CYLCHLYTHYR YR

ARCHIF WLEIDYDDOL GYMREIG
WELSH POLITICAL ARCHIVE

NEWSLETTER

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POLITICAL PAPERS ON AUCTION

Much of the press's attention in an auction held at Phillips's, London, in June was centred on the numerous love letters among the papers of the former Member of Parliament, Eliot Crawshay-Williams. However, the National Library's interest lay largely in an extensive collection of literary papers and correspondence while the Welsh Political Archive itself was particularly anxious to acquire the political papers of both Crawshay-Williams and of his father A J Williams, MP. It is gratifying to report that the Library succeeded in purchasing all of the A J Williams and Eliot Crawshay-Williams Papers apart from a few prohibitively priced letters by Winston Churchill.

Both A J Williams and Eliot Crawshay-Williams were Liberal MPs. Arthur John Williams (1830-1911) was elected MP for South Glamorgan in 1885 and served that constituency for ten years. He was one of the founders of the National Liberal Club and his radical views included a firm belief in Proportional Representation and in the abolition of the hereditary element in the House of Lords. His papers include many letters from prominent politicians such as Asquith, Gladstone, Joseph Chamberlain, T E Ellis and Lord Rendel, while his 43 volumes of diaries cover the period 1864–1911. Also included are the diaries of his wife, Rose Harriette Williams, who was a member of the Crawshay family of Cyfarthfa Castle, Merthyr Tydfil.

Eliot Crawshay-Williams (1879–1962) was a close friend of Winston Churchill who employed him as his assistant private secretary at the Colonial Office between 1906 and 1908. In 1910 he was elected MP for Leicester and acted as Parliamentary Private Secretary to David Lloyd George who was at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Crawshay-Williams's political career came to an abrupt halt in 1913 when he was cited in a divorce action brought by a fellow MP Hubert Carr-Gomm. After service in the First World War, he settled in his father's home Coed-y-Mwstwr, near Bridgend, becoming a noted playwright, novelist and poet. His plays were performed in the West End and he wrote several film scripts. Not surprisingly, he corresponded with many prominent figures in the literary and theatrical world, including John Cowper Powys, H G Wells, Sybil Thorndike, Alexander Korda and Somerset Maugham. His political correspondence also reflects the wide range of his acquaintances, including six Prime Ministers: Asquith, Campbell-Bannerman, Lloyd George, Ramsay MacDonald, Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill.

Ymgyrch Senedd i Gymru

Yn ddiweddar daeth llyfr cofnodion Pwyllgor Sir Feirionnydd o'r Ymgyrch Senedd i Gymru i law. Ceir ynddo hanes y cyfarfodydd a gynhaliwyd yn Nolgellau rhwng Mai 1951 a Hydref 1954 a darlun llawn o weithgareddau'r Pwyllgor.

Dros y blynyddoedd casglwyd gan y Llyfrgell lawer o ddeunydd yn ymwneud â'r ymgyrch unigryw hon ond mae'n siwr fod yna bapurau a chofysgrifau eraill ar gael o hyd. Byddai'r Archif Wleidyddol yn croesawu'r cyfle o'u cadw'n ddiogel.

(*The minute book of the Merioneth Committee of the Parliament for Wales Campaign, 1951–54, was received recently. The Archive would like to collect further records on this unique campaign.*)

The Advisory Committee

The Welsh Political Archive's Advisory Committee which was set up in 1985 to assist the Archive in fulfilling its objectives met again in April. A new member Mrs Lorna Schärer, was welcomed to the Committee. Mrs Schärer was formerly the Secretary of the Welsh Liberal Party.

The Committee discussed various means of improving the *Newsletter*. It also suggested ways of approaching certain Members of Parliament who are to retire at the next General Election and also what additional material might be collected during the election campaign itself.

The present members of the Committee, along with five members of the Library's staff, are:

The Librarian, Dr Brynley F Roberts (Chairman)
Dr Denis Balsom, UCW, Aberystwyth
Mr Geraint Talfan Davies, Deputy-Head of Programmes, HTV
Mr Tom Ellis (The Social Democratic Party)
Lord Hooson (The Liberal Party)
Dr Deian Hopkin, UCW, 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)
Mrs Lorna Schärer (The Liberal Party)
Mr Dafydd Elis Thomas, Member of Parliament (Plaid Cymru)
Professor Gwyn A Williams, UC Cardiff

On Television

The cameras of HTV, along with political correspondent Max Perkins, were present at the last meeting of the Welsh Political Archive's Advisory Committee. They were there to film a special feature on the Archive for the weekly report 'Friday Briefing' in the *Wales at Six* news bulletin which was broadcast on 11 April.

The programme included interviews with the National Librarian, Dr Brynley Roberts, with Mr Tom Ellis representing the Advisory Committee and with Gwyn Jenkins, who has responsibility for the running of the Archive. It was generally considered that the programme reflected accurately the function and significance of the Archive and proved to be welcome publicity for its work.

Ymwelydd

Ar 11 Gorffennaf lansiwyd catalog cyfrifiadurol newydd y Llyfrgell Genedlaethol gan yr Is-Ysgrifennydd Seneddol yn y Swyddfa Gymreig, Mr Wyn Roberts. Ar ei ymweliad cafodd Mr Roberts y cyfle i weld arddangosfa fechan ar waith yr Archif Wleidyddol gan gynnwys eitemau yn ymwneud â'i etholaeth yng Nghonwy.

(*Mr Wyn Roberts, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Welsh Office visited the Library in July.)*

District Council Elections, 1986

The District Councils where a third of councillors are elected at a time faced elections once again this year and in Wales the Districts of Colwyn, Port Talbot, Cynon Valley, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport and Swansea were involved. Once again the Archive is grateful for the help of electors across Wales in collecting election literature from each District.

Sefydlwyd yr Archif Wleidyddol Gymreig ym 1983 i greu casgliad o ddeunydd—boed yn llawysgrif, yn brintiedig, neu'n glyweledol—yn ymwneud â bywyd gwleidyddol Cymru. Mewn ymgais i ychwanegu at ei chasgliad, mae'r Archif yn ceisio sefydlu cysylltiad ag unigolion a mudiadau sydd â diddordeb mewn neu sy'n ymwneud â gwleidyddiaeth Cymru. Os ydych yn ystyried y gellwch fod o gymorth i'r Archif mewn unrhyw ffordd, y mae croeso i chwi gysylltu â: Gwyn Jenkins neu Paul O'Leary, Yr Archif Wleidyddol Gymreig, Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY 23 3BU (ffôn: [0970] 3816).

The Welsh Political Archive was established in 1983 to create a comprehensive collection of materials—manuscript, printed and audio-visual—relating to the political life of Wales. In an attempt to augment its collection, the Archive seeks to establish contact with individuals and organisations interested in or involved with Welsh politics. If you consider that you can help the Archive in any way, please contact: Gwyn Jenkins or Paul O'Leary, The Welsh Political Archive, the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 3BU (tel: [0970] 3816).

ELECTION BULLETIN

For Circulation in the Merthyr Tydfil Constituency.

No. 2. January 12. Vol. I.

Merthyr Politics

Merthyr Tydfil is a town renowned for its radical tradition and it has often been a flash-point of Welsh politics in the past. Recently the Archive was fortunate to receive the research notes and papers of Dr A W L Seaman concerning politics in Merthyr *c.* 1880-1914. During this period the parliamentary constituency returned two Members of Parliament and elections were passionately contested affairs.

Unquestionably, the most famous of these members was J Keir Hardie, and Dr Seaman's papers include some of his election literature and that of his opponents for the General Election of January 1910. The title illustration from Hardie's *Election Bulletin* in that year is shown above and serves as a reminder that before the cinema and television election literature was of prime importance in disseminating the candidate's photograph and the image that he wished to project. Here we see a trio of Welsh national symbols — harp, dragon and leeks — against the backdrop of the rising sun of Labour. This illustration neatly expresses the image Hardie worked hard to cultivate. His election colours were Red for socialism, Green for nationalism and White for purity and strength; he had used these first in his Mid-Lanark campaign of 1888 but fortunately they also coincided with the national colours of Wales.

Among the other items concerning the election of January 1910 are handbills produced by Hardie's Liberal opponent William Pritchard Morgan, a solicitor and former gold prospector in Australia. These include a cartoon of Hardie, an appeal to Irish and Roman Catholic voters and a song 'Ha, Ha, Ha, you and me, *vote for liberal unity*'.

Englynion i Keir Hardie

Yng ngholofnau Cymraeg Bwletin Etholiadol J Keir Hardie yn Ionawr 1910 pwysleisiwyd mai Cristion ac heddychwr ydoedd, dyn a oedd yn broffwyd ei gyfnod ac yn olyniaeth Proffwydi'r Beibl. Ysbrydolwyd un bardd lleol, William T Price ('Gwyddonfryn') i ganu yr englynion a ganlyn iddo. Fe'u cyhoeddwyd yn y Bwletin.

Dyn y werin a dawn eirias,—i ddewr
Ddyddori cymdeithas;
I frawd o'i ffydd, rhydd Hardie ras,
Ac i weithiwr mae'n gaethwas.

Yn Hardie mae cywir eirdant,—i enill
Ugeiniau a'u moliant,
I'w achos ef, iachus ant,
Am ei gonglau ymgenglant.

Efe ei hun yw'r gŵr fynant,—ar oll
Y'mlaen y rhes frwd weithiant
Yn hir eu bloedd, fel gwir blant
Amdano'n ddewr ymdynant.

Friw adeg, fydd colli'r frwydr,—a
Hardie'n yr oerdeb heb frodyr;
Am ei wrthod ca'i Merthyr,
Asur boeth mewn amser byr.

(Poetry in Welsh published in Keir Hardie's Election Bulletin.)

DERBYNIADAU / ACQUISITIONS

Brecon and Radnor Labour Party Records

Geographically, Brecon and Radnor is by far the largest parliamentary constituency in Wales. Its diversity is striking, containing the industrial villages of the upper Swansea Valley and the farmland of the English border with National Parkland and reservoirs in between.

Since the 1920s the constituency has elected four Labour Members of Parliament and the archives of the Divisional Labour Party, 1924–85, recently deposited in the Library, are indicators of the varied activities of the party locally. This large group of records consists of minute books, financial registers and a considerable amount of correspondence concerning local political life. The archives also contain election literature and miscellaneous publications. In all they highlight the main features of party organisation and paint a vivid picture of the issues and problems that gained prominence over this period. A special feature of this constituency was the series of successful Rural Campaigns during which many prominent Members of Parliament of the day gave their support and spoke at public meetings in the constituency.

(As reported in the last issue of the *Newsletter* the Library has received the papers of Lord Tudor Watkins, the longest-serving Member of Parliament for Brecon and Radnor, 1945–70, through the kindness of his widow, Lady Watkins.)

SDP West Glamorgan Area

Following the decision of the SDP Council for Wales to send copies of its minutes, agendas and papers to the Archive, the West Glamorgan Area Committee of the SDP has decided to follow suit. The Committee is responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the five parliamentary constituencies within its area: Swansea West, Swansea East, Aberavon, Neath and Gower.

These minutes are in general subject to a two-year embargo, and, under exceptional circumstances, a ten-year embargo. It is to be hoped that other Area Committees will be able to send copies of their records also.

'NO' Assembly Campaign Papers

In response to the leading article on the 1979 Devolution Referendum in the last number of this *Newsletter*, Lord Gibson-Watt has donated to the Archive papers of the 'No' Assembly Campaign of which he was Chairman. Most of the papers on the Referendum Campaign acquired prior to the publication of the last *Newsletter* were from the 'Yes' camp, but now the balance has been further redressed with the Ceredigion 'No' Campaign, which was organised by members within the Ceredigion Constituency Labour Party, also donating papers. In addition, some 'No' literature has been received from the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist/Leninist).

Edgar P Harries Papers

Mr P E Harries of Pembroke has kindly donated the papers of his father, Edgar P Harries, to the Archive.

Edgar Phillips Harries (1888–1963) was one of the founder members of the Pembrokeshire County Labour Party, being elected its first secretary during the First World War. He went on to become the secretary of the Organisation Department of the TUC and it is apparent from correspondence among his surviving papers that he was a highly-respected figure in the Labour Movement for many years.

Archifau Plaid Cymru

Ychwanegwyd casgliad sylweddol o bapurau at Archifau Plaid Cymru unwaith eto eleni. Papurau sy'n tarddu'n bennaf o Swyddfa'r Blaid yn Aberystwyth, 1946–80, a gafwyd y tro hwn, yn cynnwys ffeiliau o ohebiaeth ynghylch aelodaeth ac amrywiol bynciau llosg y dydd.

Yn ogystal, derbyniodd y Llyfrgell rhagor o gofnodion Pwyllgor Rhanbarth Ceredigion o Blaid Cymru, 1968–84. Ynddynt ceir deunydd amrywiol megis llyfrau cofnodion, gohebiaeth a phapurau cyffredinol sydd yn taflu cryn dipyn o oleuni ar wleidyddiaeth yr ardal.

(*Two important groups of papers have been added to the Plaid Cymru Archives.*)

Argraffwyd yn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru Aberystwyth

Printed at The National Library of Wales Aberystwyth