

and the shambolic process by which it came about has seemed less important with the passage of time.

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- 1 Chris Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party 1900–1992* (Macmillan, 1993).
- 2 As was pointed out from the audience, although it was often

believed that any Liberal member could ‘walk in and vote’ at the Liberal Assembly, in fact this was never true; just like the SDP (and the Liberal Democrat) the Liberal Party possessed a representative formula, allocating delegate places per constituency relating to membership – although the entitlement was more generous than in the SDP.

- 3 Ian Hunter, ‘Old Liberals, New Liberals and Social Democrats: the Liberal Democrats’ political heritage,’ in *Journal of Liberal History* 37 (winter 2002–03), pp. 26–27.

As a radical Liberal, he was endorsed enthusiastically by the Dunfermline Press; his opponent, John Ramsay, a Whiggish Liberal, was endorsed equally enthusiastically by the Stirling Advertiser. Seven months later, at the November 1868 general election and on an extended franchise, Sir Henry defeated John Ramsay by over 500 votes and remained MP for Stirling Burghs for the rest of his life.

The talk was supported by an excellent handout including a biographical chronology, details of Sir Henry’s constituency election results, summarised Scottish and UK general election results from 1868 to 1906, a selection of quotations (on all of which Dr Cameron commented) and a bibliography ranging from T.P. O’Connor’s 1908 memoir to Dr Cameron’s own 2007 article. (Dr Cameron’s critical comments on the 2006 biography of Sir Henry by Roy Hattersley (*Campbell-Bannerman*, Haus Publishing) were much appreciated.)

Other topics discussed included Sir Henry’s emergence from a Tory background (described as suspicious by the *Stirling Advertiser* in March 1868); his (perhaps deliberately cultivated) image of self-effacement; Irish and Scottish home rule and ‘home rule all round’ (or federalism); the dis-establishment of the Church of Scotland; the South African War of 1899–1902; imperialism; free trade versus tariff reform; extension of the franchise (including votes for women); land reform; and restricting the powers of the House of Lords. Also discussed was what would or would not have happened if Sir Henry had lived longer with reference to the careers of Asquith, Lloyd George and Churchill, the Irish dimension, the First World War, interaction with Bonar Law (Conservative Leader from 1911 and, like Sir Henry, a former pupil of the High School of Glasgow),

## Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman

### Centenary Commemorations in Scotland

Report by Dr Alexander S. Waugh

SIR HENRY was born (as Henry Campbell) in Kelvinside, Glasgow on 7 September 1836. After education at the High School of Glasgow, the University of Glasgow and Trinity College, Cambridge, he married (Sarah) Charlotte Bruce on 13 September 1860. He was Liberal MP for Stirling Burghs (Stirling, Dunfermline, Culross, Inverkeithing and [South] Queensferry) from 20 November 1868 and, after junior ministerial office in 1871–74 and 1880–84, Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1884–85, Secretary of State for War in 1886 and 1892–95, Liberal Leader in the Commons from 6 February 1899 and Prime Minister from 5 December 1905. He resigned as Prime Minister on 3 April 1908 and died in 10 Downing Street on 22 April. After a Memorial Service in Westminster Abbey on 27 April, he was buried alongside Lady Campbell-Bannerman (died 30 August 1906) beside Meikle Parish Church (Perthshire) on 28 April.

Belmont Castle, half a mile from Meikle, was the Campbell-Bannermans’ Scottish home from 1887. The

church window above their grave is near the pew in the east gallery where they regularly worshipped when at Belmont. There is a plaque commemorating Sir Henry inside the church near the east gallery.

### Campbell-Bannerman evening, 22 April

The Meikle and District History Society held a Campbell-Bannerman evening in the Kinloch Memorial Hall, Meikle on Tuesday, 22 April 2008. With some eighty people in attendance, the speaker was Dr Ewen A. Cameron, Senior Lecturer in Scottish History at Edinburgh University and a contributor to the *Journal of Liberal History*. His talk followed much the same approach as in his article about Sir Henry in the *Journal* (issue 54, spring 2007). However, Dr Cameron also referred to a number of other aspects of Sir Henry’s career during the talk and in discussion. There was, for example, reference to Sir Henry’s unsuccessful candidature at the Stirling Burghs by-election in April 1868.

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Liberal-Labour relations and Liberal election prospects.

**Centenary Commemoration, 27 April**

A Campbell-Bannerman Centenary Commemoration, endorsed by the Liberal Democrat History Group, took place in Meigle on Sunday 27 April.

The day's programme started with morning worship in the Parish Church. The service was taken by the Rev. John (Ian) W. Knox, a retired minister, who managed to mention Sir Henry in his introductory remarks and welcomes, children's address, intercessory prayer and sermon. At one point Rev. Knox suggested that Sir Henry was a precursor of Sir William Beveridge's social initiatives.

We then visited Belmont Castle which, as a listed building, is still much as reconstructed and refurbished for the Campbell-Bannermans in 1885-86. They acquired the Castle after much of it had been destroyed by fire in 1884. It has been leased from the Dundee Corporation by the Church of Scotland as a home for senior citizens since 1931. We were welcomed by Dr Sue Marshall, Deputy Unit Manager, who pointed out various features and memorabilia associated with the Campbell-Bannermans, including portraits. We were then allowed to move freely between the main lounge and the other public rooms and into the large hall (originally a covered-in courtyard) and up its grand staircase.

By reason of fire safety precautions, there is no longer direct access between the main lounge and the hall. Thus we were unable to have an overall view of the space (lounge and hall) which accommodated over two hundred relatives and public representatives (and some four hundred wreaths) on the day of Sir Henry's funeral.

Lunch followed in the Kinloch Arms Hotel, in the centre

Top: at the Campbell-Bannerman grave – Cllr Willie Wilson, Provost Depute of Perth & Kinross, Dr Alexander S. Waugh, Sheila Waugh, Rev. Dr Malcolm Macrae

Bottom: Sheila Waugh handing the wreath to Cllr Wilson



of Meigle, starting with Grace by the Rev. Dr. Malcolm H. MacRae, Meigle's Interim Moderator (acting parish minister) and concluding, as did refreshments on the Tuesday evening, with buttered gingerbread, with which Sir Henry liked to end his meals.

We then proceeded to the Campbell-Bannerman grave beside the parish church. After an introduction by Dr MacRae, and a biographical eulogy by Dr Sandy Waugh, a former pupil of the High School of Glasgow and a member of the Liberal Democrat History Group, Dr MacRae read 'Let Us Now Praise Famous Men' from *Ecclesiasticus*. A wreath – featuring the old Scottish Liberal colours of red and yellow – was then laid by Liberal Democrat Councillor Willie Wilson, Provost Depute of Perth and Kinross.

The programme concluded with the singing of Scottish Metrical Psalm 23, 'The Lord's my Shepherd', to the tune Strathro (named for the house and estate in Forfarshire (Angus)

which Sir Henry's father, Sir James Campbell acquired in 1847), followed with prayer and benediction by Dr MacRae, and an expression of thanks to all concerned by the Provost Depute, who had also undertaken similar courtesies at Belmont Castle and at lunch.

**Centenary Commemoration, 28 April**

The Stirling Liberal Democrats organised a Centenary Commemoration at Sir Henry's statue in Stirling on the afternoon of Monday, 28 April. Wreaths were laid by Nicol Stephen MSP, Scottish Liberal Democrat Leader, and Councillor Fergus Wood (SNP), Provost of Stirling.

Among others present was Dr Elspeth King, Director of the Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum which has a seascape painting by the Scottish artist, T. Campbell Noble, purchased and donated by Sir Henry in 1897. Its other Campbell-Bannerman memorabilia are a posthumous banner proclaiming him as 'One

of Britain's Greatest Statesmen', a portrait sketch by Sir James Guthrie, RSA and – arrayed with a wreath of daffodils to mark the centenary – a marble bust by Paul Raphael Montford. Sir James (another Glasgow High School former pupil) also painted, in 1907, the portrait of Sir Henry in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Paul Montford was responsible for the bronze bust of Sir Henry in Westminster Abbey (1911) and the Stirling statue as unveiled by H. H. Asquith, then Prime Minister, on 1 November 1913.

### Centenary Commemoration, High School of Glasgow

The High School of Glasgow – which has a bronze plaque of Sir Henry by Benno Schotz, RSA – will be having its own Centenary Commemoration in the autumn. Efforts are also continuing to have a new commemorative plaque erected at a more public location in Glasgow.

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both to be superficial and to omit explanations of key issues and individuals (for example, although the Corn Laws are referred to, there's no explanation of what they were or why their abolition was so controversial). The level of detail provided is too shallow for any reader who knows anything much about the background, but inadequate for those coming to it afresh. And the chapters actually say very little about the internal workings of the coalitions in question.

Even on its own terms this part of the book is pretty incoherent. Having rightly observed that most of the coalitions tended to be unstable because they were formed in the midst of crises (and therefore had a limited range of issues on which the coalition partners could agree), Oaten then criticises the Aberdeen coalition for *not* being formed in one, and therefore having nothing to bring it together. He does not attempt to consider what else could plausibly have happened in the hung parliament delivered by the 1852 election. He blames the coalition for the outbreak of the Crimean War (an accusation Disraeli also levelled), but never explains why. Having stated at one point that Asquith's large war cabinet was not a problem, he then argues that Lloyd George's much smaller one made a key difference. And so on.

Where Oaten provides a political viewpoint, it's essentially a right-wing one. Apparently the 1931 National Government should have made bigger cutbacks in the 'vast sums being wasted on social security benefits' – so much for Keynesianism, then. Throughout, ideological differences are sidelined; politics is almost entirely about personalities. Where the coalition leaders were weak, or where they were strong but disagreed with each other, the coalitions failed; where they worked well together, the coalitions

# REVIEWS

## Analysing coalitions

Mark Oaten: *Coalition: The Politics and Personalities of Coalition Government from 1850* (Harriman House, 2007)

Reviewed by Duncan Brack

MARK OATEN'S book caused a small stir upon its publication, in September 2007, with its apparent call for the Liberal Democrats to consider a post-election coalition with the Conservatives. In fact, that conclusion is not put so starkly in the book itself – it stemmed more from the article Oaten wrote for *The Times* the week before publication ('A Lib-Con pact? You shouldn't rule it out', 6 September 2007). One conclusion, however, is clear from reading this analysis of coalition government in Britain and abroad: it's that if Mark Oaten wants to forge a writing career after his departure from the Commons, he'll have to manage a great deal better than this superficial, incoherent and poorly written effort.

Having said that, the book is not entirely without value. Oaten's aim was to derive lessons from the history of coalition government in Britain and from the rest of Europe, in the belief – entirely reasonable in 2007, not so clear now – that the next election is likely to lead to a hung parliament. He aimed to look both at the process of putting coalitions together and the personalities that made them work, or fail.

Five chapters thus examine Aberdeen's Whig/Peelite administration of 1852–55, Asquith's and Lloyd George's wartime coalitions of 1915–16 and 1916–18, Lloyd George's post-war coalition of 1918–22, the National Government of 1931–35 and Churchill's wartime coalition of 1940–45. Unfortunately they manage

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