

here pieced together from highly disparate sources, many of these patchy and incomplete of necessity, is amazingly fully recreated and unflinching interesting. There has been much detective work and some conjecture in recreating the life story of an elusive figure. Considerable use has been made of the census enumerators' returns for the nineteenth century.

One of the author's scoops in this book is the revelation of the existence of William George's first wife, Selina Huntley, a chronic invalid who died in December 1855 at the age of only 36 (see pp. 167–70). Her premature death, long anticipated, left her grieving husband free to remarry and thus 'probably changed the history of the world' (p. 170). There are other curious twists in this story too. William himself was, we are told, 'a heaven-sent replacement' for an older male sibling, also called William, who had died at the age of three in February 1818 (see p. 28). History repeated itself. As was known before now, David Lloyd George, born 17 January 1863, was also a 'replacement' for an older David, born to the same parents in September 1860, and who tragically survived for only twelve hours, dying from 'Suffocatio' in the language of the day, his birth and death registered at Criccieth in a single notification by the grieving father William (p. 198). Neither Lloyd George nor his brother William ever knew of the existence of their elder brother, but the family researches of Dr W. R. P. George revealed his existence to the world in 1976.

The dogged researches of Peter Rowland have unearthed so much fascinating material. There are

reasonably full accounts of William George's ancestry and family background, sparse details of his education (very little is actually known, but he may well have attended the Haverfordwest Free Grammar School), and his early occupations. The main documentary source for this period is 'a Student's Journal' in which William George kept various notes between 1839 and 1842 (see chapter 4). Its contents are listed here in appendix II (pp. 272–78). In 1840–41 William George was able to gain admission to an early training college at Battersea established by pioneering educationalist Dr James Kay where he evidently became 'the star pupil' of the day, to such an extent that he then secured a teaching appointment at the Ealing Grove School run by Lady Byron. Here, however, he was not, it would seem, 'abundantly happy', and, sadly, began to suffer from the ill health which plagued him for the rest of his days and to brood constantly on the necessity to acquire a suitable wife. In April 1843 he moved to teach at Newbold. This book includes many valuable observations on mid nineteenth-century education and opportunities in Britain.

William George's subsequent movements and the state of his health are chronicled in successive chapters. After a period of recuperation from recurrent ill health, he opened his own school at Haverfordwest in 1853, and married his first wife, the ill-fated Selina Huntley, in April 1855, a union destined to last for just eight months. Even so, William's grief was intense, his loneliness intensified to such an extent that it propelled him into departing for pastures new at

Lloyd George's Tada

- the one father he never knew!



Peter Rowland

Wakefield and then Pwllheli. His reading matter (of which a great deal is known), always close to his heart, and his evolving religious views are analysed in some detail in this study. Whereas the first wife Selina was, it would seem, 'an intelligent, resourceful woman, apparently skilled in business techniques' (p. 187), the second, Betsy Lloyd, born at Llanystumdwy, near Criccieth, in October 1828, was 'a quiet, unobtrusive lady who went about her business efficiently but whose remarks ... have gone largely unrecorded' (p. 193). Personal details about her are vague, her early life enveloped in some uncertainty. All Lloyd George enthusiasts are long familiar with an oft-published photograph of her taken in the 1890s

LIBERAL HISTORY QUIZ 2015

Answers to the questions listed on page 26

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|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. Leon Brittan | 6. Ulbster | 12. Russell | 18. Asquith |
| 2. Birmingham | 7. Solihull | 13. Grey | 19. Lord Hartington, Duke of Devonshire |
| 3. Rosebery | 8. 1966 | 14. Melbourne | 20. Simon Hughes and Chris Huhne |
| 4. As a requirement of the will of his uncle in 1871 | 9. MacLennan | 15. Palmerston | |
| 5. Samuel | 10. <i>The Reformer</i> | 16. Gladstone | |
| | 11. Thorpe | 17. Davies | |