C. P. Trevelyan is probably the only British politician of the twentieth century to have resigned from governments of two different political parties, each time on a matter of principle. Duncan Brack describes his career.

Man of principle

C. P. Trevelyan is probably the only British politician of the twentieth century to have resigned from governments of two different political parties, each time on a matter of principle. This fact gives a clue to his nature, which was idealistic, unbending and outspoken often to the point of tactlessness. These characteristics inevitably limited his achievements in ministerial office, but he is notable as one of the Liberal politicians who, departing his erstwhile party as it began to fall apart in the 1920s, helped to give the rising Labour Party an ideological backbone it would otherwise have lacked.

Charles Philips Trevelyan was born in London on 28 October 1870, the descendant of an old West Country family. His grandfather, Charles Edward Trevelyan, had risen through the ranks of the Indian and home civil service to become a baronet, Assistant Secretary to the Treasury and Governor of Madras; he also inherited the Wallington estate in Northumberland from the main branch of the family. In 1835 Sir Charles married Hanna, sister of the historian Thomas Babington Macaulay, and had three children, of whom George Otto was the only son. In 1865, having already established himself in the world of literature, George entered the House of Commons as Liberal MP for, successively, Tynemouth, the Scottish Border Burghs and Glasgow Bridgeton. He served as Chief Secretary for Ireland from 1882–84 (after Lord Frederick Cavendish was assassinated in the Phoenix Park murders), as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster from 1884–85, and as Secretary for Scotland from 1885–86 and 1892–95. He might have risen even higher, but fell out with Gladstone over Irish home rule, fighting (and losing) his seat in 1886 as a Liberal Unionist – although he returned to the party, and the Commons, in 1887.

In 1869 Sir George married Caroline, daughter of Robert Needham Philips, Liberal MP for Bury. They had three children, Charles Philips being followed by Robert Calverley (born 1872) and George Macaulay (born 1876). Each of Charles' brothers was to enjoy a distinguished career, Robert as a poet and scholar, and George as a historian. Unsurprisingly for such a brilliant family, Charles carried, and felt he carried, a particular burden of expectation as the eldest son. He did not enjoy his father's and brothers' academic excellence, either at Harrow, where the headmaster of his preparatory school had informed his parents, to the dismay of his father, that 'you may depend on our not expecting too much of him',[1] or at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read history. His own feelings of inadequacy, coupled with a lack of conversational ability and gaucheness stemming from a background in a household where, as his biographer described it, 'declamation was the more usual form of communication'[2] and politics the main topic, contributed to growing bouts of depression. In the end he was awarded a second-class degree, which he regarded as a failure; as he wrote to his mother, 'The very brightness of my prospects, as the world would say, is a curse on me! What can it lead to but the repetition of the same miserable story of inadequacy and inefficiency in the end?'[3] It was this highly developed sense of self-criticism, combined with an upper middle-class background that stressed a responsibility and duty to serve those less fortunate than himself, that nurtured Trevelyan's idealism, endless capacity for hard work, and tendency to intolerance.

Following his father and grandfather, Trevelyan had identified himself as a Liberal from his schooldays, and at Cambridge he became secretary to the University Liberal Club. He left Cambridge just in time for the 1892 election, and, his father's seat being a safe one, canvassed successfully for Charles Fenwick amongst the Northumbrian miners in Wansbeck. In October, at his parents' suggestion, Trevelyan became private secretary to Lord Houghton, the newly appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Under-employed and ill at ease among the aristocratic anti-home rulers in Dublin Castle, he took himself off whenever possible to meet the Irish people, and developed a deep-seated con-

tempt for the lack of official concern with the interests of the majority of the population.

Into parliament

On his return from Ireland in 1893, it was taken for granted by both Trevelyan and his father that he would seek to enter the Commons, and in 1894 he was selected to replace the retiring Radical Liberal MP for North Lambeth, F. M. Coldwells. He fought the 1895 election on a manifesto promising to 'serve the public' and to 'labour in the cause of progress' but succumbed to the swing to the Unionists, losing the seat to the Liberal Unionist Henry Stanley (the former explorer and finder of Livingstone). The experience, however, was a useful one, and in 1898 he was selected to fight the Elland division in the West Riding of Yorkshire, again when the sitting MP retired. Although the seat had been held for the Liberals at the four previous elections, the local organisation had nevertheless been allowed to decay; as Trevelyan remarked of Thomas Wayman, the sitting MP: 'They say he has one speech and one only, and even at election times he has been known to refuse to deliver the oration more than four times.'[4] Trevelyan put his father's money to good use, employing an experienced agent and speaking throughout the constituency. In the by-election in March 1899, when Wayman finally stood down, he boosted the Liberal majority to just under one thousand. At last even his father was satisfied with his performance.

In the years leading up to his entry to the Commons Trevelyan's political views had begun to crystallise. In North Lambeth he described himself as a Radical, but in reality he fitted the Fabian mould better, seeking progress by slow gradual steps. Like many others he was deeply influenced by John Ruskin's moral paternalism, put into effect through the ideal hero who strives to serve the poor, the weak and oppressed. His friendship with the Webbs, and subsequent involvement in the Fabian Society and the Rainbow Circle,[5] added precision and direction to Ruskin's rather vague and rhetorical romanticism. Along with other Fabian-inclined Liberals, notably Herbert Samuel, who became a firm friend, Trevelyan remained suspicious of socialism, which he saw as essentially destructive, and was convinced that the Liberal Party was the best vehicle for the realisation of working-class aspirations. He also regarded himself as an Imperialist, although the term had a different meaning then than its later connotations of an aggressive and expansionist foreign policy. Like many other Liberal Imperialists, Trevelyan rejected the Gladstonian approach of non-interference in foreign affairs along with its economic and social principles of *laissez-faire* and self-help; he believed a strong Empire was the best foundation for a stronger society and progressive social reform.

Trevelyan's interest in education also began during this formative period when in 1896 he was co-opted on to the London School Board. Although he remained a member only until 1897, he campaigned hard for the Progressives (a coalition of Liberals, Fabians and socialists who fought local elections in London for several decades) in that year's election, and gained valuable experience in public administration. He later played a major role in the debates on Balfour's Education Bill of 1902, stressing in particular the iniquities of the religious tests for teachers in national schools.

Trevelyan held Elland in the 1900 election with an increased majority. He regarded the Unionist government's actions in South Africa as justified, and had little sympathy with the Liberal 'pro-Boers'; his campaign 'smashed the government on their own khaki issue as well as driving home social reform'.[6] In the 1900–05 parliament, he initially aligned himself enthusiastically with the Liberal Imperialists, alienating Campbell-Bannerman and his supporters while displeasing Asquith, Haldane and colleagues by publicly criticising their part in the internecine squabbles into which the party fell in 1900–02.

As the battles over Balfour's education bill and Joseph Chamberlain's declaration of support for tariff reform began to fracture the Unionist government and reunite the Liberals, Trevelyan threw himself into campaigning throughout the country,

Trevelyan and family, c. 1910

coming to be more and more in demand as a speaker. He wrote to Campbell-Bannerman demanding more than simple opposition to the government: he wanted reform of education, taxation of land values, reform of Army administration, graduation of income tax and reform of the electoral system. Although the Liberal leader replied politely,[7] in private he agreed with John Spencer's estimation of Trevelyan as enthusiastic but possessing little sense of proportion. Trevelyan became a particular supporter of land value taxation, introducing bills on the subject in 1902 and 1904, and becoming a leading member of the Land Values Group of MPs. As at other times, the land taxers alienated other Liberals through their obsessive pursuit of their objective, and Trevelyan became increasingly frustrated at the Liberal leaders' propensity to declare support for the principle while declining to do anything about it in practice.

Trevelyan gained almost 70% of the vote in Elland in the 1906 landslide, writing a postcard in elation to his mother saying simply; 'There WAS a Tory party!'. But disappointment followed. Although his abilities were widely recognised, his principled refusal to promote himself combined with his previous outspokenness denied him any ministerial position. Eventually, in February he accepted the unpaid position of Third Charity Commissioner, and there he stayed, despite his

father's vigorous lobbying of senior ministers, for two-and-a-half years. Finally, in October 1908 he was appointed Under-Secretary at the Board of Education under his friend Walter Runciman, a position which he retained until he resigned in 1914. There he tried to put into practice the principles which had underlain his opposition to Balfour's education bill, arguing for secular and nondenominational teaching. Throughout its life, however, the Liberal government found it exceptionally difficult to make any progress on education; the mutually contradictory demands of Anglicans, Catholics and Nonconformists always overwhelmed the New Liberal arguments for educational reform and investment as an underpinning for social reform, and concrete achievements were very limited.

In many ways Trevelyan was not really cut out to be a politician, and his dissatisfaction with politics gradually mounted. He stuck very firmly to his principles, and had little time for those who adopted a less idealistic course. In 1906, for example, in complaining about political bias in the appointment of magistrates, he had provoked an ascerbic reply from Lord Chancellor Loreburn: 'really it is very good of you to inform me of the duties of a Liberal Minister and of your opinion of the way I discharge them…'[8] In 1912, he chose to make plain his opposition to the Government's prosecution of the agitator Tom Mann (for inciting soldiers to make common cause with striking miners) by circulating a critical memorandum to all cabinet ministers – not a move calculated to win him many friends.

He despised any personal weaknesses among his colleagues, describing the Liberal Chief Whip, the Master of Elibank, as 'a beastly gambler and intriguer'[9] over the Marconi shares scandal. Although he wholeheartedly supported the Government's assault on the Lords in 1909–11 – and held his seat comfortably, though with reduced majorities, in the two elections of 1910 – he was distressed at the failure to legislate on land value taxation and at the lack of co-operation between the Liberal and Labour parties. In 1914, on their tenth wedding anniversary (he had married Mary Katherine Bell, youngest daughter of Sir Hugh Bell, in 1904), he wrote to his wife, declaring that: 'My chief work and happiness lies at home… I now see the supreme and over-powering importance of the personal side of life. The world will in the main go the way it chooses without asking me.'[10]

Resignation

On 3 August 1914, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, announced to the Commons that Britain would present an ultimatum to Germany demanding withdrawal from Belgium, which had been invaded the day before. It was obvious that this would lead to war with Germany, and later that day Trevelyan wrote to Asquith resigning his post in the Government. This was the culmination of his growing unhappiness with Grey's conduct of foreign policy by secret treaty. He was not a pacifist, and had supported the expansion of naval capacity which the 1909 'People's Budget' was partly designed to finance. However, like many Liberals he despised Grey's support of the Tsarist government in Russia and opposed all forms of autocratic rule – in 1906 he had written that 'I wish all the Kaisers would huddle together. We may then have the chance of seeing all their heads chopped off at one blow instead of just Nicholas the Last's.'[11] Furthermore, Trevelyan had trusted Grey when he had claimed that Britain was under no obligation to support France, and now felt betrayed; he suspected that Britain's covert alliance with France had goaded Germany into aggression. 'I never was clearer in all my life,' he wrote to his wife. 'We have gone to war from a sentimental attachment to the French and hatred of Germany.'[12]

Trevelyan's was a distinctly minority view; for the vast majority of Liberals, Britain's ultimatum to Germany was justified by its unprovoked attack upon Belgium, and only Burns and Morley joined him in resignation. Trevelyan soon became a leader of the small Liberal anti-war group, and in September, along with E. D. Morel, Arthur Ponsonby, Norman Angell and Ramsay MacDonald, helped to form the Union of Democratic Control. The principles of the UDC could be traced back to Cobden's classic Radical plea 'no foreign politics'. Its aims included no transfer of populations without a plebiscite; no treaties without Parliament's approval; no balance-of-power diplomacy, but an attempt to establish a 'European concert'; and a drastic reduction in armaments and nationalisation of the armaments industry. In practice the UDC achieved very little; its members were viciously attacked by the patriotic papers, its meetings were frequently broken up by supporters of the war, and its parliamentarians' speeches were ignored by the press. Trevelyan's attachment to it increasingly cost him his friends in the parliamentary party, in his local association (which deselected him in April 1915), and even in his own family, where his father and brother George (hitherto the closer of his two brothers) expressed antipathy to his views.

The result was to push Trevelyan, along with other Liberal opponents of the war, towards the Labour Party. This became particularly true after the resignation from the government in August 1917 of the Labour leader, Arthur Henderson, when Lloyd George refused to allow him to attend the Stockholm conference of socialists from all the belligerent powers, and the freedom this subsequently gave Labour to develop an independent war policy. The *Memorandum on War Aims* adopted by the party in December 1917 was virtually identical to UDC policies.

From Liberal to Labour

In February 1918 Trevelyan's letter 'Can Socialism and Radicalism Unite?' was published in *The Nation*. It contained the bold statement: 'Our lives have been spoilt by compromise, because we tolerated armaments firms and secret diplomacy and the rule of wealth… The root of all evil is economic privilege. The personal problem which faces many of us is that we cannot waste the rest of our lives in half-measures against it.'[13] Finally, in November 1918 he followed his younger brother Robert into the Independent Labour Party. He was

slow in coming to his decision, admitting that 'old political attachments are strong',[14] and found himself forced to stand as an independent in the general election of December, as a Labour candidate had already been selected in Elland. He was crushed, polling only 5% of the vote in a four-cornered fight.

After four years in the political wilderness, Trevelyan greatly enjoyed his new-found camaraderie in the ILP, and in September 1919 he was selected as candidate for Newcastle Central. Typically, and unlike many other Liberals in a similar position, he did not assume that in joining Labour he was bringing it superior leadership by virtue of his education and experience – although in practice the adherence of relatively senior Liberals such as Trevelyan, Ponsonby, Buxton and Wedgwood Benn certainly did boost Labour's credibility.

Trevelyan's belief, expressed in his book *From Liberalism to Labour* (1921) was simply that Liberalism had been abandoned during the war and the Liberal Party was now incapable of acting as a vehicle for reform. Building on the New Liberalism of the pre-war era, he proposed nationalisation of the land, railways and mines, a capital levy to remove the burden of war debt, free secondary education and free access to the universities. He saw the Labour Party as better able than the Liberals ever had been to 'reorganise economic society… That is why all social reformers are all bound to gravitate, as I have done, to Labour.'[15] But otherwise his political beliefs had no need to change: 'Faith in Democracy, belief in Free Trade, love of personal freedom, respect for personal liberties, are all part of the Labour creed. The Labour Party is, indeed, the safest custodian of these cherished Liberal principles.'[16] Rather more controversial was his notorious sympathy for Soviet Russia, where his uncritical enthusiasm for the epic struggle of the Russian people to throw off the yoke of Tsarism completely blinded him to any faults in the Soviet system.

Triumph…

In the election of November 1922, Trevelyan's local Labour party was well organised, and he himself helped attract former Liberals. He won Newcastle Central by almost 5,000 votes. He was elated: 'It was a glorious win smashing both Toryism and Liberalism. On the Tyne, Liberalism is dead… A new power has arisen. You should have seen the drive of the new force. Twenty-two men canvassing every night for a fortnight. I never saw anything like it in Elland.'[17] The election of December 1923 was a tougher fight, as the Liberals did not contest the seat and most of their remaining votes went to the Conservatives; still, Trevelyan held on by 1,200. He had been appointed Labour's spokesman on education in the 1922–23 Parliament, and, when Ramsay Macdonald formed Labour's first government in January 1924, Trevelyan entered the Cabinet as President of the Board of Education. 'I no longer have only six children,' he said to his wife. 'I have six million.'[18]

This was the post he had wanted above all others, and he set out to create a system which would afford every child, whatever their background, access to a decent education and a career in life. His first act was to revoke Circular 1190, which had been issued by his predecessor to restrict expenditure by local education authorities. His ten months in office also saw the relaxation of conditions for the payment of state grants, the restoration of state scholarships, an increase in the proportion of free places at secondary schools, higher maintenance allowances for secondary school pupils, a tripling of the adult education grant, and the encouragement of local education authorities to raise the school leaving age to fifteen (though very few of them did so). His enthusiasm for public expenditure – in which he was joined by Wheatley, the Health Minister, and Jowett, the Minister of Works – alarmed Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, along with Ramsay MacDonald was determined above all to demonstrate that Labour could govern responsibly, but Trevelyan, already experienced in central government, was one of Labour's undoubted successes. As the novelist H. G. Wells put it, 'I think your work for education has been of outstanding value… I am convinced that there has never been a better, more far-sighted, harder working, and more unselfishly devoted Minister of Education than yourself.'[19]

MacDonald's Government fell in October 1924, and although the following election saw the Conservatives returned to office, it also achieved MacDonald's objective of forcing the Liberals emphatically into minor third-party status. Trevelyan's majority in Newcastle Central slipped a little, but he held the seat by just under 900 votes. He enjoyed the next four-and-a-half years of opposition. His appointment to the Cabinet seemed finally to have dispelled his own feelings of inadequacy, and it had also reconciled him to his father, ending the breach that had begun ten years before over his opposition to the war. He kept his front-bench position as spokesman for education, and developed huge popularity within the Labour Party. He helped to commit the party to raising the school leaving age to fifteen, arguing that it would help to reduce unemployment by cutting the number of entrants to the labour market.

… and disaster

In the election of 1929 Trevelyan increased his majority substantially, holding Newcastle Central by over 5,000 votes. Once again he was appointed President of the Board of Education, but his second period in the post was far less successful than his first. MacDonald, once again, used his lack of a parliamentary majority to avoid committing his government to any radical or socialist policy, including raising the school leaving age, despite the fact that it had been a manifesto commitment. Trevelyan believed the main reason for MacDonald's antagonism was personal; the new Cabinet, lacking both Wheatley and Jowett, was even less progressive than its cautious predecessor, and Trevelyan was often isolated politically.

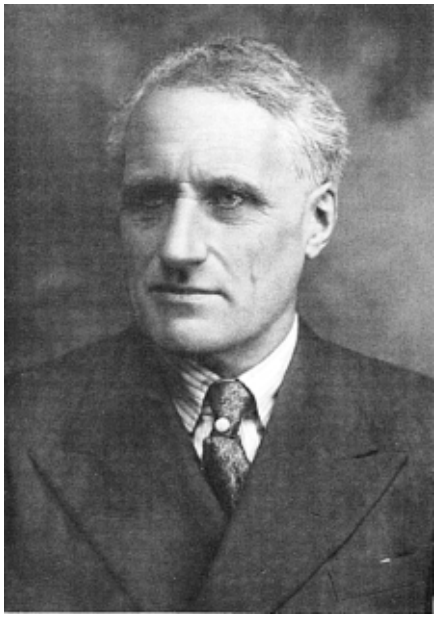
There were also legislative obstacles in the way of raising the school leaving age, and in seeking to remove these Trevelyan ran straight into the issue of denominational schools, a problem of British education politics for at least the previous sixty years, and one he had al-

ready experienced as a Liberal minister. The Act of 1902 made no financial provision for the expansion that would be needed to accommodate the extra school classes, and if it were to be amended to allow this it would immediately raise the question of whether additional support was also to be made available to the denominational, or 'non-provided', schools. Trevelyan's compromise was to propose the payment, for three years, of grants to these schools to allow them to make the necessary alterations, in exchange for the school managers handing over much of their control over the teachers to the local authorities. Despite painstaking consultations, however, the proposal generated opposition from the Catholic Church (which wished to maintain its denominational veto over teaching appointments in Catholic schools), and also from many Nonconformists (who opposed the principle of any state support for denominational schools), and he dropped it.

By the summer of 1930 Trevelyan's position was becoming untenable. He had been forced to withdraw legislation twice, ostensibly because of timetabling difficulties, but mainly – he suspected – because of MacDonald's opposition. 'He detests me,' wrote Trevelyan to his wife, 'because I am always quite definite and won't shirk things in the approved style… He will let me down if he possibly can… the real wrecker is the PM with his timidity.'[20] Finally, in October 1930 he introduced a third Education Bill. It raised the school leaving age to fifteen and included limited grants for low-income households to cover the year's lost earnings; it made no provision for church schools. The Catholic group of Labour MPs moved an amendment to provide state support for the 'non-provideds'; Trevelyan's attempt to mediate between the Catholic church and the Nonconformists failed, and the amendment was passed with Conservative support. MacDonald consistently failed to intervene. What was left of the bill was rejected by the Lords on 18 February 1931 in the light of the growing economic crisis,[21] and the next day Trevelyan resigned from a ministerial post for the second time. 'For some time I have realised that I am very much out of sympathy with the general method of Government policy,' Trevelyan wrote to the Prime Minister. 'In the present disastrous conditions of trade it seems to me that the crisis requires big Socialist measures… We ought to be demonstrating to the country the alternatives to economy and protection. Our value as a Government today should be to make people realise that Socialism is that alternative.'[22]

Typically, Trevelyan made his disagreements with MacDonald plain within the parliamentary party, and was met mainly by resentment at his public attacks on the leader, a position not helped by the growing tensions between the ILP (of which Trevelyan was still a member) and the rest of the Labour Party. All this became academic, however, as in the election that followed the formation of the National Government in August 1931, Labour's biggest electoral defeat in its history swept Trevelyan out of parliament along with the vast majority of his colleagues. Trevelyan lost Newcastle Central to a Conservative supporter of the Government by almost 8,000 votes. He had not expected such a defeat; 'I know for the first time,' wrote his wife, 'what it meant to be "stunned by a blow".'[23] His friend Josiah Wedgwood, who had held on as an independent MP, wrote also: 'Shall we never look upon your like again? These fools make me sick and I can imagine how they make you feel. If you were there with us, what fun it all would be; holding the bridge with Horatius, defying them 10 to 1. Without you there is no zest left.'[24]

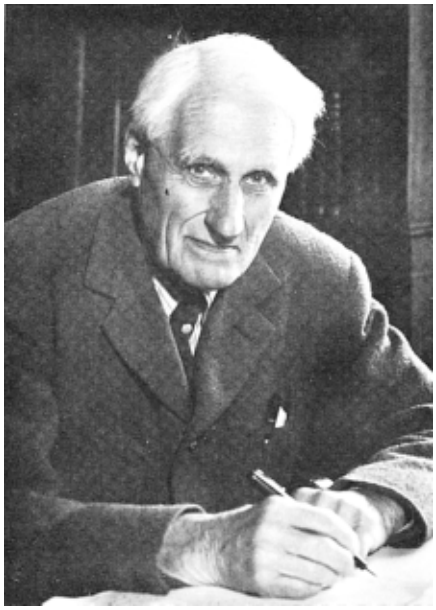
The 1931 election ended Trevelyan's involvement in parliamentary politics. He continued to attend Labour Party conferences and was a member of the National Executive until 1934. In 1932, after Labour's severance of its ties with the ILP, he joined the Socialist League, a small but vigorous intellectual elite, including G. D. H. Cole, Sir Stafford Cripps, Harold Laski and R. H. Tawney. In 1933, he introduced a successful resolution to commit the party to call a general strike in case of the threat of war – though after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, he demanded active support by Britain for the Spanish Republicans. But as the left-wing reaction against MacDonaldism petered out, Trevelyan increasingly became disillusioned. In 1934 he turned down the offer of the safe Labour seat of Morpeth. 'I won't go into politics again unless there are signs of a Rooseveltian energy in leadership and a Socialist policy in practice,' he wrote to his wife. 'No, I pine for home, not politics.'[25]



Trevelyan as President of the Board of Education, 1930

Needless to say, he led an active life at home. In 1930 he had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, and in this capacity reorganised the magistracy of the county, making it more representative of all sections of society. He was a prime mover in the founding of the People's Theatre in Newcastle and gave steady encouragement to the Youth Hostels Association in the north. In 1928 both his parents had died, and Trevelyan had become master of the family's estate at Wallington. He and his wife put substantial effort into restoring both estate and house, which had fallen into disrepair. The houses of their estate workers similarly benefited, and they provided all their employees with a week's paid holiday a year.

In 1929 they put the ILP policy of family allowances into practice and established a system of monthly allowances for every family on the estate for every child from birth until it left school or college, until such time as a similar system were to be set up at a national level – which did not happen un-



Trevelyan in retirement, 1950

til 1945, and then at a less generous level than the Trevelyans provided. The estate's grouse moors became some of the best in Northumberland, and while Trevelyan was himself a keen shot, in the public interest he made most of them over to the Forestry Commission. In 1941 he gave the whole estate to the National Trust, continuing to reside there as a tenant. He loved showing visitors round his house and the estate, and Wallington became a meeting point for young people interested in politics.

He died at Wallington on 24 January 1958, at the age of eighty-eight. With his wife Mary (or Molly, as she was commonly known), he had four daughters and three sons, the eldest of whom, George Lowthian (born 1906) succeeded to the baronetcy. His entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* was written by his cousin and friend, the left-wing Labour MP M. Philips Price; and there is one biography, which draws extensively on his correspondence but misses much of the political context: *C. P. Trevelyan 1870–1958: Portrait of a Radical,* by A. J. A. Morris. His papers are kept at Newcastle University Library.

'You know what you think you should do, and you do it'

Trevelyan was one of the important group of Liberals, including Haldane, Wedgwood, Buxton, Ponsonby, Addison, Jowett and Wedgwood Benn, who felt themselves driven out of the Liberal Party by its disastrous split in 1916, its subsequent division into two warring factions and its loss of radical zeal. In general they did not regard their move as involving any significant adjustment of their political beliefs; rather, they came to see the Labour Party simply as the more vibrant and reformist wing of the old pre-war Progressive Alliance. They helped mould Labour policy, adding a strong idealistic element to its existing labourist, trade union-focused beliefs, particularly over foreign policy issues, including free trade and control of armaments, civil liberties and even land value taxation. They helped give Labour the image of respectability and competence in government that Ramsay MacDonald so coveted, because of their backgrounds and their administrative competence. And without their radicalism, drive and enthusiasm, subsequent Liberal initiatives like the Liberal Summer Schools and Lloyd George's 'coloured books' were not enough to revive a declining party. They were central contributors to the realignment of the left in the 1920s.

And Trevelyan, in particular, acted as an inspiration to others. On his eightieth birthday in 1950, a friend wrote:

> In the first half of your career you made the very best of the luck of your birth, brought up in the surroundings of a distinguished family, educated in the height of fashion of the time, established as a promising politician, a junior minister for the party that had been your father's, married to a handsome and brilliant woman. That was the distinction of the first forty years; but the real courage and enterprise emerged in the second half… Your absolute conviction of the fault of the war policy in 1914 in the face of universal support… Anyone who knows you appreciates that you made your policy from your own reasoning and whatever the inconvenience and unpopularity you act unflinchingly and conscientiously to work out your own policy. You know what you think you should do, and you do it.[26]

This was Trevelyan's strength, and his weakness. It prevented him achieving what other, more flexible, politicians might have managed; but it also established him as a real inspiration for thousands of others. The experience of his journey from the Liberal Party into Labour were similar to those of many others who brought their political skills and efforts to the services of their new party; but his idealism was greater than most.

Duncan Brack is Editor of the Journal of Liberal Democrat History *and a former Director of Policy for the Liberal Democrats. This biography will appear, in a shorter form, in the* Dictionary of Labour Biography, *to be published by Politico's Publishing in September 2001.*

1 The Rev. C. G. Chittenden, of The Grange School, 31 August 1880; George Otto Trevelyan Mss (hereafter GOT) 133.
2 A. J. A. Morris, *C. P. Trevelyan 1870–1958: Portrait of a Radical* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1977), p. 10.
3 Trevelyan to his mother, 15 June 1892; GOT 45.
4 Trevelyan to his mother, 2 December 1897; GOT 50.
5 A discussion circle for 'Liberals of the Left and Socialists of the Right', the Rainbow Circle was formed in 1894 and met once a month, initially at the Rainbow Tavern in Fleet Street. Among others, it involved Graham Wallas, J. A. Hobson, and Ramsay MacDonald.
6 Trevelyan to his father, 10 October 1900; Charles Philips Trevelyan (hereafter CPT) Ex. Misc. Letters, 1890–1902.
7 Campbell-Bannerman to Trevelyan, 6 October 1903; CPT 5.
8 Loreburn to Trevelyan, 21 September 1906; CPT 6.
9 Trevelyan to his wife, 10 June 1913; CPT Ex. 105.
10 Morris, *C. P. Trevelyan 1870–1958*, p. 92.
11 Trevelyan to his wife, 23 July 1906; CPT Ex. 21.
12 Trevelyan to his wife, 4 August 1914; CPT Ex. 106
13 *The Nation* 2 February 1918, pp. 566–67.
14 Notes by Trevelyan for speech, 'Reasons for leaving Liber' (undated); CPT 79.
15 C. P. Trevelyan, Preface to H. Langshaw, *Socialism and the Historic function of Liberalism* (London, 1925), p. vii.
16 Ibid.
17 Trevelyan to his brother Robert, 20 November 1922; CPT 231.
18 Quoted in Mary, Lady Trevelyan, *The Number of My Days* (privately printed, 1963), p. 93.
19 H. G. Wells to Trevelyan, 21 October 1924; CPT 108.
20 Trevelyan to his wife, 16 November 1930; CPT Ex. 124.
21 The school leaving age was not raised to fifteen until Butler's Education Act of 1944.
22 Trevelyan to Ramsay MacDonald, 19 February 1931; CPT Ex. 125.
23 Mary, Lady Trevelyan, *The Number of My Days,* p. 130.
24 Wedgwood to Trevelyan, 29 October 1931; CPT 98.
25 Trevelyan to his wife, 30 September 1934; CPT Ex. 128.
26 Claude Bichnell to Trevelyan, 27 October 1950; CPT Misc. Letters 1950.