CYLCHLYTHYR YR

ARCHIF WLEIDYDDOL GYMREIG
WELSH POLITICAL ARCHIVE

NEWSLETTER

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THE 1979 REFERENDUM: 'YES' AND 'NO'

1282, 1536 and 1868 are among the dates referred to by historians as significant turning-points in the history of Wales. No doubt 1979 will also be a year which will be considered of great significance. The Devolution Referendum of 1 March 1979 led to the formation of campaigns for and against the Labour Government's proposals for a Welsh Assembly and the Welsh Political Archive has been fortunate in acquiring papers relating to both the 'Yes' and 'No' campaigns.

The Wales for the Assembly Campaign was organised from an office in Neville Street, Cardiff, and the correspondence, minutes of meetings, press releases and pamphlets, deriving from that campaign have been donated to the Archive. The Campaign's secretary, Mr. Barry Jones, Lecturer in Politics at the University College of South Wales, Cardiff, has also donated his personal papers which date from the early organisation of the campaign. A ten year embargo has been placed on these papers.

The Labour Party (Wales) Archives recently acquired by the Archive are described elsewhere but it is worth noting that they include several files of papers relating to the Labour Party's policy on devolution during the period 1973-79. Plaid Cymru also campaigned for a 'Yes' vote and recently its papers on the Referendum have been added to the extensive archives of the party already held by the Library.

The 'No' campaign in Gwynedd was organised by Mr. D. Elwyn Jones who is now the Conservative Party's North Wales organiser. He has kindly deposited a file of papers on the campaign and it is to be hoped that other organisers of the 'No' campaign will do likewise in the near future.

In years to come, historians will doubtless find these papers of considerable interest while political scientists will be fascinated by all-party campaigns whose success or failure can to some extent be quantified. Some prominent Welsh politicians stress that the 'Devolution Debate' is now over but archivists and those interested in the preservation of the Welsh political heritage will continue to seek out the papers associated with the events which led to the vote of 1 March 1979.

Mwy o archifau'r Blaid

Ymhlith y papurau a ychwanegwyd at Archifau Plaid Cymru eleni y mae nifer o lyfrau cofnodion cynnar gan gynnwys Cofnodion Pwyllgor Rhanbarth Meirion, 1926-34, Cofnodion Pwyllgor Sir Arfon, 1939-45 a Chofnodion Cangen Plaid Genedlaethol Coleg Bangor, 1940-56. Yn ogystal, derbyniwyd ffeiliau o ohebiaeth a phapurau amrywiol yn dyddio yn bennaf o'r 1960au.

Mae hwn yn gaffaeliad pwysig iawn a da yw medru adrodd bod y gwaith o restru holl archifau'r Blaid yn mynd yn ei flaen yn foddhaol.

(The Library has received an important supplementary collection to the Plaid Cymru Archives).

Os am fwy o wybodaeth ynglyn â'r Archif Wleidyddol Gymreig cysyllter â: Gwyn Jenkins neu Paul O'Leary, Yr Archif Wleidyddol Gymreig, Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 3BU (ffôn: [0970] 3816).

For further information on the Welsh Political Archive contact: Gwyn Jenkins or Paul O'Leary, The Welsh Political Archive, The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 3BU (tel: [0970] 3816).

The Welsh Political Archive's Advisory Committee

The Welsh Political Archive was established in the National Library of Wales in 1983 to co-ordinate the building up of a comprehensive collection of all materials - manuscript, printed and audio-visual - relating to the political life of Wales. The Archive is organised by an Interdepartmental Committee working in the Library but an Advisory Committee has also been set up to assist the Archive to fulfill its objectives. The present members of the committee are:

The Librarian, Dr Brynley F. Roberts (Chairman)
Dr Denis Balsom, U.C.W., Aberystwyth
Mr Geraint Talfan Davies, Deputy-Head of Programmes, H.T.V.
Mr Tom Ellis (The Social Democratic Party)
Lord Hooson (The Liberal Party)
Dr Deian Hopkin, U.C.W., Aberystwyth
Mr D. Elwyn Jones, Conservative Party organiser in North Wales
Dr Kenneth O. Morgan, The Queen's College, Oxford
Mr Ted Rowlands, Member of Parliament (The Labour Party)
Mr Dafydd Elis Thomas, Member of Parliament (Plaid Cymru)
Professor Gwyn A. Williams, U.C. Cardiff

and from the Library's Interdepartmental Committee:

Mr Daniel Huws, Keeper of Manuscripts
Mr Gwyn Jenkins, Assistant Keeper, Department of Manuscripts (Chairman)
Mr J. Graham Jones, Assistant Archivist, Department of Manuscripts
Ms. Beti Jones, Assistant Librarian, Department of Printed Books
Mr Paul O'Leary, Research Assistant, The Welsh Political Archive

Two meetings of the Advisory Committee have taken place, in April and September 1985, and these have explored the wide range of political material which might be collected by the Archive and the most appropriate methods of acquisition. It was agreed to build close contacts with political parties and pressure groups, both nationally and locally, and to emphasise the importance of preserving the written and printed records of political activity in Wales over the years.

Discussions have also centred on audio-visual materials and on the co-operation of the broadcasting authorities with the Library's Audio-Visual Unit.

NODIADAU / NOTES

Llyfrgellydd Newydd

Llyfrgellydd newydd y Llyfrgell Genedlaethol yw Dr. Brynley F. Roberts. Brodor o Aberdar yw'r Dr. Roberts ac y mae'n 54 mlwydd oed. Y mae'n briod a chanddo ddau fab. Graddiodd gydag Anrhydedd Dosbarth Cyntaf yn y Gymraeg o Goleg Prifysgol Cymru, Aberystwyth, yn 1951 ac enillodd raddau uwch MA yn 1954 a PhD yn 1969. Treuliodd gyfnod yn y fyddin (lle y dysgodd Rwsieg) a bu'n Ddarlithydd a Darllenydd yn ei hen Adran yn Aberystwyth rhwng 1957 a 1978. Yn 1978 fe'i penodwyd yn Athro'r Gymraeg yng Ngholeg y Brifysgol, Abertawe. Cychwynnodd Dr. Roberts yn ei swydd newydd ar 1 Hydref 1985. Y mae Dr. Roberts yn olynu Dr. R. Geraint Gruffydd a fu'n Llyfrgellydd Cenedlaethol am bum mlynedd. Yn ystod ei gyfnod yn y Llyfrgell cychwynwyd nifer o brosiectau newydd ac ymhlith y rhain oedd yr Archif Wleidyddol Gymreig. Bu Dr. Gruffydd yn gefn i'r Archif o'r cychwyn cyntaf ac yn barod bob amser i gynorthwyo'r staff sydd â chyfrifoldeb am yr Archif yn y Llyfrgell.

(The new Librarian of the National Library of Wales is Dr. Brynley F. Roberts. He succeeds Dr. R. Geraint Gruffydd).

Exhibition

Exhibits from the Welsh Political Archive were part of an exhibition held at an Open Day in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, in September. Copies of letters by Lloyd George, Winston Churchill and Clement Attlee were among the exhibits as well as a selection of colourful leaflets from the 1983 General Election Campaign.

Ymwelydd

Ymhlith yr ymwelwyr i'r Llyfrgell Genedlaethol yn gynharach eleni oedd Mr Dafydd Wigley a'i deulu. Yn Uned Glyweled y Llyfrgell, cafodd Mr Wigley y cyfle i weld ffilm fideo o gyhoeddiad y canlyniad yn Etholiad Cyffredinol Chwefror 1974 pryd yr etholwyd ef yn Aelod Seneddol dros Arfon am y tro cyntaf. Gwelodd hefyd y gell lle cedwir Archifau Plaid Cymru.

(Among the visitors to the National Library recently was Mr Dafydd Wigley M.P. and his family).

DERBYNIADAU / ACQUISITIONS

Lord Watkins Papers
Lord Tudor Watkins (1903-83) gave a lifetime of service to the Labour Party in Wales and particularly in the Brecon and Radnor constituency where he was the Labour Party's agent for many years before becoming its Member of Parliament in 1945. His papers, which have been donated to the Library by Lady Watkins, contain local and parliamentary election leaflets dating from 1924 to 1966 including those of E. T. John, Peter Freeman, L. Haden-Guest, W. F. Jackson and of Tudor Watkins himself.

Conservative Party Papers
Through the good offices of Mr. D. Elwyn Jones, the Conservative Party's organiser in North Wales, the Archive has obtained the minutes of the Caernarfon Division of the Conservative and Unionist Association, 1953-1972 and minutes and papers relating to the activities of the Conservative Party in the Conwy constituency. Also received recently are the records of the Wrexham Conservative Party, 1913-67. Access to these papers is restricted.

Papurau Lewis Valentine
Yn ddiweddar cafodd y Llyfrgell y cyfle i brynu casgliad sylweddol o bapurau'r Parch. Lewis E. Valentine sydd yn cynnwys rhai cannoedd o lythyron, 1916-83, llawer ohonynt yn ymwneud â'r Blaid Genedlaethol. Ceir grwpiau sylweddol o ohebiaeth oddi wrth Saunders Lewis, Kate Roberts, D. J. Williams a Gwynfor Evans. Derbyniodd Mr. Valentine nifer o'r llythyron ar ôl llosgi'r Ysgol Fomio ym 1936, rhai yn ei groesawu adref o'r carchar yn y flwyddyn ganlynol. Hefyd ceir nodiadau gan Mr. Valentine ar hanes y Blaid.
(The Library has acquired the papers of the leading Welsh Nationalist, the Rev. Lewis Valentine.)

Viscount Tonypandy Papers
In 1680 Wales provided a famous Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir William Williams, whose important collection of papers are now housed in the Library; three hundred years later a more recent Welsh Speaker, George Thomas, Viscount Tonypandy, has donated his extensive collection of papers to the Welsh Political Archive.
Lord Tonypandy's Papers comprise several thousand documents covering most of his political career and reflecting the wide range of his interests. Historians and political scientists will find these papers an invaluable source on the constitutional position of the Speaker, the history of the Labour Party since the War and on the history of Wales, particularly during the crucial period when Lord Tonypandy was Secretary of State for Wales.
The permission of Lord Tonypandy is required to see his papers.

Gwent Activist
The focus of politics in Wales inevitably rests on the members of the Houses of Parliament and their activities. On the other hand, the untiring work of many activists is never forgotten but it rarely catches the limelight of public attention either.
One such activist, Mr. Ted Spanswick of Newport, donated his papers to the Archive recently. Reflected here is the whole gamut of political matters at issue in Gwent during the last 20 years. His letters to the press represent a daunting testimony to tireless penmanship.
Mr. Spanswick was himself a parliamentary candidate for Plaid Cymru in the Monmouth constituency in February 1974.

Ellis W. Davies Papers
Few politicians keep a diary and therefore the Library has been fortunate to acquire the journals, correspondence and papers of one Member of Parliament, Ellis W. Davies, who kept a detailed diary for much of a political career which spanned the first four decades of this century.
Ellis W. Davies (1871-1939) was the Liberal Member of Parliament for Eifion, 1906-18, and for Denbigh, 1923-29, and though he did not achieve high office, partly because of his antipathy to Lloyd George, he was acquainted with many of the leading politicians of his day. His comments provide a fascinating insight into the political life of the period.

The Pontypridd Labour Party
During recent months the Archive has acquired microfilm copies of the records of the Pontypridd Trades Council and Constituency Labour Party, largely consisting of party minutes. The seven reels cover the crucial period of the party's growth (1897-1951).
The microfilms contain a selection of correspondence from the Labour Party's Headquarters in Walworth Road, London, of relevance to Pontypridd and the package is prefaced with a fascinating historical introduction by Mr. Brynmor John M.P.

Labour Party (Wales) Archives

Since 1922 the Labour Party has been the largest single parliamentary party in Wales and many developments in twentieth century Welsh politics have revolved around that fact. It follows that the Archives of the Labour Party in Wales, with its headquarters in Cardiff, will be of great importance to historians in the future and the Library has been fortunate to receive a large proportion of these Archives during 1985.

The Executive Committee minutes, correspondence and annual reports chart the development of the South Wales Regional Council of Labour from 1937 to its successor the Labour Party Wales up to 1978. The minutes have been photocopied on archival paper by the Library and bound in fifteen volumes. Taken together these minutes provide an invaluable record of party activities over this period. The day-to-day organisation of the Labour Party in Wales, the co-ordination of campaigns, and the issues and problems that faced the Labour movement as a whole are all activities covered in the minutes. The published annual reports, covering the same period, have also been preserved on microfilm.

The correspondence and papers covers the period from the early 1950s to the General Election of 1979. One interesting feature is the material concerning the production of the *Cymric Democrat* newspaper during the 1950s.

A 15 year embargo applies to these papers, apart from published material.

The Brecon and Radnor By-election

Parliamentary by-elections in Wales since 1972 have been few and largely predictable in their outcome. However, when the seat of Brecon and Radnor was unexpectedly vacated by the death of Mr. Tom Hooson a great deal of speculation ensued. This sprawling and diverse constituency both fascinated and confounded the media and pundits who descended on the local inhabitants in waves.

The Welsh Political Archive managed to secure election addresses, factsheets and other publications relating to all seven candidates, although it was necessary to pose as a floating voter at one stage! One famous candidate, Lord Sutch, made his first mark on Welsh politics and a copy of his 'Monster Manifesto' is safely preserved in the Archive.

The staff of the Library's Audio-Visual Unit were as busy as the professional broadcasters during the campaign and as a result many hours of television programmes have been recorded.

The S.D.P. and the Welsh Political Archive

Question-time can be a harrowing experience for politicians who have to remain quick on their feet in the thrust and parry of debate. However, politicians themselves are often adept with the searching question, as the Archive's Research Assistant, Paul O'Leary, found on his visit to the SDP Council for Wales meeting at Aberystwyth on the 14th September.

The Council listened to a short address on the work of the Archive and the importance of co-operating with active politicians; questions on the subject were put to the speaker afterwards. This fruitful exchange was conducted in a friendly manner and both the Archive and the members of the Council profited from the session. Later the Council agreed to send to the Archive copies of SDP Council for Wales minutes, agendas and papers. This material is subject to a ten-year embargo.

County Council Elections

One of the main differences between parliamentary elections and county council elections is the large number of 'independent' candidates who stand for office at county level.

Although the vast majority of candidates in Wales during the recent May elections belonged to one of the parties, there were many independent candidates in the field and when the Archive set out to collect electoral leaflets it was faced with a difficult problem: how to secure material published by candidates who have no organisation or representative outside of a particular locality?

In tackling this problem the Archive circulated the local and national press in Wales with an appeal for help, and staff from the Archive appealed for assistance on Radio Cymru, Radio Wales and Swansea Sound.

The result of the appeal was highly creditable with the Archive amassing a collection of election addresses, manifestoes and newsletters relating to over 200 candidates throughout Wales.

This material provides evidence of the diverse political life of Wales and its continued vitality.

Argraffwyd yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru

Printed at The National Library of Wales