

The late Mrs Sarah Moore

The funeral of Mrs Sarah Moore, J.P., member of Midlothian County Council and Convener of the Public Health Committee, which took place at West Calder on Saturday, was attended by members and officials of the County Council, by members of North and South Midlothian Divisional Labour Parties, and by a great gathering of the people of the district for which she spent herself.

As a mark of the regard in which she was held in the district, Mrs Moore was affectionately known to everyone as "Ma".

Vivid personality

She had been a member of the Council since 1929 and her vivid personality, with her ready wit and eloquence and her great fighting spirit, made her one of the outstanding figures in the Council Chamber (writes a correspondent).

She was keenly interested in public health, education, and all that concerned moral and social welfare. Better housing, meals and milk for children, day nurseries and nursery schools, better conditions for Council staff and workers, such as scales of salaries and a superannuation scheme, homes for young children and the aged (apart from the old Poor-Law Institution), projects which were openly derided as wild-cat schemes by the older regime in 1929, she lived to see accepted by the majority.

Village named after her

Her untiring exertions in fighting for houses for the people were not confined to her own district, but they brought into being the village of Moorelands, which was named after her at the desire of the inhabitants.

For the past 27 years, Mrs Moore served as a member of the Executive of the North Midlothian Divisional Labour Party, and she was for many years president of the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland Labour Women's Advisory Council.

Mrs Moore was also a member of the Licensing Appeal Court, of the Joint Committee for Midlothian and Peebles Hospital, of Saughton Prison Visiting Committee.

She is survived by six daughters and three sons.

An Appreciation

Many people residing in the Calders district and in the Lothians will regret the passing of the late County Councillor For Addiewell, Mrs Sarah Moore.

Mrs Moore was one of the early pioneers of the Labour Party and because of her long association with the movement formed a link between its early pioneering days, containing many notable figures such as Keir Hardie, Smillie and others, to the present. She has seen the Labour Party develop from a small force of propagandists, to become the Government of this Nation, also the attainment of many of the main points of Labour's early programme; she has been with it and shared with it, all the ups and downs of its stormy history; always loyal, ever steadfast in her belief in its principles; ever ready to uphold those principles from attack from whatever quarter they might come.

Indomitable spirit

Mrs Moore's amazing energy and strength of mind, coupled with her indomitable spirit evoked recognition and respect among all sections of the community, political sympathisers and opponents alike. Those vital forces in her make-up, tempered with kindness, generosity, and a deep, sometimes surprising, understanding of human nature, combined to make her probably the most outstanding personality in the district.

Fight with passion to right a wrong

She was seen at her best when aroused by injustice and was ever ready to assist, advise and if necessary, fight with all the passion she could command, to right a wrong. Her great spirit rebelled against those deep social and economic evils which were in a way the legacy of industrialism, and so she strove towards the laying of a foundation upon which a better order of society could be built, containing in its structure the material and moral environment necessary for a wider appreciation of the finer things of life, and, attendant with them, the responsibilities of citizenship and an interest in the well-being of the community. How well she succeeded in paving the way for the attainment of that goal can be understood by all who worked with her in public life and in the Labour movement.

Devoted work

Mrs Moore was the first Labour member to become a County Councillor from the west side of the County, and to attempt to recount in detail the devoted work she gave to the County would require an abler pen than mine to describe. Suffice it to say that for almost 21 years she represented the Addiewell Ward, and in this period [except?] once was returned unopposed. This in itself speaks volumes, as does the fact that, although first returned at a period not far removed from the suffragette agitation, Mrs Moore, without any ostentatious display about equality of sex, asserted her right to recognition by the very force of her personality and by the knowledge she possessed of the movement to which she belonged, and the needs of the people among whom she lived and worked.

Deep understanding and leadership

No history of the Calder, dealing with the past 30 or 40 years, would be complete without mention of this remarkable woman, the part she played in the period of industrial unrest after the First World War, her activities as a Councillor, her work on committees of the County Council dealing with health, education, etc., and not least, as an active member of the Labour Party. It can be said that, embodied in the story of her public life, is the story of the growth of our movement; that it inspired such outstanding figures was probably inevitable, in that its message expressed the hopes and aspirations of the ordinary man and woman. Mrs Moore, because of that deep understanding and leadership, was able to translate those feelings into action.

Selfless service

We salute the passing of this grand old pioneer of the Labour Movement, having in mind the splendid example she set of selfless service to the community, an example of service we may try to copy but will find difficult to surpass.

James McRiner

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