

# Arthur Lyne

By John Buckell

---

SDF member Arthur Lyne was a delegate from the shoe workers union to the trades Council before the First World War, and a founder member of Northampton Labour Party.

Arthur joined the SDF at the age of 19 and became Secretary of the east Midland region. He later recalled: "Our policy was pure Socialism, the nationalisation of production, distribution and exchange." Arthur left school aged 13 but later attended classes at the Technical School, partly founded by the Trades Council to provide education for the working class. (The Old Savoy stands on the former site on Abington Square.)

During the First World War he served on the Western Front and became a sergeant. "When it was over," he told the Chronicle and Echo in June 1966, "I joined the Peace Movement – I'm still anti-war – but I couldn't bring myself to be a full pacifist, neither on religious nor logical grounds." After his military service, Arthur served a total of 40 years on Northampton Town Council, leading the Labour group for 14 years. He was a magistrate from 1923, Mayor in 1938, and MP for Burton-on-Trent between 1945 and 1950. For 32 years he served the Number 2 branch of the local National Boot and Shoe Operatives as Vice-President and President, and at one time served on the National Executive of the union.

Asked in 1966 about his feelings on looking back over his life, he said, "I am satisfied with what I have done and with what I have achieved. I devoted my life to the cause of humanity because I loved my fellow man and wanted to do what I could to help them."