THE DIARIES

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1909

8 July
Henley Regatta.

Changeable day growing gloriously fine in the afternoon. Crowds of visitors on the lawn. Most successful party.

To town in the afternoon to attend Stationers' Hall Banquet with H.S.H.[1] Proposed toast of 'The New Livery'. Struck more than ever by the great beauty of the Hall and of the Court or drawing-room.

10 July

C.B.H.,[2] E.A.H.,[3] Gertrude Spencer[4] and Milla Deane[5] to Henley. [. . .]

[1]Harold Sidney Harmsworth (1868–1940): the second of the Harmsworth brothers; with his elder brother, Alfred, later Viscount Northcliffe launched *Daily Mail* 1896 and *Daily Mirror* 1903; created (cr.) baronet 1910, Baron Rothermere 1914, Viscount 1919; Director General of Royal Army Clothing Dept 1916–1917; Air Minister 1917–1918.

[2]The diarist, Cecil Bisshopp Harmsworth (1869–1948); editor of *Answers* and the *Harmsworth Magazine*; from 1905 Chairman of Associated Newspapers Ltd.; Liberal candidate for Mid-Worcestershire 1899–1900, Liberal candidate for North-East Lanarkshire 1901; MP Mid-Worcestershire 1906–1910, MP Luton 1911–1922; Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to Runciman, President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries 1911, chairman of inquiry into Devon and Cornwall fisheries 1912–1913, member of inquiry into all inshore fisheries of England and Wales 1913–1914, investigated export of horses 1914; PPS to Runciman, President of the Board of Trade 1914–1915; Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Home Office 1915; PPS to McKenna at the Treasury 1915–1916; member of Lloyd George's prime ministerial secretariat 1917–1918; Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1919–1922; editor and author; cr. Baron 1939; married Emilie Alberta Maffett. He habitually resided in Henley when not in London.

[3]Emilie Alberta Harmsworth, née Maffett (1873–1942): the youngest of thirteen children, cousin of Cecil Harmsworth; they married in 1897.

[4]Gertrude Mary Spencer, née Maffett (b. 1859): the fourth of the Maffett children; m. Edward Spencer 1878.

[5]Marcella Amelia Deane, née Maffett (1862–1946): the seventh of the Maffett children; m. Alexander Sharpe Deane 1889.

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To town to preside at the Annual Dinner of the Amalgamated Press, Holborn Restaurant. About 600 present. By midnight train back to Henley.

Another dreary day of a most unfortunate Summer. Frequent showers of rain and leaden skies.

12 July
House of Commons.

Budget in Committee still – the increment in land values duty under discussion for the 3rd or 4th week! To bed at 4 a.m.

13 July

Budget. Latish night again.

14 July

Budget! Real 'all-night' sitting this time. Supper of devilled bones about 2.30 a.m. Breakfast of ham and eggs and lager beer about 5.15. Lager beer and ham and eggs don't agree. One Member heard to observe that the worst of all-night sittings was he never knew when to leave off drinking whiskies and sodas and to begin drinking tea. To bed at 9.30 a.m.!

19 July

Budget. Reversion duty debate – exceedingly tedious. All-night sitting. Devilled bones at 1.30 or so – bread and milk and tea at 5.30. Home and to bed at 6.30. Lovely sunrise observed from the Terrace. Two submarines anchored opposite the House – the last up-River details of the great Naval Review.

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20 July

Budget – still the Reversion duty. I spend most of the night on the Terrace with Herbert Craig[6] and S.O. Buckmaster[7] [afterwards Lord Chancellor]. Supper of bread and milk and tea and breakfast of poached eggs and tea. Innumerable divisions. A dull morning. To bed at 9. a.m.

28 July

Dinner party H. of Commons – Solicitor General and Lady Evans,[8] Solicitor General for Scotland and Mrs. Dewar,[9] Sir D. and Lady Brynmor Jones,[10] Lucas[11] and Geraldine,[12] Mr. and Mrs. Hemmerde,[13] H.J. Craig, Gertrude Spencer. Delightful evening on the Terrace – one of the few possible evenings this year for sitting out after dinner.

31 July

Em and I to the great Naval Review at Spithead – with the Lords and Commons on the White Star Liner 'Adriatic'. Grand Spectacle. Lovely day.

[6]Herbert James Craig (1869–1934): Lib. MP Tynemouth 1906–1918.

[7]Stanley Owen Buckmaster (1861–1934): Lib. MP Cambridge 1906–1910, Keighley 1911–1915; Solicitor General 1913–1915; Lord Chancellor 1915–1916; cr. Baron Buckmaster of Cheddington 1915; Viscount Buckmaster 1933.

[8]Samuel Thomas Evans (1859–1918): lawyer and judge; Lib. MP Mid-Glamorgan 1890–1910; Solicitor General 1908–1910; President of the Probate, Admiralty and Divorce Division of the High Court 1910; cr. GCB 1917. In 1905 he married his second wife, Blanche De Pinto (d. 1932).

[9]Arthur Dewar (1860–1917): Lib. MP Edinburgh South, 1899–1900, 1906–1910; Solicitor General for Scotland 1909–1910; Senator of the College of Justice 1910; cr. Lord Dewar 1910; married Letitia Dalrymple, the daughter of Robert Bell of Clifton Hall, Midlothian, 1892.

[10]David Brynmor Jones (d. 1921 at age 69): called to the Bar 1876, QC 1893; Lib. MP Stroud 1892–1895, Swansea 1895–1914; knighted 1906; m. 1892 Florence de Mocatta, née Cohen (d. 1920), a widow.

[11]Lucas White King (1856–1925): served in the Indian Civil Service 1878–1905; Professor of Oriental Languages at Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) 1905–1922; knighted 1919.

[12]Geraldine Adelaide Hamilton King (Dot), née Harmsworth (1866–1945): CBH's sister; m. Lucas White King 1897.

[13]Edward George Hemmerde (1871–1948): Lib. MP East Denbigh 1906–1910, North-West Norfolk 1912–1918; Lab. MP Crewe 1922–1924; KC 1908; Recorder of Liverpool 1909–1948; m. Lucy Elinor Colley 1906; the couple divorced in 1922.

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2 August

To town. Speech in H. of Commons on Airships and Aeroplanes.

3 August

Alfred (Northcliffe)[14] and C.B.H. long talk with Mr. Lloyd-George[15] in his private room H. of Commons. Lloyd-G. exercising all his arts of persuasion to induce A. to support his schemes of Development, invalidity insurance, etc., etc.

[Later: I might well have given at the time and in its place a fuller account of an incident that is still very fresh in my memory. Lloyd-George's Budget was under interminable discussion and was meeting with the violent opposition that culminated in its rejection by the Lords. He had few newspaper friends, and none, think, outside the Liberal Press. Lord Rosebery[16] had gone into Opposition.

On the afternoon of the 3rd I spied N. in the Peers' Gallery. I went up to talk to him and, after listening to the debate for some time, he asked if Peers were admitted to the Members' tea room of the H. of C. I thought so, and I remember the interest he excited among Members there.

We were noted by Dalziel[17] who came up, had some chat with N., and then disappeared. In a few moments he returned saying that Ll.-G, would be much pleased if N. would go to see him in his room

[14]Alfred Charles William Harmsworth (1865–1922): eldest brother of CBH; press proprietor; launched *Answers to Correspondents* 1888, *Comic Cuts* 1890, *Daily Mail* 1896, *Daily Mirror* 1903; bought *The Times* 1908; cr. baronet 1904, Baron Northcliffe 1905, Viscount 1918; led British War Mission to United States 1917; Director of Propaganda in Enemy Countries 1918.

[15]David Lloyd George (1863–1945): Lib. MP for Caernarvon Boroughs 1890–1945; President of the Board of Trade 1906–1908; Chancellor of the Exchequer 1908–1915; Minister of Munitions 1915–1916; Secretary of State for War 1916; Prime Minister 1916–1922; leader of Liberal party 1926–1931; cr. Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor 1945.

[16]Archibald Philip Primrose (1847–1929): wealthy Scottish landowner and Liberal politician; Under-Secretary at the Home Office 1881–1883; Lord Privy Seal 1885; Foreign Secretary 1886, 1892–1894; Prime Minister 1894–1895; Liberal Imperialist; increasingly critical of Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith governments; succeeded (succ.) as 5th Earl of Rosebery 1868.

[17]Davison Alexander Dalziel (1852–1928): press proprietor and entrepreneur; Con. MP Brixton 1910–1923, 1924–1927; cr. Baron Dalziel 1927.

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behind the Speaker's Chair. (He and N. had never met, I think.) So off-we went, and for an hour and more Ll.-G. exercised all his arts to win N. to the Budget. It was a tour de force – the most remarkable I have witnessed of the little Welshman's wizardry. N. was visibly impressed, not indeed by Ll.-G.'s main Budget proposals but by Ll.-G. himself.

Failing in one direction, Ll.-G. took up the question of Development and Road Improvement. Here he was on sure ground with N. who expressed himself as in full agreement with this part of the Budget. To explain it Ll.-G. quoted from the Statement about it that he was to make in the House the following day. He went much further. He handed the document to N. and said he might make any use of it he liked! N. was astonished and incredulous. Did he mean in the *Daily Mail* going to press that evening? Ll.-G. said Certainly yes. Before the House heard it? and exclusively in the *D.M.*? That would the House say? That would the other newspapers say? The Liberal newspapers?

Ll.-G. was after big game and sticking at nothing to win it. He did win N. as far as his Development and Road Improvement plans were concerned. And N. was a frank admirer of Ll.-G.'s working heartily with him on some problems of policy (notably in respect of an Irish Settlement, after the Rebellion of 1916) until their savage estrangement over Versailles.

So, the next morning the *Daily Mail* came out with its exclusive and premature disclosure and there were wigs on the green for the Chancellor in the House and in the Press.

C.H. (13.vi.1936)]

5 August

Both to Highcliffe to stay with Harold [Rothermere] and Lil.[18]

9 August
House of Commons.

Back to town – very reluctantly. Budget again in Committee. All night sitting. To bed at 7 a.m.

A regular dog day.

[18]Mary Lilian Harmsworth, née Share (d. 1937): m. Harold Harmsworth 1893.

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10 August
House of Commons.

Another dog day. Budget in Committee. Clause 10 – undeveloped land duty. Successful speech – many congratulations. Harold and Vere[19] dine with me. House rises mercifully about 11.45.

11 August
House of Commons.

Doggier day than ever. Budget in Committee. Another sweltering all-nighter. To bed at 8 o'clock.

13 August
House of Commons.

Hot as ever. Still the Budget in Committee. Mr. Lloyd-George came up to me as I was sitting on the Terrace and said that my Speech on Tuesday was a 'topping fine speech' and thanked me for it. Long talk with John Burns[20] about everything under the sun. He wants the Government to stay in two more years – but then John's seat is not very safe.

[19]Vere Sidney Tudor Harmsworth (1895–1916): killed at the Battle of Ancre, 3 Nov. 1916. His father founded the Vere Harmsworth Chair of Naval History at Cambridge University in his memory.

[20]John Burns (1858–1943): leading member of Social Democratic Federation in 1880s; elected to London County Council (L.C.C.), 1889; Lib.-Lab. MP for Battersea 1892–1918; first working man to attain cabinet rank; President of the Local Government Board 1905–1914; President of the Board of Trade 1914; resigned in protest at British intervention in the First World War.

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He is all for Asquith[21] and frankly hostile to the aggressive pretensions of Lloyd-George and Winston[22] whom he calls the 'Bounding Brothers'.

15 August

Another very hot day. By Mail Train (with Canfield and Kate [two of the maids]) to Ireland.

23 August
Costello Lodge[23]

I finish my article on 'A Plea for a Limitation of Speeches' for the *National Review*[24] and spend a few pleasant hours afterwards on the river – with one or two sea-trout rises.

15 September
Costello Lodge

I motored in to Galway with E. and caught the afternoon train for Dublin and so to Holyhead and Chester. Stayed night at Queen's Hotel, Chester.

[21]Herbert Henry Asquith (1852–1928): Lib. MP for East Fife 1886–1918, Paisley 1920–1924; Home Secretary 1892–1895; Chancellor of the Exchequer 1905–1908; Prime Minister 1908–1916; Secretary of State for War 1915; leader of the Liberal party 1908–1926; cr. Earl of Oxford and Asquith 1926.

[22]Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874–1965): Con. MP Oldham 1900–1904; Lib. MP for Oldham 1904–1906, Manchester North-West 1906–1908, Dundee 1908–1922 (Co. Lib. 1916–1922); Con. MP for Epping 1924–1945, Woodford 1945–1964; Under-Secretary for the Colonies 1905–1908; President of the Board of Trade 1908–1910; Home Secretary 1910–1911; First Lord of the Admiralty 1911–1915, 1939–1940; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1915; Minister of Munitions 1917–1918; Secretary of State for War and Air 1918–1921; Secretary of State for the Colonies 1921–1922; Chancellor of the Exchequer 1924–1929; Prime Minister and Minister of Defence 1940–1945; Prime Minister 1951–1955; leader of Conservative party 1940–1955; Knight of the Garter 1953.

[23]A fishing lodge in Galway.

[24]This article was published in October 1909.

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16 September

Came on from Chester to Stourport. Met C.N. Nicholson[25] at Stourbridge Junction. Excellent meeting with him in Town Hall – Tontine Hotel.

17 September

In the evening to support Mr. Asquith at the great Bingley Hall Budget meeting. To Droitwich by late train (Raven Hotel).

18 September
Droitwich.

Good meeting. Chas. N. Nicholson, M.P., and John Morgan[26] speaking for me.

E.A. Goulding, M.P.,[27] Worcester lunches with C.N.N. and me.

20 September
Hyde Park Hotel & Montagu Square.

Budget in Committee (50th Day), Discussion on Income Tax and Super Tax. To bed at Hyde Park Hotel at 3.30. All sorts of rumours in the air. It is said that Mr. Balfour[28] and Lord Lansdowne[29] do

[25]Charles Norris Nicholson (1857–1918): Lib. MP Doncaster 1906–1918; cr. baronet 1912.

[26]John Morgan: Lib. parliamentary candidate for East Worcestershire 1906 (against Austen Chamberlain) and for Worcester in the first general election of 1910.

[27]Edward Alfred Goulding (1862–1936): Con. MP Devizes 1895–1906; Unionist MP Worcester 1908–1922; cr. Baron Wargrave 1922.

[28]Arthur James Balfour (1848–1930): Con. MP for Hertford 1874–1885, Manchester East 1885–1906, City of London 1906–1922; cr. Earl of Balfour 1922; President of the Local Government Board 1885–1886; Secretary of State for Scotland 1886–1887; Chief Secretary for Ireland 1887–1891; First Lord of the Treasury and Leader of the House of Commons 1891–1892, 1895–1902; Prime Minister 1902–1905; First Lord of the Admiralty 1915–1916; Foreign Secretary 1916–1919; Lord President of the Council 1919–1922, 1925–1929; leader of Conservative Party 1902–1911.

[29]Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice (1845–1927): (as Lib.) Under-Secretary for War 1872–1874, Under-Secretary for India 1880–1881; (as Lib. Unionist): Governor-General of Canada 1883–1888; Viceroy of India 1888–1894; Secretary of State for War 1895–1900; Foreign Secretary 1900–1905; leader of Unionist peers 1903–1916; succ. as 5th Marquess of Lansdowne 1866.

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not wish the Lords to reject the Budget but that the wild Lords from the country are determined to do so. Rumour has it further that the Brewers are threatening to abandon the Tory Party and to withdraw their subscriptions to party funds unless the Budget is rejected.

Meeting of Executive Committee of Liberal League to consider Lord Rosebery's resignation of the presidency. Lord R. in the Chair – voice choked with emotion and so forth. After his Glasgow Speech denouncing the Budget as revolutionary and Socialistic, nothing for the League to do but to accept his resignation. Matter referred for final decision to a meeting of the Council to be summoned later.

23 September
House of Commons

Budget Committee (33rd day) Whiskey chiefly, and the Irish mustered in fair strength on behalf of one of the few remaining Irish industries. Late at night our majorities ran dangerously low – down to 13 in one instance. So many of our lads holiday-making or slipping off to bed at midnight without due notice to the Whips. To bed Hyde Park Hotel 6 o'clock.

27 September
House of Commons

Budget Committee (35th day). To bed at 1 o'clock, it having been agreed between the high contracting parties on both front benches that we are to have no more all night sittings on the Committee Stage.

I bet Sam Evans [afterwards President of the Admiralty and Divorce Division. Sam didn't pay me], the Solicitor-General, five pounds to one that the Lords would reject the Budget.

28 September
House of Commons

Budget Committee (36th day). Dank and dismal day. My fortieth birthday – Eheu fugaces anni labuntur![30]

[30] 'Alas! our fleeting years pass away.' A reference to Horace, *Odes* II 14.

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A witty saying. I asked Clarendon Hyde (M.P. for Wednesbury):[31]

'When does a politician cease to be a politician and become a Statesman?'

'When he receives a salary' said C.H.

29 September
House of Commons

Budget Committee (37th Day)

To dinner with St. J.[32] at the Cavendish Hotel, Jermyn Street. Found him in conversation with Lord Ribblesdale,[33] the most picturesque man of our time. He is commonly called 'The Ancestor' and his lifelike portrait by Sargent[34] was a few years ago the sensation of the Academy. He seemed to know no more than we did what is to be the fate of the Budget in the Lords. Lord Ribblesdale is weak in his 'w's. He (almost not quite) says 'v' for 'w' a fact that imparts a distinctive flavour to his delightful and only too rare speeches in the Lords. There is a further embellishment of quaint analogies from the hunting field both in his public and private talk.

30 September
House of Commons

Mother to dine with me at the House. With us Herbert Craig, M.P. and John Burns. J.B. in excellent form, taking to Mother instinctively. He told us of an amusing conversation with the Kaiser,[35] during which he developed very frank views about the German Army and the social conditions of Berlin. Burns is, I think, of all remarkable men I have met the most highly endowed with natural force of character, as he is

[31] Clarendon Hyde (1858–1934): Lib. MP Wednesbury 1906–1910; knighted 1910.

[32] William Albert St John Harmsworth (1876–1933); known as St John; younger brother of Cecil Harmsworth, with whom he edited Lord Northcliffe's *My Journey Around the World*.

[33] Thomas Lister (1854–1925): Liberal politician; Lord-in-Waiting, 1880–1885; Master of the Buckhounds 1892–1895; trustee of the National Gallery 1909–1925; succ. as. 4th Baron Ribblesdale 1876.

[34] John Singer Sargent (1856–1925): American artist who lived mostly first in Paris and then, from 1886, London.

[35] Wilhelm II of Germany (1859–1941): abdicated 1918.

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in conversation the most original. His glowing deep-set eyes and huge fists emphasising his vigorous arguments – to say nothing of his big voice and powerful chest – all combine to produce an impression of great physical and mental strength.

We had E.A.H.'s 2lb 6oz sea-trout from Costello for dinner.

Burns told us that he was the 16th of 18 children all by the same mother.

Budget Committee (38th day).

4 October
House of Commons

Budget Committee 40th Day. The Irish on the rampage in defence of their old allies the publicans.

[. . .]

I had some conversation with Mr. John Redmond[36] in the Smoking-room today. He does not believe that the sporting possibilities of Ireland will suffer under Land Purchase if the question is rightly taken in hand by sportsmen. He instanced a mountain in Wicklow belonging to a number of small farmers and used for grazing sheep. They let it to Mr. Redmond on condition that he leaves to them the business of safeguarding the game from poachers, and does not allow his keeper on the ground. He says that the grouse have increased 2- or three-fold since this arrangement was made.

7 October
House of Commons

Report Development Bill. Short speech.

8 October
House of Commons

Report Development Bill. Another short speech. By mail train in evening to Ireland.

[36]John Edward Redmond (1856–1918): Irish Nat. MP for New Ross 1881–1885, North Wexford 1885–1891, Waterford city 1891–1918; supported Charles Stuart Parnell on split of the Irish Parliamentary Party; took over leadership of Irish National League after Parnell's death, 1891; leader of reunited IPP 1900–1918.

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15 October
Chester and Stourbridge

Morning spent reviewing once more the sights of Chester including the Roman Bath behind a stationer's shop. Then leisurely to Stourbridge (Talbot Hotel) by way of Wolverhampton. Grand pro-Budget meeting with Hon. E.S. Montagu, M.P.,[37] in Town Hall.

19 October
House of Commons

Finance Bill Report (1st Day), Lucas and Dot in from Totteridge to dine with me. Also with us J.D. Rees, M.P.,[38] and Cecil Beck, M.P.[39]

27 October
House of Commons

Mr. Birrell,[40] the Chief Secretary, tells me an amusing story illustrating the methods of the Lords in conducting their business. The Irish Land Bill (1909) was before their Lordships. Lord Atkinson[41] had an amendment on the paper but losing faith in it on second thoughts he moved a manuscript amendment of almost exactly opposite intention. This second amendment Lord A. moved with a cogent

[37]Edwin Samuel Montagu (1879–1924): Lib. MP West Cambridgeshire 1906–1918, Cambridgeshire, 1918–1922; Under-Secretary of State for India 1910–1914; Financial Secretary to the Treasury 1914–1915, 1915–1916; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1915; Minister of Munitions 1916; Minister without Portfolio in charge of reconstruction 1917; Secretary of State for India 1917–1922.

[38]John David Rees (1854–1922): a member of the Indian Civil Service 1875–1901; Lib. MP Montgomery District of Boroughs 1906–1910; Unionist candidate Kilmarnock Burghs 1911; Unionist MP for Nottingham East 1912–1922; knighted 1910; cr. baronet year 1919; m. Mary Katherine Dormer 1891. Died after falling out of a moving train, and left a bizarre anti-Catholic will.

[39]Arthur Cecil Tyrrell Beck (1876–1932): Lib. MP Wisbech 1906–1910; Saffron Walden 1910–1918; Junior Lord of the Treasury 1915; Vice-Chamberlain of the Royal Household 1915–1917; Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of National Service 1917–1919; knighted 1920.

[40]Augustine Birrell (1850–1933): Lib. MP West Fife 1889–1900, Bristol North 1906–1918; President of the Board of Education 1905–1907; Chief Secretary for Ireland 1907–1916.

[41]John Atkinson (1844–1932): Con. MP Londonderry North 1895–1905; Lord of Appeal 1905–1928; cr. Baron Atkinson of Glenwilliam, County Limerick 1905.

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and convincing speech of five minutes' length and it was intimated from the Government front bench that the Government was prepared to accept it. The Lord Chancellor put the original, abandoned amendment which their sapient Lordships carried! Note, that the original amendment had not even been moved!

2 November
House of Commons

Finance Bill – Third Reading.

Mr. Spencer Leigh Hughes,[42] the defeated Liberal Candidate for Bermondsey, is a man of much wit. He was speaking at a Liberal meeting during the notorious Peckham bye-election when the brewers flooded the constituency ankle-deep in beer. 'Ladies and gentlemen,' said Mr. Hughes, 'this is a stout and bitter contest!'

3 November
House of Commons

Finance Bill – Third Reading. Wonderful speech of Mr. Ure,[43] Lord Advocate, defending himself against Mr. Balfour's charge that he had been guilty of a 'frigid and calculated lie' in respect of the Tories' ability to pay for Old Age Pensions by the tariff. Mr. Asquith said it was the finest Parliamentary Speech for twenty years. It had been arranged that F.E. Smith,[44] the brilliant young K.C., was to follow Ure, but, half-way through the Lord Advocate's Speech, it became clear that Balfour would have to reply himself. I have never seen him so agitated nor the House in so dangerous a mood. Everybody's blood was up.

[42] Spencer Leigh Hughes (1858–1920): journalist; Lib. (then Coalition Lib) MP Stockport 1910–1920.

[43] Alexander Ure (1853–1928): Lib. MP Linlithgowshire 1895–1913; Solicitor General for Scotland 1905–1909; Lord Advocate 1909–1913; Lord Justice-General for Scotland and Lord President of the Court of Session 1913–1920; cr. Baron Strathclyde of Sandyford, County Lanark 1914.

[44] Frederick Edwin Smith (1872–1930): Con. MP Liverpool Walton 1906–1918, Liverpool West Derby 1918–1919; Solicitor General for England and Wales 1915; Attorney General for England and Wales 1915–1919; Lord Chancellor 1919–1922; Secretary of State for India 1924–1928; cr. Baron Birkenhead 1919, Viscount 1921, Earl of Birkenhead 1922.

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4 November
House of Commons

Finance Bill Third Reading carried by Liberal and Labour majority of 230 – the Irish Nationalists abstaining on the plea that they do not support any measures increasing taxes in Ireland.

Luncheon at the House of Commons to Sir Benjamin Stone,[45] the amiable old Member for one of the Birmingham seats and 'photographer to the H. of C.'

5 November

To Sandown Park, Esher, to see M. Paulhan fly in his biplane.[46] A wonderful sight very pleasantly described in the *Daily Mail* of Saturday, Nov. 6th. The emotion of the voyager who first gazed 'silent on a peak in Darien' must have been trifling in comparison with mine when I saw Paulhan fly!

15 November
28 Montagu Square

C.B.H. takes chair at New Vagabonds dinner at Hotel Cecil. Dinner in honour of successful aviators – of whom only Mr J.T.C. Moore-Brabazon[47] present. Mr. M-B. has recently won *Daily Mail* £1000 prize for first circular mile flight on an all-British aeroplane. Also present Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux,[48] Postmaster General of Canada, Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P.,[49] Dr. Glazebrook F.R.S.,[50] of the National

[45]John Benjamin Stone (1838–1914): Con. MP East Birmingham 1895–1910; knighted 1892; a prolific photographer, he was known as the 'Knight of the Camera'.

[46]Louis Paulhan (1883–1963): French aviator.

[47]John Theodore Cuthbert Moore-Brabazon (1884–1964): international racing driver and aviator; first person to pilot a powered aircraft in England 1909; first member of the Royal Aero Club 1910; served in the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) in Great War; Con. MP Rochester Chatham 1918–1929, Wallasey 1931–1942; cr. Baron Brabazon of Tara 1942; Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport 1923–1924, 1924–1927; Minister of Transport, 1940–1942.

[48]Rodolphe Lemieux (1866–1937): held a range of offices in Canadian politics including Speaker of the House of Commons 1922–1930.

[49]John Henniker Heaton (1848–1914): Con. MP Canterbury 1885–1910; cr. baronet 1912.

[50]Richard Tetley Glazebrook (1854–1935): Director of the National Physical Laboratory 1899–1919; knighted 1917.

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Physical Laboratory, Teddington and about 200 others. E.A.H. receives the company.

16 November
Worcestershire.

Meeting Wribbenhall Parish Room.

18 November
Chaddesley Corbett.

Meeting. Ernest Turner[51] and C.B.H. walk from over Kinver Edge to Kinver. Tea at the Harbour Inn. Then through the Wyre Forest to Bewdley. Dinner Lion Hotel, Kidderminster.

19 November
Stoke Works.

Social meeting (tea and cake) and concert.

21 November
28 Montagu Square.

By train to town. With Daff,[52] Bud[53] and Gol[54] to the Zoo in the afternoon.

22 November

Walk from Finchley Road Station to the Hampstead Garden Suburb and back over Hampstead Heath. Cold sunny day. Theatre, 'Our Miss Gibbs' at the Gaiety.[55]

[51] Ernest Turner (d. 1917): CBH's agent in Mid-Worcestershire; killed in action during the First World War.
[52] Daphne Cecil Rosemary Harmsworth (1901–1993): daughter of Cecil Harmsworth.
[53] Cecil Desmond Bernard Harmsworth (1903–1990): son of Cecil Harmsworth.
[54] Eric Beauchamp Northcliffe Harmsworth (1905–1988): son of Cecil Harmsworth.
[55] By 'Cryptos' and James T. Tanner.

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The House of Lords begin their momentous debate on Lord Lansdowne's Budget motion: – 'That the House is not justified in giving its consent to this Bill until it has been submitted to the judgment of the country'.

23 November

House of Lords Debate. Gilded Chamber packed full and every gallery well occupied.

24 November

House of Lords Debate. Marquis of Salisbury[56] opens proceedings in a speech of unusual emphasis for the H. of Lords. Archbishop of Canterbury[57] follows in a brief statement to the effect that the Bishops as a body will not interfere. Then comes Lord Rosebery for whom everybody had been waiting. Lord R. in his later, melodramatic manner and at his best in this style. He has all the gifts of great oratory – a fine presence, beautiful voice, action, passion, language. The H. of Lords usually as cold as a place of tombs seems to spring into life under the influence of this man's speech. The revival of the year after winter-time – the strains of an organ waking the echoes in an empty Cathedral – the breathing of a spirit in a dead body – while Lord R. is speaking the H. of Lords seems equal even to its overweening pretensions of these days. Today he hits out right and left. The Budget is the most abominable thing ever devised by the malice of man – but their Lordships ought not to reject it. Such is the burden of the Speech.

[56]James Edward Hubert Gascoyne-Cecil (1861–1947), son of the third Marquess (who was Prime Minister 1885–1886, 1886–1892, 1895–1902): Con. MP (as Viscount Cranborne) Darwen 1885–1892, Rochester 1893–1903; Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office 1900–1903; Lord Privy Seal 1903–1905, also President of the Board of Trade 1905; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1922–1923; Lord President of the Council 1922–1924; Lord Privy Seal 1924–1929; Leader of House of Lords 1925–1929; Conservative leader in House of Lords 1925–1931; succ. as 4th Marquess of Salisbury 1903.

[57]Randall Thomas Davidson (1848–1930): ordained as Anglican priest 1875; Bishop of Rochester 1891–1895; Bishop of Winchester 1895–1903; Archbishop of Canterbury 1903–1928.

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25 November

House of Lords Debate on Budget. In the H. of Commons Lords' amendments to Development Bill considered. I make small speech on the clauses relating to Commons & Open Spaces. Very thin attendance in our House. Everybody thinking only of the action of the Lords.

[. . .] House rises until next Wednesday when the Prime Minister gives formal notice of Commons resolutions affirming privileges.

27 November

dine with Carr-Gomms,[58] Ashley Gardens. Afterwards to 'The Great Mrs. Alloway' – a dreary problem play.[59]

30 November
West House, Brighton.

With St. John[60] in the motor-car to the Devil's Dyke. Back by road – St. J. in his wheeled chair. Beautiful bright day.

Lords reject BUDGET by 350 to 75.

1 December
House of Commons

Mr. Asquith tables Commons remonstrance amidst much enthusiasm on our side.

. . .

Em and the babes came to the House this morning. We spent some time in the Lords who were sitting at an unwontedly early hour. They saw too the H. of Commons and Bud and Gol sat in the Prime

[58]Hubert William Culling Carr-Gomm (1877–1939): Lib. MP Rotherhithe 1906–1918; assistant private secretary to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman 1906–1908. In 1906 he married Kathleen Rome, divorcing her in 1913 after she had an affair with his fellow Liberal MP Eliot Crawshay-Williams.

[59]By Douglas Murray, which may have been a pseudonym.

[60]Albert St. John Harmsworth (1876–1933): the sixth Harmsworth brother; the first person to realise the commercial possibilities of Perrier water; a keen motorist, he was crippled in an accident in 1906.

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Minister's seat. In Westminster Hall we met John Burns who shook hands with the babes and kissed his hand to them on parting.

2 December
House of Commons

I have never seen so many Members at Prayers as were present today. After Prayers the House rapidly filled up in every corner – the Strangers' Galleries, Peers' Gallery and the others too. There were a few notices of Motions for Returns and about 35 questions. The Prime Minister had a great reception when he came in – every Liberal Member rising to his feet and cheering wildly. His speech was superb – he is by far the greatest Parliamentary figure today. His fine deep voice as ever lent tone and colour to a splendid oration.

With his fresh massive clean shaven face and fine white hair Asquith suggests to me at times a Pilgrim Father. Then again I think of him as Oliver Cromwell whom he grows to resemble more and more every year – without the warts. The highest office and responsibility have 'made' Asquith. Until recently he was strangely undervalued even by his own side in politics. His grand Budget speeches, his noble oration on Sir H.C.-B,[61] and his speech and conduct since he became Prime Minister have raised him to what is easily the first place in the H. of Commons. Balfour, who had risen from a bed of sickness and was obviously unwell, made a wretched display. With all his brilliance B. always fails on great occasions. Today the circumstances were for him exceptionally difficult. It is an open secret that he wished the Budget to pass and as a 'H. of Commons man' of longer standing than almost any other Member he must deplore the action of the Lords – or rather the overwhelming pressure that has compelled him to acquiesce in that course.

3 December
House of Commons

The last day of a great Parliament. Almost immediately after Prayers Black Rod summoned us to the Lords where the Five

[61] Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836–1908): Lib. MP for Stirling Burghs, 1868–1908; Secretary of State for War, 1892–1895; Prime Minister, 1905–1908; leader of Liberal party, 1898–1908; knighted 1895.

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Commissioners – Lords McDonnell,[62] Althorp,[63] Loreburn,[64] Haversham[65] and Pentland[66] – were sitting all in a row. The Royal Assent was announced to several Bills and then the Lord Chancellor read the King's Speech. We then trooped back to the Commons where the Speaker read the Speech from the Chairman's seat. The passage specially addressed to the Gentlemen of the H. of Commons was greeted with a little fierce cheer from our side.

. . .

We all shook hands with Mr. Lowther[67] – the greatest Speaker by all admissions within living memory – as we filed out.

7 December
Evesham.

Open Congregational Bazaar, Stourbridge. Meeting in the evening at Evesham with Mr. Albert Stanley, M.P. (N.W. Staffs).[68]

[62]Anthony Patrick MacDonnell (1844–1925): Indian civil servant 1865–1901; Permanent Under-Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland 1902–1908; cr. Baron MacDonnell 1908; Chairman of Royal Commission on Civil Service 1912–1914.

[63]Charles Robert Spencer (1857–1922): Lib. MP for North Northamptonshire 1880–1885, Mid-Northamptonshire 1885–1895, 1900–1905; cr. Viscount Althorp 1905; Lord Chamberlain 1905–1912; succ. as 7th Earl Spencer 1910.

[64]Robert Reid (1846–1923): Lib. MP for Hereford 1880–1885, Dumfries Burghs 1886–1905; Solicitor general 1894; Attorney General 1894–1895; Lord Chancellor 1905–1912; knighted 1894; cr. Baron Loreburn 1905; Earl Loreburn 1911.

[65]Arthur Divett Hayter (1835–1917): Lib. MP for Wells 1865–1868, Bath 1873–1885, Walsall 1893–1895; junior whip 1880–1882; Financial Secretary to the Treasury 1882–1885; chairman, Public Accounts Committee, 1901–1905; succ. as 2nd baronet 1878; cr. Baron Haversham 1906.

[66]John Sinclair (1860–1925): Lib. MP for Dunbartonshire 1892–1895 Forfar 1897–1909; Secretary of State for Scotland 1905–1912; Governor of Madras 1912–1919; cr. Baron Pentland 1909.

[67]James Lowther (1855–1949): Con. MP for Rutland 1883–1885, Penrith 1886–1918, Penrith and Cockermouth 1918–1921; Speaker of the House of Commons 1905–1921; cr. Viscount Ullswater 1921.

[68]Albert Stanley (1863–1915): MP North-West Staffordshire 1907–1915; first elected as a 'Lib-Lab', joined Labour Party 1910.

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10 December
Droitwich

Big meeting Salters Hall with Lord Beauchamp.[69] Lord B. dined with us previously at the Raven Hotel and with us were Mr. and Mrs. Hobson[70] [. . .] and Mr. and Mrs. E. Turner.

Lord B. tells us that the King is very angry with the Lords for rejecting the Budget and that he has promised Asquith to do everything he can to help him if he achieves a majority. Lord B. as Lord Steward is in a position to know things.

16 December
Stourport.

Excellent meeting with Mr. Frank Wright[71] of Birmingham at Stourport.

17 December
Cookley & Lower Hagley.

Good meetings.

25 December
[28 Montagu Square]

We began our day with hymns sung by the babes outside our bedroom door 'Then Shepherds watched their flocks' and the first verse of 'Hark, the herald angels sing'. Then they brought in their stockings.

We took Daff and Bud to Church (St. Mary's, Bryanston Sq.). After that our first Christmas Dinner – turkey pudding and mince pies. A little Christmas tree in the centre of the table and lots of crackers. After dinner the opening of the too many and too generous gifts of Aunts and Uncles and Cousins.

[69]William Lygon (1872–1938): Governor of New South Wales 1899–1901; Lord Steward 1907–1910; Lord President of the Council 1910, 1914–1915; First Commissioner of Works 1910–1914; Liberal leader in the House of Lords 1924–1931; succ. as 7th Earl Beauchamp 1891.

[70]George Whitworth Hobson (d. 1940): active in Midlands Liberalism until the 1930s, serving as an Alderman.

[71]Frank Wright (1853–1922): Liberal politician and manufacturer in Birmingham.

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I walked some of the way out to Poynters. E.A.H., babes and self arrive in time for tea. Mother's Christmas Dinner party[. . .]

30 December

Virtual opening of General Election campaign. Large Committee meeting at the Liberal Club, Lye.

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