

## MARQUAND, HILARY ADAIR (1901-1972), economist and Labour politician

**Name:** Hilary Adair Marquand  
**Date of birth:** 1901  
**Date of death:** 1972  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** economist and Labour politician  
**Area of activity:** Economics and Money; Politics, Government and Political Movements  
**Author:** John Graham Jones

He was born on 24 December 1901 at 4 Marlborough Road, Cardiff, the elder son of Alfred Marquand, a native of Guernsey and a clerk in a coal exporting company, and Mary Adair his wife who was of Scottish descent. Some of the family were Cardiff shipowners. He was educated at Cardiff High School and, as the holder of a prestigious state scholarship, at University College, Cardiff. He graduated with first class honours in history in 1923 and in economics in 1924 and he was awarded the Gladstone and Cobden prizes. He was Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation Fellow in the social sciences in the USA for two years and lectured in economics at the University of Birmingham from 1926 until 1930. He was awarded the degrees of MA (Wales) (with distinction) in 1928 and D.Sc. (Wales) in 1938.

In 1930 Marquand was appointed Professor of Industrial Relations at Cardiff at the age of twenty-nine—the youngest professor at a British university at the time. His early published work was impressive - *The Dynamics of Industrial Combination* (1931), *Industrial Relations in the United States of America* (1934) and *Organized Labour in Four Continents* (1939). He had spent the academic year 1932-33 studying industrial relations in the USA and the year 1938-39 as visiting professor at the University of Wisconsin. During the 1930s Marquand played a leading role in diagnosing the economic ills of south Wales and formulating plans for the industrial recovery of the region. In 1931 he published the magisterial *Industrial Survey of South Wales*, the result of a survey which he had undertaken for the Board of Trade. This was followed by a similar second survey undertaken in 1937 for the Commissioner for Special Areas. He was also the author of a related monograph *South Wales Needs a Plan* (1936), a volume which gave his views on economic policy a much wider audience. All these publications presented their author's conclusions for the reasons for the abrupt decline of the coal and steel industries in south Wales, the effects on the region's economy and the pattern of industry needed for recovery. During the war years he saw service in the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Production where he served as Labour Adviser.

Breaking away from his family's deeply entrenched Conservative tradition, Hilary Marquand had joined the Labour Party in 1920. He also joined the Fabian Society in 1936. He served as Labour MP for Cardiff East, 1945-50, and for Middlesbrough East, 1950-61, when he resigned his seat. At Middlesbrough he always enjoyed substantial majorities at each parliamentary election. In the general election of July 1945 he had defeated Sir James Grigg who was at the time Secretary of State for War in the Churchill caretaker government which followed the fall of the coalition. Immediately on his election to parliament, he was appointed by Attlee to be Secretary for Overseas Trade, August 1945-March 1947, and then Paymaster-General, March 1947-July 1948, Minister of Pensions, July 1948-January 1951, and he was sworn of the Privy Council in 1949. He succeeded **Aneurin Bevan** as Minister of Health from January until October 1951 but by this time the post had been reduced in scope and status, and shorn of its responsibilities for housing and planning, it was now outside the cabinet. In all these positions Marquand proved himself to be a humane and able administrator with an interest in social welfare issues. As an academic, he brought a calm and detached approach to the hurly-burly of political life. He was generally popular at Westminster, always listened to with respect by his fellow MPs. When he resigned his Middlesbrough seat in 1961, the ensuing by-election was won by the Labour candidate Arthur Bottomley.

After the Conservative victory in 1951, Marquand was a prominent member of the opposition front bench and he was appointed Labour chief spokesman on pensions until 1959 and then on Commonwealth affairs by Hugh Gaitskell, 1959-61. In 1952-53 he undertook lecture tours on behalf of the British Council in India, Pakistan and Ceylon, in the West Indies and in Finland. In 1961, however, unhappy with the development of his feud-racked party, he resigned his seat to accept the position of Director of the Institute of Labour Studies based at the International Labour Office at Geneva. He served there until 1965. He was then deputy chairman of the Prices and Incomes Board, 1965-68. His last years were wracked by increasing ill-health and a resultant sense of personal frustration and impotence. His heartfelt concern for the welfare of the underprivileged had led him to abandon academic life for active politics where he proved a remarkably adept practitioner and earned the respect of the House of Commons with his obvious mastery of an array of complex subjects. He was a member of the Assemblies of the Council of Europe and the WEU, 1957-59. He was also a member of the National Union of Teachers and of the National Union of Blastfurnacemen.

Hilary Marquand married on 20 August 1929 Rachel Eluned Rees BA (born in 1903 or 1904), a schoolteacher and the daughter of David James Rees of Ystalyfera, well-known as the owner of *Llais Llafur*. They enjoyed a notably happy family life, and had two sons and a daughter. The eldest son, David Ian Marquand (born in 1934), shared his father's passion for both academic work and active politics. He was Labour MP for Ashfield, 1966-77. He held a number of positions at various British universities, published the first (and only) substantial biography of Ramsay MacDonald in 1977 and he was appointed principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1996. Their second son was Richard Marquand (1937-1987), director of *'Return of the Jedi'* (1983) and other films. Hilary Marquand died in Hellingly hospital, Sussex, after two years of ill-health, on 6 November 1972.

### Author

Dr John Graham Jones

### Sources

*Who was who?*

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*Etholiadau'r Ganrif / Welsh Elections 1885-1997* (Talybont 1999)

*Welsh Hustings - 1885-2004* (Ammanford 2005)

*Dod's Parliamentary Companion*

*The Times*, 8 November 1972

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Hilary Marquand](#)

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