

## FINCH, HAROLD JOSIAH (1898-1979), Labour politician

**Name:** Harold Josiah Finch  
**Date of birth:** 1898  
**Date of death:** 1979  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Labour politician  
**Area of activity:** Politics, Government and Political Movements  
**Author:** John Graham Jones

He was born at Barry on 2 May 1898, the son of Josiah Coleman Finch, a railway inspector, and Emmie Keedwell. He was educated at Barry elementary school. He worked as a clerk to the Barry Railway Company, 1912-19, and then as a clerk in the Tredegar Valley District Miners' Office. He was secretary to the Tredegar District of the South Wales Miners Federation, 1919-34. He was compensation secretary to the SWMF, and later the South Wales area of the NUM, 1935-50. Finch also served as a member of the Mynyddislwyn UDC, 1922-33, becoming its chairman in 1932-33.

He was elected the Labour MP for the Bedwelty division, as successor to Sir Charles Edwards, in 1950 and he continued to represent the constituency for the next twenty years, retiring from parliament at the general election of June 1970. He was a member of the National Executive of the NUM, 1951-60, the opposition spokesman on fuel and power, 1959-60, secretary of the Parliamentary Miners' Group, 1964-66, and he also served as chairman of the Welsh Parliamentary Party. He was also a junior minister at the Welsh Office, October 1964-April 66, working amicably in close contact with [James Griffiths](#), the first Secretary of State for Wales. He was the president of the Islwyn Memorial Society. He was knighted in 1976.

He married in September 1922 Gladys the daughter of Arthur Hinder, and they had one son and one daughter. Their home was in Pontllanfraith, and in London Finch had lodgings at 56 Kenwyn Road, Clapham Common. He published a number of works on industrial injuries and compensation. In 1972 he published a short volume of reminiscences *Memoirs of a Bedwelty MP*. A small group of his papers is in the custody of the South Wales Coalfield Archive at the University of Wales, Swansea. Harold Finch died in 1979. His successor as the Labour MP for Bedwelty was Neil Kinnock.

### Author

Dr John Graham Jones

### Sources

Harold Finch, *Memoirs of a Bedwelty MP* (1979)

*ANW index*

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

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

*Dod's Parliamentary Companion*

### Further Reading

NLW Archives: [Parliamentary Division of Bedwelty... Harold J. Finch, The Labour Candidate](#)

NLW Archives: [Parliamentary Division of Bedwelty. Polling day: Thursday October 25th 1951... Harold J. Finch The Labour Candidate](#)

Wikipedia Article: [Harold Finch](#)

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q16008683](#)

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APA Citation



Jones, J. G., (2009). FINCH, HAROLD JOSIAH (1898-1979), Labour politician. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 14 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s6-FINC-JOS-1898>

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