

# Liberal History News

## Spring 2017

### Major new resource for students of Liberal history

The Liberal Democrat History Group's website now features a major new resource for students of post-war Liberal history: a comprehensive directory of all election candidates at every Westminster election from 1945 to 2015.

This is the first comprehensive biographical index to appear of the individuals who have contested a UK parliamentary election under the designation Liberal, Liberal Democrat and Social Democrat, over the years 1945–2015. Separate files cover eleven English regions (Devon and Cornwall, East of England, East Midlands, Greater London, North East, North West, South Central, South East, South West, Yorkshire, West Midlands), and Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (Westminster elections only, including

Alliance Party of Northern Ireland candidates).

A typical entry includes details of birth and death, where known, education school/college/university), career(s), elected local government offices held (though periods of service are often imprecise), party offices held, noteworthy distinctions/achievements, honours, publications etc, etc. Information on previous (or subsequent) activities with respect to other political parties is often included. Spouses and family often receive notice. Entries vary in length and presentation, reflecting the scale of the contribution which an individual made to the party and political life in the region or nationally, to parliament or his/her achievements in wider spheres of activity. Opinions

expressed with regard to some of the more colourful personalities listed are those generally held.

Other directories have appeared listing candidates of all parties, election by election, though usually with scant biographical detail. Inevitably many entries in this series of regional indices, despite exhaustive research over twenty years, are incomplete and/or contain errors of identification etc. Many entries, particularly with respect to the many 'paper candidates' fielded in 2015, are woefully thin. Hopefully this series of indices will provide information useful to historians, scholars and for party members, will serve to revive memories of colleagues and personalities of yesteryear. Furthermore, it has been compiled partly as a tribute to the hundreds of individuals

### On This Day ...

Every day the History Group's website, Facebook page and Twitter feed carry an item of Liberal history news from the past. Below we reprint three. To see them regularly, look at [www.liberalhistory.org.uk](http://www.liberalhistory.org.uk) or [www.facebook.com/LibDemHistoryGroup](https://www.facebook.com/LibDemHistoryGroup) or follow us at: **LibHistoryToday**.

#### March

*3 March 1988:* Launch of the Social and Liberal Democrats, the result of the merger of the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party. The new party would later be renamed the Liberal Democrats. Accounts of the merger negotiations reveal that agreeing the name of the merged party was a very difficult part of the process. The new party's name was officially shortened to Democrats though some, less well disposed to the party, abbreviated it to 'Salads'. In either case it proved unpopular. The party was subsequently renamed Liberal Democrats in 1989.

#### April

*13 April 1890:* David Lloyd George enters the Commons, winning the Caernarfon Boroughs by-election by just 19 votes. He would go on to become President of the Board of Trade under Campbell-Bannerman, Chancellor of the Exchequer under Asquith and Prime Minister, 1916–22. He led the Liberal Party from 1926 to 1931, overseeing a short-lived revival in the party's fortunes. A charismatic and mercurial figure, he led the country to victory in the First World War and helped introduce the ideas of Keynesian economics to British politics – but his rivalry with Asquith split the Liberal Party and contributed to its post-war eclipse by Labour.

#### May

*27 May 1970:* Birth of Tim Farron, Leader of the Liberal Democrats. Farron has been Liberal Democrat MP for Westmorland and Lonsdale since 2005, when he defeated senior Conservative Tim Collins. Farron served as Parliamentary Private Secretary to Menzies Campbell when the latter led the party and later served as Home Affairs Spokesman. He resigned from the front bench in 2008 in protest at the party's abstention from a vote on the EU referendum but later returned as Environment spokesman. In 2010 he was elected Party President, serving two terms until 2014. Following the 2015 election and the resignation of Nick Clegg, Farron was elected to the party leadership, winning the contest with 56.5 per cent of the vote over North Norfolk MP Norman Lamb.

who felt committed enough to allow their names to go forward for nomination in the cause of Liberalism particularly during the long periods when the party's fortunes were in almost total eclipse.

The History Group would like to express its sincere thanks to the compiler of the directory, Lionel King, who was himself a parliamentary candidate (Kidderminster 1964, Sutton Coldfield 1970, Walsall South 1987).

Corrections and additional information from readers will be most welcome; please send emails to Lionel King on [lionelking1964@btinternet.com](mailto:lionelking1964@btinternet.com). Research will be ongoing. New information will appear in updated editions of the regional indices, together with entries on new candidates in parliamentary elections and by-elections which occur after May 2015.

### Election song

Music has always been used at general election rallies and during election broadcasts; but in former days songs were often written specifically for an election or even a particular candidate. The approach of the election on 8 June 2017 gives us the opportunity to reprint an election song written for Lord Hartington, Liberal candidate for North Lancashire in the 1868 general election.

*Plump, Boys, Plump!*  
(Tune: 'Tramp, Tramp, Tramp')

Electors, shout for joy,  
And return the Lib'ral boy  
And drive the Tory bigots far away,  
LORD HARTINGTON's the man,  
Then return him, as you can,  
For the Lib'ral boy is sure to win the day.

*CHORUS*  
Plump, boys, Plump, for truth and justice!  
LORD HARTINGTON's a man of great renown;  
Tell the Tories ev'ry one  
That their race is nearly run.  
They will have to 'Kick the bucket' very soon.

In that gallant ship Reform,  
He will brave the Tory storm,  
He fights with noble Gladstone and John Bright;  
Struggles for the nation's weal,  
With a heart as true as steel;

Come now, Plump, my boys, for justice  
and the right.

*CHORUS*

Be Liberal, men, and brave,  
And to no one be a slave,  
Tell the Tories you've a will of your own;  
Jolly farmers, all be true!  
Snap their fingers at their 'screw',  
For the Liberals can keep the Tories down.

*CHORUS*

Despise the Tory creeds,  
And their base despotic deeds;  
On the polling day *give Hartington your votes*;  
The Liberal ranks renew,  
Down with the Tory blue!  
Keep your colours up, and never turn your coats.

*CHORUS*

To the right sort he belongs;  
They'll redress old Ireland's wrongs;  
So be Liberals and united with each other,  
And support the noble scion,  
For he's courage like a lion,  
And will fight for poor Paddy like a brother.

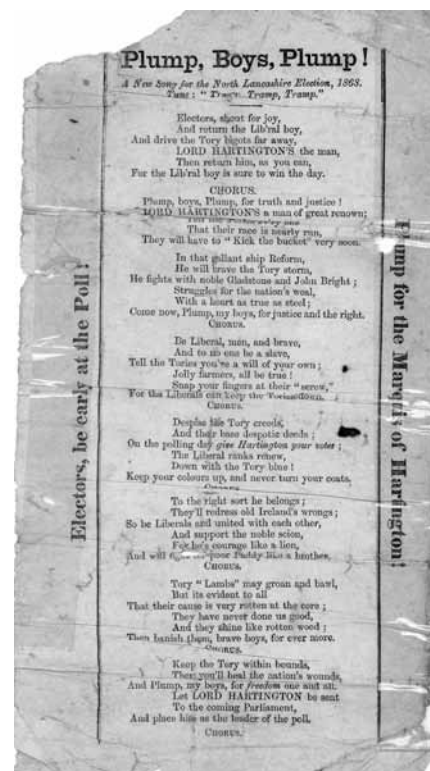
*CHORUS*

Tory 'Lambs' may groan and bawl,  
But it's evident to all  
That their cause is very rotten at the core;  
They have never done us good,  
And they shine like rotten wood;  
Then banish them, brave boys, for ever more.

*CHORUS*

Keep the Tory within bounds,  
Then you'll heal the nation's wounds,  
And Plump, my boys, for *freedom* one and all.  
Let LORD HARTINGTON be sent  
To the coming Parliament.  
And place him as the leader of the poll.  
*CHORUS*

Spencer Compton Cavendish (1833–1908) was the eldest son of William Cavendish, later Duke of Devonshire; on his father inheriting the dukedom he took the courtesy title Marquess of Hartington. He was not a peer in his own right (until he succeeded his father as Duke of Devonshire in 1891) and was thus able to sit in the Commons. First elected for



North Lancashire in 1857, he entered the cabinet in 1866.

In April 1868 Hartington supported Gladstone's resolutions for the disestablishment of the Irish church. This policy, unpopular in Lancashire (note the references to Ireland in the song), cost him his seat at the December general election. Three months later, however, he was elected for Radnor Boroughs.

He went on to lead the Liberal Party in the House of Commons during Gladstone's first retirement (1876–80). In 1886 he split from the party over Irish Home Rule, and led the breakaway Liberal Unionists until 1904, serving in Conservative / Liberal Unionist cabinets from 1895 to 1903.

The tune was taken from the American songwriter George F. Root's 1864 song, *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, The Boys are Marching*. One of the most popular songs of the American Civil War, Root wrote both the words and the music to give hope to Union prisoners of war. (Root also wrote *The Battle Cry of Freedom*. A patriotic song advocating the causes of Unionism and abolitionism, it became so popular that Southern lyricists adapted it for the Confederacy.) The same tune was later used by Liberals for the song *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp upon Protection*.

Thanks to Mr L. G. Calvert, of Poole, who sent the clipping, which appears to be from an election leaflet, to Liberal Democrat HQ.