

THE POLITICS OF PLACE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL POLITICS IN FOUR LANCASHIRE COTTON TEXTILE TOWNS, 1919 – 1939

Sam Davies and Bob Morley

This article will analyse the inter-war electoral politics of Blackburn, Bolton, Burnley and Bury. On the surface the similarities between these four towns were apparent. They were all middling-sized northern industrial centres whose local economies were based primarily on cotton. In their cotton mills and weaving sheds laboured an industrial proletariat, male and female. Owning and running most of the mills in each town was a small group of entrepreneurial families, the classic bourgeoisie of industrial capitalism. In a predominantly bleak industrial setting, life went on in these towns dominated by the importance of work, given a special significance in the inter-war years by the depression in the cotton industry. A description of Bolton in 1899 could, with some small variations of scale, stand for all four of these towns:

a terrible heap of houses and buildings, with blackened church spires standing here and there, and hundreds of high chimneys belching forth, like huge fiery dragons, till the whole place looks like a city sunk in a sea of smoke. Amidst that sickening jerry-jumble of cheap bricks and cheaper British industry, over a hundred thousand men, women and children toil and exist, sweating in the vast, hot stuffy mills and sweltering forges.¹

Yet the various political allegiances that arose in each of these four towns belie their superficial similarities. There were quite striking differences between them in their political traditions and the evolution of electoral support during the inter-war period. This should not perhaps be so surprising as it once might have been. Simplistic assumptions about the connection between social class and voting behaviour that dominated electoral sociology in past decades have begun to be modified by historians. In their place has come a realisation that the relationship between party and voter was a product of a complex range of multifarious influences; social class yes, but also gender, race, nationality, religion. Beneath the surface there were important differences between these four textile towns, where structural distinctions such as the precise nature and balance of industry in each town mattered, as well as variations in political agency and practice. It was out of this complex of local differences that political opinions were formed. The persisting importance of locality, or the 'politics of place', in twentieth century Britain is, therefore, the central focus of this comparative analysis.²

The political complexions of the four towns

First, it is necessary to set out the electoral record of each of these towns between 1918 and 1939, both at the parliamentary and municipal level. To do this, the quantitative analysis has to be focused on the fortunes of the Labour Party. This is not out

of any ideological bias, but because Labour was the only party that stood consistently for elections under its own banner during this period. Coalition arrangements obscured political differences between Toryism and Liberalism in the 1918, 1931 and 1935 general elections. In municipal politics even more so, Tories and Liberals were usually allied in some kind of formal or informal pact against Labour. Thus it is impossible to establish the degree of support for each of these two parties consistently throughout these years. Local politics for the most part was clarified into a Labour/anti-Labour confrontation, and accordingly it has to be analysed in this way. The electoral record in parliamentary and municipal elections in the four towns is outlined below in Tables 1 to 3.

The pattern that emerges from these figures is quite clear. Taken together, and compared with the national picture, electoral interest was high in these four boroughs. The average turnout in all general elections over the whole period was 84 per cent, as opposed to 71 per cent for England as a whole; the average in all municipal elections was 61 per cent, well above the 49 per cent recorded in the sample of nineteen county boroughs used here. In terms of the Labour Party's electoral performance in the four boroughs combined, this was near to the national average, which might be seen as slightly surprising given the solidly working-class nature of the four towns. At the parliamentary level support for Labour in the four boroughs was slightly above the national norm. Labour gained 40 per cent of all votes in inter-war general elections in the four boroughs, compared with 33 per cent in England as a whole. At the municipal level however, Labour gained 39 per cent of all votes, as opposed to 41 per cent in the sample of boroughs. This less impressive performance was in part a reflection of the fact that the comparison at the municipal level was with the boroughs only, which were predominantly the larger urban centres (excluding London) where Labour was likely to have greater support.

As far as variations between the four boroughs are concerned, in both Westminster and municipal elections, Labour was plainly strongest in Burnley, and equally clearly, weakest in Bury (for "inscrutable reasons which require investigation" as one commentator has pointed out),³ while Blackburn and Bolton lay somewhere between these two poles. Labour won the Burnley parliamentary seat in all but one inter-war general election, and picked up 44 per cent of all votes. By contrast, in Bury Labour never won the seat, and gained only 34 per cent of all votes. Between these two opposites, Labour had occasional wins in one of the two parliamentary seats in Blackburn and Bolton, and overall gained 42 per cent and 38 per cent of all parliamentary votes in these two towns respectively. A similar situation prevailed at the municipal level. Labour won 47 per cent of all municipal votes in its Burnley stronghold, and had overall control of the borough between 1934 and 1937. By con-

Table 1: Labour performance and turnout in inter-war general elections in four cotton textile towns

	Blackburn ^a		Bolton ^a		Burnley		Bury	
	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout
1918	20	75	-	-	42	71	23	67
1922	43	88	32	87	39	89	37	81
1923	44	85	34	80	38	87	36	81
1924	44	88	41	86	45	88	36	86
1929	51	88	45	84	46	90	37	81
1931	34	87	34	81	43	92	30	82
1935	48	85	43	77	54	88	34	83
All	42	85	38	82	44	87	34	81

	All four		All England	
	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout
1918	26	72	23	56
1922	37	87	29	73
1923	38	83	30	71
1924	42	87	33	77
1929	47	86	37	77
1931	35	85	30	76
1935	45	82	39	71
All	40	84	33	71

Sources: F.W.S. Craig, *British Parliamentary Election Results 1918 – 1949*, (3rd ed., Chichester, 1983); *British Electoral Facts 1832 – 1987*, (5th ed., Aldershot, 1989).

^a double-member constituencies

NB – Labour wins shown in bold.

trast, Labour won only 25 per cent of all municipal votes in Bury, and never came near to taking control, at best holding only one-fifth of the seats on the council after the 1930 and 1936 elections. Again somewhere in between, Labour won 44 per cent and 35 per cent of all municipal votes in Blackburn and Bolton respectively. While Labour never won control of the council in either case, it came near to a majority in Blackburn in 1929-30 and 1934-35, and held over one-third of all seats in Bolton around the same years. In summary, the variation in Labour strength in these four cotton towns was quite considerable. The relative lack of Labour success in strongly working-class surroundings stands out clearly. Labour's electoral performance was strong only in Burnley, near to average in Blackburn and Bolton, and especially weak in Bury. What were the most important factors which produced this varied pattern of electoral support?

Patterns of employment and political allegiance

Differences in the pattern of employment in the four boroughs may have been significant in influencing political attitudes. Despite the overwhelming importance of the cotton textile industry in all of them, there were nevertheless subtle distinctions between them. At the heart of the Labour weakness identified in the electoral record for these cotton towns was the traditional strength of working-class Toryism, a connection made by several historians.⁴ A number of factors underlay popular Conservatism, as one writer has explained:

Conservatism, with its various emphases upon social radicalism and Tory Democracy, its links with Orangeism and

"No Popery", employer paternalism, and a relaxed and expansive political style rooted in the culture of "beer, bonhomie and Britannia", had by the late 1860's, established important bases in many working class communities.⁵

Popular Conservatism stressed a patriotic appeal to 'the people', emphasising community with toleration of the 'weaknesses' of respectable working men, while offering an alternative to the moral conceits of Liberalism:

Conservatism thus situated itself within the culture of "conviviality and bonhomie", of "beer, bacca, billiards, and Britannia" rather than within the strait-jacketed Liberal domain of "moral exhortation" and the "improving tract".⁶

The cotton towns were strongholds of this working-class or 'clog' Toryism, and to varying degrees were dominated socially and politically as well as economically by the cotton employers. Tory control had its origins in the nineteenth-century industrial structure of these towns, the centrality of King Cotton, and the organisation of the mill. For many reasons, including the obvious electoral ones, but also due to wider considerations of status and control, the Conservative Party maintained close social contacts with the working class. Never amounting to crude manipulation, the transmission-belt of working-class Toryism and employer paternalism was oiled by both the operation of ideology and solid material interest. Such factors were based on the firm footing of inter-locking networks of social and cultural ties which served employer and propertied interests. This was a powerful political tradition, but it may have been on the decline

Table 2: Labour performance and turnout in inter-war municipal elections in four cotton textile towns.

	Blackburn		Bolton ^a		Burnley		Bury ^a	
	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout
1919	43	67	27	60	48	59	22	43
1920	39	70	22	66	41	70	23	45
1921	40	69	27	69	31	66	24	46
1922	48	71	32	67	43	71	19	39
1923	48	70	30	65	43	69	45	65
1924	42	70	37	61	45	68	14	41
1925	39	68	39	63	47	74	16	47
1926	48	68	40	63	49	76	29	48
1927	44	68	37	61	45	72	26	46
1928	46	72	41	69	57	72	27	53
1929	47	69	41	56	50	60	31	41
1930	37	69	21	59	42	65	22	46
1931	34	69	46	30	49	74	19	44
1932	43	70	35	30	54	67	24	36
1933	44	69	40	47	54	64	11	29
1934	50	70	42	51	53	73	25	35
1935	49	72	37	56	53	63	32	47
1936	44	73	35	51	43	70	26	34
1937	43	70	38	54	53	73	28	40
1938	48	68	38	54	43	68	33	48
All	44	70	35	58	47	68	25	43

	All four		19 county boroughs ^b	
	Labour % all votes	Turnout	Labour % all votes	Turnout
1919	36	60	38	44
1920	32	66	34	53
1921	32	65	37	53
1922	38	67	38	55
1923	38	67	38	52
1924	39	63	38	55
1925	38	64	39	55
1926	42	64	45	52
1927	40	64	43	53
1928	42	67	44	54
1929	44	58	47	44
1930	31	61	38	47
1931	35	55	34	51
1932	44	54	47	47
1933	44	56	45	47
1934	46	59	44	46
1935	43	60	42	47
1936	40	59	41	46
1937	40	57	41	47
1938	41	60	40	46
All	39	61	41	49

Source: S. Davies and B. Morley, *County Borough Elections in England and Wales, 1919-1938: A Comparative Analysis, Vol. 1*, (Aldershot, 1999), and *Vol. 2*, (Aldershot, 2000).

^a some double-member wards.

^b 19 boroughs are all those covered in the two volumes of Davies and Morley.

Table 3: Labour % of wins in annual municipal elections and % of seats held on the council after the elections in four cotton textile towns.

	Blackburn		Bolton ^a		Burnley		Bury ^a	
	Labour % of wins	Labour % of seats	Labour % of wins	Labour % of seats	Labour % of wins	Labour % of seats	Labour % of wins	Labour % of seats
1919	50	18	29	9	58	19	20	5
1920	7	20	21	14	17	19	20	8
1921	21	20	13	16	17	23	0	8
1922	21	13	17	14	8	11	10	8
1923	21	18	21	15	17	10	20	8
1924	7	14	13	15	25	13	0	8
1925	21	13	38	20	17	17	10	8
1926	29	14	46	26	33	19	30	13
1927	36	21	33	31	17	17	0	13
1928	50	29	46	34	33	21	20	15
1929	64	39	42	35	67	31	30	15
1930	14	44	17	32	8	29	20	20
1931	14	32	42	31	25	27	0	15
1932	36	29	33	32	83	31	10	8
1933	38	33	42	35	58	44	10	7
1934	57	44	42	36	67	54	27	14
1935	43	45	33	37	75	54	27	19
1936	50	39	25	33	42	57	9	20
1937	43	36	13	25	67	58	9	14
1938	36	34	21	22	8	48	0	9
All	33	28	29	26	37	30	14	12

	All four		19 county boroughs ^b	
	Labour % of wins	Labour % of seats	Labour % of wins	Labour % of seats
1919	38	13	37	17
1920	17	15	18	19
1921	13	17	19	21
1922	15	12	20	17
1923	20	13	23	18
1924	12	13	15	17
1925	25	16	26	19
1926	37	20	37	22
1927	25	23	30	27
1928	40	27	37	30
1929	50	32	44	32
1930	15	32	22	31
1931	25	28	15	25
1932	40	27	39	24
1933	39	32	35	27
1934	48	38	36	32
1935	43	39	36	33
1936	31	37	31	32
1937	30	32	29	31
1938	18	27	26	29
All	29	25	29	25

Source: S. Davies and B. Morley, *County Borough Elections in England and Wales, 1919-1938: A Comparative Analysis, Vol. 1*, (Aldershot, 1999), and *Vol. 2*, (Aldershot, 2000).

^a some double-member wards.

^b 19 boroughs are all those covered in the two volumes of Davies and Morley.

NB – Labour control shown in bold
– seats held include aldermen.

EDITOR'S POST-BAG.

MYSTERY OF TARIFFS.

By W. NUTTALL, Haslingden.
 When I saw Mr Butterfield's statement that "the purchase of home-produced goods gives double the employment and wealth to home workers when compared with the purchase of foreign-made goods," I thought it must be a mistake. And, Mr Butterfield himself explains his explanation fairly proves it to be a mistake. In the first example which he gives he makes it equivalent to two men, say A and B, trading together and making two additions to production and employment. But in his second example, it is as if only one man was trading with the other, which to my mind, is not a fair argument, seeing that two were engaged in the first instance. If A and B trading separately with foreigners, give the same result as A and B trading together, Mr Butterfield is right. Also, in the second example, seeing that only one is trading with the foreigner, what is to stop the other one from producing, as in the first example, and making up the 50 per cent (not 100) which he says is lost in the second example and wealth? In his other statements I am not troubled here.

TRADE UNION DICTATION.

By "OLD WEAVER," Burnley.
 I submit to Sir H. Samuel, M.P., the plain questions arising out of his statement reported in your issue of Thursday.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS

SECOND LANCASHIRE AVALANCHE FOR SOCIALISTS

ALL-ROUND LOSSES

As in the General Election, so in the municipal contests—the Socialists have suffered heavy reverses in all parts of the country. Mid-Lancashire proved no exception, as the results tabulated below, together with tables showing the present composition of the various councils, will show:

SIX TORY GAINS IN BLACKBURN.

THE FIRST WOMAN COUNCILLOR.

Lowerhouse Ward.
 Altogether 7,804 votes were registered, out of a total polling strength of 10,600.
 Results:

STONEYHOLME.	
Mrs M. Whitehead (L)...	1,036
G. Hale (Soc)	811
Majority	225
No change.	

ST. PETER'S.	
*J. Lynch (Soc)	981
J. D. Towers (C)	828
Majority	153
No change.	

ST. PAUL'S.	
*R. Broadley (Soc)	918
J. Whitham (C)	708
Majority	150

CLOVER HILL.	
*J. H. Warburton (L) ...	1,595
A. Horne (Soc)	869
Majority	726
No change.	

WALVERDEN.	
F. G. Horsfall (C)	1,483
*T. Shorrocks (Soc)	1,119
Majority	364
Con gain.	

WHITEFIELD.	
*J. Stephenson (L)	1,204
D. J. Speak (Soc)	798
Majority	406
No change.	

NETHERFIELD.	
R. I. Dawes (C)	1,069
*H. W. Throup (Soc)	954
E. Ratcliffe (Com)	34
Majority	105
Con gain.	

MARSDEN.	
*W. King (Soc)	796
J. N. Wood (C)	584
Majority	212
No change.	

COLNE.

Independents Gain Two Seats.

Colne Socialists lost one seat, in the Primet Bridge Ward, where Mr Snell, was defeated by 252 votes by Mr W. P. White, an Independent. The Socialists had entered candidates in all four contests, but their only victory was in the Carry Bridge Ward, where Mr Arthur Burrell retained his seat by 147 votes. The largest majority was recorded in the Horsfield Ward, where Mr R. Duckworth (L) did not seek re-election. His

The Northern Daily Telegraph features Labour defeats in 1931.

by the inter-war period, being severely tested by the beginning of a process of social dislocation which accompanied the collapse of the British cotton industry. On the employers' side, paternalism could be undermined by a process of merger and take-over in the industry. Limited liability companies increasingly controlled a significant number of local firms by the inter-war period. On the workers' side, when employment was threatened, traditional loyalties were eroded. The degree to which traditions of working-class Conservatism declined was an important determinant of the politics of the cotton towns in the period.

When the differences in the industrial structure of the four cotton towns are analysed, then varying political effects may be identified. Most obviously, there was the division of the industry into its two main components of spinning and weaving. Most towns in the cotton districts of Lancashire had become specialised in one or other of these branches of the industry by this time. Burnley and Blackburn were predominantly weaving towns, while Bolton and Bury were both situated in the spinning belt further to the south. Bury, however, was not as specialised as the other three towns, with a considerable amount of weaving alongside its spinning. There were discernible political differences between the work-forces in these two sides of the industry. The spinners were most noted for their moderate politics. The nature of the work process in mule spinning created a hierarchy amongst the workforce of spinner, 'big piecer' and 'little piecer', and the prospect of individual advancement within the hierarchy encouraged individualist attitudes. The spinners were the best organised, but tended to be highly exclusive and sectional. "They provided a distinctive, strongly elitist element within cotton unionism".⁷ By contrast, in general terms the workers in the weaving side of the cotton industry tended to be more radical in their trade unionism and their politics. There

was a greater degree of homogeneity in terms of status and income amongst weavers, and this was more conducive to collective attitudes. The Weavers' Amalgamation espoused an inclusive recruitment policy, including the widespread unionism of women workers in the industry. While spinners were often identified with Toryism, weavers were more often associated with a radical Liberalism which in some places could provide the springboard for the shift to Independent Labour and socialist politics.⁸ The cotton unions as a whole through the United Textile Factory Workers' Association voted to affiliate to the Labour Representative Committee in late 1902. The weavers were over four to one in favour, the spinners nearer three to one, reflecting the different political complexion of the two groups. Overall though, the decision was taken in a spirit of "pragmatic independence".⁹ Cotton workers needed representation in parliament to defend them in an unfavourable industrial and political climate, not to advance socialism. The primacy of economic goals was the norm for cotton unions.

To a limited extent the differences between spinners and weavers were reflected in the pattern of political support for Labour in the four towns between the wars. Labour was stronger in the weaving towns of Burnley and Blackburn than it was in the spinning towns of Bolton and Bury. One should not however, argue this case too strongly. Why should Labour be so much stronger in Burnley than in Blackburn, for instance? Even more problematic, why should Labour do much less well in Bury, with a mix of spinning as well as weaving, than in Bolton, which was highly specialised in spinning? Differences between spinners and weavers had some impact on the political complexions of these four towns. However, these differences were not clear-cut, and plainly there were other factors that need to be considered.

The relative preponderance of cotton workers as a proportion of the total workforce in each town, and the existence of other significant groups of workers, may have had some effect. Workers in all textile and clothing industries were by far the largest group of workers in all four of the towns, with little variation. In 1931 they amounted to 52 per cent of the total workforce in Burnley, 51 per cent in Blackburn, and 45 per cent in both Bolton and Bury.¹⁰ Amongst women they accounted for 76 per cent of all workers in Burnley, 75 per cent in Blackburn, 66 per cent in Bolton and 65 per cent in Bury, reflecting the greater prevalence of women workers in the weaving side of the industry. In all four towns engineering workers also formed a significant subsidiary group of mostly male employment – metal and engineering workers comprising 16 per cent of the male workforce in Bolton, 13 per cent in both Blackburn and Bury, and 8 per cent in Burnley. Aside from this, there were no other substantial groups of industrial workers in any of the towns, with the one exception of Burnley, where colliers made up 10 per cent of the male workforce.

Only this last variation was likely to have had any discernible political effect. The presence of over 3,000 miners in Burnley was a factor of importance in the local labour movement. Henry Pelling suggests that coal-miners in Burnley made for political liberalism, and later for independent labour politics. As he points out, “the Lancashire and Cheshire miners were early converts to independent labour politics, just because their members were divided on political questions”.¹¹ David Howell, the historian of Lancashire miners’ unionism, explains in more detail:

In 1900, the Lancashire Miners sent delegates to the foundation conference of the Labour Representation Committee... Lancashire did join in May 1903, more than five and a half years before the MFGB as a whole. In the... ballots on MFGB affiliation to the Labour Party... Lancashire voted in favour by a majority of over two to one. This early enthusiasm for Independent Labour owed relatively little to the appeal of Socialism within the coalfield... Labour politics was presented as a pragmatic method of ensuring the union's political influence, not a Socialist alternative but almost an apolitical one... the coalfield never became a centre for... left-wing developments... Instead there dominated a cautious Labour politics.¹²

The moderation of the Lancashire region within mining trade unionism was clear, and before 1914 the Burnley miners in particular were noted as a “volatile political force, capable of giving succour on occasions to Toryism”. Yet they also gave “early backing to the Socialist cause”,¹³ and in the inter-war period the commitment of Burnley miners to the Labour party was strong. In the context of Burnley politics, the miners may have been numerous enough to tip the balance marginally in Labour’s favour in the inter-war years, something which could not be said for the other textile boroughs considered here. Certainly miners played an active part in the Burnley Labour party. A significant number of miners’ union officials and rank and file miners stood for Labour in municipal elections, second only to textile officials and workers.¹⁴ Overall though, variations in the composition of the workforce of the four towns cannot fully explain the political differences between them. Plainly other connections between society, culture and political practice in these four localities need to be explored.

Employer-worker relations

It is necessary to consider how employer-worker relations in the

cotton industry varied in these four towns. As already indicated, these relations were vital determinants of the strength of working-class Conservatism in the cotton districts. The nineteenth-century picture was of a small local elite consisting primarily of cotton masters (but also bolstered significantly by owners of metal and engineering firms) who dominated the cotton towns both at work and in wider society. It will be argued here that this picture was most appropriate to Blackburn, Bolton and Bury, but it was a far less accurate description of the situation in Burnley. Moreover, it will be seen that the social tensions of the inter-war depression years placed a greater strain on employer-worker relations in Burnley than in the other three towns analysed here.

Blackburn

Blackburn has been fertile ground as a case study for the historical analysis of working-class Conservatism. From the nineteenth century, the political elite of the town was largely drawn from the cotton industrialists. These ‘masters’ had substantial paternalistic influence, even control, over their workforces. By the last third of the nineteenth century, families like the Feildens, Sudells, Cardwells, Birleys, Chippendales, Maudes, and above all the Hornbys, were stalwarts of the local establishment. By the twentieth century the cotton masters, joined by brewers like the Thwaites, and some engineering entrepreneurs, had moved out of the town and purchased country estates. John Walton refers to the early Victorian millowners as “squirearchical industrialists”, a trait utilised politically for the rest of the century.¹⁵ Aping a country gentry lifestyle, this largely Tory elite had “far reaching effects on Blackburn’s social, political, educational, and cultural development”.¹⁶ The borough was seen as “the Gibraltar of Toryism” in mainly Liberal Lancashire by the 1870s.¹⁷

A number of points about working-class Toryism and the paternalism of the manufacturers in the town need to be noted. First, the Conservatives and Liberals needed working-class support for electoral success by the twentieth century, yet both avoided obvious class ideology or stress on class differences. A paternalistic framework of politics developed which involved both hierarchical justification and popular local action. This served the requirements of the Tory elite and the Liberals were forced along the same route. This Tory paternalism however was never narrowly political, not a case of simply crude manipulation. It rested on a broad network of both cultural and social ties, but in the last resort emanated from the mill, where munificence and control were joint bedfellows. Thus:

Personal benevolence by the employers built up mill loyalty, strengthened by the key positions held by long-service overseers who owed their promotion to religious or political activity on behalf of their employers. At the same time, strict hierarchy was maintained by autocratic discipline, company housing and an anti-union policy.¹⁸

This paternalism emanated from the mill to the rest of society in the town, especially through authority positions. Millowners were party chairmen and overseers controlled the local ward committees. The Tory leaders managed to identify with popular activity and yet at the same time uphold social hierarchies. Class differences and populist links with working people were thus both maintained. The local Tory MP W.H. Hornby personified this paternalism and appeal to the local working class before 1914. In his person working-class Toryism had an almost apolitical quality that would continue to serve the local Conservative Association well in the inter-war years. The local economy was still dominated by the cotton industry and even though the

industry was ailing, the loyalty of many of the working people remained to the mill, which provided a livelihood, leisure activities and conviviality. Employers took this on board and made it a factor of political mobilisation.

One study has argued that support for the local Conservative elite by the working class by the third quarter of the nineteenth century could well have been a matter of calculation. The relationship of master and men was perceived as one of interdependence, no matter how hollow that quality was in reality.¹⁹ The overlookers, with their position of authority in the mill, could reinforce both the paternalism of the cotton masters and the deference of the operatives at the same time. But this was not simply a coercive relationship. The overlookers, though the bosses' men and perhaps chosen for their political bias, looked after the workers' interests too, and exerted leadership and influence through running the committees of the Co-op, friendly societies and chapel.²⁰ The centrality of the mill for the consolidation of a sense of neighbourhood and community bolstered paternalism, deference and working-class Tory allegiance:

Dominated by the influence and authority of the employer and his factory regime, the operation of factory neighbourhood feeling would have merged any differences of cultural style and status in a common allegiance to the neighbourhood employer.²¹

It should be noted that the paternalistic activities of the cotton elite were never able to entirely eliminate class tensions from the industry or locality. Whatever the ideological power of Tory ideas, the divergent interests of employers and workers could not always be disguised, especially in times of economic downturn. The existence of cotton trade-unionism, however moderate and deferential, and of sporadic industrial disputes, are testament to that fact.²² Moreover, the hold of the employers in the mill and factory towns was beginning to be loosened by the end of the nineteenth century, and employer-owned housing and mill-dominated neighbourhoods were starting to be dispersed by urban development and growth in the inter-war period.²³ But this last point applied less to Blackburn than other towns. Virtual mill colonies had existed in the town, where the cotton industrialists built and owned housing around their mills, but most of the mill-owned housing was sold off by the end of the century.²⁴ Blackburn appeared to have had higher quality housing than surrounding towns and most of the old back-to-backs had been demolished by 1914.²⁵ Much of the borough's housing consisted of mid to late Victorian terraces, and only thirty-eight houses were designated for slum clearance under the 1930 Housing Act.²⁶ There were only three relatively small council estates built in inter-war Blackburn, amounting to less than 2,000 houses.²⁷ Thus the widespread dispersal of long-established mill communities did not take place in the inter-war years. It is arguable that traditions of political allegiance and belief could be sustained longer in Blackburn's relatively stable environment.

Bolton

The situation in Bolton was broadly similar. One study of the town has shown the existence in the nineteenth century of a socially integrated leadership, held together by ties of marriage, social connections through membership of the council and voluntary societies, and above all what is described as an economic 'kinterlock'. These leaders exerted a powerful social and political influence over the town as a whole. These social leaders

came mainly from cotton, an elite made all the more cohesive with the amalgamations and rationalisations in the industry before the First World War. The 'cottonocracy' was made up of sixteen key families, augmented by the owners of the secondary industries of engineering, coal, tanning and corn milling.²⁸ As a counterpoint to some of the more rosy views of class relations in cotton towns, this study points to a huge divide between Bolton's elite and the working class. Workers were "cowed under", and viewed the town council and those of power and status as a "class above".²⁹ The poor feared the officials, police, and authorities generally.

In the immediate post-war years the old industrialists were still important in Bolton's economic and social leadership. They remained dominant on the council, mainly through the Conservative Party, but also to an extent from within the Liberal opposition. There was however, a gradual dilution of local control. The cotton elite was replaced in the council chamber by "the shopkeeping stratum", and "thus trade had replaced industry in local politics".³⁰ The immediate post-war cotton boom led many of the cotton elite to cash in and sell up, and further amalgamations and rationalisations accelerated this trend. Although some of the old industrial leaders remained on the boards of the local firms, in the main the personnel of the old elite retreated from public and municipal life over the period, and a new "more complex and less cohesive elite" can be identified.³¹ This change did not necessarily equate with a complete surrender of real power and influence, however. The withdrawal of elites from local government had taken place elsewhere, often much earlier than in Bolton, but without the loss of control from behind the scenes.³² In Bolton, "the Conservative section of old leadership certainly did not relinquish its ties with political power, although it left council affairs to the control of ... small traders and capitalists".³³ While the old basis of working-class Conservatism in Bolton had changed, it was by no means moribund in the inter-war years.

Bury

Turning to employer-worker relations in Bury, employer paternalism and working-class Toryism were as strong here. By the last third of the nineteenth century this was a "technologically stable" factory town with a "tight-knit ruling elite", with "Tory and Anglican loyalties" that made the borough an example of "indigenous, early established, business Toryism".³⁴ By owning the core of the locale – not only the means of production in the mills and factories, but also much of the housing stock – the social elite imparted to the neighbourhood its character, "shaping its sense of place, and proclaiming this to the town."³⁵ Even though limited liability companies controlled 50 per cent of local firms in Bury by the inter-war period, the 'cottonocracy' and other large employers continued to exert a strong influence on Bury's politics. The role of the overlookers in the cotton industry was again significant here, especially in the activities of the Co-operative movement, which was particularly influential in Bury.

There was also a patrician tinge to the ruling elite of the town. The Stanley family were patrons here on a grand scale. In the mid-Victorian period the Stanleys' close attention to local interests enhanced their popularity. Visiting Bury in 1857, the future fifteenth Earl of Derby noted in his journal: "Although the town has 40,000 inhabitants, with an immense trade, I found remaining an almost feudal respect for our family".³⁶ The Stanleys were a patrician dynasty "jealously guarding" their influence in the borough, with the fifteenth earl promoting the concept of

TOWN COUNCIL.

BURY CONSERVATIVES NOW HAVE MAJORITY OF SIX OVER ALL OTHER PARTIES.

LABOUR, WITH TEN CANDIDATES, LOSE TWO OF THEIR SEATS.

FATHER AND SON MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

7 Per Cent. Increase in Number of Voters.

None of the ten Labour Party candidates met with success; the Conservatives increased their representation on the Town Council by four seats and 47.8 per cent. of the 31,164 voters used their votes. These were the high-figures of the Bury municipal elections on Tuesday. The next highest poll of recent years was 48.00 per cent. in 1935, and this year's figure was 7 per cent. higher than in 1937 and 14 per cent. higher than in 1934.

The Conservatives now hold 25 of the 44 seats. They gained two seats from the Labour Party and one from the Liberal Party, while they took the Unsworth seat formerly held by Councillor Alnsworth, who had changed from an Independent to a Labour Party nominee. He was the only retiring member not to retain his seat. One of the new councillors is Mr. Sam Lord, son of Alderman J. L. Lord.

In each ward except Unsworth two seats were vacant while in the Unsworth Ward there was only one vacancy. Eight retiring councillors offered themselves for re-election, and the three remaining vacancies were caused by Councillors Hazy (Ashworth) and Fred Daventport not seeking re-election, and by Councillor William Judge having been elected an alderman.

For the first time in all wards except Moorside there was an hour's extension of the polling period, and instead of from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., as in previous years, polling was from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. In Moorside Ward polling was from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The local government elections in the Borough were distributed in this way:

	Men	Women	Total
Redvales	2,833	5,176	8,009
Church	2,467	2,921	5,388
Elton	2,695	3,024	5,719
Moorside	2,306	3,243	5,549
East	3,713	2,184	5,897
Unsworth	677	715	1,392
Total	14,502	16,663	31,165

INCREASED PERCENTAGE OF VOTERS.

Percentage of voters during recent year, and on Tuesday are—	1938	1937	1936	1935
Redvales	45.05	39.55	34.36	31.25
Unsworth	44.80	40.94	34.78	—
Elton	33.94	45.07	39.70	42.70
Church	45.44	48.91	34.10	45.30
Moorside	44.42	45.31	35.39	50.90
East	39.37	32.59	31.00	37.17
Total	47.45	43.27	35.24	48.00

ELTON WARD.

- SAM LORD (C.) — 1,470
- LEONARD S. JONES (C.) — 1,351
- Mrs. Bettywell (Lab.) — 1,204
- Arthur Dawson (Lab.) — 1,105
- James Killelea (L.) — 600
- Conservative gain, one from Liberal, one from Labour.

CHURCH WARD.

- FRANK ASPINALL (C.) — 1,300
- FRED JACKSON (C.) — 1,020
- George Bykes (Lab.) — 746
- Mrs. C. Skinner (Lab.) — 722
- Ernest Gowerd (L.) — 617
- Conservative gain one from Labour.

REDVALES WARD.

- ERNEST RIDGEL (C.) — 1,567
- J. W. CLARK (L.) — 1,415
- H. Hanson (Lab.) — 791
- The Howards (Ind.) — 750
- Robert Lord (L.) — 729
- No change.

EAST WARD.

- JAMES DUCKWORTH (L.) — 1,496
- FRANK RILEY (C.) — 1,353
- James Robinson (Lab.) — 741
- James Golding (Lab.) — 597
- No change.

UNSWORTH WARD.

- (One Seat)
- HERBERT MILBURN (C.) 543
- William Alnsworth (Lab.) 524
- Labour candidate changed from Independent.
- Conservative gain from Independent.
- Retiring member.
- Net gain: Conservatives gain two seats from Labour, one from Liberal and one from Independent.

SPOILED OR REJECTED

There were twelve spoiled and eleven rejected ballot papers in the six wards. In Elton there were five spoiled papers and four rejected, there because the voters had voted for more candidates than entitled to, and one for being unmarked or void for uncertainty. In Unsworth there were neither spoiled nor rejected papers, while in East Ward there was one spoiled paper and two were rejected for containing writing of a mark by which the voter could be identified. There was one spoiled paper in Church Ward, where there were also two rejected papers, one for voting for

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

	Cons.
Old Council	21
Number of seats vacant formerly held by	5
Number of candidates going to poll	9
Returns	9
New Council	25
Conservatives have now majority	



COUNCILLOR L. E. JONES.

One of the two new representatives for Elton ward is Mr. Leonard E. Jones, of 306, Beaudesholme-road, Bury. A native of Prestwich, Mr. Jones has been in the bleaching and dyeing trade for 12 years and is a director of the Elton Mill Dyeing and Finishing Company Limited, of Radcliffe. He was educated at Stand Grammar School.

Interested in sport, Mr. Jones is a member of the Bury Sports Club and is a vice-president of the Woodbank Cricket Club, Bury, whose representative he is on the Bury Amateur Cricket League's executive committee.



COUNCILLOR S. LORD.

By his election to the Council for Elton Ward, Councillor Sam Lord joins his father, Alderman J. L. Lord, in municipal service. Councillor Lord, whose home is The Wombles, Kingsley-avenue, Elton, is a native of the town, and has lived all his life in Elton. Since boyhood he has been associated with All Saints' Church and Sunday School, and plays cricket for the school. He was educated first at St. Stephen's School, and afterwards at Bury Grammar School. Councillor Lord is a soap manufacturer, with his business in Agnes-street.



COUNCILLOR FRED JACKSON.

Forty-nine years of age, and son of a former town councillor, Councillor Fred Jackson resides at 162, Walmsley-road, Bury, and is in business as a builder and contractor. His late father sat on Bury Town Council as Conservative representative for East Ward for fourteen years. Born in Bury, Councillor Jackson was educated at St. Thomas's School, and later entered his father's business. Returning to this country after serving in France with the mechanical transport during the war, he went into business on his own account. He is the inventor of the Jackson system of expansion joints for Lancashire and Yorkshire roads.



COUNCILLOR H. MILBURN.

Councillor Herbert Milburn, of "Fairley," Brook-Dene, Unsworth, is 35 years of age, and is an estate agent. Until about two years ago he was the district inspector of the Bury branch of the Fine Art and General Insurance Co. Ltd., a position which he resigned when, following the death of a relative, he was appointed the manager of a large estate at Liverpool. He is a native of Oldwood, and lived there until his marriage twelve years ago to Miss A. Barstall, of Radcliffe (who was a teacher at the Unsworth Parish Church Day School), when he came to reside in Unsworth. He is an active member of the Free

'Tory Democracy'. These magnates understood the importance of securing support beyond the elite. As the "Kings of Lancashire", the Stanleys believed that "working men and tenants" should show "respect, affection and deference" to their "employers and landlords", and worked actively to promote and sustain such attitudes.³⁷ The family gave strategic leases and outright gifts of land to the borough, and continued to show its favour well into the twentieth century.³⁸ Successive generations of the family were intimately involved in the affairs of the council. Their political home was not consistently Tory, as some of the dynasty veered towards Liberalism over the decades. Via Unionism, however, they were firmly ensconced in the Conservative camp by 1918. Their patronage strongly influenced Bury Conservatism in the inter-war period. If anything the interconnection of landed and industrial power seemed to strengthen the appeal of Conservatism to working-class voters, but it should also be stressed that the Tory party worked hard to sustain this appeal, as will be shown below.

It was also the case that Bury was comparatively less hard hit by the inter-war depression than the other towns considered here, and this may have helped to sustain social and political stability. The town did not have an overwhelming reliance on only one or other of the spinning or weaving sectors, and in other ways also had a more diversified local economy. This resulted in comparatively fewer unemployed, less economic dislocation and a slightly more gentle decline. According to the 1931 Census, Bury, with 16.9 per cent of the workforce defined as out of work, suffered less than Preston (18.6 per cent), Old-

ham (22.8 per cent), Burnley (24.1 per cent) and especially Blackburn (32.7 per cent). Only Rochdale, Manchester and Bolton fared marginally better in cotton Lancashire. There was also some recovery later in the decade. Bury unemployment "returned to about the average of the county as a whole by 1936 and 1937", and one study saw "most of the spinning district... at a certain moderate level of prosperity at the peak of the trade cycle" by 1937.³⁹

Burnley

The situation in Burnley was markedly different however. There was a small elite of mill, mine and factory owners, but it was far less important in the locality than in other longer-established textile centres. This was in part because the main development of weaving in Burnley and the surrounding area in the north-east of Lancashire came late, in the second half of the nineteenth century, and also because the structure of the industry in this late phase produced a less imposing elite. Through borrowing and the leasing of cotton plant, Burnley, along with Nelson, was "the last major spawning ground of self-made cotton manufacturers".⁴⁰ As one writer has commented:

Burnley, Nelson and Brierfield were distinct from older, larger weaving centres like Blackburn or Preston because of their high proportion of small manufacturers. The area was renowned for encouraging an ambitious tacker or shopkeeper to save up or borrow enough to rent a space in a mill, set up a few looms and employ a handful of weavers.

NORTHERN DAILY TELEGRAPH, M

**ALL
ALONG THE
LINE.
LABOUR
WINS AT THE
ELECTIONS.
STRONGER
GRIP ON THE
TOWN COUNCILS.
CLEAN SWEEP IN LONDON
AND
GREAT GAINS IN THE
COUNTRY.**

A sweeping triumph has been achieved by labour in the borough council elections, which reached their final stage throughout Lancashire and Wales on Saturday. So far as

**WAR WAGES.
GUARANTEED TILL TEXT
OCTOBER.
GOVERNMENT'S NEW LABOUR
BILL.**

To-day the Government's new industrial bill is being submitted to the House of Commons. Its provisions fall under two heads. One extends the war wage, guaranteed by Act of Parliament for twelve months after the armistice, until September 30 next year, thus making general the concession recently given to the railwaymen. The other proposes machinery for settling and preventing disputes. This machinery consists of (1) an Industrial Court on a permanent basis, and (2) Courts of Inquiry, with power, if necessary, to summon witnesses and compel the production of documents, to inquire into the causes and circumstances of disputes. Through the agency of the reports issued by these courts the Government propose for the first time to give a definite status to the public as arbiters. It is hoped, says an official statement, that "an authoritative and impartial report would be a useful means of bringing to bear the pressure of public opinion on either side, and that the procedure will avoid the necessity of a series of such ex parte statements as appear during strikes."

Two important clauses were dropped at the last minute, in one case owing to strong opposition from both employers and employed. It was proposed to make certain decisions binding, and this both sides interpreted as savouring of compulsory arbitration, and the clause was accordingly dropped. The second abandoned clause provided that trade unions should not support out of their funds a strike by their members against the award of the Industrial Court. To this the trade unions

**BLACKBURN
MAKES A CHANGE.
CONSERVATIVE COUNCIL
ROUT.
LABOUR CAPTURES FIVE
SEATS.
MR CARMICHAEL IN FOR ST.
SILAS'S.**

The result of the polling for the election of Town Councillors at Blackburn on Saturday represents a gain of five seats by the Labour Party and two by the Liberals, at the expense of the Conservatives. The Labour victories were in St. Mary's, St. Luke's, St. Stephen's, St. John's, and St. Paul's, and those of the Liberals in St. Silas's and St. Andrew's. The Labour Party also secured the return of their two retiring members. The Conservatives lost two of theirs—Mr T. Sharples in Silas's and Mr W. Edmundson in St. Luke's. The following table shows the results at a glance:

	Nominated	Returned
Conservatives	12	5
Labour	14	7
Liberal	16	2
Independent	2	2

The general lack of public interest in the contest was reflected in the small poll, only 34,770 of the 52,278 votes being cast. The appended table shows the voting strength in each ward and the number of votes given:

Labour triumphant in 1919 - Northern Daily Telegraph, 3 November 1919.

This was called the room-and-power system, since crucial was the small manufacturer's access to the mill's steam power.⁴¹

The powerful influence on social and political life that the big cotton masters exerted elsewhere was noticeably less significant in Burnley. Moreover, research suggests that Burnley's leading families were Liberal, such as the Thornbers (textiles) and Hargreaves and Thursbys (colliery-owners). With a strong temperance movement, Liberalism was to be a persistent force in municipal politics.⁴² One comparative study has portrayed pre-1914 Burnley as 'progressive' with none of the 'clog Toryism' of Blackburn.⁴³

Thus the basis of working-class Conservatism was inherently weaker in Burnley. Moreover employer-worker relations were especially undermined by the strains of the inter-war depression. Unemployment was relatively high, as stated above, but even more significant was the fact that industrial conflict in the weaving industry in the 1930s was centred on Burnley. The "More Looms" dispute began in 1931, and rumbled on until the major lockout in the summer of 1932. The central issue of this dispute was an attempt by the mill owners to double the number of looms per weaver from four to eight, which partially slowed down the speed that the worker could operate. This industrial dispute had its epicentre in Burnley, and had near total support in north-east Lancashire.⁴⁴ The progress of the dispute was given widespread coverage in the local press, and in 1932 in particular was a major issue at the same time as the November local elections were held.⁴⁵ The impact of the dispute on local politics was significant. One consequence was an increased distrust of the workers involved of their full-time union officials, as many felt that the union did not represent them adequately during the dispute.⁴⁶ More generally, the lockouts carried out by the employers to break the weavers' resistance engendered a great deal of bitterness in the locality. Heightened class consciousness was the result, and this may well have been an important factor in the rapid rise in Labour's support around this time, and also the decline in Burnley Conservatism. There is evidence that the atmosphere surrounding the local elections of this period became more embittered, and class-based issues were stressed more strongly on all sides.⁴⁷ The effect on Burnley's municipal politics was marked, and it helped to propel Labour into power. Labour's chances of winning a majority on Burnley council seemed faint in 1931, with the party holding only thirteen of the forty-eight seats, or just over a quarter of the total. However, Labour gained two seats in 1932, even though it was defending the gains made three years previously at the high-point of 1929. Five more gains were made in 1933, and another five in 1934, giving Labour an overall majority in Burnley for the first time. This rapid rise within three years from a position of weakness to one of overall control was very unusual, being achieved in very few boroughs at this time. It was an indication of a sudden and massive shift in local opinion in Burnley. In each of these three years Labour also won well over 50 per cent of all votes cast, showing the strength of support for the party in the aftermath of the "More Looms" dispute.

Religion and culture

A further factor that needs to be considered is the role of religion in shaping local culture and local political forces. The connection between popular Toryism and Anglicanism in the cotton district of Lancashire has already been alluded to, and was certainly manifested in Blackburn.⁴⁸ Bishop Fisher could in 1878 write of

the town that "the alliance between Conservatism and the Church – religion not having much to do with the compact – is closer than in any other Lancashire town."⁴⁹ The Church of England was by far the strongest religious affiliation in the town and, in its own terms, managed to keep the spread of nonconformity from across the Pennines at bay. Nonconformity had a wide variety of sects but was weak in total numbers. The Anglicans had by far the largest number of elementary schools, extending their influence over succeeding generations. Only four Board Schools were built in Blackburn by 1900, while there were twenty-five Anglican, eleven Nonconformist, and eight Catholic establishments. More militant expressions of Protestantism were also evident in Blackburn. The Orange movement was quite strong with over 1,200 members in seventeen lodges at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁵⁰ Orangemen and militant Protestants repeatedly linked "virulent attacks on Roman Catholicism with support for the economic and social grievances of English workers".⁵¹ With over 2,500 Irish living in the Penny Street area of the town at the turn of the century, anti-Catholicism could be utilised as another Conservative ploy.

The significance of Anglicanism to Tory control of Bolton was also notable, as it was in Bury as well. Mid-Victorian Bury's ruling elite was "steadfastly Anglican", and the strength of Anglican and Tory feeling was shown by the fact that the town had no Board Schools before 1914.⁵² This tradition was carried over into the 1930s, with the council being noted for its parsimonious attitude to education.⁵³ The overtly anti-Catholic Protestantism of the nineteenth-century cotton districts was of course much more muted by the inter-war period, but it was an element in the appeal of Toryism to working-class voters. It also played some part in the important development of Liberal Unionism in Bury, which was reckoned to be second only to that of Birmingham.⁵⁴ It operated at both the parliamentary and municipal level, and took hold locally when in 1885 the local MP, Sir Henry James, became a Liberal Unionist. He was popular for his work on behalf of trade unionists, and it was he who made the claim that next to Birmingham, "Bury contains more Liberal Unionists than any other constituency".⁵⁵ The unique strength of Liberal Unionism in a Lancashire municipality combined with a strongly entrenched Conservative presence produced, as in Birmingham, a powerful political force. By the 1890s "the Council was becoming more Conservative in membership – Liberal Unionists in alliance with Conservatives outnumbered Gladstonian Liberals in 1893".⁵⁶ Co-operation between Conservatives and Liberal Unionists was firmly established by the early twentieth century, and formal merger only further solidified their control in the inter-war years.

All this is not to say that nonconformity was absent in Bury. In the 1851 religious census over 50 per cent of worshippers were classified as Dissenters, and the nonconformist tradition was reflected by the late nineteenth century in a paucity of public houses.⁵⁷ There were also a significant number of Methodist schools in the borough,⁵⁸ and the Temperance Union and Band of Hope were prominent. Nonconformity provided a basis for Liberalism in the borough, which was reflected in Liberal positions on education in inter-war politics.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, nonconformity was subordinate to Anglicanism in Bury. The schisms in Methodism weakened its influence, and more radical strands such as the Primitive and Independent Methodists were insignificant. The contrast with another cotton-spinning town, Rochdale, is noteworthy. A strong nonconformist tradition there resulted in a dominant Liberalism.⁶⁰ Even more striking is the contrast with Burnley, where radical nonconformity fed into a socialist tradition.

MUNICIPAL CONTESTS.

INTERESTING LANCASHIRE FIGHTS.

HOW PARTIES FARED AT THE POLL.

LABOUR GAIN A SEAT AT BLACKBURN.

Many interesting municipal fights took place in East Lancashire yesterday.

The net result of the contests at Blackburn was that Labour has one more representative on the Council, and the Conservatives one less, the representation of the Liberal and Independent parties being unchanged. Two of the Labour men returned are not new to the Chamber, Councillors Townsend and Heyes both being former members.

Labour had hardly been prepared for the defeat of Mr Pickering, which gave the Conservatives cause for rejoicing, but on the other hand both parties received a mild surprise by the turnover in favour of Labour in Trinity Ward. Asterisk denotes retiring councillor.

BLACKBURN.

The results at Blackburn were as follows:

ST. STEPHEN'S (4,754 voters).
 *John Eddleston (Ind), cotton manufacturer 2,096
 Wm. Scott (Lab), trade union secretary 1,223
 Majority 873
 No change.

ST. MARK'S (4,400).
 *John Walsh (Con), electrical engineer 1,683
 John Wm. Taylor (Lab), insurance agent 1,470
 Majority 213
 No change.

ST. PAUL'S (4,167).
 *Francis Harrison (Lib), meat purveyor 1,500
 John Calvert (Lab), retired over-..... 1,308

ber of aldermen. He thought that, in view of the difficulties of trade and unemployment and of the Rent Restrictions Act, they had no reason to feel disgraced by the results. The ruling party always felt the disadvantages arising from circumstances over which they had no control.

Neither the municipality nor the country were at all to blame for the slump in employment. The depression was world-wide. Again, the municipality had no control over evictions, but the dominant party had to bear the brunt of attacks on those questions.

Thinking the workers, Alderman Forrest described the abilities of Mr Frank Maxwell, the party agent, as "the best word in electioneering". The longer he knew Mr Maxwell the more convinced he became that he was the greatest asset of the Conservative party in Blackburn. [Applause.]

Mr Maxwell agreed with Alderman Forrest that the unemployment and housing questions had accounted for some of the results. Many of the Conservative canvassers were greeted with the remark, "We cannot be worse off. We will have a change."

The Chairman reminded the gathering that taking the results altogether and including the unopposed returns, they were highly satisfactory. With regard to St. Peter's Ward, while they regretted Mr Brierley's defeat, they must bear in mind that last year Councillor Porter won the seat with a majority of 193. That had been reduced by the Conservative candidate by 109. [Applause] If they put in an extra effort there next year they would regain the seat for the Conservatives.

AT THE I.L.P.

Labour Agent and Hiring

The Northern Daily Telegraph records Labour victories, 2 November 1923.

The strength of religious nonconformity in the Burnley area was significant. Indeed, one study sees the influence of Methodism on Burnley "as the largest in the whole of the Manchester district".⁶¹ A relative shortage of public houses was noted at the end of the nineteenth century, an indicator of Nonconformist influence. The relatively late development of weaving in Burnley and the other towns further up the valley like Nelson and Brierfield was important in this regard again. Large numbers of workers migrated into the area, attracted by the rapidly growing employment prospects, many from as far away as Cornwall and East Anglia. The greatest number though, came from nearby, across the border from the strongly nonconformist West Riding of Yorkshire. The religious and cultural connections with the West Riding were strong. There were three main variants of nonconformity locally. Wesleyan Methodism was dominated by local employers and encouraged individualism. The strong Liberal tradition of the area stemmed mainly from this source. However, predominantly working-class Primitive Methodism and Independent Methodism bequeathed a rather different legacy to the locality. The Independents in particular, emphasising chapel democracy, self-government, temperance and self-education, were vital in encouraging a strong radicalism in the area. This radical tradition was later to be important in the developing socialist and labour movement.⁶²

Political organisation and campaigning

It is also necessary to consider how much political organisation actively influenced, created and altered political opinion in these towns. Underlying socio-economic and cultural traditions may have disposed different localities to varying political allegiances, but the mobilisation of these allegiances could also make a difference. The experiences of Bury and Burnley, at the opposite ends of the political spectrum amongst our four towns, illustrate this point very well.

In Bury, the strength and depth of Conservative Party organisation in the inter-war period was impressive. It has been pointed out in recent research that on a national scale "Conservatives were actively engaged throughout this period in trying to understand the nature of their new audience and reconstructing the social alliances from which their electoral strength derived."⁶³ The dominance of Conservatism in Bury before 1914 was obvious, and it had been enhanced by the merger with Liberal Unionism in the town, and in municipal politics after 1918 further boosted by informal alliance with the remnants of Gladstonian Liberalism.⁶⁴ But this did not lead to complacency on the Conservatives' part. In April 1919 the local Conservative Association formed a Labour Committee, which operated throughout the inter-war years, showing the importance the Tories placed on holding on to long-established working-class support in the face of the growth of the Labour party. There was one delegate to the committee from the Workingmen's Unionist Association Committee in each ward, showing the depth of political organisation in the locality. Each Conservative club also had two representatives on the committee, showing the importance of the clubs in the social and political organisation of working-class Toryism. These clubs served as a focal point of politics, entertainment and sometimes, moral instruction. The Liberal party also had a vibrant club organisation. The Labour party realised the advantage the other two parties had with their clubs and bemoaned their own lack of them. At a post-election inquest in 1920, for instance, the party chairman said Labour "had to recognise that the other parties had clubs, and worked inside those clubs."⁶⁵

The Labour Committee in the Tory party was charged with organising working-class support at municipal as well as Westminster elections. It had also been set up "to increase party representation in trade unions and co-operatives",⁶⁶ and to penetrate and organise within such working-class bodies. The Co-operative Society in Bury played a large role in working-class life, and Tory efforts to intervene in it were constant and well-organised. Thus in August 1920, the Tories launched a campaign to stop the Bury Co-operative movement from affiliating with the local Labour party.⁶⁷ The Tory Labour Committee also organised slates of Tory supporters for elections within Co-operative societies, and actively supported and campaigned for them.⁶⁸ The local Conservative Association also attempted to organise within the trade unions. For instance, Bury Tories mounted a campaign against a *Daily Herald* plan to raise £200,000 from the trade union movement to establish a Manchester edition of this overtly Labour newspaper. The Conservatives opposed the action under the guise of it being a "seizure" of trade union funds, and argued that the *Herald* plan would be opposed "as long as that organ pursues its present policy of advocating direct or industrial action, expounding Bolshevik propaganda, and fanning the flames of revolutionary fanaticism".⁶⁹

A further factor in popular Conservatism was the stress on the patriotic appeal to "the people",⁷⁰ and the party actively cultivated this, for instance organising to support the Gallipoli Sunday parades which were still being commemorated in Bury in the 1990s.⁷¹ The borough was also a major depot of the Lan-

HOW LANCASHIRE TOWNS VOTED

MUNICIPAL PENDULUM SWINGS IN
SOCIALISTS' FAVOUR

BLACKBURN AND BURNLEY GAINS

LIBERALS STAND FIRM: TORIES TAKE
BRUNT OF LOSSES

In other counties, Socialists in Lancashire gained a number of successes in municipal elections, the results of which were declared last night. In the East Lancashire area they won seats at Blackburn, five at Burnley, three at Nelson. On the other hand they failed in Clitheroe. Liberals in the county gained more than they lost, the brunt of the Socialist advance borne by the Conservatives. A drawing of the poll pendulum is issued in the following "Telegraph" extracts from the various local centres. An asterisk denotes a retiring councillor.

**WE TORY LOSSES IN
BLACKBURN.**
**SWEEPING LIBERAL
VICTORY.**

HEADED POLL BUT LOST SEAT.

Woman Out by Casting Vote After Burnley Tie.

An extraordinary result at Burnley was a tie in the voting in Fulledge Ward between the retiring Conservative candidate, Mr A. W. Roberts, and the Socialist's woman nominee, Mrs Mary Williams. Each polled 1,422, and Mr Roberts retained his representation with the casting vote of the returning officer, Alderman Whewell, after a recount had confirmed the tie.

Mrs Williams was one of three women in the field, Mrs Maria Brown, J.P., the retiring Conservative in Whittlefield, had a narrow majority over Mr T. Maxfield (Soc) in a ward which has never returned a member of the latter party. Mrs Maud A. Harpin was the Socialist opponent of Mr Arthur Green, the retiring Liberal in Daneshouse. She, too, had a good measure of support.

Of outstanding interest was the huge majority of the Mayor-Elect, Councillor

The Northern Daily Telegraph records Labour victories, 2 November 1923

cashire Fusiliers, which may have helped to reinforce this patriotism. The composition of the executive committee of the Bury Conservative party also reflected the importance of working-class participation in the party. The chair, treasurer and secretary of each ward organisation was represented, plus an occasional extra representative, but always "one or more labour representatives". Thus three of the five wards in the borough had one labour representative, and the two others had two each.⁷²

The powerful organisation of Toryism in Bury was matched on the other side by Labour in Burnley. By the twentieth century the borough had a large Mechanics Institute, a successful building society, co-operative weaving sheds, and vibrant socialist organisations like the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) and a Socialist Party of Great Britain (SPGB) group.⁷³ Early twentieth century Burnley was a hotspot of political radicalism in a county not noted for this characteristic. The SDF branch, "the first modern Socialist organisation in Britain", was built on the campaigns of H.M. Hyndman for Burnley's parliamentary seat on four occasions up to 1911.⁷⁴ The first parliamentary victory for Labour in 1918 was secured by Dan Irving, ally of Hyndman and professional socialist organiser of the SDF. Irving had become a councillor as early as 1902. Although the SDF never

had more than two councillors out of the 48 on the pre-1914 council, Hyndman's organisation played a crucial role in the local Labour movement. The SDF was not dogmatic and sectarian in Burnley, willing to act alongside the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and "become very much part of the wider Labour movement".⁷⁵ Relations with the Weavers' Union were never easy, with the weavers withdrawing from the Trades Council in 1904, and then revoking their financial support for SDF candidates for the council in 1909. In the same year the SDF and ILP were contesting wards against each other.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, by 1918 Labour was well-organised and posed a real challenge in Burnley.

Labour was a lively and well-run party throughout the inter-war years in Burnley, and consistently mounted vigorous and imaginative campaigns. This can be best shown in 1932, when in the aftermath of the "More Looms" dispute, it exploited two important and emotive issues with great effect: the Means Test and the government's "false economy policy" as it was called in Burnley.⁷⁷ Labour carried out an extensive press campaign, one of the high points being the advertisement in the *Burnley News* just before the November contests, hailing the electorate with: "Smash the Means Test: VOTE LABOUR".⁷⁸ While in many other boroughs, including the three others considered here, there is evidence that Labour was becoming more moderate in its rhetoric and policies following the disasters of 1930-31. In Burnley the opposite seems to have been the case, and the electorate proved to be receptive to Labour's campaigns.⁷⁹ Other examples of the bold policies Labour put forward in its rise to power in Burnley can be identified. It promised higher expenditure on school milk and meals, nourishment for expectant mothers, the provision of more nursery schools, the construction of more council houses and the use of direct labour. Disparaging services in the hands of the private sector, Labour advocated a greater role for municipal or public enterprise.⁸⁰ By contrast, it has been argued that in Bolton, Labour bowed to the pressure of working-class conservatism in the 1930s, sought to distance itself from radical proposals on behalf of the unemployed, and moved towards more moderate and cautious policies. The result there was political demoralisation and a decline in Labour support.⁸¹

Political practice

One final issue that needs to be considered is how much political practice at the municipal level might have affected the performance of the parties in these towns. As has been pointed out elsewhere, the system of inter-war municipal politics was open to manipulation in two significant ways. One was by the gerrymandering of ward boundaries in favour of one party or another, and the other by packing the aldermanic benches to bolster party advantage.⁸² As far as ward boundaries were concerned, in Blackburn, Bolton and Burnley no reorganisation took place between the wars, and any party advantage was negligible. In Bury, however, ward boundaries were revised in 1936, and were openly gerrymandered by the ruling Tory group. For reasons of space it is impossible to explain the complexities of the changes here.⁸³ In summary, an even-handed plan drawn up by the Town Clerk was rejected in favour of a Tory proposal which disadvantaged Labour's electoral prospects. Despite Labour complaints at the subsequent public enquiry that the council had "juggled with portions of the wards", the plan was approved. Plainly the Tories had used the redistribution to bolster their already strong position on the council.

NEW COMERS TO MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.



Sharples, Blackburn.
MR FURNESS DEAN,
 the new Liberal Councillor for St. Paul's
 Ward, Blackburn.



Moss, Accrington.
MR T. O'DONNOR,
 who gained the West Ward, Accrington,
 for Labour.



MR J. S. YATES,
 the Labour victor of Fulledgs, Ward,
 Burnley.

Northern Daily Telegraph, 2 November 1926

There was also a variety of practice in these four towns as regards the vexed question of the aldermanic elections.⁸⁴ In Blackburn and Bolton, Labour was severely under-represented with aldermen until the late 1920s. After the 1929 elections Labour was conceded a substantial increase in both towns, jumping from none to seven aldermen in Blackburn, and four to nine in Bolton, reflecting Labour's much improved position on the council by that date. For the rest of the inter-war period Labour was then treated fairly in Bolton, retaining aldermen roughly in proportion to the numbers of their elected councillors. Labour never seriously threatened Tory control in Bolton, but in Blackburn the party came within three or four seats of an overall majority in 1934-1935. In response, at the first opportunity after the 1935 elections the ruling group bolstered its position by unseating four Labour aldermen, leaving Labour once again severely under-represented with only one aldermen to twenty-two councillors. In Bury the Labour party, being much weaker overall, was granted a single alderman in 1925 and a second in 1936, with minimal effect on the balance of the council. In Burnley, by contrast, where Labour was always a more serious threat, the ruling group made virtually no concessions. Labour only had its first alderman elected in 1928, and gained no more until 1934. At this point Labour had twenty-five elected councillors and was grossly under-represented on the aldermanic bench. Even so, Labour had an overall majority on the council, and in the following three years it filled every aldermanic vacancy with its own nominees. By 1938 nine of the twelve aldermen were Labour, a considerable over-representation bolstering the party's own position on the council.

Women and local politics

One other key issue that can only be dealt with very briefly here is the role of women in politics. Given the preponderance of women in the local economies of these towns, their political activity and opinions were also likely to be of great significance. Michael Savage's study of another Lancashire weaving centre, Preston, has established the importance of women's involvement to the development of the Labour party there. Sav-

age has shown how increased women's participation was crucial in transforming Labour in Preston into a more neighbourhood-based and less economic party in the later 1920s, which in turn resulted in significant Labour gains electorally. He also shows how the patriarchal structure of work relations in weaving in Preston meant that male workers increasingly saw female labour as a threat in the context of the high unemployment of the 1930s. This helped to shift the balance back again, with women's influence on the party being reduced as their position in the labour market was eroded, and policy consequently moving back to more traditional economic lines.⁸⁵ Other related research on Nelson has shown an even greater and more sustained involvement of women in the Labour party there, grounded in part on the fact that men and women were employed on a more or less equal basis in the weaving industry in the town.⁸⁶ On the basis of the evidence of electoral politics used in this article, however, these patterns cannot be seen to have been clearly replicated in the four towns considered here.

Women's work was especially prevalent in the weaving side of the industry, and thus was most predominant in Blackburn and Burnley of the four towns. In the industrial tables of the 1931 census, 68 per cent of the labour force in the textile industry was female in Blackburn, 63 per cent in Burnley, 58 per cent in Bury, and 55 per cent in Bolton. Significantly the women's suffrage campaign had its greatest working-class support in the cotton districts. This was especially marked in the north-east Lancashire weaving towns, including Burnley.⁸⁷ Yet this pre-1914 political activity by women in the region does not seem to have been translated into great involvement in electoral politics after the vote had been won for most women in 1918. Women's presence in elections was in fact very limited, and this in itself is perhaps the most important, and most surprising finding here. Despite the great significance of women's work in the local economy, their direct influence in local politics appears to have been slight. In all parliamentary elections between the wars in these four towns, only two women ever stood, one in Blackburn and one in Bury, and both for Labour. In all inter-war municipal elections, women made up only 6 per cent of all candida-

tures in the four towns, and by town 7 per cent in both Bolton and Bury, 6 per cent in Burnley and 4 per cent in Blackburn. Labour nominated more women than their opponents, with as many as 18 per cent of its candidatures being female in Bury, 10 per cent in Bolton, 6 per cent in Burnley and only 3 per cent in Blackburn.⁸⁸ It is striking that the two weaving towns, where female employment was highest, nevertheless had the lowest proportion of women candidates, both as far as Labour was concerned and also for all parties. The higher figure in Bury can be partly attributed to the importance of the Co-op in the town. Women played a major role in the Co-operative movement, and a number of Labour's women candidates in Bury were sponsored by the Co-op.

Apart from this one exception, though, women did not figure prominently as candidates in the electoral politics of any of these towns. Nor did they appear to be especially active in election campaigns in any of the boroughs. Coverage in the local press revealed very few women-only meetings held by any of the parties, and issues such as health and child-welfare, which were often portrayed at the time as especially significant for women voters, did not figure prominently in the municipal politics of the four towns. This contrasts with a number of other boroughs, such as Birmingham, Bristol, Canterbury and Carlisle, where much more of such evidence of female involvement has been found.⁸⁹ Behind the scenes women's influence may have been greater, but only more in-depth research at a factory, ward and neighbourhood level could reveal this. This is clearly an area that requires further investigation. Tentative conclusions may be drawn, however. The evidence presented here shows limited female involvement in the inter-war politics of these four towns. Yet women were preponderant in the local labour force, and there had been a strong tradition of political activity before 1914. This tends to support the view that after 1918 there had been "a reconstruction of gender that circumscribed the roles, activities and possibilities of women".⁹⁰

Conclusion

Overall it can be seen that comparative analysis of these four towns reveals a number of interconnected factors which help to explain their varied political experiences. Employer-worker relations in the cotton industry were important as the basis of a tradition of working-class Conservatism, but were much less significant in Burnley than in the other three towns. Weaving workers in general tended more towards radicalism, spinners more towards Toryism, giving Labour a better potential base of support in predominantly weaving Burnley and Blackburn than in spinning Bolton and Bury. The presence of a substantial group of miners in Burnley provided a further impetus towards Labour. The strength of Anglicanism in Blackburn, Bolton and Bury was also linked to Tory control, whereas the radical non-conformism of Burnley was more conducive to radical political

traditions. Linked to all these issues was Burnley's later start industrially, producing a less-imposing elite group of employers. Additionally, the geographical position of the town on the edge of the Pennines was important. The strongly nonconformist West Riding of Yorkshire exerted a significant cultural influence on the town. The inter-war decline of the all-important cotton industry also had political effects – its relative moderation in Bury caused less dislocation of political allegiances, whereas its severity in Burnley, associated with industrial unrest, appeared to radicalise voters to Labour's advantage. Political agency was also influential. The powerful and pervasive organisation of Conservatism in Bury, and similarly exceptional Labour organisation in Burnley, both won political support in the locality. Finally political practice could sway control of the local council. Gerrymandering of electoral boundaries was used in Bury to strengthen Tory control. Manipulation of the aldermanic system had the same effect, especially in Blackburn, but on the other hand was used to bolster Labour's position in Burnley in the later 1930s.

In sum, the experience of these four Lancashire towns between the two world wars illuminates the interplay of locale, politics and the dominant cotton industry. The comparative approach adopted here does much to bring into relief these interconnections. More research of this nature is needed on the relationships between other locales, regions and industries, to deepen our historical understanding of twentieth-century British politics and society. The importance of the local perspective in this process needs to be stressed. As Michael Savage has commented,

*the historiography of the Labour Party has, until this past decade, largely eschewed this local perspective... whilst studies of the nineteenth century working class have almost invariably been local in scope, this is a far less developed tradition for studies of the twentieth century working class.*⁹¹

This article, adopting an explicitly comparative analysis to the local perspective, confirms two of Savage's most important conclusions. First, that "organised, formal politics cannot be reduced to social causes: it has an existence and autonomy of its own". Second, that "there is no 'essence' to working class politics... the type of strategy commonly pursued will very largely depend on the resources and capacities in the local environment".⁹² Despite the similarities in economic function between the four towns considered here, it is plain that there were different "resources and capacities" in each of them. 'Practical' political strategies were forged in the light of these differences, and interacting with the world of formal politics, produced varying political allegiances.

Notes

- 1 Quoted in J.K. Walton, *Lancashire: A Social History, 1558-1939* (Manchester, 1987), p.316.
- 2 For extended discussion of these issues, see, J. Lawrence and M. Taylor, 'Introduction: Electoral Sociology and the Historians', in *Party, State and Society: Electoral Behaviour in Britain since 1820* (Aldershot, 1997), pp.1-26; also, D. Tanner, 'Elections, Statistics, and the Rise of the Labour Party, 1906-1931', *Historical Journal*, vol. 34, no. 4 (1991), pp.893-908; and S. Davies and B. Morley, *County Borough Elections in England and Wales, 1919-1938: A Comparative Analysis, Vol.1* (Aldershot, 1999), pp.1-6.
- 3 Walton, *Lancashire*, p.349.
- 4 Notably, P. Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (1982); N. Kirk, *Labour and Society in Britain and the USA, Volume 2: Challenge and Accommodation, 1850-1939* (Aldershot, 1994); G. Trodd, 'Political Change and the Working Class in Blackburn and Burnley, 1880-1914' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of

- Lancaster, 1978); see also J. Hill, 'Working-Class Politics in Lancashire: A Regional Study in the Origins of the Labour Party', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Keele, 1969).
- 5 Kirk, *Labour and Society*, pp.188-9.
 - 6 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
 - 7 D. Howell, *British Workers and the Independent Labour Party, 1888-1906* (Manchester, 1983), p.54; see also J. McHugh and B. Ripley, 'The Spinners and the Rise of Labour' in A. Fowler and T. Wyke (eds), *The Barefoot Aristocrats: A History of the Amalgamated Association of Operative Cotton Spinners* (Littleborough, 1987), pp.115-45.
 - 8 Howell, *British Workers and the Independent Labour Party, 1888-1906*, pp.53-6.
 - 9 *Ibid.*, p.67.
 - 10 These proportions calculated from the industry tables of the 1931 census, as are the other figures on occupations quoted in this article.
 - 11 H. Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910* (Aldershot, 1994), pp.262, 286; Walton, *Lancashire*, p.299.
 - 12 D. Howell, *The Politics of the NUM: A Lancashire View* (Manchester, 1989), pp.7-8.
 - 13 J. Hill, "Lib-Labism, Socialism and Labour in Burnley, c. 1890-1918", *Northern History*, Vol. 35 (1999), p.188.
 - 14 Based on a sample of occupations of municipal candidates given in Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections*, Vol. II (Aldershot, 2000, forthcoming), ch.4.
 - 15 Walton, *Lancashire*, p.132.
 - 16 D. Beattie, *Blackburn: The Development of a Lancashire Cotton Town* (Halifax, 1992), p.32.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, p.38; see also Tanner, *Political Change and the Labour Party*, pp. 131, 143, 146-7; despite his focus being mainly on the fortunes of Liberalism in the Lancashire textile towns, Tanner also recognises the strength of working-class Conservatism here.
 - 18 Trodd, 'Political Change', p.107.
 - 19 Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics*, p.91.
 - 20 *Ibid.*, pp.100-3.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, p.111.
 - 22 On cotton trade unionism, see White, *The Limits of Trade Union Militancy*; Fowler and Wyke, *The Barefoot Aristocrats*.
 - 23 Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics*, p.338.
 - 24 Beattie, *Blackburn*, pp.51-4.
 - 25 *Ibid.*, p.54.
 - 26 *Ibid.*, pp.156-7.
 - 27 Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections*, Vol. I, p.686.
 - 28 P.A. Harris, 'Social Attitudes and Social Leadership in Bolton 1919-1939' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Lancaster, 1973), p.3.
 - 29 *Ibid.*, p.103.
 - 30 *Ibid.*, p.46.
 - 31 Walton, *Lancashire*, pp.347-8.
 - 32 See P.J. Waller, *Town, City and Nation: England 1850-1914* (Oxford, 1983), pp.288-93.
 - 33 Harris, 'Social Attitudes', pp.47-8.
 - 34 Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics*, p.14.
 - 35 *Ibid.*, p.123.
 - 36 *Ibid.*, p.6.
 - 37 *Ibid.*, p.299.
 - 38 J. Bannister, *From Parish to Metro: Two Centuries of Local Government in a Lancashire Town* (Bury, 1974), pp.40-1.
 - 39 M.P. Fogarty, *Prospects of the Industrial Areas of Great Britain* (1945), p.220.
 - 40 Walton, *Lancashire*, p.306.
 - 41 J. Liddington, *The Life and Times of a Respectable Rebel: Selina Cooper (1864-1946)* (1984), p.32.
 - 42 L. Chew, 'Dan Irving and Socialist Politics in Burnley', *North West Labour History*, no. 23 (1998/99), p.4.
 - 43 Trodd, 'Political Change', pp.134-5; see also Hill, "Lib-Labism, Socialism and Labour in Burnley", pp.185-204.
 - 44 B. Whittaker, 'Review of A. and L. Fowler, *The History of the Nelson Weavers' Association* and of A. Bullen, *The Lancashire Weavers' Union*,' in *North West Labour History*, no. 10 (1984), pp.60-2.
 - 45 See, for instance, the extensive coverage in *Burnley News*, 28 Oct. 1932.
 - 46 Whittaker, 'Review', p.62.
 - 47 The stormy atmosphere of the time in the north-eastern Lancashire weaving towns is well described in Liddington, *Life and Times*, pp.357-83.
 - 48 On religion and popular Conservatism in the cotton districts, see N. Kirk, *The Growth of Working Class Reformism in Mid-Victorian England* (1985).
 - 49 Quoted in P.F. Clarke, 'British Politics and Blackburn Politics 1900-1910', *Historical Journal*, XII, 2 (1969), p.303. See also Kirk, *Labour and Society*, p.193.
 - 50 Beattie, *Blackburn*, p.41.
 - 51 Quoted in Kirk, *Labour and Society*, p.191.
 - 52 Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics*, p.14; Pelling, *Social Geography*, p.255.
 - 53 Bannister, *From Parish to Metro*, p.70.
 - 54 For a discussion of Unionism in Birmingham, see Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections*, Vol. I, pp.222-4.
 - 55 Pelling, *Social Geography*, p.255.
 - 56 Bannister, *From Parish to Metro*, p.73.
 - 57 Walton, *Lancashire*, pp.184, 299.

- 58 Bannister, *From Parish to Metro*, p.71.
- 59 See Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, Vol. II*, ch. 6.
- 60 Pelling, *Social Geography*, p.255.
- 61 Trodd, 'Political Change', pp.134-5.
- 62 Liddington, *Life and Times*, pp.35-8.
- 63 D. Jarvis, "The shaping of Conservative electoral hegemony, 1918-39", in Lawrence and Taylor, *Party, State and Society*, p.146.
- 64 On the inter-war Tory-Liberal municipal alliance in Bury, see Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, Vol. II*, ch. 6.
- 65 *Bury Times*, 3 Nov. 1920.
- 66 *Minutes of the Bury Conservative Association Labour Committee*, [hereafter BCLC], GCP/C/2/1, 1920-1929, Bury Record Office.
- 67 [BCLC], GCP/C/2/1, 19 Aug. 1920.
- 68 [BCLC], GCP/C/2/1, 24 Jun. 1920 and 27 Apr. 1926.
- 69 [BCLC], GCP/C/2/1, 19 Nov. 1920.
- 70 Kirk, *Labour and Society*, pp.188-9, 195 and 196.
- 71 J. Hudson, *Bury in Old Photographs* (Stroud, 1993), pp. 74-7.
- 72 *Minutes of the Bury and Radcliffe Conservative Association*, GCP/C/1/3, 26 Feb. 1936.
- 73 Trodd, 'Political Change'.
- 74 Chew, 'Dan Irving', p.2.
- 75 Walton, *Lancashire*, pp.275, 279.
- 76 Chew, 'Dan Irving', p.7.
- 77 *Burnley News*, 22 Oct. 1932.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 29 Oct. 1932.
- 79 For confirmation of this view, see *ibid.*, 2 Nov. 1932; on Labour weakness and moderation in Blackburn and Bolton, see Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, vol. I*, pp.346-7; 473-5.
- 80 *Burnley News*, 1 Nov. 1933.
- 81 Harris, 'Social Attitudes', p.411.
- 82 See S. Davies, *Liverpool Labour: Social and Political Influences on the Development of the Labour Party in Liverpool, 1900-1939* (Keele, 1996), pp.97-119, 156-63.
- 83 The details of the redistribution can be found in the *Minutes* of Bury Council. (ABU/T28), 20 Jun. 1935, (minute no. 390), 10 Oct. 1935, (minute no. 440), 30 Oct., 1935, (minute nos. 438-441), 7 May 1936, (minute nos. 570-571); *Bury Times*, 4 Apr., 1936. A full analysis of the political effects of the changes can be found in Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, Vol. II*, ch. 6.
- 84 For full details of the aldermen in the four towns, see Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, Vol. I*, pp. 357, 483, and *Vol. II*, chs. 4 & 6.
- 85 M. Savage, *The Dynamics of Working-Class Politics: The Labour Movement in Preston 1880-1940* (Cambridge, 1987), pp.162-87.
- 86 J. Mark-Lawson et al., "Gender and Local Politics: Struggles over Welfare Policies, 1918-1939", in L. Murgatroyd et al., *Localities, Class and Gender* (1985), pp.209-13.
- 87 J. Liddington and J. Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us: The Rise of the Women's Suffrage Movement* (1978); K. Hunt, *Equivocal Feminists: The Social Democratic Federation and the Woman Question* (Cambridge, 1996), p.162.
- 88 All figures calculated from election results given for each town in Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, Vols. I and II*.
- 89 See Davies and Morley, *County Borough Elections, Vol. I*, pp.228-9, *Vol. 2*, chs. 3, 7 & 9.
- 90 S. Kingsley Kent, "Gender Reconstruction after the First World War", in H. Smith, (ed.), *British Feminism in the Twentieth Century* (Aldershot, 1990).
- 91 M. Savage, 'The Rise of the Labour Party in Local Perspective', *Journal of Regional and Local Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1 (1990), p.1.
- 92 *Ibid.*, p.11.