

all draw attention to the fact that women and children are still second-class citizens today, only in a different context.

The campaign for equality today obviously focuses on different aspects of the disparity between the sexes, and to some extent the battles that WLF fought are no longer relevant, but it is equally important to remember that the debate has not disappeared, it has just moved on. Women are still under-represented politically, both in terms of their presence in political institutions such as Parliament, but perhaps more importantly in the fact that the effect that policies and decisions have on women is absent from the discussions. It may well be that these changes are both the cause and effect, but without organisations such as the Women Liberal Democrats, and the Women's Liberal Federation in its day, women's voices will not be heard, and politics will only ever be half as pertinent as it could be.

Hollie Voyce previously worked for the Women Liberal Democrats as their Head of Office, and before that was a Women and Equalities intern for Lorely Burt MP. Hollie has had a long-held interest in women and politics and studied how the European Union affected women's citizenship in Britain while at university.

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- 1 Women's Liberal Federation, *Past, Present and Future: Membership form*.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Barbara Banks, *Women's Liberal Federation Centenary: 100 years of advancing women – Congratulations* (Women's Liberal Federation, 1987).
- 4 David Morgan, *Suffragists and Liberals: the Politics of Woman Suffrage in Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p. 14.
- 5 Barbara Banks, op. cit.
- 6 David Morgan, op. cit., p. 17.
- 7 Ibid., p. 16.
- 8 Constance Rover, *Women's Suffrage*

and Party Politics in Britain, 1866–1914 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 129.

- 9 Ibid., p. 140.
- 10 Ibid., p. 142.
- 11 Ibid., p. 160.
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- 13 Women's Liberal Federation, *Women's Liberal Federation Centenary: A valued link with our past* (Women's Liberal Federation, 1987).
- 14 Women's Liberal Federation, *Organisation for Women's Liberal Associations*, p. 5.
- 15 Ibid., p. 6.
- 16 Women's Liberal Federation, *Organisation for Women's Liberal Associations*, p. 2.
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- 18 Ibid., p. 3.
- 19 Ibid., p. 4.
- 20 Ibid., p. 12.
- 21 Women's Local Government Society, <http://www.womenin-localgovernment.org.uk/index.php?action=background>
- 22 Joan De Robeck, *Organisation and Functions of a Women's Liberal Association* (London: Women's Liberal Federation, circa. 1950)
- 23 Women's Liberal Federation, *Organisation for Women's Liberal Associations*, p. 2.
- 24 Joan De Robeck, op. cit., p. 6.
- 25 Women Liberal Democrats, *Focus on Women*, 1991.
- 26 Women's Liberal Federation, *The Challenge of Citizenship: The choice of the woman voter*.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Women's Liberal Federation, *The Great Partnership* (London, 1949), p. 5.
- 29 Ibid., p. 6.
- 30 Liberal-SDP Alliance, *Freedom & Choice for Women* (West Yorkshire, 1986).
- 31 Women's Liberal Federation, *The Great Partnership*, (London, 1949), p. 17.
- 32 Liberal-SDP Alliance, *Freedom & Choice for Women* (West Yorkshire, 1986), p. 12.
- 33 Ibid., p. 5.
- 34 Women Liberal Democrats Funding Bid 2008.
- 35 Women's Liberal Federation, *Past, Present and Future: Membership form*.

REVIEWS

Women and Lloyd George

Ffion Hague, *The Pain and the Privilege: the Women in Lloyd George's Life* (Harper Press, 2008)

Reviewed by **Dr J. Graham Jones**

THIS IS a positively brilliant book: the ultimate definitive study of Lloyd George's relationships with the various women in his life. Originally a simple biography of Dame Margaret Lloyd George, it soon developed into a full analysis of her husband's relationship with many other women. The book is a highly compelling read from cover to

cover, certain to keep the reader enthralled throughout. It reads like a historical novel and yet (as is apparent from the bibliography and the endnote references) is firmly grounded in a rich array of both primary source materials and extremely wide secondary reading. Mrs Hague always writes in a lively, personal style certain to captivate the reader.

The volume is underpinned by an immense amount of background reading which enables the author to paint on a very wide canvas throughout the text. Perhaps the most outstanding example of this is the opening section of Chapter 9 ('Mair') (pp. 161 ff.) where Mrs Hague presents a marvellously succinct pen-portrait of Edwardian Britain before proceeding to a discussion of the fortunes of the Lloyd George family at a crucial time, and the sudden death of their adored eldest daughter Mair Eluned on 30 November 1908. A similar structure is adopted at many points in the narrative.

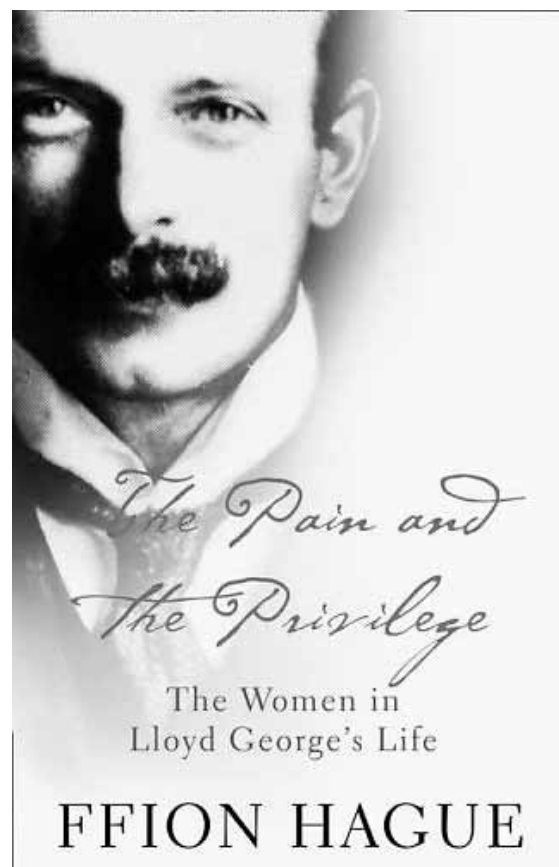
Mrs Hague's intimate acquaintance with the primary source materials enables her to flesh out the conventional wisdom of Lloyd George's life and relationships and to add important, sometimes revisionist, detail to the story already available in the published volumes of correspondence and diaries. For example, on pages 287–93 she makes splendid use of Frances Stevenson's full, unpublished diary and her correspondence with Lloyd George to give the full story of her brief engagement to Captain Billy Owen in 1915 – a previously untold story and unknown to many.

Throughout the book the author has made good use of the extensive Lloyd George archives at the National Library of Wales (NLW) and both the Lloyd George and the Frances Stevenson Papers at the Parliamentary Archive at the House of Lords. In the case of the letters from Lloyd George to Dame Margaret, however, she does tend to rely overmuch on the published correspondence so readily available in Kenneth O. Morgan, *Lloyd George: Family Letters, 1885–1936* (Oxford University Press and University of Wales Press, 1973). Quarrying through the original manuscript letters and Lloyd George's early diaries in greater depth would

undoubtedly have unearthed much additional relevant material to enrich the story. Also, although there are occasional references to material in the extensive William George archive purchased by the NLW in 1989, it would seem that this might have been used more fully during the course of the research.

The amount of fascinating detail packed into the book is awesomely impressive. This is especially true when Mrs Hague discusses the complexities of the relationship between Dame Margaret, usually based at Criccieth, and Lloyd George, compelled by the demands of his political career to spend much of his time at Westminster and Whitehall (see the perceptive, revealing comments on p. 118). In this connection (p. 128), she tells us that the wily LG made 'full use of the prevailing silence of the press in such matters', raising the issue of why the press at that time (in such striking contrast to the newspapers of recent decades) felt obliged to play ball in this way. Later in the text (p. 225), the author discusses the large number of extra-marital relationships among prominent politicians in the early twentieth century, commenting: 'To the modern reader, the wonder is not that so many distinguished men behaved in this way, but that they were not exposed and disgraced. The reasons for this went beyond social convention and the sanctity of the institution of marriage, important though those factors were. Those in the public eye could also rely on the complicity of the media.' One wonders why this was so, and what has changed since.

We are even told (p. 186) that, in the most painful aftermath of Mair Eluned's death, her mother took against the colour green (her deceased daughter's favourite colour), an aversion which persisted for the



rest of her days. Subsequently, Maggie had no items of green clothing in her wardrobe, and no member of the Lloyd George family was allowed to possess a green car.

Mrs Hague's masterly understanding of the complexities of twentieth century British and Welsh politics is breathtaking. This is especially apparent when she deals with such involved issues as the detail of Lloyd George's famous 'People's Budget' of 1909 and the Marconi affair a few years later. She also writes sensitively and tactfully about such complicated issues as Jennifer Longford's paternity, the alleged relationship between Lloyd George and his daughter-in-law Roberta (the first wife of his eldest son Dick), the affair between Frances Stevenson and Colonel T. F. Tweed (LG's chief-of-staff at Liberal Party headquarters), and the long relationship between Megan Lloyd George and her lover Philip Noel-Baker. In each case she presents the available evidence (carefully culled from various

sources) fairly and squarely and presents eminently sensible and scrupulously fair assessments. The reader is allowed to come to his own conclusions.

The accuracy of the factual material is very high indeed. But the premature death from cancer of Lloyd George's only sister Mrs Mary Ellen Davies in 1909 is rather glossed over (p. 187) without a full exegesis of the nature of the relationship between brother and elder sister, although the source materials do exist. LG's prostate operation actually took place in August 1931, not 1932 (p. 253). There are occasional references to a 'Welsh Liberal Party' (see, for example, p. 541), but such an entity did not exist officially until March 1967, by which time Lady Megan Lloyd George was in her grave.

The volume has a large number of highly evocative photographs, some fresh and never published before, some familiar, well-worn and published many times previously. A striking, highly contemporary note is struck with the inclusion of a photograph of the statue of Lloyd George in Parliament Square unveiled only last autumn – a bridge between the past and the present. There is a helpful bibliography of source materials and useful (if somewhat selective) endnote references. (There are some occasions where the curious reader is left craving to know the source of the information presented.) The index is extremely detailed, and in many instances Mrs Hague provides her readership with most helpful pieces of additional (or parallel) information in asterisked footnotes. These are a great asset to readers less familiar with the complex, often frenzied, course of events in Lloyd George's personal and political life.

This book deserves to be read alongside John Campbell's equally informative and revealing *If Love Were All ...*

The Story of Lloyd George and Frances Stevenson (Jonathan Cape, 2006) to which it is an admirable companion volume. One hopes that Mrs Hague will now continue her pioneering researches. With the publication of the present volume (together with some other publications), one feels that Dame Margaret Lloyd George has been given the recognition and prominence she genuinely deserves. The traditional image of the dumpy, dowdy Welsh woman tied by

choice to the kitchen sink at Brynawelon, Criccieth has been dispelled once and for all. Might one suggest that a full biography of this remarkable lady (for which the sources certainly exist) might now be a most worthy second project for this talented researcher and author?

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Women and Gladstone

Anne Isba, *Gladstone and Women* (Hambledon Continuum, 2006)

Reviewed by **Gillian Sutherland**

With the publication of the present volume (together with some other publications), one feels that Dame Margaret Lloyd George has been given the recognition and prominence she genuinely deserves.

IT IS difficult to be certain as to the audience for whom this book is intended. It is set up as a series of linked essays, each dealing with a stage in Gladstone's relationships with a woman or group of women. With footnotes all at the end, perhaps it is meant to appeal to that mythical beast, the general reader. Yet the readers who will get most out of it are social and political historians. They will have the background to supply the full resonances to the stories that are told and can use them as case studies to illuminate larger themes. (Although it should be added that all audiences would have benefited from more careful proofreading of the text.)

The account of Gladstone's childhood and education shows the often crippling effects on young men of the middle and upper classes in early nineteenth century England of a largely homosocial world. In Gladstone's case these were dramatised and enhanced by the chronic ill health of his mother and elder sister and their powerful Evangelical beliefs. The result was that when he

reached adulthood, he had no idea how to behave naturally towards young women of his own class and age and narrowly escaped several unfortunate and ill-assorted alliances. It was sheer good fortune that brought him into extended contact with Catherine Glynne in Italy and led to an exceptionally strong and happy marriage. In this version of *Amours de Voyage*, Claude and Mary Trevellyn did get married.

The whole family's treatment of Gladstone's sister Helen, who took to opium and the Roman Catholic Church, is a shabby episode. Undoubtedly she was difficult, starved of affection and resorted to self-dramatisation to compensate. At least part of the problem was that she had energies and a mind which were woefully under-used; and a less affluent family might have found relief for themselves and for her in encouraging her to make an economic contribution to the household through teaching or nursing. Her most tranquil and effective period was when she cared for her failing father. Otherwise, she was