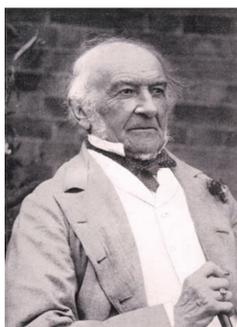


W.E. Gladstone

The Grand Old Man in Nottinghamshire



W.E. Gladstone from Thomas Archer, *William Ewart Gladstone and his contemporaries* (1898), vol. 1 (University Special Collection DAS63.4.A7).

William Ewart Gladstone (1809-98) was probably the most famous political figure of the nineteenth century. Initially a Conservative, he became a committed Liberal and served as Prime Minister of Britain and Ireland four times between 1868 and 1894. He was popularly known as 'The People's William', and, in later life, as the 'Grand Old Man', or more simply as 'G.O.M.'

Born in Liverpool of Scottish ancestry, Gladstone died at his wife's family home in Hawarden, Wales, but Nottinghamshire was the location of his earliest political success and retained a special interest for him throughout his life. This exhibition commemorates the bicentenary of Gladstone's birth on 29 December 1809. It demonstrates the diversity of Gladstone's links with the county and the city of Nottingham, and uses local material to illustrate a few of the themes that engaged Gladstone in his political career.



Illustration of the ceremony, from *Illustrated London News*, vol. 71, 6 October 1877.

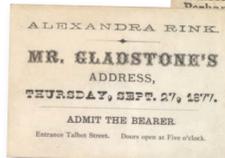
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NOTTINGHAM.

The speeches of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Carnarvon at Nottingham on Thursday week, upon the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the buildings for the new University College, were reported in the daily papers. We give an illustration of the scene at the performance of this ceremony upon the platform in Shakespeare-street, adjacent to the old Home-Fair Close. The stone was laid by the Mayor of Nottingham, Mr. J. Warren Bowers. Among those present were the Duke of St. Albans, Earl Manvers, Lord Belper, Mr. Lancelot Rolleston, High Sheriff of the county, and Mr. S. Morley, M.P., with the Duchess of St. Albans, Lady Belper, and other ladies, besides the members of the municipality and the local clergy. There was a luncheon afterwards in the Albert Hall, at which Mr. Gladstone again spoke; and he made a third speech in the evening to the Liberal Association at the Alexandra Rink.

Description of the laying of the foundation stone of University College, from *Illustrated London News*, vol. 71, 6 October 1877.

I may however presume to say that I am a stranger who made my first acquaintance with this county in a practical capacity about—indeed exactly for I believe it was in this very month—45 years ago. (Cheers.) Permit me as I have also a connection of a temporary character which gives me a great interest in all that concerns the town of Nottingham, and as it has been my part on behalf of the Park Estate in this town, to transact a good deal of business with your authorities, I naturally feel a portion of that interest which belongs properly to you, the people of the town, and am earnestly desirous, so far as I can, to bear a part in any great event, in its history, such as that of which the record will be associated with the operations had some doubt whether he would be able to make himself audible to his friends on the other side. he meant, indeed I hope he meant me, as one who sends on the other side. (Loud cheers and I likewise feel a similar doubt, but then I all. (Cheers.) We are all here with one mind and purpose, and it is desirable to mark,

Extract from Gladstone's speech, from *Nottingham Daily Journal*, 28 September 1877.



Ticket of admission to hear Gladstone speak at Alexandra Rink (University East Midlands Special Collection Not 3.F19 NOT O/S/X).



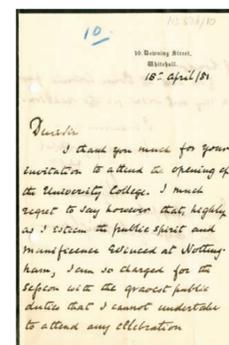
Nottingham Park, one of four views of the Park by C.J. Greenwood, published as coloured lithograph by Thomas Forman, 1850 (University ACC 830/40).

Gladstone held the seat of Newark-on-Trent as Conservative M.P. from 1832 to 1846. This brought close involvement with the estate and family affairs of the Dukes of Newcastle and their neighbours, including the Portland and Denison families. As a trustee of the Newcastle Estate, after 1864, Gladstone was personally involved in the development of Nottingham Castle and Park.



Legal document recording Gladstone's actions with other Trustees in business concerned with the Newark Estate, 3 March 1865 (University Newcastle Collection No 6 D 2/36/65/1).

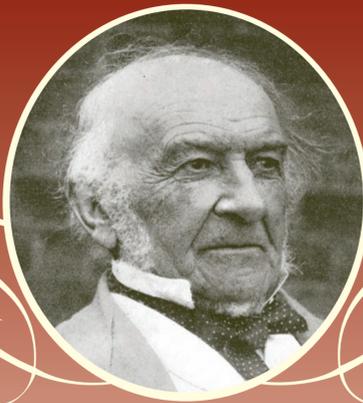
A ceremony of special significance for Nottingham and the University took place in September 1877, when the foundation stone of University College, Nottingham was laid. Gladstone gave public speeches at the ceremony and at the Alexandra Rink later the same day. The event was given extensive media coverage, both locally and nationally. Unfortunately, Gladstone's political commitments meant that he had to send his apologies when University College was formally opened in 1881.



Letter from Prime Minister Gladstone, 10 Downing Street, regretting that the gravest public duties prevent him attending the opening of Nottingham University College, 18 April 1881 (University Gripper Collection MS 678/10).

The exhibition has been curated by Dr Richard Gaunt, of the School of History at the University of Nottingham, in association with staff in the University's Manuscripts and Special Collections and Nottinghamshire Archives. It draws on material from the University's collections and from Nottinghamshire Archives and other local sources.

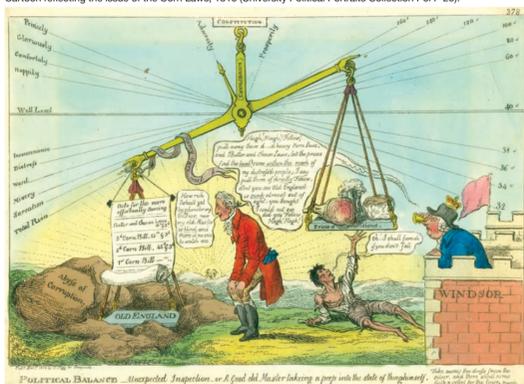




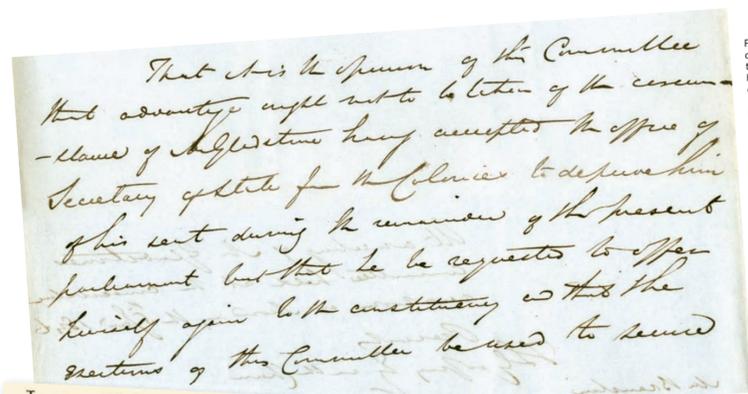
Gladstone and the Corn Laws

One of many reform issues that Gladstone became associated with was the corn laws. The price of corn was a key question in nineteenth century Britain because it had a direct impact on the price of bread. At times of economic hardship, crowds would take to the streets in support of lower prices. On several occasions there were riots in Nottingham.

Cartoon reflecting the issue of the Corn Laws, 1816 (University Political Portraits Collection Pol P 25).



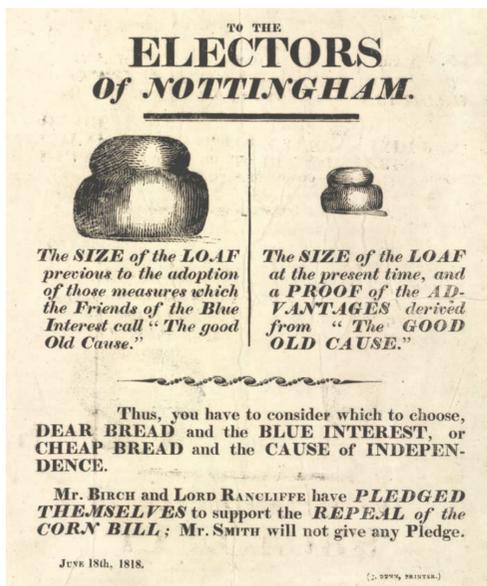
Gladstone was a supporter of the Corn Law but the Irish Potato Famine of November 1845 forced him and others to re-consider their views. He supported the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, in his decision to repeal the Corn Law. This cost Gladstone the electoral support of the 4th Duke of Newcastle, who was a keen protectionist. Gladstone gave up his Newark seat rather than cause deeper divisions, although the local election committee had resolved to support him. He remained outside Parliament for the next eighteen months.



Resolutions of Gladstone's committee, recommending that "he be requested to offer himself again to the constituency and that the exertions of this Committee be used to secure his election", 5 January 1846 (University Newcastle Collection Ne C 7894/2).

I myself had invariably, during Peel's government, spoken of protection not as a thing good in principle, but to be dealt with as tenderly and cautiously as might be according to circumstances, always moving in the direction of free trade. It then appeared to me that the case was materially altered by events; it was no longer open to me to pursue that cautious course. A great struggle really find place, on the one side for repeal, on the other side for permanent maintenance of a corn law and a protective system generally and on principle.

Extract recording Gladstone's views on protection and free trade, from John Morley, *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, vol. 1, 284 (London, 1903) (University Library DA563.4.M6).



Broadsheet about the Corn Laws, Nottingham, 1818 (University East Midlands Special Collection Not1.F19.NOT O/S, p.86).

In 1815, the British government introduced a Corn Law to protect domestic farmers from the pressure of international competition by regulating prices in the face of imports. Landowners and farmers supported this 'protectionist' policy but it was deeply unpopular with the wider population. In the Nottingham by-election of 1818, the contrasting large and small loaves came to symbolise the battle between protectionists and their 'free trade' opponents.

In the 1840s, while Gladstone was M.P. at Newark, the Anti-Corn Law League escalated the campaign against the Corn Law, using innovative techniques such as 'free trade' stickers on envelopes to spread their message.

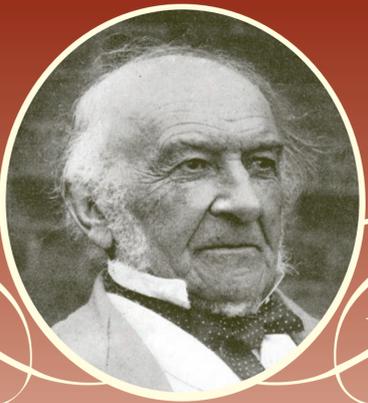


Anti-Corn Law League sticker on letter from Priscilla McLaren, sister of John Bright, 22 August 1842 (University Bright McLaren Collection N Mc 1/11).

Lord George Bentinck, the son of the 4th Duke of Portland, became the leader of the Protectionist M.P.s in Parliament. With Benjamin Disraeli, Bentinck became Peel's fiercest critic during the repeal campaign. Gladstone never forgot this. In many respects, it marked the beginning of the political feud between Gladstone and Disraeli.



Lord George Bentinck from Cassell's *Illustrated History of England* (London, 1863), Revised edition, VII, 589 (University East Midlands Special Collection Not 1.W8 HOW).



Gladstone and Slavery

James Gillray's satirical cartoon 'Barbarities in the West Indies' (1791) supports the early anti-slavery campaigners with a savage depiction of the treatment of slaves by their owners (University Political Cartoons MS 482/7).



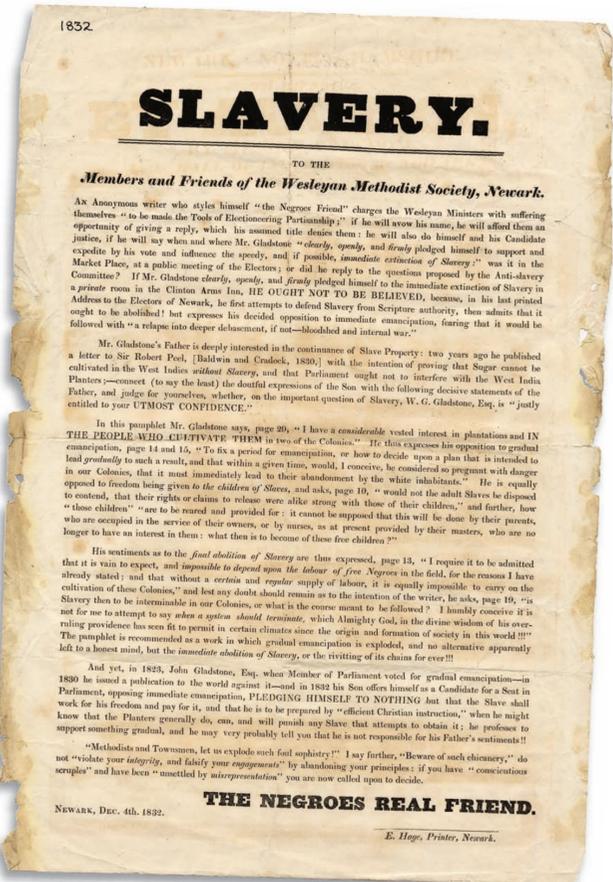
Britain had finally abolished the slave trade in 1807, after a hard fought campaign. But the condition of slavery continued to exist in the British Empire until 1833. The plight of the slaves employed on plantations in the West Indies kept the

issue alive, but there were many different political opinions on the best way forward. Public interest made the question a key issue in the General Election of 1832.



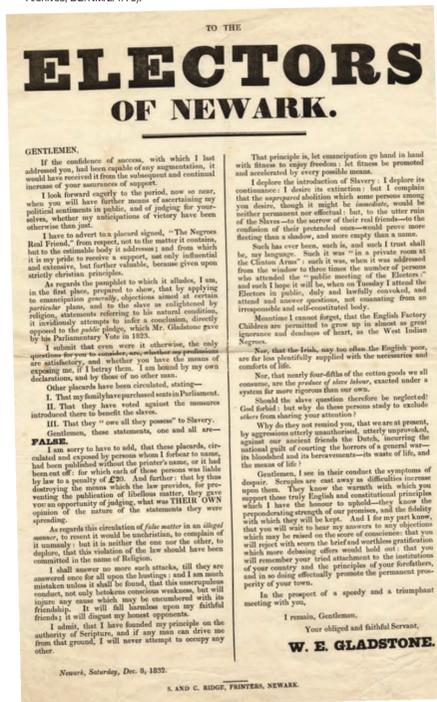
Sir John Gladstone (1764-1851), from John Morley, *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, vol.1 (London, 1903) (University Library DA563.4.M6).

Slavery was a particularly difficult question for Gladstone. His father, John, a wealthy Liverpool merchant with extensive interests in the West Indies, had publicly defended slavery in print as recently as 1830. Election handbills were issued in which charges were made against Gladstone because of his father's views.

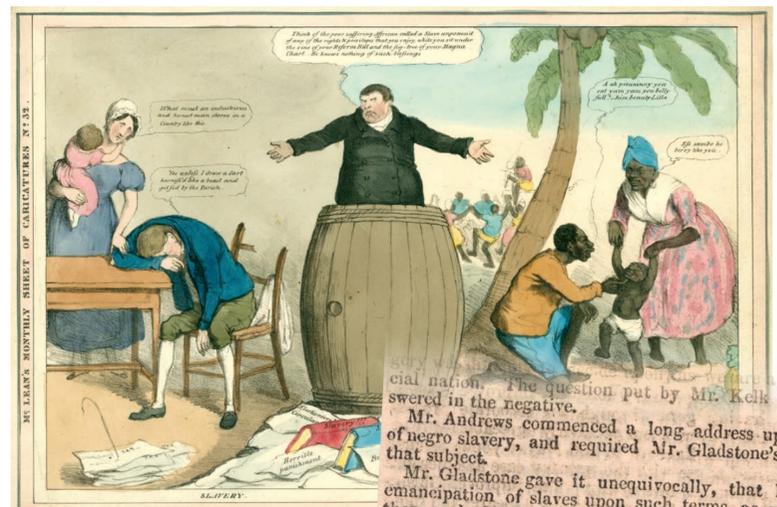


Anti-Gladstone Election Poster, 1832 (From Newark Museum Collection at Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/NM/2/1/74).

Gladstone notice to electors of Newark, 1832 (From Newark Museum Collection at Nottinghamshire Archives, DD/NM/2/1/75).



Gladstone responded with a handbill of his own in which he based his opposition to the immediate emancipation of the slaves upon passages in the Bible. Gladstone argued that slaves should not be given their freedom immediately but first had to prove their fitness to use that freedom responsibly. He supported schemes of education and apprenticeship in order to prepare slaves for a future state of independence. He also suggested that the living conditions of factory workers in England and the Irish poor were as deserving of attention as the plantation slaves in the West Indies.

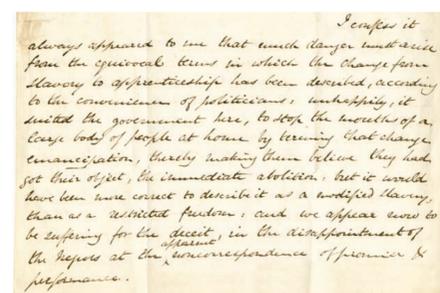


Robert Seymour's 'Slavery/Freedom' in McLean's... Caricatures, no. 32, 1 August 1832, invites the viewer to contrast the 'happy' position of the African slave, unaware of the blessings of the Reform Bill and Magna Carta, with that of a British family burdened by taxation and poverty (University Political Portraits Pol P-29).

...great commercial nation. The question put by Mr. Keble was easily answered in the negative. Mr. Andrews commenced a long address upon the subject of negro slavery, and required Mr. Gladstone's opinion upon that subject. Mr. Gladstone gave it unequivocally, that he desired the emancipation of slaves upon such terms as would preserve them and the Colonies from destruction. The slaves ought first to be fully prepared. A long discussion ensued upon this subject, to prove on the

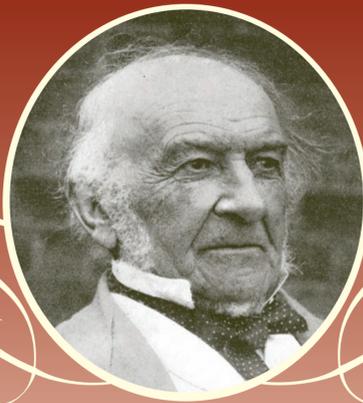
Extract from report of Gladstone's responses to questions about the freeing of slaves, from Nottingham Journal, 15 December 1832, p.2.

Gladstone was closely questioned on the issue at the election, especially by members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society who were keen supporters of abolition. His maiden speech in the House of Commons was delivered during the debates on the abolition bill in 1833. Later in the following



Extract of letter from Gladstone to the Earl of Lincoln, 27 September 1834 refers to the 'disappointment of the Negroes at the apparent noncorrespondence of promise & performance' (University Newcastle Collection Ne C 11774).

year, after reports of riots in the West Indies reached England, Gladstone commented that the government had introduced a form of 'modified slavery' rather than full emancipation.



The People's William

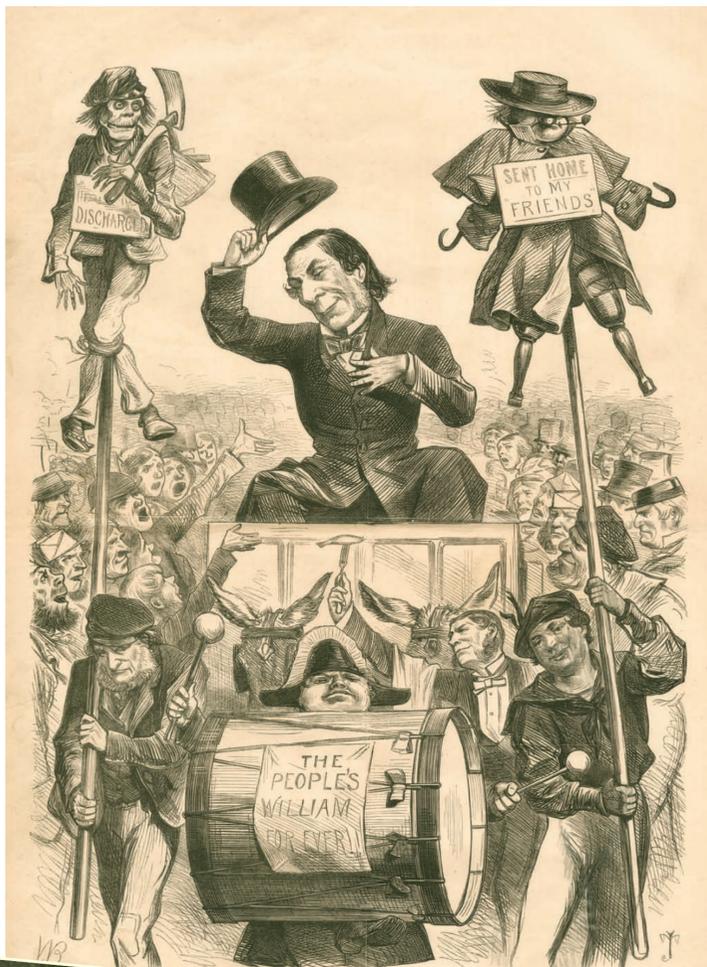
The cult of celebrity is now encouraged by a continuous stream of digital images and stories about well-known public figures — from political leaders to footballers. In Gladstone's lifetime, a revolution in mass communications was made possible by photography, the telegraph and daily newspapers. The public had new ways of hearing about their politicians. Growing literacy and an expanding political electorate extended the appetite for news.

By the 1860s, Gladstone's public speeches, characterized by their passionate delivery, attracted large crowds wherever he went. Full copies of his addresses were sought. Newspapers met the challenge by using teams of journalists who reported on Gladstone's speeches in relay, enabling very rapid publication.

HOW MR. GLADSTONE'S SPEECHES WERE REPORTED.

Few people who have read the reports of the speeches delivered by Mr. Gladstone and Earl Carnarvon on Thursday have any idea of the means by which they were produced in the newspapers. Various ideas are thrown out by the public. Some persons go so far as to suppose that a single reporter for each paper is quite sufficient, as the scribe has merely to hand over his notes to the compositor. Others who do not so readily explain the process, arrive at very erroneous conclusions, while the public, as a body, take no interest in the means at all, but simply accept the reports as they appear before them. As the result is effected by human agency only, it is obvious that to catch the words as they fall from the speaker's lips and produce about fourteen columns of such in the newspapers in a few hours afterwards, the very perfection of mental and mechanical skill has to be displayed. The system adopted by ourselves, and which no doubt was carried out by our contemporaries, was as follows:—Nine reporters constituted what we termed our corps having at their head a captain whose duty was to so arrange them that they should transcribe into long-hand the whole of the speeches almost immediately after the speakers had resumed their seats. Our corps were arranged as nearly together as possible so that the captain could look after them. As soon as the speaking commenced the first reporter took notes for five minutes, the captain being at his back to note the time. When that term was completed the first man was stopped and the second set in motion for five minutes and so on through the length of the staff. When each man had taken five minutes' turn of notes he began at once to transcribe them into long-hand, so that by the time the first man had finished his turn he had completed his copy.

Extract from account of the arrangements made by the press to report on Gladstone's speeches, from Nottingham Journal, 29 September 1877.



Advertisement from the Illustrated London News, 10 April 1886, exploits popular familiarity of Gladstone's image and reputation.

ELECTROPATHIC (BATTERY) BELT
PRICE 21s. POST-FREE. WILL LAST FOR YEARS.
 OVER A QUARTER OF A MILLION PATIENTS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY TREATED FOR RHEUMATISM, LUMBAGO, SCIATICA, GOUT, KIDNEY COMPLAINTS, EPILEPSY, PALSY, PARALYSIS, INDIGESTION, CONSTIPATION, FEMALE COMPLAINTS, GENERAL AND LOCAL DEBILITY, FUNCTIONAL DISORDERS, &c.

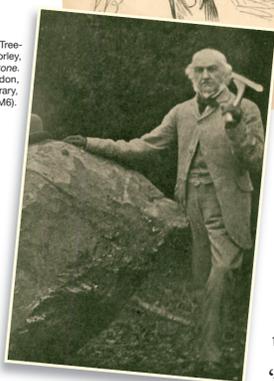
THE SECRET OUT.
 London, Mar. 9, 1886.
 Every man & woman should wear your Electropathic Belt. It has restored me to health.

MR. C. B. HARNESSES,
 The Electro-Pathic Medical Apparatus, has been prepared by the Company, and is now being widely distributed in all the principal cities of the world, and the attention of the public is drawn to the fact that the Electro-Pathic Belt, which will be found in every household, is the only one of its kind in the world.

Medical Battery Co., Ltd., 52, OXFORD-STREET, LONDON

Manufacturers exploited the instant recognition of Gladstone's image by associating it with their commercial products, illustrating the convergence of politics, celebrity and marketing. An advertisement in 1886 for an unmistakable image of Gladstone and his axe.

'Mr. Gladstone, 1886: Tree-Felling', from John Morley, The Life of Gladstone. Popular edition ... (London, 1927) (University Library, DA563.4.M6).



Gladstone's celebratory 'chaining' by his electors is illustrated in 'The Triumph of Greenwich' from Judy, or the serio-comic journal, 1 November 1871.

When he entered parliament, few members of the public would have recognized Gladstone. They learned his appearance from newspaper sketches and political cartoons. As Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 1850s and 1860s, Gladstone became known as 'the People's William' and the demand for images

grew. Photographers responded with pictures of him in both official and informal settings. He was often shown with trees and axes, because people knew that tree felling was one of his favourite pastimes.

The Gladstone bag — a product still familiar today — was apparently named after him by an admirer, J.G. Beard, a leather manufacturer.

FISHER'S GLADSTONE BAG.
 FITTINGS REMOVABLE.

In Plated, £6.
 In Silver, £7.
 18 in.

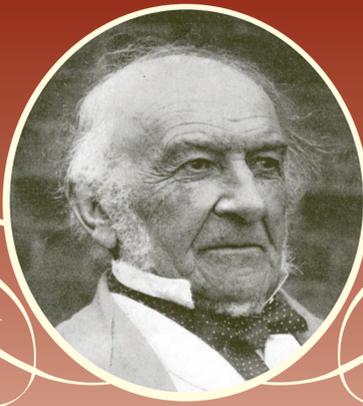
CATALOGUES FREE.

By the time of his death, the Gladstone Bag was being marketed by a number of companies; from The Graphic, 28 May 1898.

By the end of his lifetime, Gladstone was a 'celebrity' politician who not only kissed babies on the election hustings but even had them named after him, as a local record bears witness!

NAMES OF MEMBERS.			
No.	Name.	Date of Admission.	Removal or Death.
4014	Wilton, Ganney Mrs	" "	Sept 1884 Transferred to London Road St. Matthews
4015	Beeler, William Broad Gladstone	" "	Transferred 1892 to Broad St. C.C. Church
4016	Ornithage, Charles Nicholale	" "	Nov 1, 1905 - Transferred to All Saints St. Michaels
4017	Gason, Charles	By Transfer from Lancaster St. Church	
4018	Robinson, David Mrs	By Transfer from St. Paul's Church	

Membership register for Castle Gate Congregational Church 1790-1912 includes an admission in 1904 of 'William Ewart Gladstone Dexter' (University Castle Gate Congregational Church Archive, CU/R2/1).



Gladstone Commemorated

Magazines such as *The Graphic*, 4 June 1898, illustrated the progress of Gladstone's coffin, from his home in Hawarden, Wales, by special train to London.



By the time of his death, in May 1898, Gladstone had become a national figure with a public recognition which went beyond politics. Although he had retired from official life in 1894, his death was treated as a moment of national significance, comparable to the passing of the Duke of Wellington in 1852. Gladstone was accorded a public funeral and newspapers rushed out souvenir editions to mark the event. Columns of print were devoted to memorializing Gladstone and assessing his contribution to public life.

Over a century later, evidence of his public commemoration can still be seen in the streets of cities across Britain, including Nottingham. The name 'Gladstone Street' has an obvious connection, but 'Ewart Road' also pays homage, referring to Gladstone's middle name.



Street names around Nottingham commemorating Gladstone. Photographs by M. Quinn, University of Nottingham Manuscripts & Special Collections, 2009.

The Gladstone public house, Loscoe Road, Carrington. Photograph by M. Quinn, University of Nottingham Manuscripts & Special Collections, 2009.



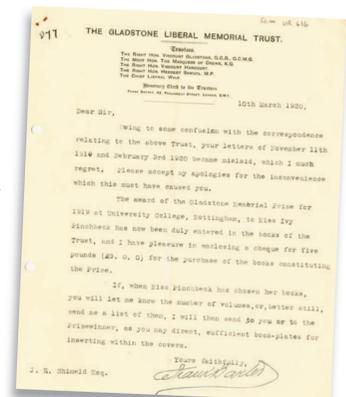
The survival of a public house, 'The Gladstone', in Carrington has more than an element of irony about it. Gladstone had begun his political life deeply opposed to the policy of opening public houses during election time in order to provide free beer to political supporters. As Prime Minister, Gladstone's licensing laws were also believed to be less generous than those later introduced by Disraeli.



Cobden, Gladstone and Bright, on the Nottingham Daily Express Building. Photograph by M. Quinn, University of Nottingham Manuscripts & Special Collections, 2009.

Some memorials date from Gladstone's lifetime. The nineteenth-century taste for images of political figures in public buildings ensured a lasting Gladstone presence in the heart of Nottingham. In 1876 Watson Fothergill's new building for the *Nottingham Daily Express* on Upper Parliament Street included the head of Gladstone alongside Richard Cobden and John Bright. With their prominence as leaders of the Anti-Corn Law League (1838-46) these were suitable subjects for the Liberal newspaper to commemorate.

Within Nottingham University Collection, a different kind of memorial was maintained. For some decades after his death a Gladstone Memorial Prize was awarded for performance in History or Political Economy. Recipients of the essay prize included Ivy Pinchbeck and J.D. Chambers, both of whom went on to become historians of note.



Letter from the Gladstone Liberal Memorial Trust informs the Registrar of University College that Ivy Pinchbeck has won the 1919 award (University archives UR 616).

