

# **Papers of the Prime Ministers of Great Britain**

**Series Eight:**

**THE PAPERS OF  
WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE**

# **PAPERS OF THE PRIME MINISTERS OF GREAT BRITAIN**

## **Series Eight: The Papers of William Ewart Gladstone**

*Part Ten: Letter Books and Registers of Letters from the  
Gladstone Papers at The British Library, London.*

Temporary Guide

First Published in 1997 by Primary Source Media Ltd.

Copyright © Primary Source Media Ltd. and  
The British Library London.

Filmed by The British Library, London.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise without the prior permission of Primary Source Media Limited.

PRIMARY SOURCE MEDIA LTD.  
50 Milford Road  
Reading  
Berkshire RG1 8LJ  
England

PRIMARY SOURCE MEDIA LTD.  
12 Lunar Drive  
Woodbridge  
Connecticut 06525  
USA

## **CONTENTS**

### **Page**

Technical Note	5
Publisher's Note	7
Introduction	9
Contents of Reels	17



## **TECHNICAL NOTE**

Primary Source Media has set itself the highest standards in the field of archivally-permanent library microfilming. Our microfilm publications conform to the recommendations of the guides to good microforming and micropublishing practice and meet the standards established by the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Attention should be drawn to the nature of the original material. Printed material and manuscript documents from The British Library sometimes consist of articles, records and correspondence printed or written with a variety of inks and pens and on paper which has become severely discoloured or stained which renders the original document difficult to read. Occasionally volumes have been tightly bound and this leads to text loss. These original characteristics present difficulties of image and contrast which stringent tests and camera alterations cannot entirely overcome. Every effort has been made to minimise these difficulties though there are some few pages which have proved impossible to reproduce satisfactorily. Conscious of this we have chosen to include these pages in order to make available the complete volume, bundle or file.

The collection is presented as filmed by the British Library, London.



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Primary Source Media is proud to present the **Papers of William Ewart Gladstone**, the eighth in the series of **Papers of the Prime Ministers of Great Britain**. This microfilm edition combines materials from The British Library's extensive collection of political manuscripts with the most complete collection anywhere available of Gladstone's *Printed Speeches*, that of St. Deiniol's Residential Library, close to Gladstone's family home, Hawarden Castle, Wales. From The British Library the *Special Correspondence*, *General Correspondence*, *Notes for Speeches* and *Letter Books and Registers* are here represented in full.

The series will be of central interest not only to those studying this exceptional Victorian, but to anyone working on the Nineteenth Century. It will enable the reader to study not only Gladstone's views, but, through his exchange of correspondence, those of almost every leading political, literary, and social figure of the Nineteenth Century, on a huge variety of subjects.

A number of individuals and institutions have contributed to this comprehensive microfilm collection. Along with acknowledgements for the help and co-operation extended by The British Library and St. Deiniol's Library, we are especially grateful to Dr. P.J. Jagger, Warden and Chief Librarian, St. Deiniol's Library and Sir William Gladstone, Hawarden Castle. Finally, a special acknowledgment and thank you are due to Professor Colin Matthew, F.B.A. without whose generous advice and contribution this microfilm collection could not have been realised.





# INTRODUCTION

## **William Ewart Gladstone and His Papers**

**by Prof. H.C.G. Matthew, FBA. Lecturer in Gladstone Studies, Christ Church College and Tutor in Modern History, St. Hugh's College, Oxford.**

William Ewart Gladstone was born in 1809 and died in 1898. His life thus spanned the highnoon of Britain's epoch as a world power, and the offices he held placed him at the centre of that power: President of the Board of Trade, Colonial Secretary, Master of the Mint, Chancellor of the Exchequer in four different administrations, and four times Prime Minister (1868-74, 1880-85, 1886, 1892-94).

This was an exceptional executive political career, lasting from Gladstone's start in office in 1834 to his final resignation as Prime Minister sixty years later.

Gladstone was born in Liverpool, the son of a merchant prince of the industrial revolution, John Gladstone, who moved from the Scottish borders to Lancashire, made a fortune from the American corn trade, invested heavily in sugar plantations in the West Indies worked by slave labour, and retired to Fasque, his estate in Kincardineshire on the east coast of his native Scotland. He was made a Baronet by Sir Robert Peel in 1846.

William Gladstone was sent by his father to be educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford: the best education that money could at that time buy. A devout Anglican, he considered going into the Church, but, under his father's influence, chose instead a career in politics. He was elected as a Tory in 1832 for Newark, a borough partially under the political influence of the Duke of Newcastle. Though he began his political career as a strong Tory, he moved towards liberalism over religious and fiscal questions in the 1840s and became the dominant figure in the liberal party in the second half of the century. He sat for various English seats, including the University of Oxford, before fighting the famous Midlothian election campaign in 1880. He held the Midlothian seat until he retired as an M.P. at the general election of 1894.

Gladstone was thus at the centre of the key events of Victorian Britain: he supported Peel over the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 and his years as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 1850s and 1860s consolidated free-trade and minimal state spending. His first Government established a systematic education system in England and legislated for trade unions and university reform, abolishing most religious tests in the ancient universities. All his governments were involved in Irish legislation, disestablishing the Irish church in 1869, reforming Irish land legislation in 1870 and 1881, and proposing Home Rule as a solution to the constitutional paralysis of Britain and Ireland in 1886 and 1893; the 1886 Home Rule Bill split his party. Gladstone occupied Egypt in 1882 and was Prime Minister at the time of the 'Scramble for Africa'. He was involved in the first Boer War in South Africa in the 1880s and in the Ashantee War of 1873-4. His government introduced important liberalising reforms in India in the 1880s and confronted Russia over expansion in Central Asia. Though very resistant to expanding Britain's formal imperial responsibilities, Gladstone as Prime Minister proved an extensive if reluctant imperialist. This long career in Cabinet politics did not prevent him from extensive literary work. He published over twenty books and one hundred long articles in Victorian periodicals on a wide variety of subjects, from theology through Italian unity to the design of bookcases.

He was one of the founders of modern oratory, pioneering the view that Cabinet Ministers should speak directly to the people as well as to the House of Commons (a view which Queen Victoria predictably deplored). Involving the extended electorate in the drama of politics in a way which was both charismatic and rationalist was perhaps Gladstone's most distinctive service to the concept of representative government.

Gladstone was also famous for 'rescuing' prostitutes from the streets of London, chopping down trees, chewing each mouthful of food thirty-two times, and filling his hot-water bottle with thick soup (because it retained heat longer).

This was, then, a life of quite exceptional energy, range and variety. It is preserved for us in the various collections of Gladstone's papers, much of which this series of microfilms makes generally available.

### **The Gladstone Papers**

From the start, Gladstone corresponded with a wide range of people: political, literary, and theological, European, American, and colonial. Also from the start, he kept their correspondence, and they tended to keep his. His huge collection was kept at Hawarden Castle, his wife's home in Flintshire (North Wales) where he spent most of his time when not required to be in London. There he built a room called the 'Temple of Peace' to house his library and the 'Octagon' to house his archival collection. Unfortunately the 'Octagon' was rather damp, which accounts for the water stains sometimes noticeable on Gladstonian documents.

Gladstone sorted his papers himself and left them in fair order for his first biographer, the liberal author and politician John Morley. The collection has been broken up, but fortunately into only three parts, each of which is now well housed and conserved. The main bulk of the papers dealing with national affairs went to the British Museum in 1930. Their 750 volumes constitute the largest collection of political manuscripts in what is now The British Library and perhaps also the most important. It is from these that most of this microfilm series is drawn.

Before the papers were taken to the British Museum, they were sifted at Hawarden by A. Tilney Bassett, the Gladstone family's archivist. He kept back what he regarded as minor political documents - about 50,000 of them - and these are now available together with the voluminous Gladstone family correspondence at Hawarden, where they are produced for the reader in the Clwyd Record Office.

The third part of the collection, Gladstone's very personal diary from 1825 to 1896 and its accompanying papers was given to the Archbishop of Canterbury. These have now been published, together with other documents, as M.R.D. Foot and H.C.G. Matthew, eds., *The Gladstone Diaries with Cabinet Minutes and Prime-Ministerial Correspondence*, 14 volumes (1968-95). This includes Gladstone's daily diary (over 27,000 entries), his records of the 550 Cabinet meetings which he as Prime Minister attended and over 7,000 of the most important of his Prime Ministerial letters. In his diary entries, Gladstone mentions most of his correspondents day-by-day, and when in government much of that correspondence relates to cabinet affairs described in the diary. The Index volume of *The Gladstone Diaries* has an extensive subject index as well as a listing of 22,000 of his correspondents with their dates and occupations. It offers a sophisticated analytic entry to the Gladstone papers in The British Library and consequently, the reader

## INTRODUCTION

will find it a useful publication to use alongside this microfilm edition of the Gladstone Papers in The British Library.

### Speeches

We start with a small but fascinating and largely unknown section of the papers: the most complete collection available of Gladstone speeches. From an early age, these were reported *verbatim* in the press. A press-cuttings book was started and was kept up volume-by-volume not just by Gladstone himself, but by his wife Catherine, his children and his secretaries. Eventually there were many volumes, which are in St. Deiniol's Residential library which Gladstone founded in Hawarden. They comprise the first twelve reels of Part I. Many of these cuttings are from local newspapers only available at The British Library Newspaper Division in Colindale, and in some cases not even there. This is an exceptional, perhaps unique, record of British political oratory.

Together with it in the series are the speech notes (now in The British Library) which Gladstone used for his speeches. He began keeping these notes in 1825 (the same year as his journal starts) when at Eton College, and they run through to 1896, his last big public address. It is fascinating to compare these brief notes - often a couple of sides only - with the two-hour speeches derived from them.

An attempt at a printed collection of Gladstone's speeches was made at the end of his life by two Liberal admirers, but they only published the last two of the planned twelve volumes! This collection of speeches is here made generally available for the first time.

### Special Correspondence

The series then follows the arrangement of the Gladstone Papers in The British Library, where a division is made, following the conventions of that institution's cataloguing, into Special Correspondence and General Correspondence.

The Special Correspondence groups letters by volume under named correspondents: that is, all the letters from Lord Palmerston are in chronological order in the Palmerston volume. The Special Correspondence volumes are mostly 'in' letters - that is, letters *from* correspondents to Gladstone. But they also include the more important 'out' letters, that is, letters by Gladstone to other people. Gladstone had two ways of recording his 'out' letters when in office. The mass of them were transcribed by the secretary into the Letter Book (see below) but the more important were copied onto a separate sheet of paper, sometimes by Gladstone himself. Gladstone usually indicated on the holograph letter how it was to be copied: one tick in the bottom left-hand corner of the first page meant 'transcribe into the Letter Book', two ticks meant 'copy on a separate sheet of paper'. When these separate copies are of letters to someone with a volume in the Special Correspondence, the copy of the letter will be found in its chronological place in that volume.

The Gladstone Special Correspondence volumes are exceptionally rich. They contain letters in long series from most of those at the forefront of Victorian public life (except the Queen herself: her letters were deposited at The British Library by the family but not donated). The Special Correspondence is a roll-call of the Victorian 'great and good' (and bad!): Lord Aberdeen, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the 14th Earl of Derby, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, and Lord Rosebery among the Prime Ministers; John Bright, Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, Edward Cardwell, Lord Ripon, Lord

Spencer and a host of other Liberal Cabinet colleagues. Among religious figures are Cardinals Manning and Newman, Anglicans like Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand, the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury, G.V. Wellesley, Samuel Wilberforce and nonconformists like Christopher Newman Hall.

The Special Correspondence is by no means limited to the world of public affairs. There are volumes of correspondence with publishers (Alexander Macmillan, John Murray, James Knowles and W.H. Rideing of the *North American Review*) and with poets and writers (Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, Francis Doyle, Arthur Hallam, Martin Tupper, Richard Monckton Milnes, R.H. Hutton and F.T. Palgrave). There are a number of volumes dealing with the secret corners of Victorian public life, for example that of Katharine O'Shea, the mistress and then the wife of Charles Stewart Parnell, and that of Georgiana, Duchess of Sutherland, Mistress of the Robes to Queen Victoria for most of the early part of her reign.

The Special Correspondence volumes do not only contain letters. On occasion there are memorials sent in by the correspondent, memoranda by Gladstone about the correspondent, some printed papers about the topic which the letters are about, and various lists and odds and ends. They repay serendipity.

In two cases where the other side of the correspondence - the original letters by Gladstone - also exists in The British Library, this has been included in this edition. Gladstone's letters to Lord Aberdeen and to John Bright will be found on separate reels in the Part in which their 'in' letters are included.

Some of the Special Correspondence volumes cover a very long chronological span. That with Walter James, Gladstone's Peelite friend, runs from 1844 to 1892 and that with Sir Thomas Acland, a school friend who served with Gladstone throughout his political career, from 1830 to 1896. One of the largest series is that of correspondence with the 8th Duke of Argyll; it runs from 1849 to 1896 and occupies nine volumes in The British Library. It covers a mass of topics: religion, Darwinianism, Ireland, India, foreign affairs and literature: a Victorian miniature in itself.

## **General Correspondence**

If the Special Correspondence deals with Gladstone's frequent correspondence with a number of close friends and colleagues, the General Correspondence deals with his occasional correspondence. It is differently arranged: the letters are in a continuous chronological sequence from 1826 to 1898 (175 volumes in The British Library). It is not known exactly how many letters there are in this vast series, but there must be in excess of 30,000. When there is a separate copy of Gladstone's reply to a correspondent whose letters are in the General Correspondence, it is included in its chronological place.

Though there are, by definition, fewer letters *per* correspondent in the General Correspondence, that does not mean that the correspondents or their letters are of less interest than those in the Special Correspondence. The General Correspondence includes letters from an astonishing range of people, from common prostitutes whose welfare Gladstone was seeking to improve to foreign monarchs such as William I of Germany, Leopold II of Belgium, Alexander II and III of Russia, and the Khedive of Egypt.

Almost all Victorian politicians who are not in the Special Correspondence have letters scattered across the General Correspondence: Disraeli, Salisbury, and Parnell lead a huge list. Literary figures are there in abundance: Tennyson, Oscar Wilde, J.A. Symonds, William Morris, J.L. Motley, Oliver Wendell Holmes, J.R. Lowell, Alessandro Manzoni, Alexis de Tocqueville. Anglican churchmen and women, Roman

## INTRODUCTION

Catholics, nonconformists, Unitarians and other religious figures not surprisingly are well represented. So too are political organisations throughout the world. There are many letters on Ireland from America, on Italian unity, on imperialism and conditions in the colonies.

There are many curious corners in the General Correspondence which browsing will reveal. There are artefacts - wax seals, an iron crucifix found on the island of Iona, locks of hair - and there are mementoes of various sorts, verses from children, abusive letters, poems, and splendid 'Memorials' from American cities supporting Irish Home Rule. There are scraps of Gladstoniana, jottings of notes and drafts of replies, even the odd caricature.

### Letter Books

When in office, Gladstone recorded his 'out' letters (i.e. letters to a correspondent) in Letter Books, unless the letter was of unusual importance (when, as described above, it was separately copied and will be found in the relevant place in the Special or General Correspondence). These Letter Books are large ledgers, and they contain a huge number of letters - probably in the order of 15,000 letters. Letters were transcribed daily into the Letter Books by the private secretaries. Their handwriting is on the whole legible. At the back of each volume, an alphabetical record of the names of the correspondents was kept together with the dates of Gladstone's letters to them. This is therefore an excellent record of Gladstone's ministerial work, for most of the letters in the Letter Books deal with government business and policy.

The more important of them have been published in *The Gladstone Diaries with Cabinet Minutes and Prime-Ministerial Correspondence* and in A. Ramm, ed., *The Political Correspondence of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville*, 4v., but there are many hitherto unpublished letters in this collection.

Many of the letters in the Letter Books relate to the decisions of the 550 meetings of the Cabinet which Gladstone chaired. Gladstone's Cabinet minutes (he was the first Prime Minister systematically to record Cabinet decisions) are all printed in *The Gladstone Diaries*.

When Gladstone was not in office, he did not maintain the Letter Books, and only occasionally made copies of his voluminous correspondence. Such copies are found in the relevant place in the Special and General Correspondence.

### Conclusion

This is an exceptionally rich and wide-ranging collection of papers, worthy of the career it records. This microfilm edition makes systematically available all the correspondence in the predominant part of it, that in The British Library. In so doing it makes a major contribution to international scholarship.

It enables the reader to study not only Gladstone's views but, through the range of the replies to his letters, those of the leading figures of the nineteenth century on a huge variety of subjects. Three may be mentioned as examples.

Gladstone's position over the American Civil War was ambivalent and controversial: in a famous speech at Newcastle in 1862 he appeared to recognise the claims of the Confederacy; other extra-parliamentary speeches then and subsequently in the St. Deiniol's collection enable the reader to set these remarks in

context and to compare them with the large correspondence they engendered: many letters in the General Correspondence for 1862 and 1863, together with Gladstone's replies in the Letter Books, and letters to and from Palmerston and Russell in the Special Correspondence.

Gladstone's 'Bulgarian atrocities' campaign of 1876 and his subsequent widening of this attack into a general condemnation of 'Beaconsfieldism' can be similarly traced. Here the relationship between the many public speeches - often quite short, with reports now only easily findable in the St. Deiniol's collection and the correspondents is critical. The 'Eastern Question' crisis of 1876-80 marked the emergence of Balkan nationalism as a central question of European diplomacy. Gladstone's role in encouraging Balkan nations against 'the unspeakable Turk' was more ambivalent than his famous 'bag and baggage' speech of 1876 suggested. The twists and turns in public addresses and private correspondence is ideally illustrated in this microfilm edition.

Ireland dominates this Gladstone edition, just as it did the nineteenth century. Gladstone spoke more speeches and wrote more letters on Ireland than on any other question. Church, land, violence, the origins of the modern Secret Service, the constitutional crisis and the liberal split of 1885-6, the attempts at Home Rule, all fill volumes of the St. Deiniol's speeches and the General and Special Correspondence. There can be no doubt that the Gladstone collection is the single most important archive for the study of Ireland and governmental politics in the nineteenth century. And, given the disappearance of Parnell's papers, it is a central source for Parnell's years as leader of the Irish Nationalist Party.

Like all such large collections, this microfilm edition of the Gladstone papers is more complicated than at first glance it seems. It will reward the diligent reader with many surprising additions to the simple format of the letter. Browsing in the index - whether in the printed or the electronic version - and in the volumes will always produce unexpected results. The Gladstone Papers, like Gladstone himself and indeed like most Victorians, are the more complex and the more rewarding the more they are studied.

The reader may find the following notes helpful:

Gladstone developed his own system of number abbreviations for use in his diaries and used it freely in copies of letters and in memoranda. His main abbreviations are:

m = a thousand (the Italian for a thousand being 'mille')

m = a million

m = a thousand million

When annotating quickly, Gladstone often used Italian words; the most frequent of these is 'ma' (but), written in the margin to express qualification or disapproval.

### ***Editions of Gladstoniana:***

*The Gladstone Diaries with Cabinet Minutes and Prime-Ministerial Correspondence*, ed. M.R.D. Foot and H.C.G. Matthew., 14 v. (1968-95)

*The Prime Ministers' Papers: W.E. Gladstone*, ed. J. Brooke and M. Sorensen, 4 v. (1971-81)

*The Gladstone Papers* (1930)

*The Political Correspondence of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville*, ed. A. Ramm, 4 v. (1952-62)

## INTRODUCTION

*Correspondence on church and religion of W.E. Gladstone*, ed. D.C. Lathbury, 2 v. (1910)  
P. Guedella, *The Queen and Mr. Gladstone*, 2 v. (1933)  
P. Guedella, *The Palmerston Papers, Gladstone and Palmerston 1851-1865* (1928)  
A. Tilney-Bassett, *Gladstone to his wife* (1936)  
A. Tilney-Bassett, *Gladstone's Speeches* (1916)  
W.E. Gladstone, *Gleanings from past years* 7 v. (1879)  
W.E. Gladstone, *Later Gleanings* (1897)

### ***Biographies of Gladstone:***

There are many biographical studies of Gladstone. The chief are:

John Morley, *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, 3 v. (1903)  
J.L. Hammond, *Gladstone and the Irish Nation* (1938)  
S.G. Checkland, *The Gladstones. A family biography 1764-1851* (1971)  
H.C.G. Matthew, *Gladstone, 1809-1874* (1986) and *Gladstone 1875-1898* (forthcoming)  
R.T. Shannon, *Gladstone*, vol.i (1982)  
P. Stansky, *Gladstone* (1979)

My biography contains a bibliographical survey of published works on Gladstone. The Index volume of *The Gladstone Diaries* includes a bibliography of Gladstone's publications, a comprehensive list of his life-time's reading, and a subject index which anyone using his correspondence in The British Library will find useful.

H.C.G. Matthew  
November 1993





# **PAPERS OF THE PRIME MINISTERS OF GREAT BRITAIN**

**Series Eight:**                *The Papers of William Ewart Gladstone*

**Part Ten:**                    *Letter Books and Registers of Letters from the Gladstone Papers at The British Library, London*

## **CONTENTS OF REELS**

### **REEL ONE**

Add. Ms. 44527	Vol. 442	1835 - 1844
Add. Ms. 44528	Vol. 443	1845 - 11 November 1853

### **REEL TWO**

Add. Ms. 44529	Vol. 444	12 November 1853 - 19 December 1854
Add. Ms. 44530	Vol. 445	20 December 1854 - 2 May 1860

### **REEL THREE**

Add. Ms. 44531	Vol. 446	3 May 1860 - 13 August 1861
Add. Ms. 44532	Vol. 447	14 August 1861 - 14 August 1862

### **REEL FOUR**

Add. Ms. 44533	Vol. 448	15 August 1862 - 25 November 1863
Add. Ms. 44534	Vol. 449	25 November 1863 - 14 January 1865

### **REEL FIVE**

Add. Ms. 44535	Vol. 450	1865
Add. Ms. 44536	Vol. 451	1866 - 30 June 1869

### **REEL SIX**

Add. Ms. 44537	Vol. 452	1 July 1869 - 24 November 1869
Add. Ms. 44538	Vol. 453	25 November 1869 - 29 July 1870

### **REEL SEVEN**

Add. Ms. 44539	Vol. 454	29 July 1870 - 11 April 1871
Add. Ms. 44540	Vol. 455	12 April 1871 - 2 December 1871

### **REEL EIGHT**

Add. Ms. 44541	Vol. 456	30 November 1871 - 27 August 1872
Add. Ms. 44542	Vol. 457	27 August 1872 - 22 October 1873

**REEL NINE**

Add. Ms. 44543	Vol. 458	23 October 1873 - 31 March 1874
Add. Ms. 44544	Vol. 459	1880 - 2 July 1881

**REEL TEN**

Add. Ms. 44545	Vol. 460	26 July 1881 - 18 September 1882
Add. Ms. 44546	Vol. 461	19 September 1882 - 23 November 1883

**REEL ELEVEN**

Add. Ms. 44547	Vol. 462	24 November 1883 - 9 April 1885
Add. Ms. 44548	Vol. 463	10 April 1885 - 1887

**REEL TWELVE**

Add. Ms. 44549	Vol. 464	1892 - 1894
Add. Ms. 44550	Vol. 465	1858 - 20 January 1859

**REEL THIRTEEN**

Add. Ms. 44551	Vol. 466	24 January 1859 - 19 March 1859
----------------	----------	---------------------------------

**REEL FOURTEEN**

Add. Ms. 44552	Vol. 467	September 1841 - April 1842
Add. Ms. 44553	Vol. 468	September 1841 - December 1843

**REEL FIFTEEN**

Add. Ms. 44554	Vol. 469	May 1842 - December 1844
Add. Ms. 44555	Vol. 470	1844 - February 1845

**REEL SIXTEEN**

Add. Ms. 44556	Vol. 471	December 1845 - July 1846
Add. Ms. 44557	Vol. 472	[1845] - 1855