



The Liberal Unionist Party: A History (International Library of Political Studies)

Ian Cawood

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The Liberal Unionist party was one of the shortest-lived political parties in British history. It was formed in 1886 by a faction of the Liberal party, led by Lord Hartington, which opposed Irish home rule. In 1895, it entered into a coalition government with the Conservative party and in 1912, it amalgamated with the Conservatives. Ian Cawood here uses previously unpublished archival material to provide the first complete study of the Liberal Unionist party. He argues that the party was a genuinely successful political movement with widespread activist and popular support which resulted in the development of an authentic Liberal Unionist culture across Britain in the mid-1890s. The issues which this book explores are central to an understanding of the development of the twentieth century Conservative party, the emergence of a 'national' political culture, and the problems, both organisational and ideological, of a sustained period of coalition in the British parliamentary system.

'Well written, and thoroughly researched. Ian Cawood rightly notes that, apart from the role that Joseph Chamberlain has played in its origin and development, Liberal Unionism as a popular political movement has been ignored. Far more than merely a creature of Chamberlain's, Liberal Unionism had a life of its own, extending well beyond the parliamentary corridors of power in Westminster.

Travis L. Crosby, Professor Emeritus of History, Wheaton College, Massachusetts

'The Liberal Unionist Party is a well written and cogently argued book. It makes important contributions to our understanding of late nineteenth-century British politics.'

William Lubenow, Professor of History, Stockton College, New Jersey

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