

U DX323

**Research notes of Betty Vernon
regarding Ellen Wilkinson**

1891-c.1982

Biographical Background:

Research notes of Betty D. Vernon for her book *Ellen Wilkinson, 1891-1947* published in 1982.

Ellen Cicely Wilkinson (8 Oct 1891-6 Feb 1947) was a 20th century British politician, born to Richard Wilkinson and Ellen Wood in Manchester. She joined the Independent Labour Party at the age of sixteen and was a founding member of the British Communist Party in 1920.

Ellen Wilkinson attended The University of Manchester between 1910 and 1913 gaining an upper second class history degree, before completing an MA in 1914. During her time at the University of Manchester she was a member of the Fabian Society, the Debating Society and the National Union of Women's Suffrage. In the General Election of 1924, Ellen Wilkinson was elected as the MP for Middlesbrough East, and gained the nickname 'Red Ellen' because of her fiery coloured hair and her strong left political views, although she lost the seat in 1931.

In November 1935 she became the MP for Jarrow in Tyneside, a small and economically depressed town in the North East of England. In October 1936 Ellen Wilkinson was involved in organising the Jarrow March (sometimes known as the Jarrow Crusade), in which 207 unemployed men marched from Jarrow to London to lobby Parliament about the unemployment and the extreme poverty suffered in the North East of England during the Great Depression. Ellen Wilkinson walked much of the 300 miles with them.

Ellen Wilkinson was heavily involved in the Hire Purchase Bill of 1938. In Clement Atlee's government in 1945, Ellen Wilkinson became Minister for Education, (1945-1947), the first female to hold the post, and only the second female British Minister. One of her most memorable achievements was the raising of the school leaving age, which she did not live to see. She died in 1947.

Custodial history: Donated by Betty Vernon in Sep 1995

Description:

Predominantly handwritten and typed notes of Betty D. Vernon on Ellen Wilkinson for her book *Ellen Wilkinson, 1891-1947*, as well as newspaper clippings and transcriptions relating to Ellen Wilkinson, personal accounts of Ellen Wilkinson, correspondence with those who knew Ellen Wilkinson and works, and transcriptions of works, by Ellen Wilkinson herself.

Extent: 2 boxes

Related material:

Triptych given to G D H Cole and Margaret Postgate [Ref U DX198]
Papers of Robin Page Arnot [Ref U DAR]

Access conditions:

Access will be granted to any accredited reader

Copyright: Betty D. Vernon

- U DX323/1 Childhood 1891-c.1982
- Betty Vernon's notes on Ellen Wilkinson's life pre-parliament: school and university - Manchester Fabian Society, Trade Unions. Annotated notes on Ellen Wilkinson's family - her mother, father, brothers, Harold and Richard, and sister, Annie - from Prof Ross Waller (Sep/Oct 1978), which also briefly mention her time at university and Walton Newbold.
- Notes from various people on Ellen Wilkinson's early years and childhood; notes from Muriel Nichol on Walton Newbold (Nov 1978), a letter from Dr R. H Wilkinson (10 Dec 1978) answering Betty Vernon's questions about Ellen Wilkinson, notes from Stella Davies on Ellen Wilkinson and her siblings, a letter from John Parker which mentions Walton Newbold. (18 Feb 1980). Annotated extracts from the *Methodist Times* (1925) re: Wilkinson's Methodist upbringing. Excerpts from The Manchester University Magazine (1912) containing articles written by Wilkinson on the subject of The Women's Union Debates. Extracts from Margaret Cole's *The Road to Success* (1936) concerning organisational and political work. Extract from *Myself When Young* Edited by the Countess of Oxford and Asquith written by Ellen Wilkinson about her youth. 7 page extract from the *Fabian News* April 1915. 'Born and Bred' - Ellen Wilkinson's script on BBC 27 Oct 1945, and newspaper clippings and records of an exchange in the House of Commons between Miss Wilkinson and Sir Frederick Hall. Annotated notes on 'The University Socialist Federation,' 'The Fabian Society,' as well as notes on the Clarion Club, Walter Newbold, the NCLC, the Manchester University Debates Society, the Manchester Society for Women's Suffrage, women and suffrage in general, Harry Pollitt and the Poor Law. Information on and the pass list (1909) of The Matriculation Examination. Independent Labour Party circular (16 Jan 1919). Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's resignation from the Communist Party, her first general election and on Wilkinson and Manchester City Council.
- 1 item
- U DX323/2 Trade Unionism 1906-c.1982
- Ellen Wilkinson: 'The Girls Who Are "Doing Their Bit"' The A.U.C.E Journal (Nov 1917). Notes on Trade Unions and Trade Boards. Annotated information on 'The Trade Boards Bill'. Notes on the CAVE Committee. R.J: 'Labour in the House' The New Dawn (19 Aug 1922). Betty Vernon's handwritten notes on Trade Unions and Trade Boards.
- 1 item

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| U DX323/3 | 24 & 31 (1924 Election) Notes on the poor law, unemployment insurance, Anomalies Bill and Ellen Wilkinson's views on the 1931 election. Notes on life as a woman in the Houses of Parliament, on Ellen Wilkinson's early days in the house and a copy of Wilkinson's maiden speech in the House of Commons. Notes on Ellen Wilkinson as MP for Middlesbrough and on Middlesbrough generally. Notes on the CAVE Committee. Copy of 'The Cambell Case' by J. R. Campbell (Nov 1924). Notes on Susan Lawrence. Notes entitled 'parliament generally'. Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's personal views. 1 item | 1921-c.1982 |
| U DX323/4 | Clash Betty Vernon's notes on Ellen Wilkinson's book Clash. Notes on the great strike (1925-1926). Notes on the Women's Committee for Relief of Miners Wives and Children. 'Mines Bill Read Second Time' Bristol Observer (3 Jul 1926). Notes on John Jagger and Walton Newbold. Wright Robinson extracts. W. Henry Brown: 'The Woman's Way Miss E. C. Wilkinson, M.A' The New Dawn (19 Oct 1935). Notes on unemployment, trade unions and trade boards. Information on weekly hours and weekly earnings (1924, 1928, 1931). Notes on the CAVE Committee. Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's view on Women's wages. Notes on women in trade unions, extracts from Barbara Drake. Notes on National Health Insurance (1911). 1 item | 1891-c.1982 |
| U DX323/5 | Feminism Including an annotated typed draft, as well as a handwritten draft, of Betty Vernon's chapter on feminism. General notes on, as well as Ellen Wilkinson's, feminism and view on women, including: equal pay and pensions; unemployment; equality of nationality in marriage and family allowance. Notes on Ellen Wilkinson and the arts, notably film and theatre. An annotated copy of 'An informal discussion between Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P and Mr William H. Thoday on Questions for Women Voters: II. Should Women be paid as much as Men?' (9 Oct 1928). 1 item | 1920-c.1982 |
| U DX323/6 | 1931 - Out Betty Vernon's notes and newspaper clippings about conditions and unemployment in Jarrow in the 1930s, the planning of the Jarrow march, the march itself (1936) and proposed solutions to the problems of Jarrow. A newspaper clipping discussing the possible Bessemer steel plant at Jarrow (21 Dec 1936). 1 item | 1931-c.1982 |

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| U DX323/7 | <p>Hire Purchase 1938</p> <p>A copy of the Hire Purchase Bill 1937.10 Dec 1937's Order of The Day regarding a second reading of the Hire Purchase Bill, and 6 May 1938's Order of The Day regarding the third reading of the Hire Purchase Bill. Information on the Haldane Society. An annotated copy of the committee discussion of the Hire Purchase Bill (10 Feb-1 Mar 1938). Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's involvement in a Bill relating to Building Societies 1939.</p> <p>1 item</p> | 1937-c.1982 |
| U DX323/8 | <p>LP Conference Annual Reports</p> <p>Betty Vernon's notes on Time and Tide extracts (1935-1939). Notes on the Labour Party conferences of the 1920s and 1930s, and their education discussions.</p> <p>1 item</p> | 1923-c.1982 |
| U DX323/9 | <p>Anti-Fascism, Germany, Reichstag, Spain, and Refugees</p> <p>Betty Vernon's notes and documents on the Reichstag fire, event and trial; minutes of Dimitrov in court; newspaper review of The Reichstag Fire by Fritz Tobias; extracts from New Dawn showing EW's anti-fascist views (1930, 1933); Ellen Wilkinson: 'Electioneering in Germany' The Labour Magazine 1:4 (Aug 1932).</p> <p>The Spain part of the file contains notes on Otto Simon and Professor Joseph Trueta; newspaper extracts and notes on both Wilkinson's trip to Spain in 1934 and her stance on fascism in Spain and an interview with Philip Noel Baker.</p> <p>The refugee section of the file contains Betty Vernon's notes regarding refugees in Europe; a personal account, from Mrs L Steinhart, of Ellen Wilkinson's kindness to refugees; an account from Bertha Bracey of Wilkinson's association with refugee organisations and correspondence to and from Lola Humm-Sernau regarding Ellen Wilkinson's aid of refugees in France.</p> <p>1 item</p> | 1930-c.1982 |
| U DX323/10 | <p>LB Club and the 30's</p> <p>Newspaper extracts (1936-1937) on foreign relations in the thirties, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Italy, and Russia, as well as Betty Vernon's handwritten notes on the same. Notes and newspaper extracts on loans made from Britain to Germany on the 1930s. Newspaper extracts 1939 relating to Ellen Wilkinson and her campaigns and interests. Betty Vernon's notes on Stafford Cripps and Michael Foot and Dalton, as well as an extract from Dalton's unpublished diaries (14 Jun 1939) regarding Attlee's illness. Notes on the 1945 election and subsequent government. Notes on the LB Club, (1936-1948). Clippings from the 40th anniversary edition of the Tribune of an article by Ellen Wilkinson and of her</p> | 1933-c.1982 |

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- U DX323/10 involvement in the Left Book Club.
cont...
6 typed pages of draft with handwritten notes on the reverse labelled 'Popular Front and notes.'
1 item
- U DX323/11 Wartime 1938-c.1982
Ellen Wilkinson's election pamphlet (1945).
Notes on Ellen Wilkinson and the immediate post-war situation. Photostats of New Dawn reporting upon NUDAW [National Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers] ADM (3-5 May 1944). Notes on Oswald Mosley. An extract from Harold Nicholson's diaries (20 Nov 1940). Notes on Home Security and Civil Defence. Typed and annotated paragraph drafts relating to wartime and to Ellen Wilkinson's health. Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's activity relating to shelters during the war.
1 item
- U DX323/12 Dalton Diaries and " Post War " thinking 1931-c.1982
Notes on the Labour Party Conference (1945). Notes on the Dalton Diaries (1931-1945)
1 item
- U DX323/13 Education 1926-c.1982
Includes various notes by Betty Vernon on Ellen Wilkinson's ideas and policies on education and on education in general. Foreword of a pamphlet written by Ellen Wilkinson regarding Education (1947). Information on Labour education policies (1926). Notes on Ellen Wilkinson as Minister for Education. Letter from Ellen Wilkinson regarding raising the school leaving age (1 Oct 1945). Notes on cabinet papers and Ellen Wilkinson's cabinet speeches (Dec 1946-Jan 1947). Pre War and Post War statistics regarding education. Information and notes on 'multilateralism theory'. Notes on teacher training and the [emergency training] scheme. Letter of congratulations to Ellen Wilkinson from Vera Brittain regarding her entrance to the Ministry of Education (4 Aug 1945). Order of the Day for (1 Jul 1946) involving Ellen Wilkinson as Minister for Education. 'Compulsory School Age: The Minister's Statement' Times Educational Supplement (6 Oct 1945). Notes on University Awards. Ministry of Education circulars regarding raising of school age (27 Sep 1945) and The Educational Building Programme 1947 (19 Dec 1946). Notes and information on UNESCO.
1 item

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| U DX323/14 | Death/Inquest Newspaper [Middlesbrough Evening Gazette] extracts regarding Ellen Wilkinson (1974). Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's health and death. Various newspaper clippings regarding the outcome of the inquest into Ellen Wilkinson's death and the reaction to her death. Notes on Ellen Wilkinson's health and the circumstances of her death. Handwritten timeline of events (1939-1945). 1 item | 1939-c.1982 |
| U DX323/15 | Obits Newspaper clippings reporting the death of Ellen Wilkinson, obituaries of Ellen Wilkinson, and personal tributes to her. Extract from 'BW diaries' (17 Aug 1917). 1 item | 1927-c.1982 |
| U DX323/16 | Interviews Notes on interviews with various people about Ellen Wilkinson including; Sir Anthony (28 Feb 1978), George Strauss (Aug 1979), Lord Alexander (31 Jan 1979), Arthur Logan Petch (Jun 1978), Amy Wilde-Mitchell (Oct 1978), Ivor Montagu (20 Sep 1978), Robin Page Arnot (Jan 1978), Lord Radcliffe Maud (13 Dec 1977) and Dame Mabel Tylecote (Jul 1978). 1 item | 1978-c.1982 |
| U DX323/17 | Notes to finish sorting Various notes by Betty Vernon on Ellen Wilkinson's life. Notes on the great strike of 1912. Notes on the 1918 'New LP'. Notes relating to Ellen Wilkinson's work with and view of trade unions. Extracts from Dorothy Elliott's Women in search of Justice. A copy of 'The Unemployed Woman' by Ellen Wilkinson in The New Dawn (27 May 1922). Notes on communism, women, workers, Notes on Ellen Wilkinson at the TUC Conference. Extracts from various newspapers and pamphlets relating to Ellen Wilkinson and the Labour Party (1922-1925). 1 item | 1891-c.1982 |
| U DX323/18 | Needs to be sorted Betty Vernon's notes on a variety of subjects, including Ellen Wilkinson's personality, factories, Iron and Steel, free trade, Jarrow, unemployment, India, education, peace and armament, Ellen Wilkinson's constituency (1931), India and trade unions. Ellen Wilkinson: 'Marion [Phillips]' The Labour Magazine (Feb 1932). Ellen Wilkinson: 'UAB [Unemployment Assistance Board] Circular Scheme' The Tribune (5 Nov 1937). 1 item | 1917-c.1982 |