Cornwall

How did the Liberal Party fare in its traditional stronghold of Cornwall? Garry Tregidga examines the evidence.

Cornwall: A Local Study in Liberal Survival

In 1929, the Liberal Party swept to a landslide victory in Cornwall winning all five parliamentary constituencies.[1] The scale of the result was in stark contrast to the party's failure to escape from third-party status at national level, where it won less than a tenth of the total number of seats in the House of Commons. But over the next two years, the electoral position of the party throughout Britain was to be further undermined. This decline was to continue in subsequent elections, and, by the early 1950s, the party appeared destined for total extinction. But how did it fare in a traditional stronghold like Cornwall? It is tempting to adopt a positive interpretation – since Cornish Liberalism in the 1930s was to survive as a major force, such that the party was then well placed to take advantage of the changing nature of British politics. From the 1960s onwards, the duchy provided the political base for a succession of prominent Liberal MPs that then finally resulted in a series of local landslides from 1997 to 2010. That success arguably required the survival of a strong electoral base at a time when independent Liberalism could so easily have disappeared. This article focuses on the period between 1931 and 1955 in terms of parliamentary representation and regional comparisons before turning to the core dynamics of the party's continuing relevance in Cornwall during the middle decades of the century.

But it is worth reflecting at the start on what we mean by the phrase 'the survival of Cornish Liberalism'. From a parliamentary perspective, it might be argued that its local experience after 1929 points, instead, to the reasons for decline, since it was simply unable to maintain its regional stronghold. This failure, which was part of a wider process evident in the seemingly inexorable decline in the number of Liberal seats from fifty-nine to just six by 1951, means that Cornwall needs to be considered in the wider context of the party's electoral geography in Britain after the First World War. In the 1920s, the Liberals may have been struggling to remain a serious contender for power, but they were able to win, despite the increasingly negative impact of the electoral system, in a number of areas across Britain. A classic example was the south-west of Britain. In 1923, it was possible to travel from Land's End to Newbury in Berkshire through a continuous network of adjacent Liberal seats. By 1929, however, only Cornwall elected a full contingent of Liberal candidates alongside three isolated victories in East Dorset, Plymouth Devonport and South Molton. Nonetheless, there was still a geographical base for the party in some other areas of Britain with twenty-nine out of their fifty-nine victories concentrated in Cornwall, Scotland and Wales. A somewhat more fragmented picture can be seen in eastern England, with a cluster of five adjacent seats stretching from Lincolnshire and down to Bedfordshire (Holland with Boston, Huntingdonshire, Isle of Ely, Luton, and Mid-Bedfordshire) with an additional four MPs scattered across Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk (Eye, Harwich, Norfolk East, and Norwich).

From the 1930s onwards, the parliamentary base of the party was further eroded.

St Ives in the 1930s

In the final area listed above, only the Isle of Ely returned a Liberal, as Mid Bedfordshire moved to the Conservatives and the other MPs defected to the Liberal Nationals. A similar process happened in the north of Scotland. Sir Archibald Sinclair was returned unopposed in Caithness & Sutherland in 1931, but the adjacent seats of Inverness, Ross & Cromarty, and the Western Isles moved to the Liberal Nationals. Any subsequent Liberal gains were restricted to individual seats, notably Orkney & Shetland and Roxburgh & Selkirk in 1950. Only rural Wales provided a consistent cluster of seats with the relatively slow decline in parliamentary representation from seven seats in 1935 to three in 1951 enabling a Liberal group to survive in the House of Commons. Cornwall, by comparison, made only a limited contribution to the survival of parliamentary Liberalism. In 1929, the party had polled an average vote of 42.4 per cent, which was sufficient to win all five seats in three-cornered contests. But their position was vulnerable, since the lead over the Conservatives in four of the seats ranged from just 2.6 per cent to 3.5 per cent. The one exception was Sir Donald Maclean in North Cornwall, with a slightly more comfortable 7.4 per cent. Significantly, this was the only seat from 1931 onwards to consistently return a Liberal up to and including the 1945 general election. Thereafter, no seats were actually won in the duchy until Bodmin in 1964 and North Cornwall in 1966.[2] One might add that, by the early 1950s, the party's local ability to even make a credible challenge for victory was restricted to these two border constituencies running alongside the River Tamar. Further west, the party had dropped to third place behind its Conservative and Labour opponents with a lost deposit at Falmouth & Camborne in 1951 and a poll of less than a fifth of the vote in the remaining seats of Truro and St Ives in the subsequent election of 1955.

But what had survived in Cornwall was a willingness to put forward candidates in the vast majority of parliamentary contests from 1929 to 1955. At the national level, the party was only able to contest a respectable number

of seats in 1945 and 1950, with 306 and 475 candidates respectively. In Cornwall, virtually every seat was contested, with the exception of St Ives in 1931 and 1935 where Sir Walter Runciman, the sitting MP had defected to the Liberal Nationals, and brief absences at Truro in 1951 and Falmouth & Camborne in 1955. The benefits of a party consistently putting forward candidates has been noted by Mark Pack, writing in connection to the contemporary benefits to the Liberal Democrats of contesting more seats in local government, who concluded recently that it was important to offer more opportunities for voters to become 'persistent supporters' of the party:

> One of the biggest challenges the Liberal Democrats face is to build up a large group of loyal supporters who persistently support us. Our core support is much smaller than that of our main rivals – and we suffer for it. It makes us more vulnerable to bad times. It means we have further to go and harder to work to get to the winning point than rival parties with larger core votes.[3]

Such comments also applied to the middle decades of the twentieth century with even seats that were potentially winnable going uncontested. The classic example were the seats lost to the Liberal Nationals. Many of the thirty-five seats that they won in 1931 went uncontested by independent Liberal candidates in subsequent elections and that was of course crucial given the declining parliamentary base of the party. In Cornwall, circumstances were different. Only St Ives went to the Liberal Nationals, and by the end of the decade a persistent challenge by the Liberals had resumed. A separate Liberal National organisation was created in this constituency but nowhere else in Cornwall.[4] In the other seats, the traditional rivalry between the Conservatives and Liberals continued. Maurice Petherick, the Conservative candidate for Penryn & Falmouth, correctly predicted in 1930 that 'for many years to come we might fight out the old-fashioned battle of Tory versus Radical'. He lamented that regional politics was still engaged in a 'local battle' instead of supporters of the old established parties coming together to focus on the 'great national issue of Socialism'.[5] Petherick's interpretation makes sense of how Cornish politics was, indeed, to develop over the subsequent quarter of a century. Despite Labour and the Conservatives gradually eroding their share of the vote from the highpoint of 1929, the Liberals were still able to survive into the early 1950s as a serious electoral force in the duchy, with a willingness to put forward candidates and with potentially winnable seats in Bodmin and North Cornwall

That 'local battle' was sustained by the relative weakness of the Labour Party in the far south-west. The collapse of Cornwall's mining industry in the late nineteenth century had prevented the emergence of a strong trade union tradition. By 1918, there were signs that the Workers Union, in particular, was finally expanding in places like Camborne and the Clay Country.[6] But this late development of the labour movement had political implications for the rise of socialism. Although Labour had fared quite well in the western seats of Camborne and St Ives in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, its early success was not maintained.[7] The first Labour MP in Cornwall was only elected in 1945, and the socialists were unable to increase their representation in subsequent elections. This provided an electoral space for the Liberals. A good example was the marginal seat of rural North Cornwall, which was won by the Liberals in a series of six election contests (including the 1932 and 1939 by-elections) from 1929 to 1945. Tactical voting in the 1931 general election saw the Labour vote reduced from 8 per cent to a derisory 5.6 per cent. Thereafter, the Liberals benefited from straight fights with the Conservatives until the 1950 general election.[8] It

reflected a wider tendency for Labour supporters in rural Cornwall to support the Liberals in preference to the Conservatives. In the late 1930s, the national interest in a Popular Front to challenge the National Government provided a framework for Labour to quietly withdraw its candidates in Bodmin, North Cornwall and St Ives.[9] Even after the Second World War, there was speculation of local anti-Conservative pacts, with Transport House disaffiliating a local branch of Bodmin Divisional Labour Party in 1945 because it was supporting the Liberal candidate.[10] Although Labour finally seemed to be gaining ground across the peninsula by 1950, the underlying reality of its position was that it was still struggling to replace the Liberals. In Bodmin and North Cornwall, it was unable to escape third-party status, while the gradual revival in Liberal fortunes as the decade progressed meant that Cornwall started to move back to its traditional alignments.

That sense of political tradition was maintained by the strength of religious Nonconformity. The national Census of Religious Worship in 1851 revealed that in Cornwall, which was more akin to North Wales or the North of England than the shire counties of southern England, the Nonconformists accounted for 71.8 per cent of all those attending a place of worship. In comparison, the figures for Devon, Somerset and Dorset were 43.1, 38.4, and 37.8 respectively. Bruce Coleman concluded, in a study of religious history edited by Nicholas Orme, that the regional distribution of Nonconformist support would still have been comparable in the 1930s.[11] Moreover, the denominational nature of Nonconformity in Cornwall gave an advantage to the Liberals. In those regions of the United Kingdom where Primitive Methodism was strong, such as Durham, the Labour Party usually achieved and sustained an early predominance after the First World War. But this denomination was much weaker in the far west.[12] A vernacular form of Wesleyan Methodism looked to radical champions like Isaac Foot, Liberal MP for Bodmin from 1922–24 and 1929–35, whose contribution is discussed later. Reference should also be made to the distinctive regional presence of the Bible Christians, founded by William Bryant from Gunwen in Cornwall and who emerged as a powerful force in rural constituencies like North Cornwall and adjacent North Devon. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they were regarded as the 'heartiest and most intelligent supporters' of the Liberal cause.[13] By the early 1950s, it was being claimed that the continuing existence of a 'hard core of Radical nonconformity' had enabled the Liberals in Cornwall, in contrast to many other parts of Britain, to retain their role as the main opposition to the Conservatives in the eastern seats of Bodmin and North Cornwall. When John Foot contested Bodmin for the Liberals in 1950, it was reported in the *Western Morning News* that his election meetings were 'attended by a religious fervour that could have been plucked from a page of Victorian history'.[14] Methodist ministers still appeared on Liberal platforms and encouraged party activists to preach the 'goodness of your cause'.[15] This reflected the common ground that still existed between the Liberals and Nonconformist denominations. Although temperance was not mentioned in national manifestos after 1935, issues relating to alcohol were still raised west of the Tamar. For example, Isaac Foot, speaking at a local Liberal rally in September 1952, claimed that Churchill's post-war administration had put 'the pledges they gave to the people … to one side' so that it could defend the interests of the brewing industry. Once again the 'Tories had been revealed as the brewers' party'.[16] A Nonconformist agenda continued to be articulated as the decade developed, with candidates like Stuart Roseveare, a popular Methodist preacher and Liberal candidate for Bodmin in 1955, stressing moral concerns for a 'better

kind of world' with reference to God and the Devil.[17] There is a need for further research into the continuing links between Liberalism and Nonconformity, with candidates like Peter Bessell and John Pardoe in the 1960s, and continuing down to Colin Breed in 1997, appealing to the cultural traditions of Cornish Methodism.[18]

One might add that religious Nonconformity also provided Cornish Liberals with a belief in righteousness that enabled them to survive the difficult decades of defeat that followed 1929. When Lord Rea, Liberal chief whip in the House of Lords, addressed a party meeting in Cornwall in 1952, he began by saying that Liberalism was a 'great cause because like religion it aimed at the good of all. That was why both were out of fashion in a world of hysterical self-interest.'[19] That message was constantly expounded at the local level. In 1954, the Rev R. J. Day, a Methodist minister, opened a Liberal garden fete in Cornwall with an appeal for passion in support of moral values. He argued that both Liberalism and Christianity needed to be motivated by the same evangelical passion:

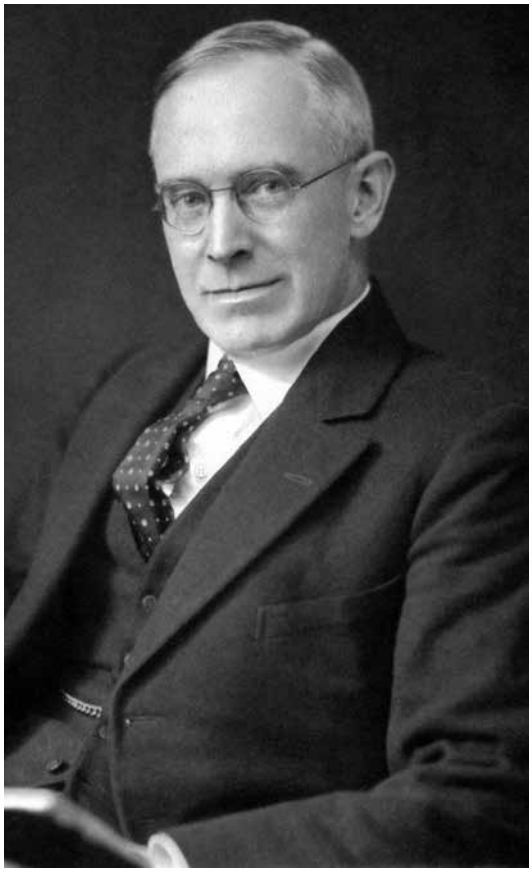
> I am not only a convinced Christian, but also a convicted one. There is a difference ... because if you are a convicted Christian you feel that you must spread your message abroad. You workers should not only be convinced Liberals but also convicted ones and you must therefore let others know about the goodness of your cause.[20]

Such sentiments encouraged some Liberals to stand as candidates when a more practical approach might have been to step aside in favour of the other parties. In 1951, it was suggested by senior members in the Bodmin Liberal Association that the party should not contest the general election, following the resignation of John Foot as candidate and growing concern over the rise in the Labour vote. But a defiant Roseveare stepped forward a few days after the start of the election campaign to prevent an agreement with the Conservatives.[21] His passionate defence of the traditional Liberal/Methodist agenda maintained second place in 1951 with 25.6 per cent of the vote and slowly started to improve the party's fortunes to 28.0 per cent in 1955. Edwin Malindine, who contested the adjacent seat of North Cornwall in 1955, was able to generate a revivalist campaign in the rural areas with the support of a younger generation of Methodists like William Hosking, who subsequently became a parliamentary candidate himself for Truro in the 1960s. Malindine increased his party's vote from 34.8 per cent to 42.9 per cent in 1955, so that, even at this stage, it had once more become a winnable marginal. Malindine concluded that the strength of Methodism in North Cornwall would be one of the 'seeds of a resounding Liberal victory in the near future', since the party was based on 'moral principles and spiritual values'.[22]

The Liberals could also point to a natural champion of their cause. Isaac Foot played an active role in Cornish politics from the time when he was first selected to defend the marginal Liberal seat of Bodmin in December 1910 until his death at the age of 80 in 1960, at which point his name was still synonymous with Liberalism in the far south-west of Britain. He was first elected to the House of Commons in a by-election for the same seat in March 1922, but the changing electoral fortunes of the party was hardly conducive to his attempts to sustain a parliamentary career, with defeats in 1924 and 1935. Nonetheless, his victory in 1922 can be seen as a pivotal moment in the Cornish revivals of the party both in 1923 and 1929. As a prominent local preacher and vice president of the Methodist Conference in 1937–38, he was well placed to appeal to Nonconformists throughout the peninsula. His status led to his becoming president of the Liberal Party in 1947, and he continued to campaign for local parliamentary

candidates in the 1950s. Even after his defeat at Bodmin in 1935, he continued as an effective standard bearer for the cause throughout Cornwall. In 1937, he was only narrowly defeated by 210 votes in a straight fight with the Liberal Nationals at the St Ives by-election. He continued as the prospective parliamentary candidate for this seat until the Second World War since, with an election due in 1939 or 1940, it was essential to maintain the progress secured in a marginal seat.[23] But the real legacy of his challenge was that he was able to restore the dormant fortunes of independent Liberalism in a seat where Runciman, the former MP (1929–37) and cabinet minister, had defected to the Simonite faction. Runciman had been returned unopposed in 1931 and 1935, but thereafter the seat was contested in each successive election by the Liberals, with Foot's challenge providing an inspiration for party activists. Even in the difficult circumstances of 1951, when the Liberals came third in the constituency with 14.9 per cent, the key point, perhaps, was that the party was still competing as an electoral force against its opponents and maintaining a core vote. By the end of the decade, the Liberals had been able to regain second place to the Conservatives.

There were other ways in which Foot contributed to the maintenance of a Liberal tradition. For example, his home at Pencrebar, near Callington, was opened up to the wider public as a regular space for party rallies and social gatherings for younger generations of local Liberals. By the early 1950s, Pencrebar was becoming the venue for new thinking on a range of issues at the micro level, as the party attempted to reassert its relevance. Thus, in September 1952, there was a particular focus on agriculture, as speakers at a rally claimed that agriculture, a key industry for Cornwall, was being neglected by the Conservatives who 'were more interested in big business and high finance'.[24] Gerald Whitmarsh, a leading



Isaac Foot (1880–1960, MP for Bodmin 1922–24, 1929–35) in 1931 (© National Portrait Gallery, London)

party activist and parliamentary candidate for nearby Tavistock at the time, linked the need to champion the rural interest with a change in the party's electoral strategy. He claimed that, in previous elections, such as 1950, the party had 'made the mistake of trying to do too much with too few resources' by campaigning as a party of government. An alternative strategy was to concentrate on those rural areas like Cornwall where the party could still compete, and he even suggested that the party should adopt a new title to demonstrate its commitment to the countryside:

> For the future they had to concentrate on the seats most likely to be won … This meant leaving the industrial centres and attacking

> in the country areas, such as Wales and Cornwall … We must get down to looking after the countryside [and] design a country policy to give long-term security. It might be that we should change our title to the Liberal and Country Party'.[25]

The wider involvement of the Foot family in Cornish politics at this time also needs to be considered. When Isaac became candidate for St Ives in 1937, it was decided that one of his sons, John, should replace him in Bodmin. Much was made of him 'following in his father's footsteps', with a sense of family tradition likely to resonate in an area of small farms and related family businesses.[26] He remained as the party's candidate until after the 1950 election. In that year, he was also joined by Dingle, his elder brother, who contested North Cornwall. Dingle had been a junior government minister during the Second World War and served as Liberal MP for Dundee from 1931 until 1945. When Tom Horabin, the sitting MP for North Cornwall, defected to Labour in 1947, it was an opportunity for Dingle to return to Cornwall. It was certainly unusual for two brothers to contest adjacent seats, and their challenge meant that the Liberal campaign in Cornwall was firmly rooted in the Foot tradition. Both men were experienced campaigners in their own right and in a position to consolidate the party's appeal to its traditional supporters at a time when it was literally fighting for survival. It is always difficult to assess the significance of individual candidates in a general election compared to other factors such as organisation, financial resources and the macro/micro political environment. Nonetheless, it should be noted that, in the early 1950s, the party was able to preserve more of a stable vote in the two constituencies contested by the Foot brothers compared to seats further west in Cornwall or across the River Tamar in Devon.

The Foots were perhaps symbolic of the wider importance of family leadership in the survival of Cornish Liberalism. Sir Francis Acland's successful defence of North Cornwall in the 1930s was sustained by his family's connections to the area. When he was first elected at Camborne, in December 1910, he had declared that in 'each of the last three centuries members of my family have had the honour of representing Cornish seats in the House of Commons'. The Acland estates in the duchy were concentrated in North Cornwall, and it was stated that local respect for the Aclands was closely connected to a continuing 'acceptance of the Liberal faith' in the villages and hamlets of the area in the 1930s.[27] The loyalty of the Robartes family of Lanhydrock to the Liberal cause was to continue into the postwar period. Viscount Clifden, the younger brother of T. C. Agar Robartes, the prewar MP for both Bodmin and St Austell, continued as patron and president of Bodmin Liberal Association until just before his death in 1966.[28] This sense of continuity was vital for a party that depended on support from rural areas in order to survive.

The Cornish experience from 1931 to 1955 provides a micro perspective on Liberal history at this time. The far south-west was not immune to the party's long struggle for its very existence, as both members and voters gradually defected to the other parties.

Anti-metropolitan agendas also need to be considered in regard to any discussion of Cornish politics at this time. When Isaac Foot was first elected, in 1922, it was reported in the press that the scenes at the declaration of the result 'beggared description [with] the enthusiasm of nonconformist farmers, of earnest young preachers, of dark-eyed women and fiery Celtic youth [having] something religious

about it. No such fervour could be seen outside Wales'.[29] By the 1930s, Liberal candidates were claiming that their party, unlike the Conservative–Labour alignment at Westminster, could 'understand Cornish folk and be in sympathy with their traditions and outlook on life'.[30] In practical terms, ideas like devolution and the local disestablishment of the Anglican church had been occasionally raised before the First World War. The need for specific representation of Cornish interests at Westminster was a theme that came naturally to a party that was itself increasingly marginalised by the new political duopoly at Westminster. Liberals claimed that the duchy was a 'long way from London and unless the powers that be are made to realise that Cornwall really does exist ... we shall not get our fair proportion of public expenditure'.[31] In 1929, the five Liberal MPs elected in Cornwall decided to establish a Duchy Parliamentary Committee to coordinate their activities for both local and national affairs, with echoes perhaps of the Scottish Standing Committee set up in 1907. This initiative showed how the party was attempting to define a new role for itself at the local level.[32] Its collapse as a result of the divisions and defeats of 1931 removed a regional justification for Cornish Liberalism. After the Second World War, there were indications that the party was prepared to go even further. In 1952, leading local Liberals, like John Foot and Roseveare, advocated greater autonomy on the grounds that the 'Cornish people were a separate nation', similar to the home rule pledges given by the Scottish and Welsh Liberals. A representative of party headquarters in London even suggested that Cornwall should have total control over domestic affairs with only defence and foreign policy remaining with Westminster.[33] In that sense, the Liberals could be seen as a surrogate nationalist force for Cornwall at a time when Plaid Cymru and the SNP were already contesting seats and starting to present themselves as competitors in the electoral arena. Mebyon Kernow, the Cornish equivalent, was not created until 1951, and it was not until the 1970s that it made its first attempt to contest parliamentary elections, when the Liberals had already recovered at the local level.[34] The ability of the Liberals to link their cause to territorial politics should certainly be recognised as a possible factor in its local survival. In the long term, it paved the way for MPs such as John Pardoe in the 1960s, David Penhaligon in the 1970s, and Andrew George in the 1990s to use Cornish issues as an effective platform to win elections.

The Cornish experience from 1931 to 1955 provides a micro perspective on Liberal history at this time. The far south-west was not immune to the party's long struggle for its very existence, as both members and voters gradually defected to the other parties. It was noticeable that the failure to retain any seats by 1950 was in contrast to the situation in rural Scotland and Wales. For example, the remote seat of Orkney and Shetland saw a significant increase in support for Jo Grimond in the early 1950s, while the cluster of Welsh seats that survived were perhaps assisted by the benefit of straight fights with Labour. But the subtle regional dynamics of Cornish politics gave an advantage to the survival of Liberalism. A respectable core vote remained that reflected such factors as the strength of rural Nonconformity, the failure of Labour to sustain its early breakthrough after the First World War, and a sense of territorial difference that could be of benefit to a party that was no longer dominant at Westminster. Further research is needed on the role of the Foot family in acting as natural leaders for the region's political traditions. With three members of the same family standing as parliamentary candidates in Cornwall during this critical period it is certainly tempting to highlight their importance at a time when local leadership was needed to both contest elections and shore up support. By 1955, the first indications of a recovery were

emerging at the local level with a swing of 8.1 per cent compared to 1951 in North Cornwall, and more modest rises of 3.7 per cent and 2.4 per cent in St Ives and Bodmin respectively. The electoral direction of Cornish Liberalism could now change from survival to revival. ■

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1 For a study of the 1929 election and the wider story of the Liberal Party in the south-west after the First World War, see Garry Tregidga, *The Liberal Party in South West Britain since 1918* (University of Exeter Press, 2000).

2 Garry Tregidga, '"Bodmin Man": Peter Bessell and Cornish Politics in the 1950s and 1960s' in Philip Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies*, vol. 8 (University of Exeter Press, 2000), pp. 161–81.

3 Mark Pack, 'Why we must stand in more council elections', 10 Jan. 2025: www.markpack.org.uk/168176/why-we-must-stand-in-more-council-elections/

4 The 'Liberal National' association with this western constituency was to continue until 1966 when John Nott, the future secretary of state at the time of the Falklands War, was elected as a 'National Liberal and Conservative' MP.

5 *The Liberal Magazine*, 38 (1930), p. 33.

6 *Cornish Guardian,* 21 Feb. 1918.

7 For a discussion of the early progress of the Labour Party in Cornwall, see Garry Tregidga, 'Socialism and the Old Left: The Labour Party in Cornwall during the inter-War Period' in Philip Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies*, vol. 7 (University of Exeter Press, 1999), pp. 74–93.

8 An independent Labour candidate stood in 1945 but lacked the support of Labour members and polled 1.8 per cent.

9 *Western Morning News*, 30 Dec. 1938.

10 *Cornish Guardian,* 15 Mar. 1945.

11 Nicholas Orme (ed.), *Unity and Variety: A History of the Church in Devon and Cornwall* (University of Exeter Press, 1991), pp. 140–54.

12 M. Kinnear, *The British Voter: An Atlas and Survey since 1885* (London, 1968), p. 126.

13 Garry Tregidga (ed.), *Remembering the Bible Christians: Studies in the Cultural and Historical Life of Cornwall since 1815* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017).

14 *Western Morning News*, 8 Feb. 1950.

15 Ibid., 5 Oct. 1959.

16 *Cornish Guardian,* 4 Sep. 1952.

17 Bodmin Conservative Association papers (Kresen Kernow, Redruth), DDX/385/4, election address of Stuart Roseveare in 1955.

18 Colin Breed, who served as Liberal Democrat MP for South East Cornwall from 1997 to 2010, was a Methodist local preacher. He recounts a story that Paul Tyler, Liberal MP for Bodmin in 1974 and Liberal Democrat MP for North Cornwall from 1992 to 2005, said that 'when he was interviewed as a potential candidate in Cornwall [party members] were pleased to hear that he was descended from Bishop Trelawny, but worried that he also said he was an Anglican; he had to point out that Trelawny had also been an Anglican before they calmed down'.

19 *Cornish Guardian*, 4 Sep. 1952.

20 Ibid., 24 June 1954.

21 Interview with Eric Higgs at Lanlivery, 20 Nov. 1993.

22 *Cornish Guardian*, 22 July 1954 and 2 June 1955. Interview with William Hosking at Newquay, 31 Mar. 1994.

23 For a discussion of Foot's candidacy at St Ives see Tregidga, *Liberal Party*, p. 91.

24 *Western Morning News,* 17 May 1955.

25 *Cornish Guardian,* 4 Sep. 1952.

26 *Western Morning News*, 4 Jan. 1939.

27 For a study of the Acland family and Cornish politics see Garry Tregidga, *Killerton, Camborne and Westminster: The Political Correspondence of Sir Francis and Lady Eleanor Acland, 1910–29* (Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 2006), pp. 18 and 53.

28 *Cornish Times,* 22 July 1966.

29 *Cornish Guardian*, 3 Mar. 1922.

30 Penryn & Falmouth Conservative Association papers (Kresen Kernow, Redruth), DDX/551/11, electoral address of the Liberal candidate for Penryn & Falmouth in 1935.

31 *Cornish Guardian,* 16 Feb. 1923.

32 *Western Morning News,* 6 Mar. 1930.

33 *Cornish Guardian,* 8 May 1952

34 For a study of this subject see Bernard Deacon, Dick Cole and Garry Tregidga, *Mebyon Kernow and Cornish Nationalism* (Welsh Academic Press, 2003). Mebyon Kernow was initially a pressure group, and it was significant that the two Cornish Liberal MPs, Peter Bessell and John Pardoe. were members in the 1960s.