

Frome Divisional Labour Party,
1918-1949/North Somerset
Constituency Labour Party,
1949-1983:

A Brief Introduction
to the
Microfilm Edition

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Frome Divisional Labour Party 1918-1949/North Somerset Constituency Labour Party 1949-1983: A Brief Introduction

Labour in South-West England

Few regions of Britain have proved more consistently inhospitable to the Labour Party than the South-West of England. There was not a single Labour or socialist candidate in parliamentary elections in Somerset, Dorset, Devon or Cornwall before the First World War. This was hardly surprising, given the lack of local Labour organisation, itself a product of the weakness of trade unionism. But although Labour parties had been set up in most constituencies in the region by the early 1920s, parliamentary success did not follow. At the general elections of 1918, 1922, 1924, 1931 and 1935, none of the region's 26 seats was won. The only inter-war successes came in 1923, when one seat was gained, and 1929, when two were obtained. Even in 1945, Labour's electoral *annus mirabilis*, only 6 of the seats went to Labour. In the 13 general elections between 1950 and 1992, things remained dismal: the only seats Labour won were Plymouth Devonport (8 times), Falmouth and Camborne in Cornwall (6 times) and Exeter and Plymouth Sutton (once each). Nationally, the 1997 election provided a massive victory for Labour; even then, only 5 seats in the region were won by the party.

Frome: A Winnable Seat

There was only one seat in the region which Labour won more than once between the re-distributions of 1918 and 1949, and that was the Frome division of Somerset. During this period, Frome went Labour in every general election that led to the formation of a Labour government – that is, in 1923, 1929 and 1945. At first sight this might seem surprising. Somerset is a county which has given most Labour historians little pause for thought, and many would dismiss it as an agricultural backwater with little potential for the growth of a Labour party usually identified with industry and particularly the regions associated with the heavy industries of the Industrial Revolution.¹

Yet it would be wrong thus to dismiss the county as being of no interest. After all, Labour politicians and union leaders as different as A.J. Cook of the Miners' Federation, Ernest Bevin of the Transport and General Workers' Union (and later Minister of Labour and Foreign Secretary) and senior cabinet minister A.V. Alexander all hailed from Somerset. Sir Stafford Cripps and Tony Benn served successively as MP for the East/South East Bristol constituency, which bordered the Frome/North Somerset seat, in the period between 1930 and 1983. Far from being an insignificant backwater, Frome was an important and interesting constituency in its own right.

Although taking its title from the old textile town of Frome, the parliamentary division was, in effect, the constituency covering most of north-eastern Somerset. It lay to the south-east of Bristol; Bath was a separate borough constituency, surrounded on all sides by Frome. The division itself comprised the urban districts of Frome, Midsomer Norton and Radstock, and

¹ It is not possible to offer a full bibliography of work on the Labour party at local and regional level here, but see A. Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (London, 1997), p.274, for a fairly detailed list.

the rural districts of Bath, Clutton, Keynsham, and part of that of Frome.² It was thus relatively large in area. The distance between Frome, in the south-east, and Keynsham, in the north-west, was 14 miles; that between Batheaston, in the north-east, and East Harptree, in the south-west, was 16 miles. It also suffered from poor communications, since it was largely bypassed by the main road and rail routes to and from Bristol and was quite significantly contoured. The railway system in the division was patchy, and often slow, making it difficult for members from outlying areas to attend meetings of the constituency party, which were usually held in Radstock.³

North Somerset

The redistribution of seats effected in 1918 remained in place for over thirty years, but by the later 1940s population movements had made a wholesale redrawing of constituency boundaries inevitable. The electorate in Frome had grown from 51,582 at the last pre-war general election, 1935, to 68,954 ten years later, and this was much larger than most of the other seats in the county.⁴ Under the redistribution of seats conducted by Attlee's Labour government in 1949, the Frome constituency was abolished. Most of the old seat was transferred to the Wells division (thus necessitating the change of name to North Somerset), while a new area, stretching to the coast at Portishead, was added. The new seat comprised the urban districts of Keynsham, North Radstock and Portishead, plus the rural districts of Bathavon, Clutton and part of that of Long Ashton.⁵ Aside from minor amendments, this constituency remained in being until 1983, when most of it was transferred to the new Wansdyke constituency, the remainder (the area around Portishead) becoming part of the new Woodspring seat.⁶ Like Frome, it covered a large area: the distance from Portishead in the north-west to Radstock on the south-east was around 22 miles. Poor communications remained a problem: by the 1950s special buses were being laid on for many constituency party events, but they had to wind their way across the indifferent roads of the division for well over an hour before reaching their destination. It was a recognition of these difficulties that led to most committee meetings being held in Bristol, despite the fact that the party's offices were situated in Radstock.

From a Labour perspective, the 1948 redistribution has been much criticised.⁷ It said a lot that at the 1951 election Labour won fewer seats than the Conservatives even though it gained more votes. So far as Somerset was concerned, it is hard to gainsay this conventional wisdom. Frome had looked like a fairly safe seat in 1945; but North Somerset was to remain a Conservative seat throughout its history.

While social and economic changes were a factor here, the fortunes of Labour in Somerset were not helped by the detachment of a largely industrial town, Frome, and its replacement by the much more middle class area around Portishead. North Somerset remained a marginal seat between 1951 and 1966, but it was one that the Conservatives always won (although they

² *Representation of the People Act, 1918* (7 & 8 Geo. 5, ch.64).

³ R. Athill, *The Somerset and Dorset Railway* (Newton Abbot, 1967), pp.38, 89, 93, 95, 165-72; *Bradshaw's April 1910 Railway Guide* (new edn., Newton Abbot, 1968), pp.53, 114, 115.

⁴ F.W.S. Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-1949* (3rd edn., Chichester, 1983), pp.454-9.

⁵ F.W.S. Craig, *Boundaries of Parliamentary Constituencies, 1885-1972* (Chichester, 1972), p.85.

⁶ R. Waller, *The Almanac of British Politics* (2nd edn., London 1983), pp.221, 223.

⁷ K.O. Morgan, *Labour in Power, 1945-1951* (Oxford, 1985), p.406; B. Donoughue and G.W. Jones, *Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician* (London, 1973), p.453.

might not have done so had there not been Liberal intervention in 1964 and 1966). From 1970 onwards, however, the Conservative majority was always comfortable, and by the latter date, with a majority of 26.6 per cent, it looked like a safe Tory seat. It seems quite possible that, on slightly more favourable boundaries, Labour would have held North Somerset for most, if not all, the period between 1945 and 1966, at least.

The Social and Economic Background

Agriculture was the largest single employer of labour in the constituency during the inter-war period. According to the 1931 Census, it accounted for 18.33 per cent of adult male employment. Middle class occupations accounted for a further 16.1 per cent.⁸

So far as the Labour Party was concerned, however, what made Frome a winnable seat was the fact that a significant proportion (17.5 per cent in 1931) of adult males worked in coalmining.⁹ Coal had been mined in Somerset since at least the sixteenth century, but the coalfield was only really opened up significantly during the nineteenth century; in the early twentieth century it was at its zenith, producing 1.25 million tons a year.¹⁰ This, however, made it one of the smallest and least important fields in Britain, and once the immediate post-war boom had come to an end in 1920, the coalfield moved into a difficult period. Indeed, things were so bad that early in 1921 the owners were 'prepared to contemplate indefinite [state] control'.¹¹ The seams were generally 'thin and furnish[ed] coal of inferior quality', and the bulk of the coal was consumed locally.¹² Wages tended to be low in comparison with other coalfields, reflecting the poor quality of the coal and the small scale of most of the mining operations.¹³ When the National Union of Mineworkers was formed with a membership of 602,863 in 1944, the Somerset Miners' Association (SMA) brought only 2,600 members into the new organisation.¹⁴

A major problem for Labour, in retrospect, was that the coalfield was in terminal decline. Of the twelve pits nationalised in 1947, only two remained by 1969, and they were closed in 1973, making Somerset the first British coalfield to be closed down completely.¹⁵ Yet the closure was carried through with remarkably little controversy, even in 'an atmosphere of harmony and good will'.¹⁶ Increasingly, it became practical for professionals and clerical workers in Bristol and Bath to live in the constituency: Keynsham, in particular, developed as a dormitory town for its two larger neighbours.¹⁷ Unsurprisingly, such social changes were not to the advantage of the Labour Party, and contributed to the constituency's increasingly Conservative profile from the 1960s onwards.

⁸ Author's calculations based on the 1931 *Census of England and Wales*.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ C.G. Down and A.J. Warrington, *The History of the Somerset Coalfield* (Newton Abbot, n.d.), pp.16-22.

¹¹ B. Supple, *The History of the British Coal Industry, Vol. IV: 1913-1946, The Political Economy of Decline* (Oxford, 1987), p.157.

¹² A. Neuman, *Economic Organisation of the British Coal Industry* (London, 1934), p.522.

¹³ *Ibid.*; R.P. Arnot, *The Miners in Crisis and War: A History of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain (from 1930 onwards)* (London, 1961), p.41.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.414.

¹⁵ P. Bonsall, 'The Somerset coalfield, 1947-1973: attitudes and responses to pit closures in the post-nationalisation era', *Southern History*, 11 (1989), pp.114-30.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.115.

¹⁷ Waller, *Almanac of British Politics*, pp.207, 209.

Frome and North Somerset Labour Parties

Although insignificant in terms of the broader national picture of coal and mining trade unionism, the Somerset miners loomed large in the politics of the constituency party. Its activities tended to be based on the main mining centre of Radstock and Midsomer Norton, even after the closure of the coalfield. The SMA was a significant contributor to party funds, and its President, Fred Swift, was also the first President of the Frome DLP (1918-38).¹⁸

However, the SMA never had a stranglehold over the constituency in the way that its counterparts did in other areas of Britain. It was never strong enough, in membership or financial terms, to force its nominees into the parliamentary candidature, a stark contrast to the situation in, say, North-East Derbyshire, where miners' nominees were parliamentary candidates at every general election between 1918 and 1983. In Frome, other unions were also of importance to local Labour politics, as these records show. The National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives (NUBSO) sponsored the candidate between 1923 and 1931, and the printing unions were also of some significance. Typically for a rural division, the railwaymen were important, being in some parts of the constituency the only unionised workers. The general unions, like the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers (NUGMW) also played a role.

On the whole though, the level of trade unionism in the area was not as high as in more typical Labour areas. This means that a high priority was given to the development of individual membership. Such membership was essential for financial reasons: the records of the party make clear the almost ceaseless anxiety over funding. Linked to this was the need for a high individual membership on grounds of organisation. The two constituencies covered very large areas, with numerous villages as well as the larger towns, and well over a hundred polling stations. This made good local organisation imperative. Figures for individual membership and the number of local Labour parties are given in Appendix 2. Broadly speaking, the membership figures followed national trends: that is, growing during the 1930s, contracting during the Second World War, and then rising to a peak in the early 1950s before dwindling, first slowly, and then more rapidly, during the period between the later 1950s and the early 1980s. Even by the standards of the time, the figures for the early 1950s were impressive. The figure of 4,834 claimed in 1952 was some way short of nearby Taunton, which along with South Lewisham, had the largest membership at over 7,000, but it was still impressive; that year North Somerset won the NEC's Regional Shield for the most impressive increase.¹⁹ However, as the nature of the area changed and cultural changes took a grip the membership fell, and the hope expressed in 1952 that the membership might rise to 10,000 looked like a hollow joke long before the party's membership fell back to a truly lamentable level in the 1970s. The number of local Labour parties in the towns and villages also fluctuated, though not, on the whole, so dramatically.

The records reveal the extent to which the constituency party depended on a few key individuals. Particularly important was the agent. Frome went through great difficulties with

¹⁸ For Swift, see J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville (eds.), *Dictionary of Labour Biography, Vol. II* (London, 1974), pp.361-4.

¹⁹ Labour Party Annual Report, 1951 (London, 1951), p.12; Labour Party Annual Report, 1953 (London, 1953), p.14 [also on Reel 6 of *Annual Reports of the Labour Party, 1900 to date* (Microform Academic Publishers)].

its agents at various times, but was able to maintain a full-time agent for much of the period of its existence (one reason for the preservation of the records, no doubt). North Somerset was also able to employ an agent on a full-time basis until the 1960s. The quality of these agents appears to have varied considerably; one agent was dismissed in 1958 following a financial scandal. However, it is noticeable that the party fared less well in elections, and that its membership fell, once it had ceased to employ a full-time agent, although here it is difficult to disentangle cause and effect.

Another key figure was the President and/or Chairman. Here, a succession of figures followed Swift, but the key point was that they were a focal point for party organisation, someone who held the whole party together in times of difficulty, and who liaised with and usually backed the agent and the parliamentary candidate. The extent of the party's difficulties when its Chairman announced his defection to the newly-formed Social Democratic Party in 1981 was considerable.

The parliamentary candidate also played a central role in the party's life. Frome was able to attract some good candidates during its lifetime. Edward Gill was a popular and well-liked figure, and his sudden death in 1923 appears to have robbed the party of a potentially able MP. He was succeeded by Fred Gould, a local man who had worked in the footwear industry and whose candidature was sponsored by NUBSO. Gould won the seat in 1923 and, having lost it in 1924, regained it in 1929. He became a parliamentary private secretary in 1930, but lost the seat in Labour's electoral debacle in 1931. Thereafter, his union decided that it wanted him to fight a seat with a larger proportion of footwear workers, and he was to be defeated at the 1935 election in Leicester East. His successor, R.W.G. Mackay, was the most distinguished of all the Labour candidates in the Frome and North Somerset seats. An Australian solicitor who appears to have secured the nomination in no small part because of the patronage of Sir Stafford Cripps, Mackay was an able organiser, and was most keen to see the party develop a real and lasting organisational presence throughout the constituency. His effectiveness was shown to some extent by the fact that he came very close to winning the seat in 1935. After the 1935 defeat he remained the candidate, and instituted further radical reforms of the party organisation. In 1942, however, he was expelled from the Labour Party for fighting the Llandaff and Barry by-election as an Independent Labour candidate in violation of the wartime electoral truce; the following year he joined the largely middle class ethical social party, Common Wealth. As national organiser of the latter he is generally regarded as having been highly successful.²⁰ He later rejoined the Labour Party and became an MP for a Hull seat.

Mackay's defection marked the start of a period in which the party was unable to secure a satisfactory candidate. The MP elected in 1945, Walter Farthing, was generally seen as ineffectual, and when he began to look for other seats in the face of the potential loss of the new North Somerset seat due to redistribution, the constituency party effectively de-selected him. But his successor, Mrs. Xenia Field, was generally seen as a failure, a political lightweight who had only secured the nomination because of her connections with people high up in the party hierarchy. She was forced out in 1951. Her successors were little improvement. The problem was that, as North Somerset began to look less and less winnable, so it began to attract poor candidates. The nadir was probably touched with Fraser Wilde,

²⁰ P. Addison, 'By-Elections of the Second World War', in C. Cook and J. Ramsden (eds.) *By-Elections in British Politics* (London, 1973), pp.165-90, at p.181.

who was adopted amid great enthusiasm in 1956. Wilde had promised to spend a great deal of his time working in the constituency, but soon backtracked, and outraged local activists by demanding that they should take it in turns to offer him board and lodging free of charge during his visits. His defeat at the 1959 election led to his being dropped. Thereafter, a succession of candidates could do little to project themselves or to revive the fortunes of the local party, although it must be noted that Labour might well have won the seat in 1964 and 1970 had it not been for the intervention of a Liberal candidate. The final candidate to fight the seat for labour, Tony Smith, was another defector to the SDP in the early 1980s, at a time when he was still the prospective Labour candidate.

The other person who was central to the party was the regional organiser. But, as with the candidates, it seems that these duties were carried out more effectively during the earlier part of the period. Of central importance was Clem Jones, South-West regional organiser from 1924 to 1951.²¹ He attended many meetings of the party's committees, and was usually able to offer sound advice at times of crisis. Mrs. Annie Townley, the South-West women's organiser for much of the same period, also played a significant role. On the whole, however, the effectiveness of the regional organisers seems to have been diminished from the later 1950s onwards; this probably reflected the overall deterioration in the Labour Party's organisation during the 1960s and 1970s.

On the whole, this was a moderate constituency party. Fred Swift, its guiding light for the first twenty years of its life, was well known in Miners' Federation circles as a moderate.²² By and large the party was loyal to the first two Labour governments. During the later 1930s there were some moves towards co-operation with the Communists on a local basis, but this was unremarkable in the south-west and especially so given the victory of the Independent Progressive candidate, Vernon Bartlett, at the by-election in nearby Bridgwater in 1938.²³ There was only isolated support for Mackay's decision to fight Llandaff and Barry in 1942, and the party was loyal to the Attlee governments. The detailed voting figures for the party's national executive committee (NEC) given in the records for the 1950s show little sign of a swing to the left. In 1968 a resolution calling on MPs to see their first duty at all times as loyalty to the Wilson government was passed comfortably. It was only in the 1970s that activists began to emerge as more left-wing, with people like Alfred Nussbaum being particularly important in leading the party towards a more radical position. To some extent this might be explained by the increasingly middle class membership, by the fall in individual membership, by the increasing detachment of local trade unions from the CLP, and by the difficulties being experienced at the time by the Wilson and Callaghan governments. In 1981 the party voted for Benn in both ballots for the deputy leadership.²⁴ However, although Woodspring was to support Neil Kinnock as leader and Michael Meacher as deputy in 1983, Wansdyke favoured the 'Dream Ticket' of Kinnock and Roy Hattersley. Thus symbolising the shift away from the left that was then underway and which was to culminate in the

²¹ Labour Party Annual Report, 1951 (London, 1951), p.14 [also on Reel 6 of *Annual Reports of the Labour Party, 1900 to date* (Microform Academic Publishers)].

²² Bellamy and Saville, *Dictionary of Labour Biography, Vol. II, p.361-2*.

²³ G.H. Tregidga, 'The Liberal Party in South-West England, 1929-1959', unpublished Exeter University Ph.D. thesis, 1995, pp.140-53.

²⁴ Labour Party Annual Report, 1981 (London, 1981), p.354 [also on Reel 16 of *Annual Reports of the Labour Party, 1900 to date* (Microform Academic Publishers)].

leadership of Tony Blair from 1994 onwards.²⁵ It was under Blair's leadership that Labour won Wansdyke from the Conservatives in 1997.

The Records

The records offer almost complete runs of meetings through the period between 1918 and 1983. There are lacunae, however. After the Annual Meeting of 13th February 1926, no meetings are recorded until 7th January 1927, and recorded meetings then remain sparse until after the General Election of May 1929. During the early part of the Second World War, fewer meetings were held. There is a degree of patchiness about the minutes during the period between 1946 and 1966, where it seems that occasionally we are without executive committee or general management committee papers. Nonetheless, we usually have one or the other, and for the 1950s in particular we also have lots of useful correspondence, ephemera, and so on. For all other periods, however, the records are very full.

Taken as a whole, they provide a fascinating insight into Labour politics at the grassroots in an area of the country which has been too often ignored by scholars and commentators. There are few better or more complete runs of records for any constituency Labour party. It is to be hoped that their publication in microfilm will enable scholars and students of Labour politics to assess more accurately the reasons for the successes and failings of the Labour Party in twentieth-century Britain.

²⁵ Labour Party Annual Report, 1983 (London, 1983) endpaper [also on Reel 17 of *Annual Reports of the Labour Party, 1900 to date* (Microform Academic Publishers)].

Appendix 1: Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-1983

Frome 1918-1945

<u>Year</u>	<u>Electors</u>	<u>Turnout</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
1918	35,222	67.7	P.A. Hurd	Coaln Con	11,118	46.6
			E. Gill	Lab	10,454	43.9
			Sir J.E. Barlow	Lib	2,004	8.4
			T.M.H. Kincaid-Smith	National	<u>258</u>	<u>1.1</u>
					664	2.7
1922	35,698	82.2	P.A. Hurd	Con	15,017	51.2
			E. Gill	Lab	<u>14,311</u>	<u>48.8</u>
					706	2.4
1923	36,628	79.7	F. Gould	Lab	15,902	54.4
			P.A. Hurd	Con	<u>13,306</u>	<u>45.6</u>
					2,596	8.8
1924	37,438	82.9	G.K. Peto	Con	16,397	52.8
			F. Gould	Lab	<u>14,652</u>	<u>47.2</u>
					1,745	5.6
1929	47,039	86.5	F. Gould	Lab	18,524	45.5
			G.K. Peto	Con	16,378	40.3
			C.S. Stratton-Hallett	Lib	<u>5,774</u>	<u>14.2</u>
					2,146	5.2
1931	48,778	87.3	Viscount Weymouth	Con	24,858	58.3
			F. Gould	Lab	<u>17,748</u>	<u>41.7</u>
					7,110	16.6
1935	51,582	82.5	Mrs. M.C. Tate	Con	19,684	46.3
			R.W.G. Mackay	Lab	18,690	43.9
			P.W. Hopkins	Lib	<u>4,177</u>	<u>9.8</u>
					994	2.4
1945	68,954	78.3	W.J. Farthing	Lab	29,735	55.1
			Mrs. M.C. Tate	Con	<u>24,228</u>	<u>44.9</u>
					5,507	10.2

North Somerset, 1950-1983

<u>Year</u>	<u>Electors</u>	<u>Turnout</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
1950	59,919	87.7	E.H.C. Leather	Con	23,953	45.6
			Mrs. X.N. Field	Lab	23,050	43.8
			A.E. Whitcher	Lib	<u>5,573</u>	<u>10.6</u>
					903	1.8
1951	59,167	88.5	E.H.C. Leather	Con	27,465	52.4
			R.J. Hurst	Lab	<u>24,917</u>	<u>47.6</u>
					2,548	4.8
1955	58,282	85.4	E.H.C. Leather	Con	26,985	54.2
			D.R. Llewellyn	Lab	<u>22,802</u>	<u>45.8</u>
					4,183	8.4
1959	63,231	85.5	E.H.C. Leather	Con	30,432	56.3
			E.F. Wilde	Lab	<u>23,649</u>	<u>43.7</u>
					6,783	12.6
1964	70,186	85.4	A.P. Dean	Con	27,814	46.3
			D.T. White	Lab	23,896	39.9
			M.E. Willies	Lib	<u>8,253</u>	<u>13.8</u>
					3,918	6.4
1966	72,803	85.3	A.P. Dean	Con	28,824	46.4
			B. Tilley	Lab	26,526	42.7
			M.E. Willies	Lib	<u>6,745</u>	<u>10.9</u>
					2,298	3.7
1970	84,808	79.1	A.P. Dean	Con	38,975	58.1
			J.T. Mitchard	Lab	<u>28,121</u>	<u>41.9</u>
					10,854	16.2
1974 (Feb.)	88,238	85.0	A.P. Dean	Con	34,576	46.1
			H.R. White	Lab	22,421	29.9
			Mrs. J.M. Bourne	Lib	<u>18,023</u>	<u>24.0</u>
					12,155	16.2

1974	89,032	80.5	A.P. Dean	Con	32,146	44.9
(Oct.)			H.R. White	Lab	22,671	31.7
			Mrs. J.M. Bourne	Lib	16,428	22.9
			J.F. Poling	UDP	<u>387</u>	<u>0.5</u>
					9,475	13.2
1979	96,606	82.2	A.P. Dean	Con	43,173	54.4
			A.J. Smith	Lab	22,122	27.8
			Rev. A.D. Sanders	Lib	12,898	16.2
			R.H. Carder	EP	<u>1,254</u>	<u>1.6</u>
					21,051	26.6

Key:

Coaln Con	Coalition Conservative
Con	Conservative
EP	Ecology Party
Lab	Labour
Lib	Liberal
UDP	United Democratic Party

**Appendix 2: Individual Membership and Number of Local Parties,
1919-1983**

Frome

<u>Year</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Number of Local Labour Parties</u>
1919				23b
1927				23b
1929			480a	20b
1930			1352a	34b
1931			600a	
1932			969a	
1933	305	286	591a	
1934	264	254	518a	
1935	451	438	889a	
1936	1045	934	1979a	
1937	1229	882	2111a	
1938	1106	989	2095a	46b
1939			1715a	52b
1940	627	516	1143a	
1941	283	253	536a	
1942	237	245	482a	
1943	270	255	525a	
1944	270	249	519a	
1945	696	560	1256a	
1946	988	765	1753a	
1947	620	480	1100a	

North Somerset

1949	920	598	1518a	18b
1950	1661	1104	2765a	
1951	1907	1440	3347a	
1952	2721	2113	4834a	

<u>Year</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Number of Local Labour Parties</u>
1953	2179	1896	4075a	
1955	1340	1303	2643a	21b
1957			2000b	18b
1958			1300b	
1959			1500b	
1963			1600b	
1965			1450b	
1975			under 1000b	
1977			657b	15b
1983			520b	

Sources:

a Labour Party Annual Reports

b North Somerset CLP Papers

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Minutes: 1950-1959
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General Election accounts and papers: 1959
1964
Review of Results in South Wales: 1966
Maud Report and associated matters: 1969
Notes on the Quarterly Bulletin: 1977-1978
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