognised organ of the Liberal party' by press directories, but by 1899 it was not easy to define what this meant. Founded in 1846, briefly under the editorship of Charles Dickens, and financed by wealthy radical Liberals to support a programme of reform at home, events abroad in the 1890s exposed the divisions within the Liberal Party over Britain's Imperial role and had their effect on the *Daily News*.

E. T. Cook, who was appointed editor in 1895, belonged to the imperialist wing of the party and spoke for it with increasing vigour as imperial issues came to dominate the news pages. Cook had close contacts in South Africa. Edmund Garrett, editor of the *Cape Times* and a forthright supporter of the High Commissioner, was an old friend and colleague from days when they were both on the staff of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Garrett was Cape Town correspondent for the *Daily News* until the summer of 1899. Cook was also a personal friend of Milner, whom he had known from the days when he was a brilliant undergraduate at New College, Oxford and Milner a newly appointed fellow.

This was to influence the editorial views of the *Daily News* when South African affairs became prominent on the news pages. Cook, like Sir Edward Lawson, followed Chamberlain's lead in the months before war broke out. He also defended Milner vigorously, notably after the publication of his helot despatch. Cook's appointment had been unwelcome to many radical Liberals, who had always looked upon the *Daily News* as their voice. Eventually, early in 1901, Lloyd George, by then one of the Parliamentary leaders of the 'pro-Boers', arranged for the paper to be purchased by a syndicate headed by two wealthy Liberal businessmen, on the understanding that the *Daily News* would take a neutral position on the war and concentrate on important

home issues. Cook was forced to resign and was replaced by Rudi Lehmann, then on the staff of *Punch*, who himself resigned after only seven months.

The troubles of the paper continued, reflecting clashes between different styles of Liberalism and between Lloyd George and the financial backers he had secured.<sup>4</sup> However, although in theory the paper was supposed to ignore the war, in practice it did not. The issue of farm burning which had in fact gone on ever since Lord Roberts entered the Free State in the spring of 1900, was assiduously followed by the newly radicalised *Daily News* and by the end of May 1901 it was plain that the paper had decided to take up the conduct of the war systematically. No other paper had so much information about the devastation of farms and crops.

No other paper had such full coverage of the concentration camps. It was the *Daily News* that carried the first formal protest against the policy in a letter from Joshua Rowntree and gave the fullest coverage to Emily Hobhouse's report. She herself had insisted on giving the text to the *Daily News* for exclusive coverage. The paper printed a summary running to more than a page and there followed during the next few weeks many letters expressing concern and horror at the short-sightedness of the policy. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that there was more to this than moral indignation; it was part of a concerted plan to pull the Liberal Party together behind Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in a radical programme, using a highly emotive issue which could only embarrass a Government already floundering as the war dragged on unsuccessfully and expensively.

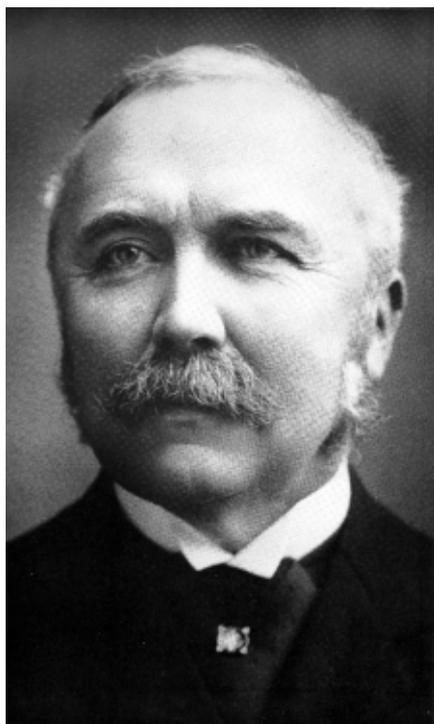
## The Daily Chronicle

The *Daily Chronicle* had had a somewhat chequered career in terms of its value to the Liberal Party, since it started publication in 1876. This was to continue throughout the war. In its early days it had little political content or foreign news, being largely devoted to advertising. During the 1880s it had taken a Unionist position on Ireland, only returning wholly to Gladstonian

Liberalism in 1890. In 1894 Henry Massingham, who had been the assistant editor since 1886, became editor. At the time he seemed to be a supporter of Lord Rosebery's version of Liberalism, a position which he soon abandoned. His second-in-command, Henry Norman, remained a Liberal Imperialist while Massingham veered increasingly to the left of the party, more particularly on foreign issues and imperialism. The staff whom he engaged were like-minded. Harold Spender, his Parliamentary correspondent, was a Liberal radical; so too were Vaughan Nash, his labour correspondent, and Henry Nevinson, war correspondent, leader writer and literary editor. Henry Norman resigned in May 1899, leaving a clear field for Spender and Nevinson as Massingham's chief assistants.

During the months before war broke out, the paper became increasingly uneasy and critical of Government policy in South Africa and by the summer of 1899 was voicing all the arguments against intervention in the Transvaal and acting as the most important public sounding board for 'pro-Boer' opinions. However, Frank Lloyd, owner of the paper since 1876, did not like Massingham's policy on the Transvaal, which was affecting turnover, and it was rumoured that Mrs Lloyd disap-

**Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836–1908), leader of the Liberal Party 1899–1908**



proved of the paper's attacks on the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, the influential Imperialist editor of the *Methodist Times*. Massingham was ordered not to express views on South African affairs. This was tantamount to dismissal, for no editor could possibly remain silent on the main issue of the day and on November 21 1899, Massingham duly resigned.

Thereafter the paper became impeccably Imperialist on the war. Spender and Nash both resigned, but Nevinson stayed on. At the time of the change he was locked up in Ladysmith during the siege and it was some weeks before he heard the news. It was a blow, for, as he mourned in his diary, 'all my influence is gone'. When he returned to England he found that this was indeed so: the new editor, J. H. Fisher, whom he came to detest, allowed him little leeway even in the choice of books for review. He tried to move to the *Daily News* without success, but, somewhat ironically, was consoled by the civilised presence in the *Chronicle* office of E. T. Cook, who was taken on to write leaders for the paper after leaving the *Daily News*.<sup>5</sup>

## A new paper?

The fortunes of these two newspapers horrified many radical Liberals opposed to the war at the time. It seemed to them that a vital element in the public discussion of Britain's role in the world, the moral basis of British hegemony, was under threat of being stifled. For these two papers represented and were read by the type of middle-class, educated Liberal who also read *The Times*.

Most educated Liberals saw 1900 as the year when their Press was totally emasculated because it had no significant national voice. When the *Daily Chronicle* changed sides, an attempt was made to raise funds for a new Liberal newspaper to fill the perceived gap in the market. The prime movers in the scheme, apart from Massingham himself, were a group of radical Liberals, all 'pro-Boer', who included Vaughan Nash, Frederick Mackarness, a radical lawyer prominent in the South African Conciliation Committee, Lady Carlisle and her son-in-law, Professor Gilbert Murray.

It was hoped that Sir John Brunner, one of the founders of ICI and well known for his radicalism and his interests in the press, would finance the scheme, but this was not to be. Massingham estimated that at least £250,000 would be needed to start a new paper. It was never collected; by early March 1900 £28,329 had been promised, very little of which was ever received. In the meantime, the *Manchester Guardian*, which had taken Massingham on as its London editor and found space both for Vaughan Nash and Harold Spender in Manchester, filled the gap. Copies of the paper were sent to London and, according to J. L. Hammond, could be bought in Fleet Street by 9.30 in the morning. Hammond's own weekly paper, *The Speaker*, was also regarded by his friends as to some extent a substitute for the *Chronicle* during the period between Massingham's resignation and the acquisition of the *Daily News* fourteen months later for the radical cause.<sup>6</sup>

## The Morning Leader

But there were always alternatives to the *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle*. There were the two newspapers in which Sir John Brunner had a financial interest, the *Morning Leader* and the *Star*. The *Morning Leader*, founded in 1892, was by 1899 edited by Ernest Parke. It is a paper which has been largely ignored in press histories. Where they do mention it, it is to dismiss it as being of little political importance.<sup>7</sup> It had, apparently, no contacts with the government or leading politicians. H. N. Brailsford, who was happy to write leaders for it in 1900 when the choice of newspapers to work for was severely limited for 'pro-Boer' Liberal intellectuals like himself, remarked somewhat patronisingly to Gilbert Murray, 'It is cheap, popular and sometimes vulgar but it is staunch and loyal, has a good circulation and is preparing to reform itself into as good a paper as one can expect for ½d'.<sup>8</sup>

The *Morning Leader* was certainly different from the other Liberal morning papers. Its primary aim, in good traditional Liberal fashion, was to educate

its readership, but it had also adapted to the new journalism. It was easier to read, having only five columns on a page in place of the six or seven favoured by most other morning daily papers and using a larger font throughout. It was also illustrated, with a daily cartoon and other pictures of current interest.

Education on the issues of the day was provided in its leaders, which tended to review and criticise the whole range of editorial opinion on Fleet Street. This was supplemented by special articles on the subjects of the day, some serious, some frankly satirical and intended to entertain. It did not aim at the highly educated intellectual elite of the party. Some idea of those who did read it is provided by the newspaper itself. At the end of October 1899, it offered to its readership a cheap news telegram service. On November 1 the paper reported that the first subscriber was 'a London tradesman – who desired to post the news in his shop window for the benefit of his customers and the public generally'. During the first few days, the paper subsequently announced:

Not only did tradesmen in remote country towns accept the idea initiated in London and seek to become news purveyors to their neighbours; instances came to hand of bands of men engaged in some common employment clubbing together to obtain the service. In one case the clerks of a big waterworks sent an order, in another soldiers in barracks, in a third men working on some large engineering job in a remote district of Wales.

Its readership, judging from its substantial letter columns, also included many nonconformist clergymen mainly, but not exclusively, from London. It seems to have appealed to women too.

## The Star

Its sister paper, the *Star*, was slightly older. Founded in 1888 under the legendary editorship of T. P. O'Connor, with a talented staff, including Massingham and George Bernard Shaw, it was and remained uncompromisingly and consistently radical, more so than either the *Daily News* or the *Daily Chronicle*. It aimed to represent and unify the opin-

ions of the different radical movements while providing its readership with excellent literary and music criticism. So its letter pages accommodated Fabians, Trade Unionists and Marxists, while Richard Le Gallienne and George Bernard Shaw wrote respectively of literature and music. It had a pungent style of presentation, including headlines in language aimed both to attract immediate attention and to proclaim the paper's stance, which by 1899 had become more familiar and popularised through the *Daily Mail* than it had been a decade earlier. By 1899 O'Connor had long departed and the editor was Ernest Parke.

The role of the *Star* was dismissed by Francis Williams as of little importance, particularly in capturing the widespread attention of the all-important lower middle class mass readership. But reading its pages one cannot but be struck by its sharp freshness in support of a frankly 'anti-jingo' policy, or by its combination, in the space of a mere four pages, of the essentials of the latest news, comment upon it, regular coverage of labour issues and book reviews and theatre criticisms.

Whether or not the *Star* and the *Morning Leader* had significant influence, what that was and why they foundered are questions which might bear re-examination. During the war neither ever wavered in their sympathies for the Boers; indeed they were so sympathetic that in 1900 Milner made sure that their chief apologist for President Kruger was publicly exposed as a Boer agent in the pay of the Transvaal Government. This was Reginald Statham, one time editor of a newspaper in Natal, leader writer for the *Daily News* during the first Anglo-Boer war, and the first journalist in England to popularise the theory of a capitalist conspiracy on the Rand aimed against the Transvaal Government, financed by the Randlords, including Cecil Rhodes and operating through a bought Press, soon to be more widely popularised by J. A. Hobson.<sup>9</sup>

## The Echo

Radical Liberals were also able to look to another evening paper, the *Echo*. Founded in 1868, it was the first half-

penny evening newspaper, which from the start was noted for its advanced Liberal views. From 1876 it was owned by J. Passmore Edwards, Liberal MP for Salisbury, and well known as the founder of many public libraries and institutions. The *Echo* was his voice until the end of 1897 when he sold it, together with the *Morning Herald*, to the Liberal MP and businessman, Thomas Lough, and to John Barker, who was elected MP for Maidstone in 1900. They appointed Sir Hugh Gilzean Reid, also a Liberal MP and proprietor of several successful newspapers in Scotland and the North of England, as manager and William Crook as editor.

Crook was an Irishman, son of the founder of the Methodist College in Belfast. He had himself been a teacher when he first came to England, but had for many years also been a journalist, writing regularly for Hugh Price Hughes's *Methodist Times* under the pseudonym 'Historicus'. As editor of the *Echo* he continued Passmore Edwards's radical Liberalism. When war started he soon fell out with Price Hughes, who disliked his 'pro-Boer' attitude, and ceased to write for the *Methodist Times*. At the end of that year he was also forced to resign as editor of the *Echo*. The paper was making a loss and he and his unpopular views on South Africa were blamed. Crook himself blamed the proprietors for having poured too much money into their other newspaper, the *Morning Herald*, which had never done well and was eventually sold on and amalgamated into the new *Daily Express*.

Like the *Star*, the *Echo* had only four pages, but it too managed to cram in a vast amount of information about news and current affairs, trade union matters, sport and entertainment. Crook continued to write for it even after he ceased to be editor and, of course, later he took on the post of chief publicist for the Liberal Party, but the *Echo* was more non-committal in its coverage of the war after Crook resigned.<sup>10</sup>

## The Westminster Gazette

The most significant of the evening papers was the *Westminster Gazette*. Like all evening papers it was not pri-



J. A. Spender (1862–1942), editor of the *Westminster Gazette* 1896–1921

marily a newspaper. Indeed sometimes it hardly bothered with news at all, preferring to use its space for ample comment combined with articles of general interest. Founded in 1892 on the initiative of E. T. Cook to replace the *Pall Mall Gazette* as an evening paper in the Liberal interest (after the latter had been purchased by John Jacob Astor and changed its politics), it had been edited by J. A. Spender since Cook's departure to edit the *Daily News* in 1895. It was owned by Sir George Newnes who accepted consistent losses during his period of ownership because, under Cook and Spender, it became the most prestigious national evening paper of the day.

Spender used his editorial pulpit to preach sweet reason. He approached any question with an open mind and he was more prepared to examine it from several angles than any other editor on Fleet Street. His leaders were required reading for cabinet ministers and members of the opposition alike even if those with strong partisan views, such as Leonard Courtney's wife Janet, complained that he was a 'wobbler'. Politically his links were with the Liberal Party and he was in the confidence of the party leadership. His links with Asquith at a later date are well known, but he was equally close to Sir Henry

Campbell-Bannerman, elected leader of the party at the start of 1899, a relationship which developed during the South African war.

Campbell-Bannerman seems to have become acquainted with Spender through his friend and fellow Scottish MP James Bryce. Sir Henry found Spender an intelligent and sympathetic supporter to whom he could send advance copies of speeches delivered in Scotland, secure in the knowledge that they would be properly reported in the *Westminster Gazette*. The Press Association, which in Scotland was dominated by representatives of the *Scotsman* and the *Glasgow Herald*, both papers hostile to Campbell-Bannerman, and the national London-based papers therefore received mangled and inadequate reports of his Scottish speeches.

During the khaki election of 1900 Spender also provided the Liberal leader with an aide to help him to write speeches and present himself to the public.<sup>11</sup> But despite these close links with the Liberal leadership Spender never provided the uncompromising support which one finds in the *Daily Chronicle* under Massingham or Rudi Lehmann's *Daily News*. Spender did not want war; he saw no necessity for it. Like his friend Bryce he blamed the new diplomacy of Chamberlain for an unnecessary war, but once war came Spender, like many Liberals, saw no option but to bend before the storm, hope it would all be over soon and prepare for a generous, liberal settlement.

Even after hopes of achieving this were dashed, Spender was still temperamentally incapable of taking a hard line. For instance, he condemned the concentration camps but, typically, argued that their shortcomings must be the result of mismanagement and not deliberate policy.

## Conclusions

Such was the national Liberal press at the time of the South African war. Certain features are striking.

First, it was not a press dominated by groups and cartels motivated primarily by profits and circulation figures. Most of these papers were small businesses, some

were family businesses. Consequently all were undercapitalised and had plant and equipment badly in need of modernisation. None of them could hope to compete with a new paper like the *Daily Mail* which had invested in the latest equipment which allowed it to reach unprecedented circulation figures.

Secondly it was not a press which put news first and foremost, like the American press of the time, upon which the new tabloid newspapers, the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*, modelled themselves. Debate and comment in leaders and articles was still regarded as being of equal importance and, in the case of evening papers, perhaps even greater importance. These two factors were both disadvantageous to the wide dissemination of a Liberal view of the war.

But even more disadvantageous was the third point; the lack of any uniform pattern or homogeneity in the Liberal press, any more than there was in the Liberal Party at that time. At the outbreak of war the Liberal section of the national press had been profoundly affected by the various arguments within the party and was divided, not over social aims, but over the question of union and, increasingly, over the problems arising from the existence of the British Empire. From 1895, with the election of Lord Salisbury's coalition Government of Conservatives and Unionists and the appointment of the former Liberal, Joseph Chamberlain to the post of Colonial Secretary this latter question became ever more dominant and divisive within both party and press. This is reflected in the very variable approach which the different papers took to the issues raised by the war. The lack of unanimity in the party on most of the major issues, remained throughout the war a weakness constantly on show in the Liberal press and constantly exploited by its opponents.

*Dr Jacqueline Beaumont is a Research Fellow at Oxford Brookes University. This paper is based on her talk to the Liberal Democrat History Group meeting on 3 July 2000, 'Liberalism and the Boer War'.*

1 Alan Lee, 'The Structure, Ownership and Control of the Press, 1855–1914' in Ed Boyce,

- Curran and Wingate *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (London 1978), p. 121. See too Alan J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press 1855–1914* London 1980 pp. 274–80 for more detailed tables.
- 2 For the *Daily Telegraph* see Lord Burnham 'Peterborough Court: The Story of the *Daily Telegraph*' (1955).
  - 3 For Garvin and the *Daily Telegraph* see David Ayerst 'Garvin of the *Observer*', especially chapter 2. The quotation is taken from Garvin's letter to his wife Christina dated 3 Oct 1900. The letters are owned by Garvin's grandson, Professor John Ledingham, to whom I am grateful for permission to quote from them.
  - 4 Stephen Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain* vol 1, London 1981 pp. 362–66 for Cook, pp. 397–404 for changes during the war. Koss's volume is the chief source of information for many of the newspapers referred to in this paper. For an account of the *Daily News* during this period, which may not be entirely reliable see Archibald Marshall *Out and About. Random Reminiscences* pp. 85–89. Marshall, who was a friend and admirer of Lehmann, suggests that Lehmann was forced out of the editorship. Gerald Shaw *The Garrett Papers*, Van Riebeck Society, Second Series, No 15, Cape Town 1984 pp. 1–39.
  - 5 For the *Daily Chronicle* see Koss op. cit., A. Havighurst, H. W. Massingham, Bodleian Library Ms Eng Misc e 610/6 Journal of H. W. Nevinston Feb 1899 – March 1900.
  - 6 Bodleian Library: Ms Harcourt 32 3.12.1899 Letter from John Morley to Harcourt with Massingham's comment as to cost of a new paper. Bodleian Library: Ms Murray 7 E7 for subscribers and figures in the attempt to float a new paper.
  - 7 See for instance Francis Williams, *Dangerous Estate* London 1957 pp. 134–5.
  - 8 Bodleian Library, Ms Murray 124 11.1.1900 Letter from H. N. Brailsford to Gilbert Murray
  - 9 R. F. Statham *My Life's Record: A Fight for Justice*. London 1901. Statham regularly wrote letters to the *Star* expressing views sympathetic towards the Transvaal and the Kruger regime in the months before war broke out.
  - 10 This paragraph is based upon information in letters in the Crook papers; Bodleian Library: Ms Eng Lett d 380. See too Stephen Koss, op. cit.
  - 11 F Wilson Harris, J. A. Spender, London 1946, Koss op. cit. for the *Westminster Gazette*.

## 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 2) for inclusion here.

**The party agent and English electoral culture, c.1880 – c.1906.** The development of political agency as a profession, the role of the election agent in managing election campaigns during this period, and the changing nature of elections, as increased use was made of the press and the platform. *Kathryn Rix, Christ's College, Cambridge, CB2 2BU; awr@bcs.org.uk.*

**Liberal policy towards Austria-Hungary, 1905–16.** *Andrew Gardner, 22 Birdbrook House, Popham Road, Islington, London N1 8TA; agardner@ssees.ac.uk.*

**The Hon H. G. Beaumont (MP for Eastbourne 1906–10).** Any information welcome, particularly on his political views (he stood as a Radical). *Tim Beaumont, 40 Elms Road, London SW4 9EX.*

**Edmund Lamb (Liberal MP for Leominster 1906–10).** Any information on his election and period as MP; wanted for biography of his daughter, Winfred Lamb. *Dr David Gill, d.gill@appleonline.net.*

**Joseph King (Liberal MP for North Somerset during the Great War).** Any information welcome, particularly on his links with the Union of Democratic Control and other opponents of the war (including his friend George Raffalovich). *Colin Houlding; COLGUDIN@aol.com*

**The political life and times of Josiah Wedgwood MP.** Study of the political life of this radical MP, hoping to shed light on the question of why the Labour Party replaced the Liberals as the primary popular representatives of radicalism in the 1920s. *Paul Mulvey, 112 Richmond Avenue, London N1 0LS; paulmulvey@yahoo.com.*

**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.*

**Liberals and the local government of London 1919–39.** *Chris Fox, 173 Worplesdon Road, Guildford GU2 6XD; christopher.fox7@virgin.net.*

**Crouch End or Hornsey Liberal Association or Young Liberals in the 1920s and 1930s;** especially any details of James Gleeson or Patrick Moir, who are believed to have been Chairmen. *Tony Marriott, Flat A, 13 Coleridge Road, Crouch End, London N8 8EH.*

**The Liberal Party and foreign and defence policy, 1922–88;** of particular interest are the 1920s and 30s, and the possibility of interviewing anyone involved in formulating party foreign and defence policies. *Dr R. S. Grayson, 8 Cheltenham Avenue, Twickenham TW1 3HD.*

**Liberal foreign policy in the 1930s.** Focussing particularly on Liberal anti-appeasers. *Michael Kelly, 12 Collinbridge Road, Whitewell, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT36 7SN*

**The Liberal Party and the wartime coalition 1940–45.** Sources, particularly on Sinclair as Air Minister, and on Harcourt Johnstone, Dingle Foot, Lord Sherwood and Sir Geoffrey Maunders (Sinclair's PPS) particularly welcome. *Ian Hunter, 9 Defoe Avenue, Kew, Richmond TW9 4DL; ian.hunter@curtishunter.co.uk.*

**The grassroots organisation of the Liberal Party 1945–64;** the role of local activists in the late 1950s revival of the Liberal Party. *Mark Egan, 42 Richmond Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1LN.*

**The Unservile State Group, 1953–1970s.** *Dr Peter Barberis, 24 Lime Avenue, Flixton, Manchester M41 5DE.*

**The Young Liberal Movement 1959–1985;** including in particular relations with the leadership, and between NLYL and ULS. *Carrie Park, 89 Coombe Lane, Bristol BS9 2AR; clp25@hermes.cam.ac.uk.*

**The political and electoral strategy of the Liberal Party 1970–79.** Individual constituency papers, and contact with members of the Party's policy committees and/or the Party Council, particularly welcome. *Ruth Fox, 7 Mulberry Court, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 3JW.*