

G. M. Trevelyan

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“Billy Pitt, damn his eyes!” exclaimed G. M. Trevelyan when he discussed Pitt the Younger’s legislation aimed at suppressing the Corresponding Societies in England in the era of the French Revolution.¹ That Trevelyan was born more than three-quarters of a century after the events in question took place, did nothing to dampen the ardor of his convictions. One would expect no less from the grand-nephew of Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay and the son of George Otto Trevelyan, the author of a famous biography of Whig Prime Minister Charles James Fox.

The English historian George Macaulay Trevelyan brought a great literary talent to the writing of history. Planted firmly in the tradition of Whig and Liberal principles articulated by Macaulay² in the mid nineteenth century, Trevelyan's work described the history of religious freedom and personal liberty in England. An abiding faith in the unbreakable bonds between history and literature form another major theme of his life, and directed him toward a complete reliance on narrative history. Unfortunately for Trevelyan this focus on the narrative, especially when wedded to his Whig ideology, limited his objectivity and his skills as a critical historian.

An awareness of these limitations did not elude Trevelyan. Writing a brief autobiographical sketch, Trevelyan reflected on his career:

I have been not an original but a traditional kind of historian. The best that can be said of me is that I tried to keep up to date a family tradition as to the relation of history to literature, in a period when the current was running strongly in the other direction towards history exclusively ‘scientific’, a period therefore when my old fashioned ideas and practice have had, perhaps, a certain value as counterpoise.³

¹A. L. Rowse, *Historians I Have Known* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd, 1996), 2.

²Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay (1800-1859) was an eminent Whig historian. His most famous work is *The History of England from the Accession of James II* (Boston: Philips, Sampson, and Company, 1849-61. 5 vols.)

³G. M. Trevelyan, *An Autobiography and Other Essays* (London: Longman’s Green and Co., 1949), 1.

This quote goes very far toward describing Trevelyan's career as an historian. His version of history in the Whig-Liberal tradition continued even after the collapse of the Liberal party itself. These Liberal ideals⁴ asserted themselves in his choice of subject matter: a continuance of late Stuart history where Macaulay had left it, a study of Lord Grey and the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832, a biography of the Italian freedom fighter Garibaldi, and a biography of Sir Edward Grey, Liberal Foreign Secretary at the outbreak of the Great War. He eschewed scientific history in favor of the literary approach and Whig principles of his great uncle Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay and his father Sir George Otto Trevelyan - a historical philosophy that stressed ideals of progress and liberty, expressed in elegant and accessible prose.

“The Trevelyans are a very old family,” wrote Trevelyan in his biography of his father.⁵ While his family lineage may be traced back many generations, his nineteenth-century relations most heavily influenced his character and interests. His great uncle, Lord Macaulay, wrote the Victorian classic *History of England*; his grandfather Charles Trevelyan distinguished himself in the Indian and English Civil Service; his father gained renown for books on the American Revolution and on the Whig leader Charles James Fox. Youthful travels in Italy and a love of liberty ingrained in his family compelled Trevelyan to write a three-volume work on the life of Garibaldi; those same ideals and other family interests later pushed him toward the study of Stuart England. “Trevelyan lived and moved in a world very different from that of the average professional historian,” explained David Cannadine, “For nearly half a century, he enjoyed a unique position of cultural authority which derived as much from his range of contacts and

⁴ Liberal in this context refers to a belief in free markets, individual liberty, and representative government, and should not be confused with the adjective “liberal” as commonly used in late 20th and early 21st America, which suggests some form of socialism.

⁵ G. M. Trevelyan, *Sir George Otto Trevelyan: A Memoir* (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1932), 1.

⁶ David Cannadine, *G. M. Trevelyan: A Life In History* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992), 19.

connections throughout the British Establishment as from his unchallenged position as a public educator.”⁶ His family connections in British government and literary circles were buttressed further when Trevelyan attended Harrow and Cambridge, gaining an acquaintance with members of the British ruling classes of his own generation.

Such a strong family heritage of history writing could not fail to have a deep impact on a growing historian. Trevelyan was by no means ashamed of his biases, family and otherwise. He proudly declared of his Garibaldi trilogy: “They are reeking with bias. Without bias, I should never have written them at all. For I was moved to write them by a poetical sympathy with the passions of the Italian patriots of the period, which I retrospectively shared.”⁷

Characterized by a devout belief in progress, the Whig interpretation of history stressed themes such as the triumph of Protestantism in England and the rise of Parliament as a bulwark against encroachments on the rights of ordinary citizens. Through the works of Lord Macaulay, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 came to be seen as a central event in English history, by removing the Catholic and tyrannical James II in favor of William III, Parliament, Protestantism and liberty. Trevelyan’s trilogy *England Under Queen Anne*, continued the theme of Macaulay’s history, albeit moderated and modified, up to the Hanoverian succession. The Whig party, celebrated in the works of Macaulay, had by Trevelyan’s day mutated into the Liberal party and still retained great power throughout the first half of Trevelyan’s career.

While extremely popular in the Victorian era and retaining momentum well into the early twentieth century, the Whig view was not without critics. According to Herbert Butterfield, the Whig interpretation “studies the past with reference to the present,” and through this “system of immediate reference to the present-day, historical personages can easily and irresistibly be classed into men who furthered progress and the men who tried to hinder it.”⁸ These are the tendencies that, when combined with features such as

⁷ G. M. Trevelyan, “Bias in History”, *An Autobiography and Other Essays* (London: Longman’s, Green and Co., 1949), 77.

⁸ Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1965), 11.

Macaulay's absolute certainty in his own, often shaky judgments, leave Whig history open to criticism as presentist and shallow.

The Whig view of history was also widely read and popular because Trevelyan and Macaulay wrote engaging and enjoyable books. "What is easy to read has been difficult to write," Trevelyan declared in his essay "Clio, A Muse."⁹ Indeed a fluid style and compelling narrative were the hallmarks of Trevelyan's historical writing. Trevelyan's works failed to display a rigorous analytical approach typical of scientific historians, yet this stems from intent rather than ignorance. Ideas of literature and poetry never strayed far from Trevelyan's conception of history:

The poetry of history lies in the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this earth, once, on this familiar spot of ground, walked other men and women, as actual as we are to-day, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passions, but now all gone, one generation vanishing after another, gone as utterly as we shall shortly be gone as ghost at cock crow. This is the most familiar and certain fact about life, but it is also the most poetic.¹⁰

A certain, almost mystical connection with the past emerges in this passage, central to Trevelyan's attempt to recreate the life of prior generations. This intuitive bond with the past eludes scientific inquiry. While Trevelyan might very well endure charges of weak analysis, he rightly sees that some portion of life and historical experience cannot be reached through the frigid analysis of social science.

The link between literature and history is one of the major themes of Trevelyan's life. Historian David Cannadine claimed that Trevelyan "never wavered from his belief that history and literature were inseparable: no historian could write about the English past ignorant of what novelists and poets had said; and no critic could write about literature if he was unaware of the circumstances in which it had been created."¹¹

Normally a reserved man, Trevelyan betrayed rare emotion when reading poetry; one of his graduate students, J. H. Plumb observed that "only poetry reading was done

⁹ G. M. Trevelyan, "Clio: A Muse," *The Varieties of History*. Ed. Fritz Stern (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 240.

¹⁰ Trevelyan, "Autobiography of an Historian," *An Autobiography and Other Essays*, 13.

¹¹ Cannadine, 33.

with emotion when he might become so consumed by it that he sobbed.”¹² Trevelyan, throughout his life, entertained a very high opinion of the English poet and novelist George Meredith. In 1906 he wrote *The Poetry and Philosophy of George Meredith*; forty-nine years later, he edited an edition of Meredith’s poetry. It is not surprising that an author who paid so much attention to the writings of Meredith, an author who so lovingly described the pastoral,¹³ should stress the poetic elements of history. Indeed, Trevelyan’s interest in Meredith offers insight into two major areas of his thought: the celebration of the English countryside and an attention to the poetic elements of history. Each of these interests will be treated in turn.

An abiding affection for the natural world pervaded Trevelyan’s life and work. Trevelyan took an active part in conservation movements of his day; from 1925 until the end of his life Trevelyan worked on behalf of the National Trust. Cannadine wrote that “by the early 1930s Trevelyan had thus established himself as one of the foremost activists in the battle to save the English countryside.”¹⁴ This infatuation with the natural world also manifested itself in Trevelyan’s writings. Two of his books, *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* and *Grey of Fallodon*, contain references to the Northumberland landscapes so dear and so familiar to Trevelyan; both the Trevelyan and the Grey families owned land in that part of England. In an essay on John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Trevelyan allowed his love of the English countryside to burst forth in his prose: “Men and women were not then buried so deep in the heart of ugly towns so that they could know neither beauty nor solitude...this fact goes far to account for the strength and imaginative quality of English religion, language, literature, thought and feeling in those days.”¹⁵

Given Trevelyan’s overwhelming concern with poetry and literature one may ask why he chose history, rather than literature as a vocation. According to historian J. H.

¹² J. H. Plumb, *The Making of an Historian: The Collected Essays of J.H. Plumb* (New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1988), 182.

¹³ See especially chapter 46 of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, “Nature Speaks”.

¹⁴ Cannadine, 157.

¹⁵ G. M. Trevelyan, “John Bunyan”, *Clio, A Muse and Other Essays* (London: Longman’s, Green and Co, 1930), 56.

Plumb: “The answer to this question is manifold, but one overwhelming reason cries aloud . . . that is his preoccupation with Time.”¹⁶

All of these interests culminated in a strong desire to produce narrative history. A literary sensibility directed Trevelyan’s interests toward narrative history, and helped to produce some of the finest historical writing of that style in the twentieth century. Discussing her days at Cambridge when Trevelyan was one of her professors, C. V. Wedgwood referred to him as “a great *How* historian.”¹⁷ Indeed all of Trevelyan’s major books are works of narrative history: the Garibaldi books trace the fortunes of that leader in his drive for Italian independence; *England Under Queen Anne*, another three-volume work, provides a narrative history of late Stuart England. The many biographies written by Trevelyan again use a narrative, rather than a thematic approach.

Lord Grey of the Reform Bill contains a superb description of the effects of Grey’s maiden speech in the House of Commons:

Thus, by a brilliant piece of invective on the wrong side of a question that he did not understand, the young man from Northumberland at twenty-two years of age became one of the most envied in that most enviable of all aristocracies of history, the men and women look out from the canvasses of Reynolds and Romney with a divine self-satisfaction, bred of unchallenged possession of all that was best in a great civilization, in the years when Rousseau was no more than a theory and Voltaire was still a fashion.¹⁸

Trevelyan in his humour! What a sentence to showcase vintage elements in Trevelyan’s thought and style! Here one sees all the aristocratic nostalgia, the tendency toward moral judgment and the affinity for a Britain so distant from the days just after the end of World War One when Trevelyan wrote those words.

When Trevelyan does turn critical, his comments still remain within the framework of ideas established by his relatives. A fine example of Trevelyan’s critical faculty circumscribed in a Whig context comes in his attitude toward John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough. Macaulay wrote with an intense dislike of Marlborough and criticized him on all available grounds, including his spelling, “his education had been so

¹⁶ J. H. Plumb, *G. M. Trevelyan* (London, Longman’s: Green and Co., 1951), 9.

¹⁷ Ved Mehta, *Fly and Fly Bottle: Encounters With British Intellectuals* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962), 198.

¹⁸ Trevelyan, *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*, 15-16.

much neglected, that he could not spell the most common words of his own language.”¹⁹ Trevelyan, when dealing with similar accusation from Marlborough's detractors in the early 1700s replied, “disgraceful indeed that we should have our battles won by a fellow who has not heard of Anacreon . . . but nations at war have to make what shift they can.”²⁰ Where Macaulay had portrayed Marlborough as composed of “alloy of the most sordid kind”; a man “thrifty in his very vices,” Trevelyan dissented.²¹ He expressed such thoughts in 1926, in a letter to his daughter Mary, remarking of Marlborough: “He was *humane*, he was wise, he was not passion’s slave or party’s or fanaticism’s, and he served his country and his age with all his incomparable armoury of genius and temper till he had completed his work, and ushered in an age of toleration and reason - he himself being the most tolerant and reasonable of men.”²² In a letter to the editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*, dated 19 October 1933, Trevelyan wrote, “I think Macaulay was wrong in his reading of Marlborough. Indeed I think it is the worst thing in his history.”²³ The particulars of Marlborough's conduct and the morality of many of his actions now possess little interest, except for the specialist. This incident of Trevelyan's dissent, however, well illustrates his restrictions as an historian; he challenges a minor point of Macaulay's argument and faults his characterization, but retains the overall structure of the Whig interpretation of history. Comments such as these do make Trevelyan, “a more judicious Macaulay”- more open minded, but also steeped in the English Liberal tradition of his family.

Nevertheless, Trevelyan’s works do betray an underdeveloped critical faculty. Throughout his life he sought to focus on narrative, rather than attempting to answer research questions in the manner so popular with professional historians. “In evoking the past, in unfolding a narrative, and in capturing the imagination of a broad general public,

¹⁹ T. B. Macaulay, *History of England*, Ed. And Intr. Hugh Trevor-Roper. (London: Penguin Classics, 1986), 82.

²⁰ G. M. Trevelyan, *Ramillies and the Union with Scotland*, vol 2 of *England Under Queen Anne* (London, Longman’s, Green and Co., 1932), 7-8.

²¹ Macaulay, 82.

²² Quoted in Cannadine, 117.

²³ Letter. *Times Literary Supplement*. 1655 (19 October 1933): 711.

the asking of questions was an important but essentially subordinate activity,” claimed David Cannadine.²⁴

Trevelyan's tendency toward gripping narrative, at the expense of analysis could cause problems in his books. When he treated the 1708 siege of Lille in *England Under Queen Anne*, some problems of focus and of sources emerged. A man with a marked interest in military affairs, Trevelyan had studied the War of Spanish Succession since his youth. Yet in his narrative of that war, the siege of Lille by the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy, the largest sustained military operation on the continent since William III's siege of Namur in 1695, receives only four and a half pages. Much of that deals with the battle of Wynendael, and controversies surrounding that action, rather than with the siege itself. While describing the operations of a four-month siege, Trevelyan cites only one letter from Marlborough's correspondence, a letter to Sidney Godolphin. Typically, Trevelyan singled out a document that dealt with one of the more dramatic moments of the siege. The letter appears purely to advance the narrative; Trevelyan made no attempt to treat it critically. Here again Trevelyan's judgment comes into question as he sacrifices one of the great operations of the War of Spanish Succession for dramatic flair, avoiding the lethargic pace of early eighteenth-century siege warfare in favor of the more dynamic battlefield action, a prejudice common to many traditional practitioners of military history.

By contrast the battle of Oudenarde, fought immediately before the siege of Lille, receives three times as much space in the narrative. In describing an operation of bewildering complexity, involving tens of thousands of French, British, Prussian, Dutch, Swiss, and Hanoverian troops, Trevelyan appallingly fails to give the reader the sources on which he bases his battle piece. He refers only twice to sources: one, to the journal of Private John Deane, although Trevelyan fails to supply any bibliographical information for the quote, another to the *Feldzüge*, a collection of German documents pertaining to Prince Eugene of Savoy, one of the allied commanders.

Battles provided a natural showcase for individual agency and the role of human actions in history. Writing in an age when many historians turned toward “impersonal

²⁴ Cannadine, 221.

forces” as an explanation of historical events, Trevelyan retained faith in the importance of human action. “Hail to Dryasdust,” exclaimed Trevelyan, “the true purveyor of poetry! Carlyle’s expression of this feeling for the poetic value of all historical facts had drawn me to him ever since as a freshman at Cambridge I read *Sartor* and the *French Revolution* again and again.”²⁵ This brings us to a larger theme that runs throughout Trevelyan’s work: his sympathy for a modified “Great Man” approach to history. Many of Trevelyan’s books illustrate this theme; the Garibaldi books and the depiction of Marlborough in *England Under Queen Anne* are excellent examples of this interest. Carlyle’s words: “The Commander over Men; he to whose will our wills are to be subordinated, and loyally surrender themselves, and find their welfare in doing so, may be reckoned the most important of Great Men,” certainly apply to Trevelyan’s treatment of both Garibaldi and Marlborough.²⁶

A concern with social history serves to balance Trevelyan’s interest in the “Great Man” approach to history, despite his rather inadequate definition of social history as, “History of a people with the politics left out.”²⁷ Trevelyan’s tendencies toward social history, while apparently in touch with the historical trends of his day, actually have strong antecedents in the writings of Macaulay. The third chapter of the *History of England* described the social condition of England at the accession of James II. Likewise, early sections of *England Under Queen Anne* seek to portray English society at the dawn of the eighteenth century. One can also view *English Social History* as an elegy to an England rapidly fading away amidst the brutality of the Second World War. Although one may criticize Trevelyan for either nostalgia or flawed social history, his work remained extremely popular: by 1949 the book had sold 400,000 copies.²⁸

With his demonstrated interest in both the “Great Man” approach and in social history, is it possible to derive a definition of history from Trevelyan’s writings? Many

²⁵ G. M. Trevelyan, “Autobiography of an Historian”, *An Autobiography and Other Essays*, 13.

²⁶ Thomas Carlyle, “The Hero As King,” *Carlyle: Selected Works and Reminiscences and Letters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 297.

²⁷ G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History* (London: Longman’s: Green and Company, 1942), vii.

²⁸ John Kenyon, *The History Men: The Historical Profession in England Since the Renaissance* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983), 234.

different definitions appear throughout his essays, his most inclusive comes from a passage discussing the proper sources for an historian. Trevelyan claimed: "Everything that records the past of man in History . . . History, thus defined, is the House in which are found side by side past politics, war, economics, law and society; past religion, science, art and architecture; the poetry and literature of the past and much else besides."²⁹

Late twentieth-century writers may gain more from a close study of Trevelyan's style than from his research or his historical judgments. By his own admission, he stood apart from the historical currents of his day, preferring instead the values and interpretations of his family and of nineteenth-century Britain. Almost without question he accepts his family's views of history, criticizing only minor details of the Whig program. His criticisms of Macaulay's treatment of Marlborough fault Macaulay's characterization of the Duke, but in no way alter the grander scheme of Whig interpretation. Even his attempts at social history, one of the rising trends of twentieth-century historiography stems in part from Macaulay. Trevelyan's works stand out as superbly written examples of historical writing, but not as monuments of creative and original scholarship.

Later twentieth-century readers and academics might find Trevelyan's sporadic citation of sources frustrating. A close look at Trevelyan's *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* provides an interesting example both of the sources he consulted and his methods of documentation. In his preface Trevelyan states:

I have used not only the rich treasury of the Howick Papers themselves, and the documents relative to my subject in Holland House and Lambton Castle, most kindly put at my disposal by Lord Ilchester and Lord Durham, but I have studied - among the Additional MSS. In the British Museum and among the Home Office Papers - the currents on which the ship of Reform was launched.³⁰

Such a passage is fairly representative for Trevelyan; references to collections of papers owned by noble families throughout England are quite common in his books. This illustrates both the type of history he wrote, so often political and aristocratic, and a

²⁹ G. M. Trevelyan, *A Layman's Love of Letters* (London, Longman's: Green and Co., 1954), 77.

³⁰ G. M. Trevelyan, *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1920), viii.

strong desire to work from unpublished primary sources. These tendencies continue in the notes within the text, although there Trevelyan also refers to numerous secondary works as well. Unfortunately, Trevelyan only cited his sources sporadically. Numerous undocumented quotations appear; while one can usually derive the general source of the quotation from internal evidence in Trevelyan's text, the specific book or manuscript collection and the precise page number are often absent.³¹ Even Trevelyan's greatest mature work, *England Under Queen Anne*, exhibits this flaw, so frustrating to historians interested in the sources of Trevelyan's accounts of the military operations of the War of Spanish Succession.

It is possible, however, to discover what sources Trevelyan used for his books. Normally Trevelyan, in a preface, would mention the archives he consulted while working on a particular book. Clearly he relied heavily on archival material when possible. This became difficult during his writing of the last two volumes of *England Under Queen Anne*, after the Churchill family closed the Blenheim archive following Winston Churchill's embarkation upon the writing of his massive *Marlborough: His Life and Times*. Fortunately for Trevelyan, one of Marlborough's previous biographers, Archdeacon Coxe, had transcribed many of the papers in that archive and then deposited his copies in the British Museum.³² This *contretemps* is, however, not mentioned in the preface to the second volume of *England Under Queen Anne*.

Ironically, in assessing Trevelyan's work, one might compare it to the military skills of Marlborough: neither man was known as an innovator, in their respective fields. Trevelyan's writing style proved as agreeable and persuasive in its day as Marlborough's diplomacy; while both men scored impressive triumphs, one in books, the other in battle, neither man succeeded in imposing his will upon events in the long term. Marlborough's battles failed to win the War of Spanish Succession; Trevelyan's writings failed to secure the renewed predominance of the Whig view of history.

A brief comparison of Trevelyan with two of his contemporaries may help to better place him within his historiographical context. Lewis Namier and Winston

³¹ Some, but by no means all, examples of this in *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* may be seen on pages 5-6, 36, 151, and 162.

³² Trevelyan, "Autobiography of an Historian", 46.

Churchill both wrote works dealing with eighteenth-century Britain. The methods and interests of the former differ markedly from those of Trevelyan, for Namier preferred extremely detailed studies of Parliament to Trevelyan's dramatic volumes; Churchill and Trevelyan have far more in common.

One could hardly find an historian writing in the 1920s and 1930s whose methods, interests and style differed more sharply from those of Trevelyan than Lewis Namier. His magnificent work *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, published in 1929, provided an extremely detailed, tightly focused and minutely researched portrait of the House of Commons in 1760-61. Namier examined the membership of that parliament, then looked for bonds between members and groups that developed at that time, painstakingly cataloguing his results on index cards.³³ This method, while illuminating to the specialist, lacked the broad appeal of Trevelyan's writings; Linda Colley comments: "His most significant work was on eighteenth-century England, a field which had never been fashionable before he applied himself to it and which his writings seemed to make even less accessible."³⁴ Yet while Trevelyan's narrative continued to win wide readership with the educated public, professional historians preferred Namier. "In the minds of professional academics, he seemed to occupy the position of God," Ved Mehta wryly commented, "and if they criticized him, it was more often in the spirit of theologians than in the spirit of atheists."³⁵

Both Churchill and Trevelyan wrote about Late Stuart England, the age when Britain first began to emerge as a leading Imperial power, during the 1930s, when the power of the British Empire had begun to wane visibly. Family concerns played a strong role in their writings: Churchill sought to rehabilitate the reputation of his ancestor, the first Duke of Marlborough; Trevelyan wrote to continue the story of Stuart England begun by Macaulay. *England Under Queen Anne* and *Marlborough: His Life and Times* each sold well, no doubt in part due to the reputations of their authors and also in part to the superb ability of Churchill and Trevelyan as writers. Only Trevelyan's more

³³ Rowse, 118.

³⁴ Linda Colley, *Lewis Namier* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), 2.

³⁵ Mehta, 214-15.

sophisticated view of the past separated him from Churchill, who according to Plumb, “was unable to disentangle himself from his beliefs in the traditional interpretations of the English past...the old Whig claptrap echoes in chapter after chapter.”³⁶ Plumb also noted that while Trevelyan in many ways felt similar to Churchill about the past “in his work there is a strong elegiac note . . . a deep regret for a world that is fading.”³⁷

By the end of his life much of what Trevelyan, like Churchill, held dear had passed away. The Liberal Party had died after the First World War; narrative history had gone out of fashion in the historical community; for a man enamored of Garibaldi and Italian liberty, the course of Italian history in the early twentieth century must have been severely disheartening. In addition, John Kenyon claims, “Trevelyan also lived long enough to realize that his long defense of the English countryside as he knew it, his devoted service to the National Trust, had been largely in vain; the motor car had won.”³⁸ While the world Trevelyan so loved has long since passed away, his writings endure as a window into a more elegant and more confident Britain, and an illumination of the old fashioned Liberal principles that made Britain great during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

³⁶ Plumb, *The Making of an Historian*, 240.

³⁷ Ibid, 251.

³⁸ Kenyon, 234.

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