W. E. GLADSTONE: A LOVE FOR TREES AND TREE-FELLING

W E Gladstone tree-felling in Hawarden Park, 1887
(Clwyd Record Office)

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Throughout this work the following abbreviations apply:


*GGMs* refers to the Glynne-Gladstone manuscripts available at the Flintshire County Records Office.
Part 1

Introduction, interest in trees, wood and forestry

"Woodman, spare that tree! Touch not a single bough!

In youth it sheltered me, and I'll protect it now." George Pope Morris (1802-64)

Sources

It is the aim of this dissertation to focus on William Gladstone's love of trees, his plantings and tree-felling, and with a section reflecting public interest in his hobby and its use by the press and others to make a political point.

It will be helpful to comment on the sources for the investigation. The main source must be the daily Diary that Gladstone maintained for over seventy years. Tantalisingly brief in some respects, it nevertheless gives a matchless account of Gladstone's correspondence (to whom he wrote, not usually details beyond the occasional hint), people he met, from the Queen to the humblest visitor to Hawarden, details of the family — invariably couched in sympathetic and affectionate terms, engagements and lastly leisure activities from the literature he read or his own writings to the tree-felling which is a prime concern for this work.

Much correspondence, accounts for the Estate and cuttings and cartoons from the press are further primary sources stored at St Deiniol's library at Hawarden and available at the nearby Flintshire County Records Office.

Letters have been written to the present Sir William Gladstone and to some of the stately homes that saw him planting or felling trees: replies are included with the text.

A number of biographies have been written, both shortly after his death and just before it by contemporary authors, and by 20th century writers much later. The former have the advantages of having known Gladstone personally (even served under him in Cabinet like John Morley or Justin McCarthy). His daughter, Mary
Drew, fills in many family details not in the *Diaries* and provides evidence of his relations with Catherine, his wife, and the other members of the family. Although by no means always uncritical, 19th century authors tend to write in a rose-tinted style with a whiff of nostalgia and sentimentality.

20th Century authors have the advantage of hindsight and are generally more critical – their difficulty sometimes would appear to be an inability to reconstruct the atmosphere surrounding events as they would have seemed at the time to 19th century citizens. Nonetheless, with reservations, we owe much to their scholarship and overview of the political scene. Where there is much divergence of opinion lies with a study of the person of Gladstone, his personality, motives and driving forces – there are differing theories and assessments of what made this remarkable man tick, and his reasons, among other things, for chopping down trees.

The family

John Gladstone (1764-1851), was born in Leith in Scotland, himself son of a corn dealer, and travelled widely to make a large fortune not least through sugar, cotton and West Indian slaves. He moved south to Liverpool, where William was born in 1809 to Anne, John's second wife (his first wife had died eleven years earlier). William was John's fourth son and younger than the oldest child, Anna, by seven years. William looked up to his mother and elder sister as ideal examples of their sex and was distressed at the death of both of them (1835 and 1829 respectfully). The oldest son, Tom (1804-89), went to Eton and Christ College, Oxford, and later became a backbench Tory MP. Robertson (1805-75) became Mayor of Liverpool, went into the family business and John Neilson (1807-63) into the navy. Helen (1814-80) his younger sister, completed the family of Sir John and was close to William in his early career.
Early years

A political career beckoned William and he honed his debating skills at Eton and Oxford, studying Classics and Mathematics, and made a few close friends, among them Arthur Hallam, whose early death was a severe setback for him. Born into relative affluence without financial difficulties, Gladstone – influenced by his sister Anna - seriously considered a career in the Church of England but was deflected by his father\(^1\). Instead, with no clear call to the ministry, he entered Parliament as Tory MP for Newark and made his maiden speech in June 1833 during the debate on slavery in the West Indies. He gained a minor office as Junior Lord of the Treasury within two years in government, launching his political career of six decades in which the majority of his time was spent as Chancellor of the Exchequer or Premier. He represented several constituencies after Newark, including Oxford University, South Lancashire and Greenwich. His political clashes with and antipathy to Disraeli are well known; in private, there may have been a mutual respect, and on occasion sympathy, as when Gladstone wrote to Disraeli on his wife’s death and received a touching reply\(^2\).

Gladstone proposed twice unsuccessfully to other women before proposing to Catherine Glynne (by letter) in 1839; there followed a long and happy marriage. His children ‘adored’ him and he was kind and tolerant to them\(^3\). He valued his family life and spent as much time at Hawarden as he was permitted and where he was able to indulge his hobby of tree-felling and planting most.

\(^3\) ibid. p11.
His attributes

He is described by the late twentieth century historian, A.N. Wilson, as ‘the most paradoxical of political figures...prince of humbug, yet deeply the man of principle...guilt-ridden profiteer from his father’s Demerara slave plantations, yet defender of the old man’s good intentions...stern, in youth an unbending Tory, yet in old age a visionary radical...populist with an eye to the main chance, yet prepared throughout his long political life to stand on firmly rooted moral conviction...visionary prophet, but crashing bore’. This summary does less than justice to this self-disciplined statesman and family man who graced the House of Commons from a young man in his twenties to the highest office in the land for the fourth time in his eighties. Certainly it is unlikely that his contemporaries would share such an analysis of William Ewart Gladstone that has been sketched in hindsight with a pen imbued with late twentieth century cynicism. His moral conviction and religious faith was consistent and he was unusual among many politicians with firm Christian beliefs in his refusal to divorce his religion from his political life. He believed fervently that politics was or should be a field of Christian action. It is true the intensity of his stances was viewed with irritation at times by the Queen – following the liberal landslide election victory of 1880, she declared that she would ‘sooner abdicate than send for or have anything to do with that half-mad firebrand who would soon ruin everything and be a dictator’. This was in all probability an overreaction and a position she was unable to pursue even if she had wanted to – nonetheless the evidence is there to suggest that she preferred Disraeli’s flattery to Gladstone’s lectures – though his loyalty and deference to her position was never in doubt.

An upright figure, lithe and athletic into his seventies, Gladstone believed in physical exercise and was fond of walking, not merely along the path which he constructed at Hawarden to give himself seclusion on his way to church at 8.30am for many years, but also further a field in North Wales and in other places where he holidayed at home and abroad. His exercise of tree-felling and planting complemented his walking when he was at home. He is known to have walked much in London in the years when he felt it his duty to 'play with fire' and attempt to rescue some of the capital's many prostitutes – an activity in which he was by no means altogether unsuccessful, as in the case of a Miss Cowper whom he arranged to go to Harriet Monsell's House at Clewer – he took charge himself of finding a home for her pet spaniel.

St. Deiniol's Library in Hawarden remains a legacy of Gladstone's phenomenal voracity for reading and acquisition of some 27,000 books on a range of subjects. His Diaries record few days to pass without his finding opportunities for reading: he had a desire to stretch his mind and to use every moment given – though not to the neglect of matters of state or to his family. He read and re-read the Bible and the Greek epic poet, Homer, many times. He also read and regarded as influential Aristotle, Dante and Butler as well as Suetonius, Plautus, Longinus, Propertius and Tibullus among Roman authors and works in French and Italian – and English poetry from Shakespeare to Tennyson. When the pile of official papers and documents requiring his perusal - and reply – are taken into account over his many years as Chancellor of the Exchequer or Prime Minister, his appetite for reading in leisure is the more remarkable. As an author, he published two dozen titles plus many articles for journals, which Bebbington suggests was not only a significant intellectual

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achievement in its own right but also had a bearing on the central role he played in British Politics\textsuperscript{9}.

The plant enthusiast

In view of his commitments it is not surprising that he never became as single-minded a horticulturalist as that other son of a Liverpool merchant, AK Bulley, son of a cotton broker, whose gardens today at Ness are evidence of his zest for plants and foresight as the first of the great 20\textsuperscript{th} century patrons of plant collectors\textsuperscript{10}. Plants brought back to this country by George Forrest and Kingdom Ward shortly after Gladstone’s death still adorn the gardens which he had the vision and philanthropic desire to make available to the public. Bulley’s political leanings would have not been abhorrent to Gladstone whose own comparable desire was to make his vast library available to the church and wider public at St Deiniol’s in Hawarden.

Nevertheless, Gladstone developed and sustained an interest in horticulture. Rare plants from foreign climes get scant mention in the Diaries – one exception is the outstanding specimen of a famous Magnolia, of unusual girth, that the Gladstones observed on holiday near the Meurikoffre villa close to Capodimonte ( alas the Diary leaves blank the actual size of the girth at four feet from the ground\textsuperscript{11}. Even in this case the tree was perhaps not so much a rarity as an exceptional example of its type. On another occasion on a cruising holiday to Scandinavia on the 28\textsuperscript{th} of August 1885 the Diary records (in the same breathe) a meeting at Molde with the Prince of Wales, who was on his way to hunt Elk, and an encounter with an Ash that had a girth of 11\frac{1}{2} feet and a Larch of 7\frac{3}{4} feet. On the visit to Cannes in January 1883 to stop at the Chateau Scott (belonging to Lord Wolverton) Gladstone describes the Chateau as ‘one of the finest houses in Cannes, beautifully situated in 10 acres of grounds, well

\textsuperscript{9} ibid, p1.
\textsuperscript{10} Hadfield, Miles, \textit{A History of British Gardening}, London, Spring Books 1960 rep 1969, p 408
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{GD}, vol 12, p178, Tuesday 15\textsuperscript{th} Jan 1889.
laid-out and commanding extensive views over the gulf...elaborately decorated\textsuperscript{12}. Yet it was the visit to Monsieur Dognin’s garden during this holiday that really captivated Gladstone; he described it as a wonderful garden, a fairyland indeed, and ten days later he met the Duke of Argyll and took him to the garden for a second look for himself. Just over a week later he escorted a party to the Dognin garden, met the owner and on leaving Cannes later wrote of his appreciation for the experience to M Dognin. Tantalisingly we have no knowledge of the planting there.

A truly rare plant to Britain would be the Upas tree which Gladstone was well aware of and will be discussed later. His knowledge and love of trees and gardens will have been fostered by his surroundings when living at Fasque and after his marriage to Catherine on the 25\textsuperscript{th} of July 1839. The wedding was a double one; Catherine’s younger sister, Mary, marrying Lord Lyttelton at Hawarden at the same time\textsuperscript{13}. The couples always got on well together and this meant many visits for the Gladstones to Hagley Hall in Worcestershire. Designed as a park of great natural beauty, the Lyttelton family had rebuilt and planted the hall and estate in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, and Hadfield suggests that James Stuart’s Doric Temple of Theseus in 1758 marked the introduction of the Greek manner into England\textsuperscript{14}. No doubt Gladstone appreciated the Greek-style architecture as well as the beauty of the red pines and flat-topped cedars on their visits. The Diaries tell us that Gladstone felled some trees at Hagley on the third of December 1868\textsuperscript{15} and on the 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} on January 1876, when it took two days to bring down the Elm with a girth of 15-16 feet. Gladstone recalled that it was a grand fall\textsuperscript{16}.

\textsuperscript{12} The Times, 22\textsuperscript{nd} Jan 1883, p5d.
\textsuperscript{13} Checkland, S.G, The Gladstones, a Family Biography 1764-1851, Cambridge, CUP 1971, p 312
\textsuperscript{14} Hadfield, p208f.
\textsuperscript{15} GD, vol 6, p654, 30\textsuperscript{th} Dec 1868.
\textsuperscript{16} GD, vol 9, p98, 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} Jan 1876.
Much more formal was the design in the neo-Italianate style, with great geometric areas and straight paths, iron-work pergolas, dazzling bedding zones of colour, terraces, balustrades and stairways\(^{17}\), of Sir Charles Barry. Barry is remembered particularly for his design of the new Houses of Parliament, but with the help of WA Nesfield he rendered the landscaping of Capability Brown at Trentham virtual background to his redesign of the house and garden. Barry laid out the parterres, one of them circular still surviving at Dunrobin Castle as at Trentham around 1850. Gladstone stayed at Dunrobin, home of his close friend the Duchess of Sutherland, three years later when the full effect of Barry's work would be coming to full fruition and the garden was renowned for its breeding of fuchsias including the variety named after the Duchess of Sutherland\(^{18}\). Gladstone was unwell with an attack of erysipelas and the Duchess herself nursed him through this time by reading to him, he records, with the utmost kindness\(^{19}\).

Garden architecture was no novelty to Gladstone at this period as he served as a parsimonious\(^{20}\) Commissioner of the 1851 Exhibition with Joseph Paxton and others; Paxton, of course, is credited with the design of Europe's first public park in Birkenhead close to Gladstone's birthplace in Liverpool and later home at Hawarden.

**A collection of axes**

Williamson is among his biographers who mentions 'a collection of axes' presented by various friends\(^{21}\). The 'Temple of Peace', Gladstone's study at Hawarden Castle, contains some of this collection – a dozen are on display today and another in a glass case in the exhibition at St Deiniol's. The latter bears an inscription in the form of a couplet:

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\(^{19}\) Matthew, 1986, p95.

\(^{20}\) ibid, p98.

\(^{21}\) Williamson, D, *Gladstone the Man, a non-political biography*, London, Bowden, 1898, p81.
‘Twas Vulcan wrought an axe of solid steel,
For wise Minerva’s cautious arm to wield’.

The reference to the Roman god, Vulcan (Hephaistos in Greek, the blacksmith god) who dwelt beneath Mount Etna and fashioned weapons and tools, would have pleased Gladstone – as would the allusion (thinly veiled) to himself in the form of Minerva (Athene in Greek, goddess of crafts as well as of righteous warfare) whose skill with Vulcan’s tools would have been without parallel.

The assortment of axes on view at the Castle are sturdier than the one at St. Deiniol’s which could be used to lop small branches, to ‘kibble’ (chop into small pieces) and to cut smaller saplings with one hand. They include a wicked-looking machete, with Gladstone’s initials on the handle, useful again for ‘woodcraft’ or pruning for firewood, and an array of larger axes, mostly with handles of at least three feet in length and axe-heads as heavy as the weight of a sledgehammer. Any doubts about the strength of Gladstone are instantly dispelled. One axe takes considerable effort to lift, let alone for a man in his sixties or seventies to use repeatedly for over an hour or more at a time on a tree some feet in girth. Inscriptions are usually on the blade or heel of the axe-head; the name of one manufacturer is Gilpin and records that it is of solid steel; another claims Hurd’s solid silver steel ‘Perfection’; WE Greaves and Sons declaimed an axe of electro-boracic steel; the year 1886 is on one inscription; Gladstone’s initials are on Greaves’ axe. One axe was fashioned locally by J. Griffiths of Caergwrle, another was presented to Gladstone, inscribed Mustad, Osovik, Norway and dated February 20th 1889, presumably by friends that he visited in Scandinavia four years earlier.

Famously, he visited the great Forth Bridge at Queensferry, just two miles from Dalmeny on Thursday 28th August 1884 which was finally opened six years later.
and regarded as the chief glory of British industrial architecture. His rapport with the workmen was evident when a few days later, on Tuesday 2nd September, they presented him with an axe; on his return to Hawarden he sent them ‘entertaining and improving volumes’. The axe had a silver head and was a favourite of Gladstone’s as was one with an American wedge-shaped blade. Ritchie records that the remaining collection of axes numbered between thirty and forty – perhaps the most amusing was a silver pencil, shaped like an axe, presented by the Prince of Wales, with whom he enjoyed good relations, ‘for axing questions’.

The Upas tree

The couplet on the axe in the showcase at St. Deiniol’s was composed by a Birmingham blacksmith, Simon Shorter, who went to Hawarden in person to present the axe that he had made for Gladstone. The axe, that had an oak handle (symbolic of the wooden walls of Old England) was forged out of solid steel, engraved with the Gladstone arms and the Staffordshire Knot on the reverse side to the couplet. Shorter made his journey not only to offer the axe as a token of his respect and an example of British workingman’s craftsmanship but also as symbolic of the notion desirable to be taken with regard to the Upas tree of society – ‘that is intoxicating drink’. Shorter compared the spread of drink-related social problems to the poisons of the Upas tree: he was perhaps an example of the strong opinion among the working classes – especially the non-conformists – who supported the temperance movements of the late nineteenth century. As early as 1872 the first Gladstone administration had carried, under HA Bruce, the Home Secretary, a Licensing Act which introduced

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22 *GD*, vol 11, p200 n1.
24 ibid, p200.
26 ibid, p506.
restrictions on the opening times of public houses. Many felt the measures did not go far enough and temperance continued to be an issue for the rest of the century with its advocates strongly represented among the Methodists and General Booth’s Salvation Army.

Bebbington recalls a remark of Gladstone in 1887 to the effect that the chapel-goers ‘formed the backbone of British Liberalism’, and increasingly the working classes were to be found in the chapels and very many would be Liberal supporters. Part of Gladstone’s popularity among the working classes, for whom drink-related problems would bring the most severe consequences, was due to his high moral stand and personal Christian faith although he was not a teetotaller himself. He took care not to deter the movement and one of the leaders told the House of Commons in 1883 that temperance reformers had total confidence in him ‘that nothing could shake’. Clearly Shorter was of that opinion.

The Upas tree, mentioned indirectly in Gladstone’s Wigan speech on October 23rd 1868, became a byword for issues that had far-reaching consequences and that required the Gladstone axe to chop down. Some facts about this otherwise little known tropical tree are worth noting. The tree can rise to 250 feet, with dome-shaped canopy and elliptic-shaped evergreen leaves and has a buttressed trunk supporting the upward growth and maximising outward root movement (necessary in thin, tropical soils). The Upas (Antiaris Toxicaria), a member of the nettle family, has edible fruits, purple and pear-shaped when ripe, but the leaves contain thin, white poisonous latex (as the second part of the Latin name implies), which was used by natives on their arrow tips. Not much can grow beneath its dense foliage and Russell remarks that its

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28 ibid, p183.
30 ibid, p186.
reputation for killing anyone falling asleep under it is unwarranted\textsuperscript{31}. This tree is found in North India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Fiji, Borneo and The Philippines and presumably was known to Gladstone through family business interests in India, though his own son, Harry, who spent some years in India, was still at Eton when Gladstone's speech at Wigan was delivered. The famous speech concludes:

"We have paid instalments to the Ireland, the Irish people, the mass of the Irish people who would not be worthy to be free if they were satisfied with instalments, or if they should be contented with anything less than full and equal justice (applause). We therefore aim at the destruction of that system of ascendancy, which although it has been crippled and curtailed by former efforts, yet still...exists. It is like some tall tree of noxious growth, lifting its head to heaven and darkening and poisoning the atmosphere of the land so far as its shadow can extend. It is still there, gentlemen, but now at length the day has come, when, as we hope, the axe has been laid to the root (loud cheers); it is deeply cut round and round; it nods and quivers from top to base (cheers). There lacks, gentlemen, but one stroke more, the stroke of these elections (loud applause). It will then once for all topple to its fall and on the day when it falls, the heart of Ireland will leap for joy and the mind and conscience of England and Scotland will repose with thankful satisfaction upon the thought that something also has been done towards the discharge of national duty and towards deepening and widening the foundation of public strength, security and peace (Loud applause, end of speech at one and a half hours)\textsuperscript{32}.

The speech is a prime example of Gladstone's powers of eloquence and rhetoric, enhanced by his deeply held concern for the Irish questions — Matthew\textsuperscript{33} subheads these 'The Upas Tree — The Irish Church; The Upas Tree — Irish Land; The Upas Tree — Irish Education', highlighting the three main strands of reform for Ireland and the Irish that Gladstone desired to tackle following the Liberal victory of 1868. When the telegram came with General Grey, the Queen's secretary, Gladstone was felling a tree in the park at Hawarden. The bystander, Ashley, younger son of


\textsuperscript{32} Gladstone's Speeches and Writings, vol 4, p74, Liverpool, Egerton Smith and Company, 1868.

\textsuperscript{33} Matthew, 1986, p168.
Lord Shaftesbury, recorded thirty years later the apocryphal-sounding account of Gladstone’s reaction\textsuperscript{34}. He read the telegram, handed it without comment to Ashley other than ‘very significant’ and continued to hack at the tree. Then he rested on his axe and said ‘my mission is to pacify Ireland’. He continued to complete the felling before escorting Grey to the house to write a reply to the telegram. Subsequently he saw the Queen who invited him for the first time to form a government as Prime Minister. Despite his speech Gladstone lost his seat in South Lancashire in the November election but was elected for Greenwich instead.

Gladstone’s religious life

A clause in the Wigan speech is worth comment: ‘the axe is laid to the root’.

The quotation, which would not have been lost on most of his audience, is from Luke’s gospel (ch. 3 v.9), ‘the axe is ready to cut down the trees at the roots: every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire’ – the same words of John the Baptist are attributed by Matthew (ch.3 v.10). Gladstone chose his reference carefully. Cutting a tree and leaving the stump would with certain trees merely encourage fresh growth – varieties of Willow in particular. Isaiah (ch.6 v.13b) speaks of the stump of an oak representing a new beginning for God’s people, and in chapter 11 verse 1 he asserts that ‘the royal line of David is like a tree that has been cut down; but just as new branches sprout from a stump, so a new king will arise from among David’s descendants\textsuperscript{35}. Gladstone however required the Upas Tree to be attacked at its roots for complete destruction, so preferred John’s metaphor. He wanted the Irish questions to be tackled once and for all.

For Gladstone quoting from scripture would have come naturally; for most of his life he read the Bible daily in his private devotions. He often read the Lessons on

\textsuperscript{34} Jenkins, R, Gladstone, London and Basingstoke, Pan Macmillan, 1995, p290.

\textsuperscript{35} Quotations are taken from the Good News Bible.
Sunday in church at Hawarden when he was at home, and rarely missed a daily walk through his trees in the park every morning to the 8.15 or 8.30am service. In old age he wrote a series of articles on the Bible to the popular journal *Good Words* that were subsequently issued in book form as the *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture* which sold widely\(^ {36} \). If his private and public observances were unwavering throughout his long life, his churchmanship developed from his evangelical upbringing from his parents (especially his mother – and older sister) to a Tractarian High Church position in adulthood which led certain of his friends eventually to become Roman Catholics, and in later life he swung back to a Broad Church inclination. He flirted briefly with the Unitarian Church in his late thirties but developed a respect (some would say to his political advantage) with nonconformists of Baptist, Congregational and Methodist persuasions in the later decades of the century. He corresponded several times with CH Spurgeon, the great Baptist minister of the time, and went to hear him preach\(^ {37} \). Both men had charisma and could grip their audience; Gladstone must have gone to hear the content of Spurgeon’s sermon – with the Midlothian campaigns behind him, he hardly needed tips on style of public speaking.

His reading was wide and he read – and wrote – articles and books on a range of topics with theological interest. His mind was open to evaluate new concepts – he was not a fundamentalist nor was he prey to speculative doctrines. He was prepared – and had the scholarship and clarity of mind – to stand his ground in debate with the self-styled agnostic, Huxley. For the statesman himself, however, the rebuttal of unbelief was the chief task of the age\(^ {38} \). He ‘viewed with alarm the modes of thought and reasoning which extensively prevail in the present day with respect to questions

\(^{36}\) Bebbington, 1993, p235f.
\(^{37}\) *GD*, vol 10, p189, Jan 3\(^ {rd} \) 1882.
bearing on religious belief. In 1874, he told Catherine ‘that the welfare of mankind does not now depend on the state or the world of politics; the real battle is being fought in the world of thought, where a deadly attack is made with great tenacity of purpose and over a wide field upon the greatest treasure of mankind, the belief in God and the gospel of Christ’. Another cause of the crisis of belief in the later 19th century was the result of Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* (1859), which was seized upon by some as rendering the Bible obsolete. Gladstone saw no ground for supposing that evolution and revelation were in opposition and resisted any simplistic notion that Darwin had disproved the Bible. As Bebbington comments, a century later very few scientists would maintain that science is the only path to knowledge.

**Forestry**

Whether laying his axe to the root or leaving a stump, Gladstone had a range of axes to choose from by the time he was into his mid-seventies. Some were heavier than others, some had wider blades and some had longer handles or sharper blades; not surprisingly, he built up much experience of their uses on various types of wood and trees. At a tree felling experiment on 2nd February 1878 he shared some of that experience: ‘Oak, though very hard is not a bad tree to cut, for the grain breaks off easily and does not cling to the axe. Beech is far tougher; that and Ash being the two most difficult to fell of our English trees on account of their bending to the axe. Ash is subject to fracture in felling, and I have a splinter of Ash...two feet eight inches in length. The pleasantest to fell is Spanish Chestnut because it comes away so freely, the grain breaking easily. Yew is the most horrible to cut of all forest trees’.

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39 ibid, p217.
40 ibid, p217, quoting a letter from Gladstone to Catherine in Tilney Bassett (ed) *Gladstone to his wife*, London, 1936, p201f.
41 Bebbington, 1993, p232.
"Tree felling by machinery—Mr Gladstone watching a trial of the New Patent Steam Feller near Tulse Hill". *The Graphic*, 16 February 1878. See 2 Feb 78
Gladstone recalls that he had his first lesson in woodcutting (around the lawn and Old Castle at Hawarden) on Saturday 31st July 1858, and followed it up the next day. His interest in Forestry extended in 1864, when on the death of his friend, the Duke of Newcastle, he found it necessary as trustee to supervise the management of the large woodland property at Worksop. Instead of trusting to agents, he, with characteristic thoroughness, immediately applied himself to the theory and practice of Forestry. It was an ongoing responsibility and two items record an auction and letter vis-a-vis a sale of timber at the Clumber Worksop Manor Estate. The auction took place at the Lion Hotel, Worksop, on Thursday 16th March 1876; item 1 in the catalogue listed 60 trees and 33 poles from Carburton Lodge (32 Ash, 11 Oak and Elm, 4 Larch, 3 Scotch (Pine?), 2 Alder and Spruce and 1 each of Birch, Maple and Spanish Chestnut). The purchaser was B Gartside and for this lot plus the 33 poles, £70 was paid (the estimated value was £74 – 10s – 3d). Other lots contributed to a total sale of timber of £4892 – 10s, over £200 more than the estimated value. The letter, from Joel Haslam (of the same date) to Gladstone enclosed a catalogue and contained the results of the sale: 'the competition has been of a spirited nature, but not as much in several lots as was expected. I think altogether the sale has been a successful one.'

The previous year, 1875, Gladstone went over the Castle grounds of the Newcastle estate and stayed at Wollaston Hall (Clumber Park). The next morning (Tuesday 11th May) he rose and before breakfast cut down a Siberian Elm in the park (it was rare for him to fell a tree at such an early hour): he commented that the axe was bad but the tree soft, 4 feet 6 inches in circumference, the girth measured 4 feet

43 GD, vol5, p315, Saturday 31st July 1858.
44 Leech, p261.
45 GG Ms 3027.
46 ibid.

16
above ground, and took 50 minutes to fell. The next day (May 12th) he spent 7 hours
inspecting the Manor and the woods, remarking 'the Manor Hill woods were
admirable'. A third day was spent on another lengthy survey of the property,
including the gardens and Decoy Wood\textsuperscript{47}.

His interest was stirred 3 years later by reports of the invention of a steam saw
and he went with his son, William, to Ransome's Works and from there to Rosefull
Park Estate to see the remarkable operations of the tree-cutting steam saw. *The Times*
reported the demonstration two days later (4\textsuperscript{th} February 1878, p.6a) and *The Graphic*
a fortnight later (16\textsuperscript{th} February)\textsuperscript{48}. Gladstone praised the saw but made no move to
purchase one, and resumed felling with the axe.

In his early years and in the surroundings at Fasque he was aware of not only
the beauty of trees but of their different properties and uses of the timber they
produced. Speaking to the Worshipful Company of Turners on the 16\textsuperscript{th} February 1876
he claimed, 'as a very young man I was exceedingly fond of the practice of turning,
and at the present moment I am in possession of some articles executed by myself. I
have, in some sense, a title to consider myself as a brother of a very ancient craft.
Moreover, it is what the common eye does not always understand. It is a craft of
skill\textsuperscript{49}. He continued by stressing the last point with a quotation from Homer, and the
*Diaries* tell us he spoke for forty minutes to an audience, pronouncedly liberal in
tone, which he described as the best he ever had within those precincts. He was to be
admitted as a Turner\textsuperscript{50}.

\textsuperscript{47} GD, vol 9, p35f, Monday – Thursday 10\textsuperscript{th} – 13\textsuperscript{th} May 1875.
\textsuperscript{48} GD, vol 9, p350, Saturday 2\textsuperscript{nd} Feb 1878.
\textsuperscript{49} Leech, p261.
\textsuperscript{50} GD, vol 9, p105, Wednesday 16\textsuperscript{th} Feb 1876.
PART 2. The Politician and the Symbol of the Axe

"And where the offence is, let the great axe fall", Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act 4 Scene 5.

Introduction to the Symbol

As Gladstone's popularity increased in the 1860s as Chancellor and latterly as Premier (he became known as 'the People's William'), so his hobby of tree-felling which he was indulging at the same time became more frequent and caught the imagination of the press and the working man. The latter perceived identification by Gladstone with the working classes, and the press - widening its circulation following the repeal of paper tax - seized upon the axe as a readily recognised symbol of Gladstone cutting away injustices. Such a symbol had already occurred in cartoons just before the 1832 Reform Act in earlier radicalism 51.

Political cartoons – previously used by Punch for over two decades – had already depicted Gladstone as a knight in armour, often on horseback, as a Crusader, sword in hand; at other times less flatteringly in magazines of a right-wing or imperialistic flavour such as JUDY. Towards the 1870s, the sword in many cartoons was replaced by the axe as will be seen in a selection that follows. With one exception only cartoons in which Gladstone is represented with an axe are shown – most occur in the 1870s or 1880s.

The symbol of the axe is found on banners during political demonstrations and also on election posters. Poems were written that included reference to Gladstone and his axes. Conservatives retaliated – sometimes with no holds barred, as in the crude representation of the face of Gladstone adorning the inside of chamber pots in some

51 Biagini, E.F, Gladstone (British History in Perspective series), Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000, p65.
Tory homes\textsuperscript{52}. Margeret DeLisle always carried an axe (on a pendant) to symbolise her admiration for Gladstone – until the death of General Gordon in 1885 (for which Gladstone’s handling of the situation in Khartoum received much criticism) when she took it off\textsuperscript{53}.

There follows a selection from the many political cartoons featuring Gladstone; in these he is shown as the woodcutter. The cartoons accompany the text.

\textsuperscript{52} GD, vol 11, preceding page 347, illustrated with the caption ‘A Unionist Chamber Pot’.
\textsuperscript{53} GD, vol 9, introduction, p.lxxxiv and p292, Wednesday 20\textsuperscript{th} Feb 1878.
1. **O woodman pare that tree! The Comic News, April 23rd 1864, p.199**

There is a surprising gap in the *Diaries* of entries of woodcutting – from 11th September 1862 to 9th November 1867. It may be that his hobby took a backseat during this period or that he simply failed to record this activity; however, he did mention his walks, rides and even sculling on a river so this seems unlikely\(^\text{54}\). Yet his reputation for tree-cutting was beginning to capture the public’s imagination and in the middle of this ‘barren’ period of no woodcraft comes one of the first political cartoons that depicted Gladstone with axe in hand. Much had already been achieved in his position as Chancellor of the Exchequer; the bough of sugar duties had only been partially severed – his aim was to achieve a balance of taxation liability in society and a duty on sugar and tea ensured a contribution from the working classes\(^\text{55}\). His hope had always been to abolish income-tax (foiled in his first Chancellorship by the necessary funding of the Crimean War), he now wished to phase it out in a way that would put more burden on the people with property\(^\text{56}\), and less on the lower middle class. This, he felt, would produce a vibrant economy as well as a more contented population\(^\text{57}\). Free trade (the axe) would encourage initiative and deter restrictive practices. A bough already severed (in 1861) was his eventual success, despite opposition in the House of Lords, in abolishing Paper Duties (a tax on knowledge\(^\text{58}\)), which won him much popularity with the press and was an important step towards democracy, wider franchise and educational opportunities that were to follow within the decade (the ‘hopes for times to come’). The dogs making unavailing modest noises presumably represent the opposition of the House of Lords. The massive trunk of the tree may hint that much remained to be done. The cartoonist

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\(^{54}\) *GD*, vol 6, p271, Sat 23rd Apr 1864.
\(^{55}\) Bebbington, 1993, p91.
\(^{56}\) ibid.
\(^{57}\) ibid, p92.
\(^{58}\) ibid, p95.
(Yorick) bitingly shows the severed bough of income tax with the lesser branches splayed like the fingers of a hand ready to grab from the peoples' pockets.
Mr. If you have garnered the evidence, (call it) felon, please go on both-handed or right against the Arch-felon landlords of Ireland, and may God protect the right.

Don't overlook Modern wrongs.
2. With his work before him! *FUN*, February 12th 1870

The editorial of *FUN* of Wednesday 9th February (three days before this cartoon was published) said: 'the beginning of the Session is the beginning of labour for a Premier, even who finds his relaxation in felling timber. There is, to begin with, an ugly bulk to be hewed down in a neighbouring island. The Head of the Government made one big chip fly last year; but he has his work before him to bring down the Upas tree of Wrong, which was planted so long ago in a fertile soil that is as deeply rooted as Bigotry, and as widely spreading as Injustice. Here's more power to his elbow and a keen edge to his axe!''

The cartoon looks as though someone has cut it out of the magazine and sent it to Gladstone with a plea to press on with reforms in Ireland (the Irish Church Bill of 1869 had soon followed his appointment as Premier); he is contemplating the rest of the task – to his correspondent, this was the Irish land issue and the injustices perpetrated by landlords that were resisted by the Tenant League who wished for fixity of tenure, freedom of sale and fair rent59. These measures took up much legislative time in the first two years of Gladstone’s government. The question of Irish Education was another reform waiting consideration; although the majority of the Irish were Roman Catholics, they only had their poorly endowed University; they ignored the 'godless' Queen's University (founded by Peel and others in 1845) and Trinity College, Dublin, which was well-endowed but an Anglican foundation60.

60 ibid, p198.
3. The Earl and the Woodman, Sept 2\textsuperscript{nd} 1876, Punch or the London Charivari

Swain depicts Disraeli, now the new Lord Beaconsfield, in his recently acquired regalia, looking wistfully over the fence at Gladstone, who is dressed rather like a Morris-dancer, busily watering rose bushes with a wood in the background and an array of tree stumps around him – the axe significantly resting against a stump, perhaps indicating that Gladstone was now no longer Premier or even Liberal party leader, having resigned after the election defeat of 1874. In fact he was occupied not so much with Arcadian pursuits as with his theological studies, though he had addressed the Hawarden Horticultural Fete a fortnight earlier for 40 minutes on the subject of Cottage Gardening and had done some axe-work on August 5\textsuperscript{th}. An attack of lumbago followed working on a new walk around the Old Castle walls a week before this cartoon was published\textsuperscript{61}.

The Bulgarians had revolted against the Sultan in April and in May some twelve thousand Bulgarian men, women and children were massacred by Turkish irregular troops\textsuperscript{62}. Disraeli was more concerned with a possible Russian attack on Constantinople with a position to threaten the new Royal Navy base in Alexandria, so was disinclined to join European condemnation of the Turks. If Disraeli wished to bask in his new robes and hope criticism would go away\textsuperscript{63} and envied Gladstone's seemingly carefree position on the subject, he was quickly to be disillusioned. Four days after this cartoon appeared, Gladstone published 'The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East', embarrassing lukewarm Liberal leaders but selling around

\textsuperscript{61} GD, vol 9, pp145, 148f.
\textsuperscript{62} Magnus, p238f.
200,000 copies inside three weeks\textsuperscript{64}. Disraeli received a complimentary copy which he described as 'vindictive and ill written'\textsuperscript{65}.

For Gladstone the axe in the cartoon was now very much in his hand again: a week after the cartoon, he addressed a crowd of 10,000 at Blackheath (in the rain) on the subject and spurred on by popular support re-entered the political fray. Jenkins asked the question whether Gladstone was (perhaps semi-consciously) looking for a cause to champion, bored by two and a half years on the sidelines or whether he was 'spontaneously seized by a passionate sympathy for the sufferings of the Balkan Christian communities'\textsuperscript{66}. His High Churchmanship had given him sympathies with Eastern Orthodoxy, and another factor for his intervention was that the disturbances prevented Orthodox delegates from attending a conference on Christian reunion which he supported\textsuperscript{67}.

His call on the British government to change course 're-forged an alliance between him and the rank and file Liberal voters that was never subsequently broken'\textsuperscript{68}.

\textsuperscript{64} ibid, p623.
\textsuperscript{65} Jenkins, R, p400.
\textsuperscript{66} ibid, p401.
\textsuperscript{67} Bebbington, 1993, p169.
\textsuperscript{68} ibid.
4. *Arcades Ambo*, April 14th 1887, *Punch*

The Prussian Leader, Prince Bismarck, is dressed as an Arcadian shepherd complete with staff and pipe hanging from his waist, and is meeting Gladstone in the woods. Gladstone sports the flower hat but is weighed down by a pile of books and pouches of scrolls and letters – his quill is behind an ear and he has his hands full – his axe dangles from a belt behind his back, though the tree stumps would appear to be evidence of its recent use.

The conversation implies that they are both temporarily on the political sidelines. Bismarck is being assured that comparative leisure is easily occupied – Gladstone always felt every moment should be filled. Perhaps some of the scrolls and letters were to do with correspondence on the Eastern Question – a few days earlier Gladstone had written to Mr Rylett at Salford, unable to accept his invitation to the opening of Salford Liberal Club, but urging Salfordian activity on Bulgaria. In the first week of April 1877 Gladstone wrote no less than 49 letters to a variety of people, ranging from the Dean of Westminster and Dr Heinrich Schliemann (archaeologist of the site of Troy) to Beatrice Vivian, a small girl from Camborne who had sent him a letter of admiration. He also cut down three larches for Mr Leveson-Gower at Holmbury where he was staying, but commented that a steel axe failed him with a very large chip.

At this time Bismarck’s relations with Gladstone were cool, despite his apparent attempt in the cartoon to shake hands. In his Premiership at the time of the Franco-Prussian war, Gladstone told Granville (who begged him not to risk antagonising the new Germany in a hopeless cause) that Bismarck’s violent and unjust annexation of two provinces of France (Alsace – Lorraine) marked the

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69 *GD*, vol 9, p208, 30th Mar 1877, n4.
70 ibid, n10.
71 ibid, p209.
beginning of a new and unhappy phase of European history\textsuperscript{72}; whilst a united Germany gathered strength under Bismarck's intensive diplomacy and military strategies\textsuperscript{73}.

Derby deeply distrusted Bismarck in 1877 and discovered that 'he was always warning the Russians about the British and the British about the Russians'\textsuperscript{74}. Bismarck politically felt more at ease with Disraeli than Gladstone, whose inclinations were to side with the Orthodox Christians of Russia and the Slavonic states. Whereas Disraeli at least would have some understanding of German imperialism, Gladstone repeatedly backed a belief that 'independent selfish action by any one power should be abandoned and there should exist moral justification for all statesmen's actions'\textsuperscript{75}.

However Russia invaded Turkey (as Disraeli feared) in April 1877 but met with resistance which took them till January 1878 to reach Constantinople, with terms settled at the subsequent Congress of Berlin proposed by Bismarck\textsuperscript{76}.

In June 1895, the aged Gladstone visited Kiel and Hamburg for the opening of the Kiel canal (he was the guest with his family of Donald Corrie on the Tintallon Castle); when he saw Kaiser Wilhelms II sail through the line of battleships, he remarked coldly to bystanders 'this means war!'\textsuperscript{77} Later he was presented by Bismarck with a young oak tree from Friedrichsruehe, which he planted at Hawarden close to the house on the west as soon as he returned home, which still flourishes\textsuperscript{78}. Both men died in 1898.

\textsuperscript{72} Magnus, p205.
\textsuperscript{73} Bebbington, 1993, p162f.
\textsuperscript{75} ibid, p158.
\textsuperscript{77} Magnus, p429.
\textsuperscript{78} ibid.
"ARCADES AMBO!"

Prince B-ah—k. "AH, YOU DID NOT EXPECT TO SEE ME IN ARCADIA—NEIN?"
Right Hon. W. E. G. "O, YOU'LL NOT FIND IT AT ALL DULL! LOTS TO DO! LOOK AT ME!!!"
Another cartoon of the period appeared a month later, May 12th 1877 in *The Dart*, entitled 'The Would-be Deliverer Checked' – St Stephens May 7th 1877 and depicts Gladstone, axe raised (the word 'resolution' can just be made out on the blade) on the point of intervening as in the background a Turk, with curved knife, is about dispatch a fallen maid; Gladstone is being restrained by a wolf on his back and by Chamberlain and another statesman, tugging at Chamberlain's coat. Gladstone had just presented a series of 'resolutions' in the House of Commons, to change the policy of the government from 'remonstrances and expostulations' and to participate in the 'united action of Europe presently represented by Russia alone'⁷⁹. He almost stood alone – poorly supported by fellow Liberals, and the government had a comfortable majority of 131 when the vote was taken.

⁷⁹ *GD*, vol 9, Introduction, p.xxxvii.
5. Non Noscitur A Sociis, Sept 1st 1877, Punch

The cartoon shows a rather weary Gladstone sitting on an expansive tree stump, leaning on his axe, with a smaller axe, machete and shears at his feet. If reluctant, he shows an air of responsibility towards his many visitors – unflatteringly in the shape of geese and one donkey! Some are carrying gifts (helpfully designated ‘present’) including a spade and musical instruments – one goose carries a shamrock others have hats – a top hat, a dunce’s hat and a cloth cap – the donkey has what might be described as a Phrygian cap. Other geese and the donkey have picked up ‘chips’ from the woodcutting as souvenirs of the occasion. There are two banners in the cartoon – one portrays the head of a donkey, the other perhaps a jester’s hat. In the background some trees have been marked for future felling. With tongue in cheek, the commentary below the cartoon suggests some humorous ways in which Gladstone might accept his gifts. Only the first page is reproduced.

The month of August 1877 was a busy one for Gladstone. He had much correspondence to work upon; he records spending three and a half hours on letters on August 2nd, six and a half hours the next day and six hours on Saturday 4th. That latter afternoon saw a party of 1,400 arrive from Bolton! The exclamation mark underlines the unexpectedness of the volume of the invasion ‘we were nearly killed with kindness’\textsuperscript{80}. He was cutting a tree with his son William and paused to speak to the crowd, but not about politics. \textit{The Times} records (August 6th 1877, p.7b,8c) ‘the very splinters (chips in the cartoon) which flew from his axe were picked up and treasured as relics’\textsuperscript{81}. Letter writing continued over the month – on August 8th he commented that he must have extracted the letters of almost 500 correspondents – nevertheless nearly everyday saw some tree-work and some Ash trees and Alders came under his

\textsuperscript{80} GD, vol 9, p240ff.
\textsuperscript{81} ibid, p240, n7.
axe. He found time to resume work on his Thesaurus Homerikos which he had not touched for twelve months, to attend the Hawarden Flower Show and to witness an eclipse of the moon (23rd August). Some of his correspondence was political; on August 20th he read Parliamentary papers on Turkey (as well as a history of the Crusades!) and two days later he wrote to the secretary of the Russian embassy, which hints that the Eastern Question was still on his mind82. That afternoon he addressed a crowd of 2000 from Bacup for over 20 minutes who came to witness his woodcutting – he was cutting an Alder stump, perhaps the one he is sitting on in the cartoon. Two days earlier he had parties arrive at Hawarden from Salford and Darwen and he spoke for a quarter of an hour attacking the London press for war-mongering83. Gladstone described the group from Bacup as ‘very hearty and they enjoyed themselves much’.

On August 29th he went over to Leeswood where he felled a tree with his son William – even there a number of people were present. Many of the ‘chips’ were sold as souvenirs by his son to further Catherine’s charity work locally at the Orphanage and House of Rest84.

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82 GD, vol 9, p244, Wed 22nd Aug.
84 Bebbington, 1993, p135.
Mr. Gladstone, in his intervals of wood-cutting, has recently employed his leisure in receiving little gifts from enthusiastic admirers. On accepting a walking-stick, the Member for Green- 

wish the other day made quite a touching little speech. To save the Ex-Premier as much trouble as possible this sultry weather, 
Mr. Punch begs to supply him with a few common forms to be 
used as occasion may require.

On Receiving a Sugar-Stick.

It is a most excellent stick—good to look at and good to suck at; it is innocuous in the mouth, in short—"short and sweet," you know, is a proverbial phrase—has all the qualities of a first-rate sugar- 
stick. Not that I should like to have to suck a foot or so of this 
stick; sweet as it is, it would, probably, disagree with me. Ladies 
and Gentlemen—"I may say, young Ladies and Gentlemen—what we 
have to do is to strive to be as good and as sweet in our own 
characters as this stick is in the humble capacity it bears. For is 
not this stick, like most stump-speeches—my own not excluded—a 
choice specimen of sweet stuff? Excuse the joke, and forgive my 
playfulness. "Dolce est desipere in loco." And for this, Hawar- 
den is the locus on a holiday like the present, to holiday Excursionists like you, who have made this present to me.

On Accepting an Umbrella.

It is a capital umbrella. Its makers may be proud of their work. 
I should not like to receive a bang on the head from this umbrella! It has all the qualities of a good umbrella. It will keep off the 
rain, and serve at need as a protection from the sun. My friends 
the Advertisers (who have so kindly presented me with this 

umbrella), let us attempt to make our own lives, on one point 
especially, like this very useful article—an article which, I under- 
stand, can be supplied to the Public at the very reasonable figure 
of Ten-and-Six. Whether in the private or political, business of 
life, don't let any one be able to turn us inside out!

On Acknowledging the Gift of a Hat.

It is a very handsome hat. Almost too handsome for use—at 
least at election times. I should not like to have this hat 
knocked over my eyes. It is really a good one—good to look at, 
good to wear instead of the shocking—bad billy-cok I have now 
donned in my favourite character of the humble wood-cutter. It 
is light on the head, and, in a word, has all the qualities of a good 
hat. My dear friends, what we have to do is to make our heads 
like this hat—imperious to wet—heavy wet especially—and well- 
lined. 

On Accepting a Big Drum.

This is one of the best drums I have ever played upon; yet I should 
not like this drum to be banged at three o'clock in the morning out- 
side my bedroom door if I wanted to sleep. It is a capital instru- 
ment—full of music. Oh, my friends, let us be like this drum. 
Let us make noise enough at least, if there is not much in us but 
noise, and let our cry be, with the Greek sage, Strizu, but hear 
me!

On being Presented with a Case of Cheap Claret.

It is really a very nice wine—for the money! Not that I should like 
to have to drink a bottle of it. It has many qualities—it has a good 
colour, and it is not likely to get into one's head. I believe it would
6. **Planting the Hughenden Tree, December 29th 1877, Punch**

At the time of the crisis of the Eastern Question, which sharply divided the nation, Disraeli invited Queen Victoria to his estate at Hughenden on December 15th 1877, where she and her daughter, Beatrice, each planted a tree in the Italian garden. Apart from Lord Melbourne, her first Prime Minister, the Queen had not accepted an invitation previously from any of her Premiers to visit their country home. The ceremony over, the Queen (on a chair with specially shortened legs) had tea before returning to London. Gladstone was offended when the Queen refused an invitation to Hawarden in August 1889 when she was touring Wales, preferring to stay with her husband's biographer, Sir Theodore Martin, near Llangollen.

The visit drew much criticism, not least from Gladstone's friend, Edward Freeman, who said 'the Queen is going ostentatiously to eat with Disraeli in his ghetto' – Gladstone himself made no comment. Aldous suggests that Victoria may have favoured Hughenden with her presence to endorse Disraeli's policy over the political situation and to encourage him to keep his nerve, as well as to confirm their friendship. The cartoon and accompanying poem would seem to corroborate that viewpoint and Disraeli's policy of conditional neutrality, as can be seen in the naming of the sapling. Gladstone was appalled that stronger measures were not being taken to protect the Christian Slavs from the massacring Turks – he hovers axe in hand, balanced on an upside down chair made locally in High Wycombe, home of Beech trees and chair manufacture and all sorts of turnery goods (Gladstone himself was a member of the Worshipful Company of Turners).

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86 Magnus, p376f.
87 Aldous, p279.
88 ibid.
Hughenden was renowned for its collection of trees and Disraeli loved nothing more than a relaxing walk amongst them and in the garden planned by his wife. In 1860 he commented 'when I come to Hughenden, I past the first week in sauntering about my park and examining all the trees'\textsuperscript{89}. Gladstone enjoyed a similar activity but was more renowned for his woodcutting hobby.

\textsuperscript{89} ibid, p129.
PLANTING THE HUGHENDEN TREE.

Here is Aylesbury’s fame for her dairies,
High is Aylesbury’s fame for her ducks,
But High-Wycombe enjoys greater glory,
The most-favoured borough in Bucks!
The renown of a Hughenden Manor,
The luck of a BRACKENFIELD night,
To shed on her doings and dwellers
The light from an Asian sky.

One industry that favoured borough
Has based on her fair beechen woods,
The making of chairs, tables, and platters,
And all sorts of ‘turnery’ goods.
All fashions of backs and of bottoms,
Of arms and of legs—four by four—
That from kitchen and bed-room ascending,
To Windsor, in spose, soar.

At length to that next little borough
Where so many Windsors they frame,
In this blessed month of December
The Lady of Windsor there came!
VICTORIA, in propriis personis,
To Hughenden Manor drove o’er,
With Hughenden’s Lord to take luncheon,—
A grace deigned few subjects before.

Sore travailed the brains of the borough,
Of Aldermen, Town-Clerk, and Mayor:
Who shall tell of the names and motions,
And appeals—as of right—to the Chair?
How should High Wycombe rise to its highest,
Its loyal invention to show,
In building an archway triumphal,
For the Queen beneath it to go!

Christmas evergreens, holly and laurel,
Were there, but such archways were stale;
Mere battens, distemper, and canvas,
Were all in the common-place pale;
Till twas planned—who proposed it we know not,
His blushes posterity spares.
Both her trade and her loyalty Wycombe,
Should proclaim in an archway of chairs!

Of all arches ever passed under
By Royal Procession before,
Never arch displayed loyalty greater,
And none o’er struck Royalty more.
There was but one feature a-wanting.
As a crown of the arch in the air,
Had Lord BRACKENFIELD posed, emblematic,
A-poising a neat Windsor chair!

Pass we o’er the address and the bouquet,
And the Bucks Volunteers on the green,
And drive on to Hughenden Manor,
Where its honoured Lord welcomes his Queen,
His Empress—to whom he has added
A title was ne’er Queen’s before,
And now, his full cup over-brimming,
As his guest sees her darkening his door!

Was’t a growth from the islands Pacific,
Or a shoot from some battle-fed seed,
With promise of Song-de-Baof blossoms,
And wood good for gun-stocks at need?
Whatever the tree that was planted,
At Hughenden Manor that day,
To the trees our Queen plants ‘tis the usage
That we should have something to say.

There’s war on Bulgarian mountains,
And war in Armenian plains,
But to England, that watches the battles,
Thank God! blessed peace still remains;
And even she takes hand from the ploughshare
And loom to lay hand to the sword,
Be assured she will well weigh the reason,
With due faith in her Queen and my Lord.

Did the Chia in far Bucharest shiver?
Did Gortschakoff thrill with its dread?
Did the Sultan in Stamboul feel less of
The thorns where he pillows his head?
As from luncheon in Hughenden Manor
The Queen and my radiant Lord B.
Walked out to the lawn, and proceeded
To plant a memorial tree!

Oh, what was the tree my Lord ordered,—
Or was it the Queen that bespok’s?
Was it poplar, or elder, or laurel?—
It could scarcely have been British Oak.
Or a tree of some Asian order,
Till now to our Stores unknown,
From a Hebrew root shot up in no time,
With a coronet-flower, newly blown?
7. A Breakdown: Cause and Effect, 1878, The Right Hon William Ewart
Gladstone from JUDY's point of view as shown in her cartoons during the last
10 years.

JUDY was a magazine 'respectfully dedicated to Conservatives of Great
Britain by their obedient servant, JUDY', and declared in its introduction to this
collection of cartoons 'we always thought Mr Gladstone's sway was pernicious and
we are of the same opinion still'.

In an article in JUDY, 27th January 1875, a comment was made concerning the
press and Gladstone, claiming that 'the daily papers had been wondrous civil to Mr
Gladstone on the occasion of his leave-taking, recalling the saying that praise
undeserved is satire in disguise'.

On the Bulgarian issue, a cartoon depicted 'the Turks at school' showing a
school mistress with class of Turks before her, addressing Gladstone (who is carrying
a Birch under his arm) 'civilisation - before we resort to punishment Mr Gladstone,
we will give the boys another chance of learning their lessons'.

The only cartoon which shows Gladstone with an axe is depicted here (number
62, the last one in the volume). Lord Hartington, leader of the Liberal party on
Gladstone's resignation three years earlier has had his stool chopped from under him
by Gladstone; the stool marked 'Liberalism' is unharmed.

The party under Hartington in the Commons and Granville in the Lords was
weighted on the side of the Whig faction: the quiescent Gladstone, who had retained a
seat in the Commons, was roused in support of the Bulgarian Agitation, and
embarrassed the leadership with the strength of his intervention, which delighted the
Radicals of the Party. The cartoonist, imputing an unworthy motive to Gladstone was
later proved wrong in his perception that Gladstone would never lead the Party again.
The ambitious Radical Chamberlain, founder of the National Liberal Federation in Birmingham on May 31st 1877 invited Gladstone in the hope that his presence would further his own political standing a few years down the line. He said to Dilke ‘...if he were to come back for a few years (he can’t continue in public life much longer) he would probably do much for us and pave the way for more’. He continued to expect Gladstone’s retirement for the next ten years.\(^90\)

\(^{90}\) Adelman, p34f.
A BREAK-DOWN: USE AND EFFECT:

As I shall never sit upon it, what does it matter?

GOVERNMENT MAJORITY
143

18th August, 1878.

ty of 143, by which the country applauded the action of the Ministry, was in some measure due to the conduct of Mr. Gladstone, who by his injudicious words and actions, did much to weaken the Party he led, and of which he still occasionally constitutes himself an active member. The fall of Hartington has to thank his predecessor for the completeness of the downfall of the Opposition on the
8. Cabinet Making, May 8th 1880, Punch (from Magnus, p.276)

Gladstone, Premier for the second time, is displaying his handiwork to the Queen as a craftsman, carpenter and turner, in picking his team for the 1880 cabinet. The axe has done its job and he is seeking her majesty’s approval. Her comments suggest cautious optimism. The names of the ‘well-seasoned’ wood can be made out – Selborne, Granville, Childers, Hartington, Chamberlain and Harcourt.

The Queen had wished to appoint Lord Hartington, as leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons as Premier when the Liberals won a clear majority of 42 seats in the 1880 election: Gladstone won the seat at Midlothian, his son, William, won East Worcestershire and younger son, Herbert, was returned unopposed at Leeds (which had been reserved for Gladstone in case he had lost at Midlothian).\(^{91}\)

Gladstone celebrated by felling trees in Lord Rosebery’s park and was later informed by Wolverton at Hawarden that he suspected that Hartington and Granville would insist on Gladstone resuming the Party leadership and the Premiership\(^{92}\). This eventually happened, much to the Queen’s chagrin and despite the interference of Disraeli, who went to Windsor on April 18th to recommend to her that she should send for Hartington, whom he recommended as ‘a gentleman, straightforward and a conservative at heart in whom he had every confidence. Granville, the other possibility, he ruled out as being too devoted to Gladstone.\(^{93}\) Gladstone, as expected, would not serve in a subordinate role (in fact as Premier he then assumed the position of Chancellor as well) and Hartington and Granville stood down in his favour. Not only was Gladstone the popular choice among the working classes, but he was the only person who could unite a party made of sectional interests. The Whigs, mainly landed gentry, needed him and he needed them – the Radicals still represented an

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\(^{91}\) Magnus, p270.  
\(^{92}\) Ibid.  
\(^{93}\) Ibid, p271.
important minority which had very different aims to the Whigs. The Whigs had not all approved of his speeches and tactics at Midlothian and he wanted to conciliate them. They filled most of the major offices (‘well-seasoned wood’ in the cartoon): Granville was Foreign Secretary; Spencer, Lord President of the Council; the Duke of Argyll, Lord Privy Seal; Hartington, Secretary for India; Harcourt, Home Secretary, a Whig but regarded by many as a Radical; Northbrook, First Lord of the Admiralty; Kimberley, Secretary for the Colonies; there were just two Radicals in the Cabinet, Bright, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Chamberlain, President of the Board of Trade.

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94 ibid, p275.
95 ibid.
CABINET-MAKING

Head Carpenter. 'I hope Your Majesty likes the new Cabinet. It's been hard work—such a quantity of material!'

The Queen. 'I see most of it is well seasoned—let us hope the new wood will stand well!'

PUNCH, May 8, 1880
9. A Political Poster

This is a Conservative party election poster, urging voters to reject the Liberal party candidate on the grounds that Gladstone's foreign policies would lead to the break up of the British Empire. Gladstone is identified by his cufflinks bearing his initials; the axe too with the letters G.O.M. (Grand Old Man) and 'dismemberment' on the handle, make it clear that the message is that a vote for the Liberal candidate would be a vote for the break up of the union with Ireland (Home Rule) – a policy embraced by the Conservatives themselves later, though foiled always by the House of Lords and by dissenters in both parties especially among the aristocracy, including the Whigs.

The Kenyon in the poster could be the candidate who was elected in 1886 to represent Newport in Shropshire for the Conservative party, which he represented till 1908. If this is the case he was born in 1847 and after the Kenyon family inherited the Slaney family estate of Hatton Grange near Shifnal changed his name to William Kenyon-Slaney. He was educated like Gladstone at Eton and briefly at Christ Church Oxford and is remembered for his selection to play football for England against Scotland on March 8th 1873 when he scored two goals and he thus was the first player to score in an international football match. He also played first class cricket for Shropshire and the MCC\(^6\). If successful in the election, no other Kenyon is recorded in the list of Members of Parliament in that period.

Gladstone himself generally encouraged independence and self-rule for smaller states – the struggle of the Bulgarians in the face of Turkish aggression is a case in point. His delay in sending aid to General Gordon, who was trapped in

\(^6\) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/williamkenyon-slaney
http://content-uk.cricinfo.com/england/content/player/16002.html
http://www.englishfootballonline.com/seas1872-00/1872-73/m0002scot1873.html
Khartoum, may be partly a reflection of his reluctance to further imperialistic aims beyond what appeared to be absolutely necessary and his aversion to ‘jingoism’. When Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 1860s, he had found Palmerston’s assertive foreign policy objectionable and used to cover up facing domestic problems. To quote Bebbington, ‘in imperial and foreign affairs, Gladstone staunchly resisted the boastful spirit of national self-aggrandisement’. In 1881 he is quoted as saying ‘while we are opposed to imperialism we are devoted to Empire’. His was a Christian vision of world order in which nations should aim to do to others what they wished to have done to them. Equal justice for all nations was his lodestar in international affairs. If these were his aims he was prepared to bide his time when necessary and make essential compromises to achieve the greater good; negotiations towards the settlement of the Alabama matter with the USA was an occasion that proved ultimately successful for him. Khartoum on the other hand cost him widespread popular and political support.

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97 Bebbington, 1993, p89.
98 ibid, p176.
99 ibid, p179.
100 ibid.
10. Our Cartoon For The Day, July 3rd 1886, Pall Mall Gazette

No axes here, but a tree and a saw!

Gladstone had secretly changed his mind about Home Rule for Ireland and on December 17th 1885 wrote to Hartington to say that a government should meet the demands of the Irish for a legislative body of their own, and 'that the Tory government can do it more easily and safely than any other'. The very same day, his son Herbert released what has become known as the 'Hawarden Kite' – news that his father had changed his stance to support for Home Rule. Herbert thought that the Radicals – with Chamberlain at the helm – were plotting to take over the Liberal party; by taking the action he did, he forced his father back into the political scene. It was he, not the Conservatives, who in January had to undertake to produce the Home Rule Bill. Gladstone had not made his change of view widely known; the result was Hartington and many of the Whigs were disenchanted and Chamberlain and Trevelyan resigned in March as the cabinet discussed the Bill in March. The result was the Bill was defeated in the Commons by a combination of Liberal Unionist and the Conservatives, encouraged by Hartington and Chamberlain.

Adelman blames Gladstone for not getting Chamberlain onside (he twice ignored his claims to become Irish Secretary in 1882 when he might have been a good choice). Chamberlain argued against Home Rule because he felt the Irish were incapable of self-rule, though he claimed he was 'for the widest possible self-government...consistent with the integrity of the Empire'. The ambiguities of his position encouraged those who wished to believe his first interest lay in his thirst for power rather than the welfare of the Irish. In the end, despite the defeat of the Bill,

101 Adelman, p44.
102 ibid.
103 ibid.
104 ibid, p45.
105 ibid, p46.
Chamberlain’s self-destructive action in the cartoon was the result of being thwarted by Gladstone’s longevity and leadership that lasted another eight years – anticipated perhaps by *Pall Mall Gazette* with Gladstone firmly seated in power. Magnus blames Gladstone’s single-mindedness on the Home Rule question for the resistance of stalwarts like Bright and Hartington in the picture with sympathies for other important domestic social legislation which they felt were being ignored\(^6\). Initial lack of consultation with his colleagues was also a criticism as was Gladstone’s inability to see and encourage Chamberlain’s frustrated strengths.

\(^6\) Magnus, p356ff.
MR. CHAMBERLAIN SEVERES HIS CONNECTION AND LETS THE OLD MAN DOWN.

(Does he? Oh! That's all right.)
11. Hard Pressed, July 10th 1886, Pall Mall Gazette

The play on the word ‘pressed’ emphasised the strength of feeling in most of the Press against Gladstone’s handling of the Home Rule Bill and perhaps balances the cartoon of a week earlier.

The Pall Mall Gazette stands almost alone – with The Daily News – in backing Gladstone at any rate on this issue, represented in armour with a shield marked ‘Justice’ and ‘Right’ on his axe. The writing and lines on the cartoon were subsequently added, maybe by Gladstone himself. The Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Morning Post, Daily Chronicle, The Standard and The St James’ Gazette for Gents are hurling or poised to hurl their quill-javelins at the Premier. Ireland sits with harp in the background.
HARD PRESSSED.

"Not—to the honour of British journalism—that the great Gladstonian folly has had many supporters. In London here, that cause has been take..."
12. End of Act I, April 16th 1881, *Punch*

Gladstone, axe in hand, tree on the stage imprinted ‘session’, holds aloft the Land Bill for Ireland. Discussed in Cabinet on April 2nd, it was introduced to Parliament on Thursday April 7th\textsuperscript{107}. The next day the Duke of Argyll resigned from the Cabinet, and others were lukewarm like Hartington, who requested to not be asked to take part in its defence ‘more than can be helpful’\textsuperscript{108}. The Bill was revised, but Gladstone emphasised in his letter to Argyll the government’s determination to see it through and his commitment to it, ‘every remnant of energy I possess…will be addressed to its prompt settlement’\textsuperscript{109}. Gladstone commented that he was agreeably surprised by the Bill’s reception on both sides as far as the landlord and tenant part was concerned, and reiterated in a second letter that the matter had a momentum of its own, with Ireland in a state close to anarchy, under coercion and institutions like the Land League to overcome the Bill was a question of the peace of Ireland\textsuperscript{110}.

Sir Stafford Northcote, leader of the opposition, muttering petulantly in the cartoon had once been Gladstone’s private secretary at the Board of Trade (1841) and was an ‘ineffective opponent’, withering under Gladstone’s stare\textsuperscript{111}.

Obstructionists led to resignations, and as well as Argyll, Lansdowne in 1880 and Cowper and WE Forster in 1882 departed – the Whigs were in revolt and the House of Lords defeated the Bill in 1881 by 282 to 51\textsuperscript{112}. Three days after this cartoon was published, Disraeli died.

Gladstone’s letter to Harcourt (13th April) and to Argyll (14th April) concluded with a comment that he had never seen the snowdrops on the ground together with

\textsuperscript{107} GD, vol 10, p45, Thurs Apr 7\textsuperscript{th} 1881.
\textsuperscript{108} ibid.
\textsuperscript{109} ibid, p47.
\textsuperscript{110} ibid, p48.
\textsuperscript{111} Magnus, p275.
\textsuperscript{112} Adelman, p38.
primroses, daisies and buttercups before. It was indeed unusual for snowdrops to still be flowering in mid-April. In the midst of important political correspondence his horticultural comment reveals both his ability to keep a sense of perspective and also a love for his garden.
END OF ACT I.
13. ‘Gladstone to the Rescue’, (not illustrated)

Is the superscription on a huge poster that depicts Gladstone, axe in hand, having taken a chip out of the base of a large tree entitled ‘Tory supremacy’. At the top of the tree is a crown, of the trunk ‘increasing taxation’; a bough has the word ‘corruption’ and three large roots are called ‘extravagance’, ‘humbug’ and ‘jingoism’.

On the left of the tree, where Gladstone stands, the words ‘Tory Policy at Home’ head a picture of a coal mine with a ‘For Sale’ sign; beneath that the words ‘Stagnation of Trade’ and under that ‘Annual Deficits’ with a comparison of deficits of £4 million in 1878 increasing to £6 million in 1879.

On the right of the tree, at the top, is a picture of Disraeli, the words ‘Jingo’ and ‘Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G.’, above ‘Tory Policy Abroad’; Cyprus (rigorously attacked by Gladstone as needless imperialism), Zululand and Afghanistan. Also the words ‘Scottish Conservative Club’ – ‘Faggots to be had cheap’; ‘Poor House’ and ‘The Unemployed’.

The poster may have played a minor role in the Liberal victory at the 1880 election that brought about Gladstone’s second spell as Premier. Beneath the cartoon are the words ‘The Midlothian Woodman at Work’.
Besides cartoons and posters, banners appeared in Liberal party demonstrations with portraits of Gladstone and the symbolic axe. To take two examples, in the 1884 Reform demonstrations in Scotland a banner in a march in Glasgow depicted a Pear (peer) Tree being chopped down by Gladstone; in the same year crowds in Hawick marched with a banner inscribed 'Ready for the autumn Felling – this shank winna Break'. The shank referred to the axe handle (of Gladstone). These demonstrations attracted great crowds – estimates reached 75,000 in Glasgow and 25,000 in Edinburgh, more lining the route of the marches supporting votes for Householders in the Counties that had been blocked by the House of Lords, effigies of Lord Salisbury were dragged through the town and burnt. (There were counter-demonstrations too)\(^{113}\).

Sometimes, poems and songs accompanied a march. Here is the first verse of a ‘poem’ to be sung to the tune of ‘Men of Harlech’; (with reference to Gladstone’s axe):

Men of Hawarden! March to glory
O’er the corpse of Whig and Tory;
Recreant Balfour, gaunt and gory,
Shudders at the shock.
Rouse, o labyrinthine talker,
Raise your battle-cry of ‘walker!’
Emulate the licensed hawker,
Or the Gallic cock.
Come, a truce to lagging,

\(^{113}\) From lecture by Mark Nixon on the Material Culture of the 1884 Reform Demonstration in Scotland at Saint Deiniol’s, 15\(^{th}\) July 2007.
Set your tongue a-wagging
Till the fire dissolves like snow
Before your bally-ragging.
March along through wreck and rapine
With your emerald banner flappin;
Flesh your brand-new axes by Mappin;
Stop the Union Clock!114

15. Unarming, March 10th 1894, Punch

This self-explanatory and sentimental cartoon marks the retirement of Gladstone from the Premiership and leadership of the Liberal party. The knight is hanging up his sword, marked 'leadership' – his armour, hammer and nails and axe around him. The axe to remove injustice and the crusading knight to fight for the right had been symbols used freely in representations of Gladstone’s political career for three decades in Punch and other newspapers and magazines. Cartoons may exaggerate features but have the knack of isolating an aspect and in making a point. Gladstone’s lengthy career and larger than life crusading and moralistic politics were nourishment for editors and cartoonists, as were his clashes with Disraeli. In a sense this cartoon is not only a farewell, but a thank you from Punch.

At his death various tributes were paid to him – one that referred specifically to his wood-cutting prowess was written by Hunt Jackson in the Brighton Herald on May 19th 1898115:

He moved among the forest trees,

The trust axe within his hand,

His fame was known across the seas,

The Woodman of our England’s strand.

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115 Poem from Bebbington, 1993, p240.
UNARMING.

"UNARM!—THE LONG DAY'S TASK IS DONE!"

Antony and Cleopatra, Act IV., Scene 19.
PART 3  The Man Felling Trees and Planting

"...We retain golden memories of our visit to Hawarden, and your statesman, not like Diocletian among his cabbages, but among his oaks, axe in hand" Tennyson

A Statistical Review of the Diaries

It is useful to begin this section with comments on statistical analysis of Gladstone's wood cutting exploits as recorded in his Diaries from the first mentioned occasion in 1852 to the last in 1891. In fact, the vast majority of his axe-work occurred over the quarter of a century 1866-1890 (see bar graph overleaf). The full statistical analysis can be seen in the appendix. Statistical analysis in this instance needs to be accompanied by acknowledgement of certain limitations. Unless another member of the family or a friend is specified, the assumption has been that his wood-cutting was undertaken alone. As he abbreviated both Harry and Herbert to 'H' sometimes, it may not always be possible to be precise as to which of the two helped him: occasionally a reasonable guess can be made because of the known activities of one or other of the two sons - for instance, we have some knowledge of the dates that Harry was abroad on family business in India. The Diaries also indicate that cutting took place 'with my sons' or by the simple plural 'we' - on no less than 100 occasions, and this will distort the number of times his sons helped him and leave us only with the certainty of days when one or the other of them helped him alone.

Every time he took out his axe, wood-cutting took place - not necessarily a felling; sometimes a tree was felled one day and 'kibbled', the next; for example on Friday, November 14th 1879 Gladstone worked on a big beech; the next day he

117 Kibbling means to chop into little pieces, perhaps for firewood.
To show the frequency of axe work by William Gladstone and his family
(days on which axe work is recorded in his Diaries)
actually completed the felling of the beech, and on Monday, November 17th (he never worked on a Sunday) he kibbled the beech on Saturday.

In earlier records, in the Diaries, he uses the word 'lopping' which would indicate pruning a tree perhaps to shape it or restrict its growth or to remove it if it had died-back. In later entries he uses the word 'woodcraft' which would seem likely to mean much the same thing, and so has been recorded in the same column. 'Wood-cutting' on the other hand has been included in the column marked 'felling', as it is frequently used for clearance of smaller trees or groups of trees or else as the first stages of felling.

The index of the Diaries (vol.14, p.845) mentions just four occasions when Gladstone planted a tree – in its preceding volumes however at least 23 instances may be traced. The column marked 'viewing' embraces days when, at home or abroad, he made a point of going to see a well known tree or stand of trees, usually with family or friends, or when he inspected the Estate or measured the girth of trees, mostly at Hawarden.

Of all the trees he worked upon, disappointingly many are anonymous (nomenclatures used in horticultural circles since the time of Linnaeus are not mentioned). Thus the Diary will specify – if a name is given at all – 'oak' and fail to inform what type of oak it was of the many species available. The same goes for other varieties. Nevertheless in the context of keeping a daily diary that includes correspondence and contacts made with nobility, politicians and the Queen, it is in itself remarkable that he mentions his trees at all and the record shows 27 distinct varieties of tree. The lack of Latin names does not imply that he was unaware of them; for brevity and easy reference simple names were used.
We know from a memorandum of Archdeacon Howson, recalling a conversation 40 years earlier in 1853 with Gladstone, that the latter's interest in trees 'extended to a discovery of what was indigenous and what had been imported by successive immigrants. The Romans, for instance, had brought the Elm and Beech to this country; the Chestnut and Sycamore came through the Crusades and most of the conifers could be attributed to the Vikings. Only the Oak, Ash, Holly, Ivy and Thorn were native. The elm probably predated the Romans who introduced the Walnut and Medlar. The list of native trees could be extended to include Scots Pine, Hazel, Yew, Box, Birch, Juniper and Willow.

Leisure

a. When not at Hawarden

Inspection of the Diaries shows that Gladstone's first tree felling experience was on October 29th 1852 when he cut down three beeches. There were no further wood-cutting episodes recorded prior to July 1858, almost six years later, though his interest in trees took him to view the Fredville Oak seven miles from Dover, with a girth of 36 feet, reputedly planted before 1066. Two years later, on a family excursion in mid-Wales, he expressed admiration for some old churchyard Yews at Llangwn.

It was about this time that some of his leisure and enthusiasm was occupied with gathering a collection of porcelain. He added to this collection with items from abroad (Milan in 1858) as well as at home (Brighton 1860). By 1864 his

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118 Dictated at Hawarden Castle, 23rd Oct 1893, by Archdeacon Howson. GGMs 2158.
121 ibid, p275 'at the beginning of 1854, he was dabbling heavily in porcelain'.
122 ibid, p374.
123 ibid, p411.
collection had swelled to the extent that a sale at Christie’s of his surplus porcelain was arranged for May 5th. With his duties as Chancellor reserving much of his time in London, this acquisitive interest was no doubt, as Shannon suggests, therapeutic for him and an interest shared with Catherine, though she may have attempted to curb his enthusiasm. Rosebery later commented that Gladstone was reputed to be an enthusiastic ignoramus about china. There would, of course, be no half-measures about any occupation to which Gladstone gave his attention and his china collection much pleasure and diversion from affairs of state.

Gladstone’s aesthetic interests included occasional visits to the theatre (the most infamous being the pre-booked, but perhaps tactless, theatre engagement on February 10th 1885 following news of General Gordon’s death at Khartoum), to concerts, museums and a lifelong interest in art with visits to galleries in Britain and abroad. His attention was not confined to famous works of the past but to contemporary paintings also. He sat for photographs – for example, one taken when he was 69 in Lenbach’s studio in Munich on October 13th 1879 that adorns the jacket of volume 9 of the Diaries. He also sat for portraits by Millais (1829-96) who requested to paint Gladstone in a letter dated 16th March 1878 and had their first sitting on 26th June. He had had ‘an interesting conversation with Millais on Greek art in relation to mythology on April 25th 1877.

Millais, possibly the most well known and approved artist of his generation, painted Gladstone several times, one towards the end of the latter’s life with his little

124 ibid, p481.
125 ibid, p495.
126 ibid, p533.
127 ibid, p100.
128 GD, vol 9 pp299 and 325.
129 ibid, p214.
Grandson\textsuperscript{130}. Gladstone was familiar with the work of Holman Hunt and praised his 'remarkable picture, The Shadow of Death'\textsuperscript{131}. He was on close terms with Sir Edward Burne-Jones, like Hunt a pre-Raphaelite painter, who was a friend of Mary Gladstone, stayed at Hawarden and designed a window in Hawarden church (1897) celebrating the Gladstones' marriage. Frank Holl, who also painted a picture of Gladstone at Hawarden, helped in felling a tree\textsuperscript{132}. Nearly thirty years earlier, Gladstone had recommended that a rescue case, Miss Summerhayes, should sit for a portrait by William Dyce. He maintained an interest in portrait painting in particular, but this was an intermittent occupation; he required regular physical exercise which he enjoyed by walking or tree felling.

\textit{b. At home}

The \textit{Diaries} from 1858-1890 confirm this regular physical outlet – and few days, unless severe weather or illness intervened, interrupted his routine whilst he was at Hawarden\textsuperscript{133}. The mornings, after church at 8 or 8.30am (and a half mile walk there and back), would be spent in personally dealing with his often voluminous correspondence till lunch; for much of the time without secretarial assistance, though members of the family helped him in this respect in later years. He might also have interviews and meetings, but the afternoons were spent wood-cutting or walking often with one or other of the family or a visitor or guest. The pattern of the evenings following a meal included more reading or (when it became too dark to read by oil-lamp) enjoyed whist or music with the family – especially the Rector, Stephen – or in

\begin{footnotes}
\item[130] William (grandson) received some toy soldiers from Gladstone for good behaviour at the sittings.
\item[131] \textit{GD}, vol 8 p418, 27\textsuperscript{th} Apr 1873. He took Catherine to see the picture two days later.
\item[132] \textit{GD}, vol 12 p413 n1, 31\textsuperscript{st} Oct 1887 and an article in \textit{The World}, 21\textsuperscript{st} Dec 1887 by F Holl (see appendix).
\item[133] \textit{GD}, 24\textsuperscript{th} Dec 78 – 20\textsuperscript{th} Jan 79. \textit{e.g.} a cold winter 1878-79, 18 degrees of frost and snow cleared from the pond for skaters.
\end{footnotes}
later years, Backgammon with Rendel or Armistead, when he was a guest of either of them. The routine emphasised the intensity and concentration required of all his occupations, even in relaxation. The very fact that he could record in his *Diary*, simultaneously so to speak, correspondence with the Queen or a fellow statesman and the felling of an Oak does not imply that he regarded the entries as of equal importance, but perhaps it does imply that he approached them differently but with equal intensity. From childhood he had been taught to regard 'that time was strictly rationed out to humankind by God, and that all souls would at the last day be called on to give an account of how they had spent it. His *Diary* was his account of time'. For Gladstone the First Commandment meant loving God with all his strength as well as all his mind, heart and soul, and this gave physical effort an importance and hallowedness. His faith influenced his attitude towards physical work and the tasks undertaken by the working classes.

The afternoons then were the times set aside at Hawarden for tree-felling – only on 3 occasions did he use his axe in the morning: on the May 25th 1872 he ‘finished off’ the oak at Breakneck Brow with Willy and Stephen before lunch; the Siberian Elm at Clumber Park already mentioned (May 11th 1875); the third occasion was when he met his future biographer, John Morley at Sir John Lubbock’s home at High Elms in Kent, when he rose at 8am and cut down an Oak before catching the 11.15 train to London (March 12th 1877). There was one further occasion ‘in the forenoon’ at Sandringham as a guest when he root-cut a small tree and then measured some oaks (March 31st 1883).

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134 see cartoon, 21st Feb 1891.
Physical activity in the afternoon would have become ingrained for Gladstone from his days at Eton College. The school encouraged self-reliance and initiative, and in common with other Public Schools in the 19th and 20th centuries where boarding was the norm, afternoons were committed to physical activities. 'Muscular Christianity' was the watch-word. In addition to a certain amount of compulsory team games – Gladstone played some Cricket at an average level, but appreciated a flexibility of approach that allowed him to choose his own mixture of healthy exertion in walking, jogging, drilling and quiet rowing:\footnote{Checkland, 1971, p215.}\footnote{\textit{GD}, vol 12 p410, 30th Sept 1891.} The same principles still pertain at most boarding Independent establishments, including Glenalmond College, founded in 1841, by Gladstone, his father John, Hope and others. He continued to have much to do with the financial side of the college and still owned part of the property through mortgage when he laid a foundation stone for a New Wing to celebrate the golden jubilee on the 30th of September 1891.\

'Mens Sana In Corpore Sano' remains a conscious aim, and it may have been a motivation for Gladstone's tree-felling and his health that enabled him to continue his hobby into his eighties.
Coping with Stress

Crosby, comparing early biographies of Gladstone with more recent works that seek to explain his actions and moods in psychological terms, suggests that his responses, including his tree-felling, point to a coping with stress as the underlying motive for his leisure activities. Contemporary biographers emphasise his political and moral influences and stature; Crosby, with Shannon and Matthew (editor of the Diaries), finds moments of anxieties, pent-up aggressive energy, tension and, in Parliament, explosive interjections\textsuperscript{138}. The outlet for these personality traits – coping with stress – was withdrawal: Crosby cites diplomatic illnesses, avoidance of cabinet meetings, threats of resignation and flights from England\textsuperscript{139} - and certainly there may be more than a grain of truth in this theory in the latter years as his hearing, sight and health deteriorated in his eighties whilst the responsibilities for running the country and holding the Liberal party together continued. He didn’t retreat from these responsibilities and was still a force to be reckoned with in the House of Commons and could hold a large audience spellbound with his oratory and purposefulness. Crosby rightly refers to the bastions he continued to rely on for support, his Christian faith and his family especially; these and a disinclination to lie down and give in were means to coping\textsuperscript{140}. However, as far as motivation for his tree-felling is concerned, these withdrawals towards the end of his career played little part – as his strength waned, he was unable to continue his hobby beyond 1891. His earlier years of tree-felling may invoke more cogent reasons for its practice.

\textsuperscript{139} ibid, p5.
\textsuperscript{140} ibid, p6ff.
ALL-ROUND POLITICIANS. No. 1.—THE G. O. M. VARIETY ENTERTAINER.

16. Inspired by Gladstone's axemanship, Harry Furniss of *Punch* characterized Gladstone in a flurry of activity.
Financial Aspects

It is not within the scope of this work to go into detail concerning the financial implications of a hobby or to distinguish it from a professional viewpoint. One or two remarks perhaps can be made and suffice. Gladstone’s financial acumen gradually succeeded in hauling the Estate out of the red following the insolvency of the Oak Farm Company in 1847 and liabilities that were secured on the Hawarden estate were estimated at £450,000\(^{141}\). Magnus records that Gladstone threw his own financial resources into the recovery of the property, and the Estate which had been Catherine’s home became theirs (jointly with Sir Stephen Glynne) for the rest of their lives. It was excellent training for the future Chancellor of the Exchequer. Getting sums right is one thing, delegating shrewdly is another; Gladstone trusted much of the day to day organisation to Mr Burnett\(^{142}\) and after his death, Mr Vickers. He kept in touch with them and similarly showed close interest in the work of the forester in his employment\(^{143}\). Gladstone read about Forestry and spoke on the subject\(^{144}\). He twice made hints about financial profit that could accrue to the Estate – though it might simply have been a throw-away remark in each instance. In 1875, he cut down a large Sycamore which he said was ‘now valued at 2/6d per foot’\(^{145}\). Nineteen years later, on Christmas Eve in 1894, a gale felled 3 of the great Beeches near the house, including ‘one of the most perfect in development I ever saw, which I used to say was worth £500’\(^{146}\). He knew enough about his trees to estimate their current market value; in 1877, he felled a Cherry ‘which is to be sold at (blank) per foot over the market

\(^{141}\) Magnus, p85f.
\(^{142}\) \textit{GD}, vol 8, p133, 18\(^{th}\) May 1872, “saw Mr Burnett on Estate and money affairs...”
\(^{143}\) \textit{GD}, vol 8, p37, 15\(^{th}\) Sept 1871, “saw the forester respecting diverse trees to be taken down”.
\(^{144}\) \textit{GD}, vol 11, p340, 15\(^{th}\) May 1885.
\(^{145}\) \textit{GD}, vol 9, p60, 17\(^{th}\) Aug 1875.
\(^{146}\) \textit{GD}, vol13, p422, 24\(^{th}\) Dec 1894.
price. This is the only occasion an intention to sell was expressed. Cherry and beech would have value in furniture making: and the large Elm felled in the illustration following because its branches could fall (elm trees of this species are known to drop branches without warning even on a still day) would surely have been valuable timber for the manufacture of coffins.

Critics

There were those who criticised Gladstone for cutting down trees – the Duke of Argyll is said to have disapproved strongly of the practice. Somervell comments “Gladstone cut down trees, Disraeli planted them”. It would be more accurate to say that both planted, Disraeli mostly at Hughenden, Gladstone at home and elsewhere. The same author bemoans “the tail of trees cut down would have sufficed for the afforestation of a considerable area”. Over the period under consideration and over the estate as a whole, the deforestation would not have been as appreciable as suggested.

Political opponents made capital out of his love for felling trees, suggesting “it was typical of him to cut down something which could not grow again – likening it to his idea of statesmanship”. Lord Randolph Churchill deprecated the hobby – perhaps with tongue in cheek – in a speech at Blackpool, January 24th 1884:

“For the purposes of recreation he has selected the felling of trees; and we may usefully remark that his amusements, like his politics, are essentially destructive. Every afternoon the whole world is invited to assist in the crashing fall of some beech or elm or oak. The forest laments, in order that Mr Gladstone may perspire...”

147 GD, vol 9, p249, 11th Sept 1877.
148 Shannon, p310, “Gladstone was too destructive in the management of woodlands, partly due to his eagerness in the personal handling of the axe”.
150 ibid, p285.
152 Adelman, p89.
An anonymous letter to the Manchester Courier, signed Credo, was critical of Gladstone’s mental health in cutting trees in August when the sap was still active\textsuperscript{153}.

Gladstone was challenged when a group of 500 Liberals from Leigh and Tyldesley visited Hawarden on an excursion and Gladstone pointed out an oak and a beech that he said the family particularly prized. He said that by cutting those that were rotten, the sound trees got more air and light; he inferred that Liberals would do the same in politics to what they considered to be rotten (cheers)\textsuperscript{154}.

The remark also gives credence to the view that one reason for ‘combining conservation with physical exercise’\textsuperscript{155} was the ‘very practical motive of realising the assets of the Park’\textsuperscript{156}. Much in the Park did require thinning as the house built in 1750 by Sir John Glynne was improved by draining and planting, much of which now needed replacement\textsuperscript{157}. Gladstone did not merely cut away rotten wood, he from time to time walked around the Estate with Catherine to survey the Park as a whole, to measure trees and to plant new trees\textsuperscript{158}. Foot stresses that Gladstone ‘was a great planter of trees’ as well as a feller of them\textsuperscript{159}.

There may then be several reasons for Gladstone’s hobby; he may have desired a form of exercise for its own sake that could be undertaken at short notice; at Fasque and elsewhere he had been surrounded by trees in his youth; he had learned something of the art of wood-turning; he had watched, learnt and read something of the art and skills of the forester; on moving to Hawarden in its perilous financial state at the time, he would have wanted to make it pay for itself where possible and its trees

\textsuperscript{153} Manchester Courier, 23\textsuperscript{rd} Aug 1877, letter to the editor *GGMs* 432.
\textsuperscript{154} Chester Chronicle, 8\textsuperscript{th} Sept 1877.
\textsuperscript{156} Shannon, p249.
\textsuperscript{158} Matthew, 1986, p151.
were a prime asset\textsuperscript{160}. He might well have used his wood-cutting as a means of therapy and coping with stress, though Stead’s contention that ‘the axeman cannot think of anything but the axe and it’s impact while he is wielding it’\textsuperscript{161} can scarcely have been true for every moment he was in the woods – particularly when one or other of the family were there also. However one can imagine that there might be instances when he could have said to himself as he swung the axe ‘right, take that, Disraeli!’ It is also possible that as with his self-flagellation in the 1840s, there could have been moments when he was deliberately punishing himself when he felt guilt-ridden, but this is very speculative.

**Statistics and Family Bonding**

The statistics would suggest that of all the many reasons behind his hobby that may have differed at different times, the most constant after the early years of wood-cutting (when Herbert and Harry were still being educated and Stephen and Willy were establishing themselves in their careers) was the bonding time it offered Gladstone and one or other of his sons whilst hacking at an alder or ash. In the first 20 years of his wood-cutting, we may presume that a maximum of 101 times he practised alone and on at least 90 occasions others of the family helped him, Willy, the eldest, most frequently.

Between 1871-75 he may have cut alone on 75 occasions, but one or more sons were with him no less than 203 times. Out of office between 1875-79, he could have felled solo 89 times, but he was with family company on 197 instances – more than twice the number.

From 1880-91, when much of the time he was Premier he only cut 69 times on his own at most and he had family help on 295 instances, barely a quarter of the time

\textsuperscript{160} Smith, George Barnett, *The Life of the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone* Vols 1-6, London, Paris and New York, Cassell, iii 41 “Timber Duty was repealed by Gladstone as Chancellor in 1886”.


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To show how often William Gladstone conducted his axe work on his own or with other members of family or friends (%)
spent alone. All in all, whereas he may have felled, kibbled and lopped on his own over the years perhaps as much as 325 times, on at least 746 occasions he was with one or more of his sons. For William especially, the bonding was important (400 times helping his father) and it helped what had been an uneasy relationship under his father's domination\textsuperscript{162}. The pie chart (overleaf) corroborates the fact that he had company for 70% of his axework.

No doubt each of the possible motives comes into play for felling trees at one time or another, but teamwork within the family would seem overwhelmingly the strongest. Nowhere was Gladstone happier than when he was at home at Hawarden, with his family and his trees. The family too were close-knit and revered the \textit{pater familias}; Herbert recorded that 'the children were allowed access to their father only at regulated intervals -- we grew to understand that he was much occupied and must not be disturbed...we were like little dogs who never resent exclusion but are overjoyed when they are allowed in...our affection was secured'\textsuperscript{163}. He won the children's affection not only because he loved them, says Jenkins, but because he treated them naturally and courteously as equals and with scrupulous fairness\textsuperscript{164}. It is not surprising therefore that, on well over 700 occasions one or more as adults were present to spend an hour or two in an afternoon helping him chop and kibble trees. They also helped with some planting\textsuperscript{165}.

Although still very active throughout his seventies, the statistics give the impression that the previous decade saw the greatest activity, especially in the years leading up to his Midlothian campaigns and the election of 1880. Willy continued to accompany him the most often and Herbert became increasingly available.

\textsuperscript{162} Jenkins, p394.
\textsuperscript{163} Crosby, p95f.
\textsuperscript{164} Jenkins, p127.
\textsuperscript{165} Matthew, 1986, p151.
6. Gladstone (left) at rest after a bout of tree cutting with his eldest son, William Henry Gladstone (right), at Hawarden in 1877.
Approximately two-fifths of the trees felled, kibbled and lopped were mentioned by name: others were perhaps too insignificant, or one of a cluster (and the figures might register a species when for example five trees of the same kind were culled at the same session). Large trees of longevity were mentioned by name – some of the oaks and ash which head the list numerically reached quite a size, though sycamores, elms and beech figure prominently in the list also. Almost 50 alders are quoted – trees which enjoy a streamside position and plenty of water; interestingly a similar water-lover, the poplar, is only mentioned 3 times. A letter to the present Sir William Gladstone attempted to establish whether Sir Stephen Glynne or Gladstone planted any unusual varieties – only a Deodar Cedar is mentioned in the list of fellings. Sir William’s reply was negative but reported that Harry planted some specimen trees in the Park between 1920-35. Perhaps among them is a splendid Ailanthus Altissima ‘Tree of Heaven’ along the front drive to the castle which would be about the appropriate age and compare with the yews that are hundreds of years old on the opposite side.

Previous Planting at Hawarden

One might have expected some exotic trees to have been planted at Hawarden – perhaps by Sir Stephen Glynne, as the early 19th century was an era of introduction of new specimen trees to the country through the efforts of pioneer plant-hunters abroad. The Ginkgo biloba (Maidenhair Tree), a species surviving from the Jurassic period was being planted in Britain – slow growing, hardy and distinctive it was treasured in collections of trees gracing many an English arboretum. Gladstone appears to have had no such ambitions for Hawarden. Indeed, instead, an inventory of Hawarden Castle to 1877 contains a memorandum of plants that were planted in the Glynne’s garden in 1802; there are a range of common garden flowers and fruit trees.
and bushes – peaches, nectarines, red, white and black currants, oranges and apricots, the Black Hamburgh vine and several varieties of apples (pippins, pearmain and russets) introduced in 1815\(^{166}\) and reaching a fruitful maturity by the time the Gladstones arrived at Hawarden. While staying at Sir Walder James’ home at Bettishanger in Kent Gladstone drove to Mr Long’s farm to view his 30 acres of garden and fruit ground\(^{167}\) and his interest may have been sparked by the heritage of fruiting production at Hawarden.

Fruit Farming and Hawarden Horticultural Society

On August 21\(^{st}\) 1890, Gladstone spoke at the annual Hawarden Horticultural Society show for an hour on cottage gardening and fruit growing\(^{168}\), that was the result of and catalyst for some correspondence. He had received 5 days earlier a letter from a Mr Brown ‘relating to experiments in the cultivation of the Strawberry’ (the underlining was Mr Brown’s)\(^{169}\). On June 2\(^{nd}\) 1890 he received a letter from a Thomas Brown of Lullingstone referring to earlier comments 5 years previously by Gladstone advocating agriculturalists to diversify in fruit growing and preserving, and reporting that a Mr Wood had manufactured 300 tons of Jam in his first year and was now producing 2000 tons\(^{170}\). Following Gladstone’s speech letters flowed in – mostly complimentary – including one from Cecil Hooper of Cobham acknowledging Gladstone’s mention of his name as lecturer on Fruit Farming\(^{171}\). It seems that in his speech Gladstone also recommended Bee-keeping and the keeping of poultry and rabbit as essential factors in successful cottage gardening.

\(^{166}\) GGMs, 2201.
\(^{167}\) GD, vol 9, p452f, 22\(^{nd}\) Oct 1879.
\(^{168}\) GD, vol 12, p316, 21\(^{st}\) Aug 1890.
\(^{169}\) GGMs, 719.
\(^{170}\) ibid.
\(^{171}\) ibid.
A Mr Breckhurst wrote on August 31st 1880 from Sevenoaks to thank Gladstone for ‘the great service you are rendering to the British farmer by your strong advocacy of the importance of fruit growing’. Gladstone’s speech, like most of his addresses at the Hawarden Horticultural Society’s annual shows, which were often held at the Castle, was reported in *The Times*, but seem to have caught the public imagination even more than usual. In previous years he had spoken on the virtues of working-class gardening (1875), on cottage gardening (1876) and on garden cultivation (1879); just occasionally he used the moment to slip in a political comment – the duties of the electorate (1878), land tenure (1888) and small-holdings (1892) – and in 1884 on behalf of Catherine and her local charities. The local horticultural society saw the Gladstones not merely making their grounds available but taking a full and active interest in proceedings and Gladstone spoke most years – in 1877 there is no record of a speech (or report in *The Times* afterwards), only that he attended the Flower Show and – with no suggestion that it was part of the show – felled a small ash.

**Felling Outside Hawarden**

Catherine was not an entirely passive bystander; for instance, in September 1871 the Diary reads ‘cut holly by Catherine’s orders’. The offending holly was duly dispatched! It was not surprising that Catherine should be interested in the trees of the estate that had been her lifelong home; in the month following the holly’s demise she accompanied her husband twice as they ‘examined some of the old trees

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172 GGMs, 719.
173 *The Times*, 22nd Aug 1890, p5.
174 *GD*, vol 11, p188, 14th Aug 1884 at the Hawarden Flower Show.
175 *GD*, vol 9, p243, 16th Aug 1877.
176 *GD*, vol 8, p32, 9th Sept 1871.
about the Castle\textsuperscript{177} and ‘reconnoitred trees’ together\textsuperscript{178}. Together they paid visits as guests to a number of stately homes, and at some of them Gladstone demonstrated his skill as an axe-man. Windsor Castle and Sandringham have been mentioned; the beech at Windsor was matched by a huge specimen at Hagley Hall in January 1870 and again almost two years later in December 1871\textsuperscript{179}, felling for their relatives, the Lytteltons.

Gladstone cut an oak at High Elms, Sir John Lubbock’s seat in Kent in March 1877, where he met his future biographer, John Morley, and commented that he couldn’t help liking him\textsuperscript{180}. Later the family chose Morley to write Gladstone’s official biography, but he was not their first choice; Godley’s reaction in a letter to Hamilton said ‘to choose Morley to write Gladstone’s life is very much like choosing a man who has been blind from birth, but is a clever writer, to do the biography of Millais or Burne-Jones\textsuperscript{181}. The reason for this comment may have been Morley’s agnosticism and resultant concentration on Gladstone’s political career, ignoring his religious motivations and background.

Gladstone cut a tree at Walmer Castle, belonging to Granville\textsuperscript{182} and at Holmbury cut down 3 Larches for the Hon. F. Leveson-Gower, though he complained about the axe\textsuperscript{183}. Unrecorded in the Diary is the return visit almost 6 years later when he tackled a cherry tree in a snowstorm (overleaf). On a visit to Woburn Abbey the Duke assisted him in cutting down a Deodara Cedar (cedars which have branches dangling downwards)\textsuperscript{184}. At another stately home in Scotland, Dalmeny, residence of

\textsuperscript{177} ibid, p39, 25\textsuperscript{th} Sept 1871.
\textsuperscript{178} ibid, p47, 17\textsuperscript{th} Oct 1871.
\textsuperscript{179} ibid, p80, 21\textsuperscript{st} Dec 1871.
\textsuperscript{180} GD, vol 9, p199, 12\textsuperscript{th} March 1877.
\textsuperscript{181} Foot, M. R. D, in Jagger, p31.
\textsuperscript{182} GD, vol 7, p302, 4\textsuperscript{th} June 1870.
\textsuperscript{183} GD, vol 9, p209, 5\textsuperscript{th} April 1877.
\textsuperscript{184} ibid, p355, 22\textsuperscript{nd} Oct 1878.
THE PREMIER'S EASTER HOLIDAY.

Mr. Gladstone, on Easter Monday afternoon, felled a cherry tree on the estate of the Honourable B. F. Leveson-Gower, at Holmbury Park. Commencing shortly after three, the right honourable gentleman finished his task in about twenty-five minutes. Soon after he began a heavy storm came on, but, nevertheless, he continued his feat, only making three halts. The tree was nearly twelve inches in diameter.
Lord Rosebery, he was requested to cut down a Spanish chestnut\textsuperscript{185}. It may have been coincidental that news came the day before that Disraeli had informed the Queen that the government's defeat was certain; in the \textit{Diary} Gladstone said 'I have hammered with all my little might at the fabric of the present Tory power\textsuperscript{186}.

On another occasion at Soughton Hall, property of J Bankes, he initiated Lord Aberdeen in woodcraft and praised him as a very good workman\textsuperscript{187}.

Gladstone, Magnus claims, was never a zealous educationist; his chief concern was that children should be taught the meaning of the Christian religion\textsuperscript{188}. One would expect a more egalitarian approach and Magnus goes on to suggest that Forster's Act (1870) was nearer to Gladstone's views than the great man had anticipated. Certainly Gladstone paid close attention to several Public Schools; apart from his part in the founding and finances of Glenalmond College, he gave his services as a Governor at Charterhouse and King's, Chester, during his first period as Premier and just afterwards; he spoke at Liverpool College and took a keen interest in affairs at Eton. He also visited Wellington College on several occasions as his son-in-law, E.C. Wickham, was Headmaster. On one visit, after speaking to the boys for 40 minutes, he gave a demonstration by cutting down 3 small birches in the grounds\textsuperscript{189}.

Nearer home, of course, on numerous occasions he helped Stephen, his son, by cutting trees (e.g. chestnut\textsuperscript{190}; oak\textsuperscript{191}; copper beech\textsuperscript{192}; pear\textsuperscript{193}) and general clearances, all recorded in the \textit{Diaries}.

\textsuperscript{185} \textit{GD}, vol 9, p497, 2\textsuperscript{nd}/3\textsuperscript{rd} April 1880.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{187} \textit{GD}, vol 11, p78, 17\textsuperscript{th} Dec 1883.
\textsuperscript{188} Magnus, p203.
\textsuperscript{189} \textit{GD}, vol 9, p455, 3\textsuperscript{rd} Nov 1879.
\textsuperscript{190} \textit{GD}, vol 9, p38, 22\textsuperscript{nd} May 1875.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid, p122, 2\textsuperscript{nd} May 1876.
\textsuperscript{192} \textit{GD}, vol 12, p85, 20\textsuperscript{th} Dec 1887.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid, p242, 5\textsuperscript{th} Nov 1889.
Aldous claims that Gladstone was not even very good at axemanship and compares his ‘accidents’ with Disraeli’s master-craftsman Lovett, ‘... (for whom) felling a tree is a work of art... no bustle, no exertion,... he tickles with the axe and then it falls exactly where he desires it’. Gladstone’s style may have been very different, as batsmen’s style in cricket differs, but in around a thousand fellings, only twice was there anything resembling an accident, both in the earlier days of woodcutting. Harry was in a tree when it came down – but was uninjured in the fall. On the other occasion a man’s arm was scratched as a large tree fell awkwardly. One day Gladstone got a splinter in an eye (no goggles or helmets were employed), on another autumn day a wasp stung him on an eyelid while felling alder; and he had to put off letter-writing when he slightly bruised a finger in January 1868. These episodes were all admitted in the Diaries and point to an excellent overall record for safety and skill in operation.

**Planting Outside Hawarden**

Gladstone’s tree-felling outside Hawarden was mainly undertaken in the 1870s, but the majority of his plantings outside the Estate happened in the late 1870s and throughout the 1880s. A planting left a tangible token of a visit from the celebrity, a more lasting souvenir than woodchips, but a memorial that enabled the owners to feel in touch with the Grand Old Man.

Perhaps the humility of Gladstone kept him aware of this and a sense of reluctance crept into an activity which in the privacy of his home surroundings would have accorded him much pleasure. Of his visit to Alnwick Castle, for example, he says ‘then I had to plant some trees’; he adds ‘early in the day, I had to receive a

194 Aldous, p279f.
195 GD, vol 6, p565, 27th Dec 1867.
197 GD, vol 11, p622.
198 GD, vol 6, p572, 29th Jan 1868.
deputation...I had to speak a little'; and his apparent reluctance appears to have
spread to the other events of the day as 'at every point on the road there were keen
expressions of the public feeling which was inescapable'\textsuperscript{199}. He was a reluctant hero
and tree planter.

Three days earlier at Ford Castle, Coldstream, he had 'planted a tree and cut
down part of one; with a considerable and very hearty concourse of labouring men'\textsuperscript{200}.

Unfortunately we often have no indication of the species of tree that he
planted; at Dunster Castle 'I planted a tree'\textsuperscript{201} and on his visit to Ireland in the autumn
of that year at Rathdrum, 'I planted a tree'\textsuperscript{202} was followed by 'planted a tree at
Enniskerry before visiting Maynooth and Dublin'\textsuperscript{203}. Similarly unnamed plantings
took place at Mentmore, Lord Rosebery's property and at Mr Long's farm at
Bettishanger in 1879, where he planted 2 trees\textsuperscript{204}.

However, at Dalmeny, although he merely states 'after planting 5 trees' we
have the Countess of Rosebery's word that he planted some limes and she kindly
enclosed an illustration to prove that they are still alive and well 128 years old\textsuperscript{205}. Letters to Dunster Castle and Sudbury Hall failed to elicit any information and
plantings at Haddo House, Rossie Priory and Brechin Castle in September 1884 were
all varieties to which he gave no name – though at Lord Dalhousie's castle at Brechin
he commented upon the cedars and copper beeches already planted there\textsuperscript{206}.
Gladstone planted a tree at Wanborough, near Guildford, seat of Sir A West, and
coyly admitted to having 'just touched the axe'\textsuperscript{207}.

\textsuperscript{199} \textit{GD}, vol 9, p160, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Oct 1876.
\textsuperscript{200} ibid, p159, 29\textsuperscript{th} Sept 1876.
\textsuperscript{201} ibid, p189, 27\textsuperscript{th} Jan 1877.
\textsuperscript{202} ibid, p261, 25\textsuperscript{th} Oct 1877.
\textsuperscript{203} ibid, p263, 3\textsuperscript{rd} Nov 1877.
\textsuperscript{204} ibid, p407, 21\textsuperscript{st} April and p453, 24\textsuperscript{th} Oct 1879.
\textsuperscript{205} ibid, p463, 1\textsuperscript{st} Dec 1879 and illustration overleaf.
\textsuperscript{206} \textit{GD}, vol 11, p210, 20\textsuperscript{th} Sept 1884.
\textsuperscript{207} ibid, p604, 12\textsuperscript{th} Aug 1886.
Th. Oct Sledmere planted a lime tree each in 1879. They are one behind the other on this coast.

Tom Seward

Jack Rosebery

THE COUNTESS OF ROSEBERY
DALMENY HOUSE
SOUTH QUEENSFERRY
WEST LOTHIAN
EH30 9TQ
TEL: 031 331 1784
Better known was the visit Gladstone made with Catherine to Newnham College, Cambridge, where Helen, their daughter, was a Fellow, preferring to stay there than accept the Headship of Royal Holloway College. The illustration, reproduced for the photograph in the *Diaries*\textsuperscript{208} captures the well attended ceremony in January. The tree (unnamed again) was soon destroyed presumably by Tory undergraduates. Undaunted, Gladstone replaced it with an Oak from Hawarden which still flourishes\textsuperscript{209}.

The planting at Sudbury Hall was eclipsed by what Gladstone described as a most interesting visit to the Sudbury factory for dairy produce, that followed ‘tree planting, etc’ in the *Diary* – a hint at duty rather than pleasure\textsuperscript{210}.

The Gladstones spent some of the winter of 1878 in Florence, and some enthusiastic entries in the *Diary* confirm that it was a happy and interesting holiday both socially and aesthetically. One Saturday, they ‘went to a luncheon party at Bello Sguardo; pleasant people, saw digging in the garden, and planted a tree’\textsuperscript{211}. The impromptu nature of the incident seemed to fit the spirit of the holiday.

There may have been other occasions, but just 2 more are recorded; at Lord Rothschild’s home at Aston Clinton, where ‘underwent photography. Planted a tree’ is the terse entry; the other planting was at Bingley Hall – he had spoken for an hour and a half to a meeting estimated at 20,000 persons the previous evening, so perhaps it was understandable that he dismissed the events of the next morning with ‘breakfast 9.30 – speech of 20 minutes to Irish Deputation. Then the photographing, the tree planting, the farewells’\textsuperscript{212}. One could surmise Gladstone did not seem to revel in such

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\textsuperscript{208} *GD*, vol 12, following p298.
\textsuperscript{209} ibid, p8 n8, 31\textsuperscript{st} Jan 1887.
\textsuperscript{210} ibid, p73, 25\textsuperscript{th} Oct 1887.
\textsuperscript{211} ibid, p93, 21\textsuperscript{st} Jan 1888.
\textsuperscript{212} ibid, p160, 8\textsuperscript{th} Nov 1888.
occasions; they were a duty, a means to an end and the publicity did not fill him with joy. Perhaps that is why he did not tell us what he planted.

Very different is the planting that came to light in a letter from Sir William Harcourt to Catherine after Gladstone’s death; remarking on Gladstone’s personal kindness, Harcourt wrote ‘I watch daily in my garden the growth of the walnut he planted here 10 years ago, and the young ash tree too, which will be historical monuments’. The motive of Gladstone here would seem to have been a desire to share a pleasure.

**Laying Down the Axe**

The first hint that Gladstone did not feel physically strong enough to fell trees came in 1881 when he was almost 72. He wrote ‘ventured on a little woodcutting — but I am no longer equal to the true woodman’s work’. He was still feeling the effects a fortnight later when he recorded: ‘felled a beech with Willy. But, ‘non sum qualis eram’. Perhaps a bout of lumbago was responsible at the time, mentioned in the *Diary* 4 days later. A storm on October 15th (1881) required attention to damage and with William and Stephen the next few weeks saw Gladstone in action with the axe most days — a large Elm, mutilated by the storm, was felled in November, followed by a great Oak a week later and further fellings regularly for the rest of the year. His remarks in September may have been reflecting concerns over the pressures of office and a recurring desire for retirement. Magnus reports that Granville (a year later, October 1882) consulted Sir Andrew Clark about Gladstone’s health. The reply was that Gladstone was ‘not only sound from head to toe, but built without flaw, like

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213 Drew, p198.
215 *ibid*, p137, 3rd Oct 1881 ‘I am not the man I was’.
216 *ibid*, p161f, 17th Nov 1881.

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some ancient Greek statue of the ideal man...and of all his patients, Gladstone with his careful habits had the best chance of living to be a hundred\textsuperscript{217}. 

Axework continued throughout the 1880s as opportunity arose with just the occasional hint of increasing frailty. One occurred in October 1884, ‘walk with Mr Millais: a little woodcraft: my sons felled an oak’\textsuperscript{218}. Another moment was in May 1885, ‘cut down a Holly, which impeded view. One of my last falls?’\textsuperscript{219}. There are no other hints in over 300 recorded woodcutting and crafting days until the end of the decade and the approach of his eightieth birthday. A month before that landmark, he wrote ‘woodcraft with Herbert: I played second fiddle\textsuperscript{220} - he was not ‘retiring’ from woodcutting, merely remarking on the unusual situation of allowing one of his sons to take the dominant role. A few days later he was indulging in some woodcraft and said ‘Will (his grandson) was much interested in seeing the axe and bruiting it abroad\textsuperscript{221}. 

Woodcraft continued throughout the following year: in October, he felled a Walnut at Hawarden and in November at The Glen, Innerleithen, Sir Charles Tennant’s house, he finished off the cutting of a Scotch Elm\textsuperscript{222}. A year later we have the last recorded felling in the Journal, ‘a touch of axework\textsuperscript{223}. 

No doubt he was beginning to feel his age: although as alert as ever, his eyesight and hearing were gradually deteriorating, lumbago played a part, bouts of diarrhoea became more frequent and he found himself elected Premier again although now over eighty. He took – and needed – more breaks at home and abroad. He stayed in Hoylake and visited Parkgate for the sea air\textsuperscript{224} and climbed Moel Famau for the

\textsuperscript{217} Magnus, p293.
\textsuperscript{218} GD, vol 11, p226, 15\textsuperscript{th} Oct 1884.
\textsuperscript{219} ibid, p346, 28\textsuperscript{th} May 1885.
\textsuperscript{220} GD, vol 12, p246, 21\textsuperscript{st} Nov 1889.
\textsuperscript{221} ibid, p248, 3\textsuperscript{rd} Nov 1889.
\textsuperscript{222} ibid, p333, 5\textsuperscript{th} Nov 1890.
\textsuperscript{223} ibid, p422, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Dec 1891.
\textsuperscript{224} ibid, p56, 11\textsuperscript{th} Aug 1887.
mountain air\textsuperscript{225}, walking 6 miles ‘without difficulty’; he stayed in Ripon ‘for the bracing air’ to clear his chest and to view ‘the noble trees’ at Fountains Abbey\textsuperscript{226}. He took holidays in Florence and Naples, the latter as guest of Rendel, his backgammon partner, commenting on the beautiful gardens, visiting an exhibition of pictures and sculptures, walking in the Maraval Gardens and studying the archaeological objects of Pompeii\textsuperscript{227}. He enjoyed a brief stay in the New Forest with the Harcourts: ‘many hours of driving and walking in the New Forest – a tract without rival in this country’\textsuperscript{228}.

He was at the same time concerned with his collection of books, and investigated possible sites for a library\textsuperscript{229}. Nearly a year later he recorded ‘went over the competing sites (for St. Deiniol’s) and got his advice (Rendel)\textsuperscript{230}. Two days later he worked on his library plans ‘my ground floor is to be Theological and planned for 25,000 volumes’\textsuperscript{231}. There was much to rival the place of tree-felling – in planning for this bequest and legacy of the library for the nation he was about to take the reins of office for the fourth time.

\textsuperscript{225} ibid, p60, 29\textsuperscript{th} Aug 1887.
\textsuperscript{226} ibid, p73, 26\textsuperscript{th} Oct 1887.
\textsuperscript{227} ibid, pp172-183, he was in Naples from 22\textsuperscript{nd} Dec 1888 to 8\textsuperscript{th} Feb 1889.
\textsuperscript{228} ibid, p209, 6\textsuperscript{th} June 1889.
\textsuperscript{229} ibid, p145, 7\textsuperscript{th}/8\textsuperscript{th} Sept 1888.
\textsuperscript{230} ibid, p225, 19\textsuperscript{th} Aug 1889 – the same day he read Whitehead on Fruit Culture and Stewart on Deer Forests.
\textsuperscript{231} ibid, p226, 21\textsuperscript{st} Aug 1889.
Conclusion

Surrounded by trees, especially at Fasque, Gladstone developed aesthetic and utilitarian interest in wood. His wood-turnery became a hobby and a skill. Plunging straight into politics in his early twenties there was much to occupy him. His later Diaries show a full and regular timetable with few idle moments. Church each morning and daily Bible reading expressed his Christian devotions and set the tone for the day; ‘the faith of Mr Gladstone,’ said Rosebery, ‘obviously to all who knew him, pervaded every act and every part of his life.’ Mornings whilst at Hawarden were spent on correspondence or meetings, afternoons to walking or woodcraft, and evenings to family entertainment. In London, Parliamentary activity dominated, but evenings, when not in the House of Commons, might be spent with the occasional theatre visit, voracious reading (there are prolific references to Homer especially in the Diaries) and walking in his rescue work among prostitutes of the streets of the capital.

Tree felling was an occupation mainly for Hawarden; in London he acquired the finest collection of Wedgwood pottery made during the 19th century and he developed a life-long interest in paintings. Both collections he sold off in 1875 – he needed to defray the expenses of his first Premiership. Music was an alternative to whist or backgammon as evening entertainment at Hawarden; Catherine and her sister had learnt the piano in Paris from Abbe Liszt and Gladstone shared her enjoyment, particularly for the liturgical choral works. William, their son, composed church music in adulthood.

233 ibid, p133.
234 ibid.
236 Bebbington, 2004, p82.
Visits abroad, from Italy in the 1830s onward, encouraged his appreciation of the beauty of the natural world, for which he never lost enthusiasm. However it was not until he was well into his 50s, at an age when many might be seeking less physically taxing hobbies that Gladstone began to devote regular sessions to tree felling.

Following a brief spell as Junior Lord of the Treasury (1834) and Vice President of the Board of Trade (1841) under Robert Peel, he was making his mark as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Aberdeen's government as his first record of woodcraft appears in the Diaries (1852). He was Chancellor again in Palmerston's administration (1859-65) and received much credit with the masses for his part in the repeal of the Paper Duty, which he believed 'opened a new epoch in the lives of the poor'. He became known as 'the People's William', and it was during his first Premierships that the franchise was extended and paved the way for education for all primary age children – measures that cemented his popularity with the ordinary working class man. As his reforms made the headlines so too the press latched onto his tree-felling pastime. Editorials linked the two and cartoonists portrayed him wielding his axe against injustices at home, Ireland and further afield. The axe became a readily recognisable symbol and icon for the rest of his political career not only in journals and newspapers but on banners, in rhymes and even on bric-a-brac and other mementos. It could not be said that he instigated such publicity – there are hints that he would have preferred to do without it; perhaps he could not have prevented it even if he had wished to, despite the occasional posing for the camera.

Aligning himself with the working-man was something that his tree-felling achieved – it upheld and recognised the value of honest physical toil and it helped the

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237 Magnus, p152.
238 McCarthy, illustration facing p222 (overleaf).
ordinary man to regard Gladstone as ‘one of them’. Gladstone took an interest in his tenants and their health and welfare, and credited ordinary citizens with the prefix ‘Mr’, signifying equality of worth. He himself persistently rejected a peerage and knighthood, preferring to be identified as plain ‘Mr’ Gladstone. The bond was mutual and the masses, especially the non-conformists, trusted Gladstone as he in turn had faith in their support and moral direction.

His collection of axes grew, mainly through gifts, in the 1870s and his charisma was undimmed in the press even after leaving office and resigning the leadership of the Liberal party – in fact ‘that an ex-Premier devoted himself to this rustic pastime in the bucolic atmosphere of Hawarden, after his partial but sudden political eclipse, gave him the appearance of a modern Cincinnatus’239, arisen for the occasion then retiring to the obscurity of his home.

Seemingly unable to take Gladstone’s tree-felling seriously, and dismissing an instance where the Diary records ‘attacked tree-cutting’1 as an outlet for his aggression, Jenkins latched onto this verb and described his tree-felling as an ‘assault’ and twice as ‘slaughter’241. Gladstone’s verb was possibly a οὐκ ἔχει... λέγεται εὐγενεία...242, and can be explained by the fact that he had been at Hawarden for a full week, after a fifteen month absence, catching up with his accounts, books and papers amongst all his other correspondence and spending time with Harry, regarding his profession, and Stephen, discussing his plans (April 20th-23rd 1867), and this was the first opportunity to indulge in any woodcutting since

240 GD, vol 6, p515, 25th Apr 1867.
241 Jenkins, pp190, 275 and 396.
242 ‘hapax legomenon’, remark that does not occur elsewhere.
January 1866. After such a long absence from Hawarden, no wonder he couldn’t wait to get hold of his axe again!

Crosby and Stead state that axework helped him ‘rest his brain’, based on another isolated remark he made ‘in chopping down a tree you have not time to think of anything excepting where your next stroke will fall’. His concentration was probably equally single-minded when reading, writing, in church or playing a hand of whist.

The broad picture is of a man who was never so happy as when he was at home on the relatively modest estate at Hawarden, surrounded by his family, books and trees. The ‘extended family’ too was of concern to the Gladstones, ‘no good cause of philanthropy initiated in the neighbourhood of Hawarden has failed to receive generous assistance from the inhabitants of the Castle’. The offices of state that occupied him at Parliament kept him in London, restricting his time at home at best to periods of roughly a month, 3 times a year, around Easter, in August/September and over the Christmas/New Year period. Whereas other diversions like music or books could occupy him while in London, tree-felling with a few exceptions took place when at Hawarden. Tree-felling then may have resulted from a variety of motives and circumstances over the two and a half decades in which it was a major hobby, but the bonding and involvement of members of the family that accompanied more than two-thirds of his axework must remain the dominant theme. It was there that as they swung their axes that he could thrash out matters of the Estate with Willy, debate family interests abroad with Harry, discuss his university and, later on, his political career with Herbert and church matters with Stephen. The final

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243 GD, vol 6, p660f, 'Where was he?'.
244 Stead, p52f.
245 Williamson, 1898, p90.
illustration indicates that Catherine and their daughters would sometimes be present and no doubt took their part in conversation.

Although his sons went to work with him, it does not seem that any of them persisted after his death; perhaps this was left to the foresters. His sons did take an interest in the trees of Hawarden though; apart from planting some specimen trees, Harry enjoyed measuring some of the larger trees. By 1923 the Bismarck Oak had grown to have a girth of 3 feet at 4 feet from the ground and the Ruskin Beech near the top of the Broad Walk measured over 14 feet at the same height\textsuperscript{246}. A range of measurements were taken in the grounds on several occasions. Gladstone himself recalled times when he measured the girth of outstanding trees at Hawarden and elsewhere; girth mattered when he was contemplating felling; he mentioned trees for their beauty as well as their size, and recorded the unusual events like early flowering or storm damage. He planted as well as felled and his fame for both activities was indirectly owing to his political stature. He once was said to have been challenged to a tree-felling contest, but declined\textsuperscript{247}; it was not the publicity he sought, nor did he claim any outstanding ability that made him seek a competition. Nonetheless that activity merited recording in the Diaries alongside audience with the Queen, correspondence with the Foreign Secretary and meetings in Cabinet. It mattered to him.

Perhaps it is fitting that his last speech was not a political one – but an address to the Hawarden Horticultural Society on gardening\textsuperscript{248}.

\textsuperscript{246} GGMs 1844, H.N Gladstone, 14\textsuperscript{th} June 1923.
\textsuperscript{247} Bebbington, 1993, p189.
\textsuperscript{248} Jenkins, p628, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Aug 1897.
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<thead>
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<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mr Gladstone’s home at Hawarden: a favourite pastime of former days</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Tree-felling by machinery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>O Woodman, pare that tree!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>With his work before him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>The Earl and the Woodman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Arcades Ambo!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>The would be deliverer checked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Non nescitur a sociis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Planting the Hughenden tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>A breakdown: cause and effect 1878</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Cabinet making</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>A political poster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Our cartoon for the day</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Hard pressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>End of Act 1</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Unarming</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Bar graph showing frequency of axework</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Inspired by Gladstone’s axemanship</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Fallen Elm on the Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Pie chart showing percentage of axework with the family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Gladstone and Willy resting after bout of tree-felling 1877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>The Premier’s Easter holiday at Holmbury</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Planting at Dalmeny</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>Planting at Newnham College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Photo of family around the fallen tree at Hawarden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Solo</td>
<td>Willy</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------</td>
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<td>1851-55</td>
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<td>1856-60</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>325</td>
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### APPENDIX B

**Species mentioned in the Diaries for woodcutting and planting**

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<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<td>Fir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Holly</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beech</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Hornbeam</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copper Beech</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ivy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcupine Beech</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Larch</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birch</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lime</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chestnut</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pear</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Chestnut</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Poplar</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deodara</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sycamore</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Walnut</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elm</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yew</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotch Elm</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siberian Elm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wych Elm</td>
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<td>'Evergreen'</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

291 at least and unnamed varieties

28 named varieties (or 27 and 'Evergreen')
Bibliography

Primary Sources

Glynne Gladstone Manuscripts (GGMS).


Secondary Sources


Battiscombe, G Mrs Gladstone, the Portrait of a Marriage, London, Constable, 1956.


Williamson, David, *Gladstone the Man* - a non-political biography, London, Bowden, 1898.


**Pamphlet**

Newspapers and Magazines

The Comic News
The Dart
Fun
Judy
Pall Mall Gazette
Pictorial News
Punch or 'The London Charivari'
The Chester Chronicle
The Times