

# Sources for the History of Strikes, Lock-outs and General Strikes in the United Kingdom

This fact sheet was created to coincide with the conference The History of Strikes, Lock-outs and General Strikes, Keele University, 6 May 2006. It is not an exhaustive survey of resources for the study of strikes but an overview of key collections held at institutions that are members of SSLH ARC. Researchers should also check the National Archive's Discovery network <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

**Updated April 2019**

## **Bishopsgate Library**

The Bishopsgate Institute has been collecting archive and printed material since its opening in 1895 and offers unrestricted access to these special collections in its Library's reading room. It now houses the archives and printed collections of politicians George Howell and Charles Bradlaugh, and co-operative pioneer and secularist George Jacob Holyoake. The Library has also recently acquired the archives of historian Raphael Samuel, the extensive London Co-operative Society collection and the Freedom Press Library, the latter containing a wide range of internationally published books on anarchism. The Library's collections are strongest on co-operation, secularism and trade unionism and we hold a variety of archive and printed material of interest to researchers exploring the history of strikes.

The George Howell Archive contains a wealth of material for those interested in trade unionism and strikes in the nineteenth century. Howell was a leading figure on the Strike Committee of the Operative Bricklayer's Society, played a large part in the Nine Hours struggle (1859-1862) and the archive contains papers, press cuttings, strike reports and correspondence relating to dispute and Howell's involvement. The Howell Library also contains a large selection of annual reports, pamphlets, publications and circulars issued by a wide variety of nationwide trade unions from the early nineteenth to twentieth century detailing their activities, including various strikes and disputes. There are selection of bulletins and local and national newspapers detailing the General Strike of 1926, including The Times, Daily Herald, Daily Mirror, the British Worker and the British Gazette, alongside a number of general secondary works on trade unionism and industrial disputes.

The Library also holds the papers of the National Miners Support Network was established in 1992 at the initiative of the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs and was supported by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and Women against Pit Closures. It aimed to encourage and coordinate maximum practical support and solidarity for miners in all areas of the country following the Government's announcement of pit closures in 1992. The collection includes publicity material, correspondence and other papers concerning the organisations activity.

Papers of the engineer and socialist Reg Glover (1900-1977) are also held at Bishopsgate Library. They include typescript and handwritten drafts of the autobiography, 'Thimble Pie', along with correspondence and manuscripts regarding the Coventry 'Gang' System, the engineering trade, strikes and other matters during the 1960s and 1970s.

Contact: Bishopsgate Library 230 Bishopsgate London EC2M 4QH

Tel 020 7392 9270 Fax 020 7392 9275

Email [library@bishopsgate.org.uk](mailto:library@bishopsgate.org.uk)

Web <http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk>

## **Hull University Archives**

Archives and manuscripts have been collected since the establishment of Hull University College in 1928. The main strengths of the collections are: modern political papers; pressure group archives; trades union and labour archives; modern English literary manuscripts; landed family and estate papers; business records; religious archives; South East Asian manuscripts; records of Hull University College and the University of Hull; and papers of individuals employed by or associated with the University.

Material on the history of strikes and lock-outs in Britain is found mainly amongst the pressure group and trade union archives and the personal papers of Communists, Socialists and others on the Left. There are also some sources providing the employers' perspective and comment from the Right.

### **Charles George Ammon (1873-1960) [U DMN]**

Trade unionist, Labour MP and chairman of the National Dock Labour Board.

Ammon resigned from his various government positions after his controversial role in the dock strike of 1949 and was replaced as chairman of the NDLB in 1950. There are letters received about the 1949 strike (including from Clement Attlee), press cuttings covering the period and a series of papers on docks issues, such as the report of the Committee of Inquiry into the London docks dispute of March 1945, a statement issued by the NDLB to dock workers in July 1949, and government reviews of the 1949 dock strike and the work of the Board during that period.

### **Robin Page Arnot (1890-1986) [U DAR]**

Founder member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, writer and historian of the miners' trade unions and secretary of the Labour Research Department.

Both through personal involvement and historical research, Arnot accumulated a range of papers relating to the General Strike of 1926. As a member of the executive committee of the CPGB, Arnot was imprisoned under the Incitement to Mutiny Act for agitation amongst the miners and the wider trade union movement in the period leading up to the General Strike. Arnot's correspondence during his imprisonment (October 1925 to April 1926) is available. During the strike itself, Arnot was based in the North East and played an important role in organising the Northumberland and Durham General Council and Joint Strike Committee. His experiences formed the basis for the publication by the LRD of the General Strike, May 1926: its origin and history (1926) and copies of documents used in researching this pamphlet are held. Arnot's copy of the account of the proceedings of the General Council and Joint Strike Committee has not survived, although his notes about its work (entitled 'The Debacle'), schedules listing the membership of the organisation, and a file of correspondence and research notes for the pamphlet, The General Strike in the North East, published by the Communist Party Historians Group in 1961, are available. Other material on the General Strike includes: typescripts, articles and book reviews by Arnot; records of the TUC, special meetings of trade union executives, and the Miners Federation of Great

Britain before, during and after the strike, including the report of the Strike Organisation Committee of the TUC, June 1926, transcripts of daily wireless bulletins issued by the BBC during the strike, and issue no.5 of The Picket, published by the Lochgelly group of the CPGB, May 1926. Amongst the research notes and drafts of Arnot's published histories of the miners' trade unions there is material relating to various industrial disputes in the industry. Amongst his memoirs,

there are transcripts of taped conversations with Arnot in the late 1970s about strikes in the early 1910s and the railway strike of 1919.

**Reginald Bridgeman (1884-1968) [U DBN]**

Diplomat, Labour Party parliamentary candidate and secretary of the League Against Imperialism.

Amongst his papers is a file on the General Strike which contains various contemporary documents including: statements issued by the MFGB and the TUC; a programme for an International Labour Carnival held on May Day 1926; issues of the strike bulletin of Wealdstone and District Trades Council, 12 - 16 May 1926; pamphlets of the Women's Committee for the Relief of Miners' Wives and Children; and a statement about the effect of the strike on the LMS Railway.

**Ellerman's Wilson Line (est. 1825) [U DEW]**

Shipping company based in Hull, established as Thomas Wilson and Sons and taken over by Sir John Reeves Ellerman in 1916.

The company archives include miscellaneous records about industrial disputes including: correspondence, accounts and other papers regarding the fitting up of a shed at Albert Dock for policemen during the strike of June 1893 (including communications with the Watch Committee); a paper on the use of EWL steamers during the General Strike; files on the 1955 dispute with the 'blue union', the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union, (including daily reports of numbers working); and a notice issued by the Shipping Guild about administrative workers and the General Strike.

**Jock Haston (1913-1986) [U DJH]**

Merchant seaman, secretary of, and parliamentary candidate for, the Revolutionary Communist Party and later, member of the Labour Party.

The Haston archive comprises the records of a number of Trotskyist groups, principally the Revolutionary Communist Party. There are documents issued by these groups about strikes by a variety of workers during the 1940s (despite the wartime ban). These include: Rolls Royce (engineering apprentices); miners; dockers; Humber Ltd. and Nuffield Export Ltd. (motor industry); and Adrema Ltd. (office equipment manufacturers). The most extensive papers relate to the strike by apprentices in Newcastle in 1944, after which Jock Haston and three others were prosecuted under the Trade Disputes Act 1927 for conspiring to cause the strike.

**Winifred Horrabin (1887-1971) [U DWH & U DX283]**

Socialist and feminist writer.

Relating to the General Strike, there are small numbers of letters received from her husband Frank Horrabin about attending strike meetings in various towns and from her mother Lilian Batho; a letter from Myfanwy Westrope to Frank Horrabin about the aftermath of the strike; and a letter from Catherine Wells to Frank Horrabin arranging a meeting with HG Wells. A lecture on the Russian Revolution given by Myfanwy Westrope to strikers at Aberystwyth during the General Strike is held separately within U DX135.

**Liberty (National Council for Civil Liberties) (est.1934) [U DCL]**

One of Britain's oldest and most consistently successful pressure group, founded against a background of mass unemployment, hunger marches and the rise of fascism.

The archives of Liberty contain subject files and publications on strikes and industrial disputes since the 1930s. During its first decade the NCCL played a major role in defending the case of striking miners at Harworth Colliery in Nottinghamshire, who were arrested in April 1937 during disturbances orchestrated by the police, and in campaigning for the remission of the heavy sentences received by the miners. Surviving papers include material assembled for the appeal, the

NCCL report into the dispute and other publications, press cuttings, photographs and the NCCL petition against the sentences. There are also files about: the cases of tenants who took part in the Stepney rent strike in 1939; a campaign to end the National Arbitration Tribunal and Conditions of Employment (the wartime Order 1305 which withdrew the right to strike), 1950-51; emergency powers during the railway strike, 1955; a closed shop dispute at Ferrybridge power station, 1976; the Grunwick dispute, 1976-78; picketing during the steel strike, 1979-80; the policing of the miners' strike, 1984-85 (including the independent commission of inquiry); and the Wapping dispute between the printing unions and News International, 1986.

**Kevin McNamara MP (b.1934) [U DMC]**

Labour MP for Hull North, 1966-2005 and Shadow Spokesman on Northern Ireland.

McNamara's political papers include subject files on: the Grunwick dispute, 1976-78; the dock strike, 1984; the miners' strike, 1984-85.

**John Saville (b.1916) [U DJS]**

Professor of Economic History, editor, member of Communist Party of Great Britain until 1956, founding member of the British New Left movement.

Saville's personal papers include: press cuttings about the national fire fighters' strike, 1977-78; material gathered during research into the miners' strike, 1984-85; and papers gathered by Peter Wyncoll during research into the General Strike in Nottingham (including strike bulletins issued by the Nottingham Trades Council Joint Dispute Advisory Committee and transcripts of interviews with local militants). Similar material about the General Strike was donated separately by Wyncoll and is at U DX125.

**Tony Topham (1929-2004) [U DTO]**

Labour historian, adult education tutor (specialising in trade union education), member of the workers' control movement and of the Labour Party.

Topham's personal papers document various strikes and other forms of industrial action, especially from the perspective of workers' control and industrial democracy, including: a dock strike in Bristol and Avonmouth, 1965; the seamen's strike, 1966; an unofficial strike amongst Yorkshire miners, 1969; redundancies and industrial action in the electrical industry, especially on Merseyside, 1969; the closure of Dunlop Canada Ltd., 1970; an unofficial strike amongst women workers in the clothing industry in Leeds, 1970 (including a television drama about the strike by Colin Welland); industrial action by dock workers, including the national dock strike, 1970; the closure of four shipyards in Govan, 1971; the closure of Imperial Typewriters in Hull and the workers' sit-in, 1975; the closure of East Moors Steel Works, Cardiff, 1975; and a dispute about new technology at Reckitt & Colman, Hull, 1981.

**Transport and General Workers' Union: Region 10 [U DTG]**

The files of Brian Barker, Docks and Waterways Officer of Region 10 (covering mainly Hull and Goole), include material about: the blacking of companies/vessels by dock workers, late 1970s - early 1980s; the 1980 national dock strike; a manning and wages dispute on Hull docks, 1982-83; the Tilbury docks dispute, 1983; and a dispute over the common roster in Hull, 1983-84. There is also a series of files about disputed cases brought before Hull Joint Port Working Committee and the National Joint Council for the Port Transport Industry, during the 1970s and 1980s.

**Julia Varley (1871-1952) [U DJV]**

Trade unionist, especially amongst women workers, and suffragette.

Despite Varley's active involvement in the trade union movement from the early 1890s onwards, her surviving papers are few and document very little of her work in organising strikes. There are press cuttings and photographs of Varley with women pickets and on a march during the strike amongst

Cornish clay miners in 1913; a letter from Miss P Bellars, Transport & General Workers Union, asking for reminiscences of the 1913 Black Country strike; and photographs of Varley with women pickets, playing football and at a mass meeting during the 1914 strike at Bliss Tweed Mill, Chipping Norton.

### **Sir Patrick Wall MP (1916-1998) [U DPW]**

Naval officer and Conservative MP for Beverley and Haltemprice.

Sir Patrick's political papers include subject files on: the trawlermen's strike, 1970; industrial relations on Hull docks, including the national dock strikes of 1970 and 1972 and the blacking of companies; the rail workers' strike, 1972; the miners' strike, 1972-74; and industrial disputes involving the teaching unions in 1978 and 1985.

**Contact:** Hull University Archives, Hull History Centre, Worship Street, Hull HU2 8BG

**Tel** 01482 317500

**Email** [hullhistorycentre@hcandl.co.uk](mailto:hullhistorycentre@hcandl.co.uk)

**Web** [www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk](http://www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk)

## **London School of Economics Archives**

The Archives Division has material relating to the General Strike scattered throughout its holdings and researchers are advised to use the Archives Catalogue to track down all available resources (see <http://archives.lse.ac.uk/>). The following are details of the more significant holdings relating to the General Strike.

- Tawney General Strike (COLL MISC 0358) Covering Dates: 1926 A single volume diary kept by R.H.Tawney of negotiations between the government and the Miners' Federation of Great Britain concerning wages and working hours, 10th March-3rd May 1926. Access: Open
- British Worker: official general strike bulletin. (COLL MISC 767) Covering Dates: 1926 1 folder of the British Worker: official strike news bulletin 1-11 (complete set). Published by the Trade Union Congress. Access: Open
- General Strike (COLL MISC 0140) Covering Dates: 1926 12 volumes of news bulletins, newspaper cuttings, periodicals, timetables, official proclamations, TUC bulletins etc. These items were collected by the Library soon after the strike. Access: Open
- General Strike: Birmingham Railway Unions Central Strike Committee (Coll Misc 0408) Covering Dates: 1926
- One volume relating to the central strike conference of the National Union of Railwaymen, the Transport Salaried Staff's Association, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, and the Union of Railway Signalmen. Access: Open
- General Strike publications (COLL MISC 0783) Covering Dates: 1926 1 box of copies of General Strike publications and bulletins. Arrangement: One box Accruals: No further accruals are expected Access: Open

**Contact:** Archives and Rare Books Library London School of Economics and Political Science 10 Portugal Street London WC2A 2HD

**Tel** 020 7955 7223 **Fax** 020 7955 7454

**Email** [Document@lse.ac.uk](mailto:Document@lse.ac.uk)

**Web** <http://www.lse.ac.uk/library/archive/>

## The Marx Memorial Library

The Marx Memorial Library & Workers' School was founded in 1933 in response to the rise of fascism in Europe. Its aim today remains the advance of education, knowledge and understanding of all aspects of Marxism and the history of socialism and working-class struggle. At the heart of the British labour movement for over 80 years, the Library is home to a unique collection of published and archival sources on related subjects, including the Spanish Civil War, trade unionism and peace and solidarity campaigns. The Library's education programme – online and on-site – covers subjects ranging from political and economic theory to socialist art.

The MML holds a number of archives which reference major strikes and industrial disputes. The majority are searchable on our online catalogue here <https://marx.soutron.net/Portal/Default/en-GB/Search/SimpleSearch>. Notable examples include:

- **Printers Collection:** this library, archive and artefact collection includes material on Wapping (1986) and Briant Colour Printing, in addition to solidarity action by Print Workers. Our Tony Hall collection include cartoons featuring major strikes of the 1970s and 1980s.
- **Morning Star photo library:** Our photographic collection documents many disputes including Dock Strike, Miners' Strike and others. They are searchable by theme online and a selection can be browsed.
- **General Strike:** We hold a collection of material on the 1926 General Strike including circulars and press-cuttings, with minute book of the Woolworth Strike Committee.

The MML is open Monday-Thursday 12-4pm.

Contact: Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU

Tel: 020 7253 1485

Web: [www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk](http://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk)

Email: [m.jump@marx-memorial-library.org.uk](mailto:m.jump@marx-memorial-library.org.uk)

## Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

As the main place of deposit in the UK for archives of trade unions and employers' organisations, the MRC holds key sources for the study of industrial strife.

The Trades Union Congress archive [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/TUC> ] is particularly strong from 1920 onwards, and includes more than 200 files on the 1926 General Strike, subject files relating to the railway dispute of 1919, the 1966 seamen's strike, the 'Three Day Week', Grunwick, the 'Winter of Discontent', the 1984/5 miners' strike, the News International Wapping dispute and many more. The varied contents of the files can include minutes, reports, correspondence, resolutions, internal memoranda, pamphlets, leaflets, press cuttings and other ephemera.

Described by the Webbs as "perhaps the most valuable single record of the Trade Union Movement", the archives of the Friendly Society of Operative Stonemasons of England, Ireland and Wales [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/OSM> ] date from the 1830s to the 1910s. The fortnightly returns contain vivid glimpses of the British trade union movement from the Tolpuddle Martyrs to the First World War, and include appeals by other trade unions, as well as reports of the masons' own disputes (including their strike on the 'new' Houses of Parliament during the 1840s).

Records relating to disputes in particular industries are included in the archives of the relevant trade unions. The unions represented within the MRC's collections run into the hundreds and are difficult to cover comprehensively in a brief guide, but can be identified through the MRC's online catalogue [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/collections/Trade%20Unions> ]. Areas of work covered by trade union collections at the MRC include transport, education, the building industry, printing, engineering, healthcare and social work, iron and steel, and communications.

As well as organisational archives, the MRC also holds archives of prominent trade unionists. These include (but are not limited to) the archives of :

- Tom Mann [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/TMM> ]
- Ben Tillett [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/TLT> ]
- Ernest Bevin [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/EBE> ]
- George Woodcock [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/GWK> ]
- Jack Jones [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/JLJ> ]
- Frank Cousins [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/CUZ> ]
- Frank Chapple [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/FCH> ]
- Clive Jenkins [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/CJE> ]
- Brenda Dean [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/BDE> ]
- Bill Morris [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/BMO> ]
- Rodney Bickerstaffe [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/BIC> ].

The employers' view of industrial relations is represented in the archives of bodies such as:

- The British Employers' Confederation [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/BEC> ]
- Federation of British Industries [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/FBI> ]
- Confederation of British Industry [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/CBI> ].

These collections include some files relating to specific disputes as well as broader material relating to industrial policy and relations with trade unions and government.

The MRC also holds a small number of collections relating to particular disputes. These include the:

- Grunwick dispute archive [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/GRU> ]
- video recordings by Chris Thomas relating to the Grunwick dispute [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/GGS> ]
- the GCHQ Trade Union Campaign archive [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/GCH> ], and
- the papers of Billy Osborne, trade unionist, concerning Sogat '82 and the News International Dispute [ <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/OSB> ].

Selected items from the MRC's General Strike collections have been digitised and are available online at <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/explorefurther/digital/gs/>

Contact: Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, Gibbet Hill Road, Coventry, CV4 7AL

Tel: 024 7652 4219

Email: [archives@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:archives@warwick.ac.uk)

Web: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/>

## The People's History Museum

The collections of the People's History Museum cover strikes over a period of almost two centuries; the Dock strike of 1889, the General strike of 1926, the Shrewsbury Pickets'/Building Workers' dispute of 1972/3, the Grunwick strike of 1976, the Miners' strikes of the 1980s, the Wapping dispute of 1986 and the Firemens' strike of 2002/3 are all well represented with archival and/or museum object collections. Other strikes listed may only be represented by one or two artefacts:

- 1815 Calico workers dispute
- 1818 Coalmining dispute
- 1829 Manchester Cotton Spinners' strike
- 1853 Tin Plate Workers' strike
- 1873 Ascott-under-Wychwood strike
- 1888 Gas Workers' strike
- 1889 London Tailors' strike
- 1889 Dock Workers' strike
- 1892 Durham Miners' strike
- 1899 Leeds Lockout
- 1912 Railway Workers' dispute
- 1912 Tram Workers' dispute
- 1913 Carmen's dispute
- 1914 Woolwich Arsenal dispute
- 1919 Railway Workers' dispute
- 1919 Soldiers' strike
- 1919 Police strike
- 1924 Railway Workers' (ASLEF) dispute
- 1925 Building Trades Workers' dispute
- 1936 Musician's Union dispute
- 1937 Clyde Apprentices' strike
- 1939 Rent strike
- 1950s Printers' strike
- 1954 Electricians' strike
- 1971 Postal Workers' strike
- 1976 Grunwick dispute
- 1972/3 Shrewsbury Pickets'/Building Workers' dispute
- 1978/9 Times Newspapers strike
- 1979/80 Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers' strike
- 1970s Miners' strikes
- 1970s Ford Sewing Machinists' strikes
- 1983/4 Thornton View Hospital strike
- 1984/5 Miners' strikes
- 1984/92 GCHQ dispute
- 1985/6 Quarrymen's strike
- 1986 National Graphical association strike
- 1986 Wapping dispute
- 1986/7 Furniture and Allied Trades dispute
- 1989 National Union of Journalists/Pergamon strike

- 1986 Tobacco Workers' strike
- 1988 Seamen/P&O strike
- 1989 Ambulance Workers' strike
- 1989/1991 National Association of Local Government Officers' strike
- 1980s Silentnight strike
- 1980s Barking cleaners' strike
- 1980s Wales Iron and Steel Trades Confederation strike
- 1991/2 Tilbury Dockers' strike
- 1994 Railway Workers' (RMT) dispute
- 1998 Electricians' dispute
- 2002/3 Firemen's strike.

In the Labour History Archive and Study Centre (LHASC), the papers of Jim Middleton, Wal Hannington and Harry Pollitt contain various references to strike actions. The Miners' strikes of the 1980s are particularly well covered in the papers of Martin Walker, the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners movement and the LHASC's newspaper collections, which also cover the 1926 General strike.

The list above is by no means exhaustive; please contact the People's History Museum for further details and/or visit our collections website. Go to the home page of [www.phm.org.uk](http://www.phm.org.uk) and select the Search Our Collections option from the list on the lefthand side. Entering 'strike' in the General Search box currently yields over forty records. Appointments need to be made to access archive and reserve museum object collections held at the Head Office in Princess Street.

Contact us by telephone as indicated below or by e-mail at [archive@phm.org.uk](mailto:archive@phm.org.uk) for a reservation to research archive collections at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre, currently open from 10.00am - 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm - 5.00 pm, Tuesday to Fridays inclusive.

Contact: Labour History Archive, People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester, M3 3ER

Tel: 0161 838 9190

Email [archive@phm.org.uk](mailto:archive@phm.org.uk)

## **TUC Library Collections, London Metropolitan University**

The TUC Library Collections, established in 1922, transferred to London Metropolitan University, in September 1996. Core areas of the collection include trade union publications from the UK and overseas, documents relating to working conditions and industrial relations in various industries, and material collected from the various campaigns and policy areas in which the TUC has been involved since its foundation in 1868. A major strength of the Library are the large holdings of pamphlets, periodicals and ephemera dating from the 1860s to the current day.

Folders relating to strike organisation [mainly comprising pamphlets, ephemera and press cuttings] are filed with other trade union literature and are difficult to quantify. Material in Special Collections include:

- 1926 General Strike: 6 metres of official, union and local documents plus contemporary newspapers and other published material. 2000 documents from the collection have been digitised and are available online at <http://www.unionhistory.info/generalstrike/index.php>
- 1984-85 Miners Strike: 1 metre of mainly printed ephemera.

- 1888 Match Workers Strike: The Strike Fund Register and associated material. The Register and some related archival material is available online at <http://www.unionhistory.info/matchworkers/matchworkers.php>
- Gertrude Tuckwell Collection- folders relating to various strikes 1908-1915, organised by the National Federation of Women Workers – online catalogue at [http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/library/x60186\\_24.doc](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/library/x60186_24.doc)
- Press cuttings on strikes 1911-1970 – online database at <http://webapps2.north.londonmet.ac.uk/apps/tuc/search.cfm>
- Audiovisual resources on strikes include a large photograph collection [open to researchers later in 2006] and union produced videos.

Further details of the Collections can be found at [www.londonmet.ac.uk/libraries/tuc](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/libraries/tuc) or [www.unionhistory.info](http://www.unionhistory.info)

**Contact:** Trades Union Congress Library Collections, Special Collections, London Metropolitan, University, Old Castle Street, London E1 7NT

Tel. 020 7133 3516

Email [tuclib@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:tuclib@londonmet.ac.uk)

URL [www.londonmet.ac.uk/libraries/tuc](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/libraries/tuc)

## University of London Research Library Services

The following is a list of material relating to the history of strikes and lock-outs. Researchers may wish to use the Library's online archives and manuscript database at <http://archives.urls.lon.ac.uk/> to search for other related subject terms, persons and institutions.

- Title: Letter from Joseph Holder (OWTU General Secretary) to General Manager of Texaco Trinidad Reference: ICS40F/4/10 Date: 1960 June 27 Scope and Content : Re points in dispute between the union and the company and announcing strike action.
- Title: Letter from J A Hulme (General Manager of Texaco Trinidad) to the Governor Reference: ICS40F/4/11 Date: 1960 June 27 Scope and Content: Re forthcoming strike by the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union and asking for a Board of Inquiry into the dispute to be set up.
- Title: Strike News Reference: ICS40F/4/14 Date: 1960 July - August Scope and Content :14 bulletins issued by the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union during a strike by workers at Texaco Trinidad: - [no 1] (undated); - no 2 (7 July 1960); - no 3 (8 July 1960); - no 4 (9 July 1960); - special strike bulletin (9 July 1960); - no 5 (10 July 1960); - no 6 (11 July 1960); - no 7 (12 July 1960); - no 8 (13 July 1960); - no 9 (14 July 1960); - no 10 (15 July 1960); - no 11 (18 July 1960); - no 12 (25 July 1960); - no 13 (8 August 1960).
- Title: West Indian Committee Peace and Sovereignty - Press statement Reference: ICS40G/6 Date: undated [c1963] Scope and Content: Re political repression and general strike in Martinique and Guadeloupe.
- Title: Unemployment Protest Photographs Reference: MS1089/4/1 Date: 1936-1939 Scope and Content: Press photographs of protests by the unemployed during the 1930s, including the following: - Photograph of Smithfield strikers marching to the docks following a meeting in the market (6 February 1936) (Copyright: Central Press Photos Ltd) - Photograph of police struggling to control the 10,000 crowd gathered in Whitehall following an appeal by the International Peace Campaign (23 September 1938) (Copyright: The Associated Press) - Photograph of police attempting to stop members of the National Union of the Unemployed

bringing a 'coffin' into Bow Street Magistrate's Court in an attempt to aid an arrested members charged with obstruction at a recent demonstration (9 January 1939) (Copyright: Alfieri Picture Service) - Photograph of police attempting to stop members of the National Union of the Unemployed bringing a 'coffin' into Bow Street Magistrate's Court in an attempt to aid an arrested members charged with obstruction at a recent demonstration (different photograph from above) (9 January 1939) (Copyright: Keystone) - Photograph of police attempting to stop members of the National Union of the Unemployed bringing a 'coffin' into Bow Street Magistrate's Court in an attempt to aid an arrested members charged with obstruction at a recent demonstration (different photograph from two photographs above) (9 January 1939) (Copyright: Alfieri Picture Service) - Photograph from demonstration of unemployed men at the Cruft's Dog Show at the Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington, showing protester with placard reading, 'You Breed Dogs – UAB Breeds Misery' (11 February 1939) (Copyright: The Associated Press) - Photograph showing members of the Unemployed Workers Movement fishing in unfinished ARP trenches in Regent's Park (13 February 1939) (Copyright: Keystone)

- Title: Chapman, Sidney (fl 1885-1886), solicitor Reference: MS193 Date: 1885-1886 Scope and Content: Paper entitled The Strike in the London Boot Trade, 1885-1886.
- Title: Burnett, John (fl 1892), member of the Board of Trade Reference: MS460 Date: 1892
- Scope and Content: Two items c 1892, by John Burnett of the Board of Trade concerning the reduction of wages and strikes in the mining, shipbuilding, metal and textile trades.
- Title: Article concerning the Coal Strike Legislation, written by Charles Booth 18 March 1912 (2 copies) Reference: MS797/II/33 Date: 1912
- Title: Newspaper extract of copy of permit issued by Dockers strike committee Reference: MS797/IV/10 Date: 1911
- Title: Cover of Daily Mirror newspaper. Contains photograph of meeting of railwaymen's unions to discuss a general strike because of refusal to reinstate 250 Liverpool Tramwaymen Reference: MS797/IV/12 Date: 1911

Title: The Institute of Commonwealth Studies archives collections. Contains the following:

- **Dave McKerrell papers (ICS194)** relate to his banishment to the United Kingdom after his part in the Rand strikes of 1913, <http://archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/Details/archive/110052381#>
- **South African Police papers (ICS76)** include a file of papers on strike at the Meyer and Charlton mine, 1917, <http://archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/Details/archive/110021555>
- **Baruch Hirson papers (ICS32)** include material on the South African miners' strike of 1946, <http://archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/Details/archive/110020241>
- **Billy Strachan's papers (ICS158)** include material on strikes and the labour movement in the West Indies, <http://archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/Details/archive/110049212>
- **Bantock papers (ICS27)** include a report by Bantock on a strike at spinning and weaving mills, Wellawatte, 1937, <http://archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/Details/archive/110020236>

Contact: Special Collections Senate House Library Senate House Malet Street London WC1E 7HU

Tel 020 7862 8470 Fax 020 7862 8480

Email [specialcollections@shl.lon.ac.uk](mailto:specialcollections@shl.lon.ac.uk)

Web <https://www.senatehouselibrary.ac.uk/our-collections/special-collections>

## Swansea University

The University of Wales Swansea holds the South Wales Coalfield Collection (SWCC), which includes a wide range of printed and archival material on the history of the South Wales Coalfield. Much of the Collection relates to the National Union of Mineworkers (South Wales Area) and its predecessor, the South Wales Miners' Federation (SWMF). It includes records and publications of the central administration and its branches or lodges which would contain much relevant material on strikes in the 20th century. Similarly, the Collection includes material from welfare associations and co-operative societies in the Coalfield which would cover specific strike years. Material can vary from minutes of general meetings to details of distress funds, food funds, support groups and picketing lists.

The Collection also includes personal collections and within these varied items can be found relating to both national and local strikes, for example: William Henry Davies (Penclawdd) :1907 pocket-book containing an account of the strike at Berthlwyd Colliery.

Bryn Williams (Cwm) :Contains Cwm Llantwit Lodge minutes chiefly relating to strike picketing and a Miners' Eisteddfod competition essay by Bryn Williams, 'My experiences at the picket line', 1926 strike.

The Collection also includes a large collection of photographs a number of which capture industrial disputes and strikes throughout the twentieth century. The photographs taken during the 1984-85 strike, for example include scenes of demonstrations in which women, children and miners are involved.

Printed material held at the South Wales Miners' Library includes personal collections of pamphlets, covering many aspects of the social life, politics and culture of the coalfield. For example: Glyn Evans pamphlets: Communist Party of Great Britain, The reds and the general strike: the lessons of the first general strike of the British working class. 1926 Glyn Evans pamphlets: Cook, A.J, The Mond moonshine: my case against the "peace" surrender, 1926 Arthur Horner pamphlets: Horner, Arthur, Coal: the next round, 1926.

As well as traditional printed material, the Collection also contains a large selection of newspaper cuttings relating to the miners' strikes of 1972, 1974 and 1984-1985.

In addition the South Wales Miners' Library houses the oral history collection, which consists of interviews with former miners, political leaders of the coalfield and their families. The interviews cover a wide variety of subjects, including:

- The General Strike: AUD 221,
- interview with Jim Brewer; AUD 227,
- Morgan Lewis Jones: AUD 169,
- Frank Williams. Miners' strike of 1972: AUD 258,
- Interview with Glyn Williams: AUD 345,
- Dulais Valley Strike Committee. Miners' strike of 1974: AUD 352,
- Interview with Harry Samuel; AUD 415,
- Dai Francis. Miners' strike of 1984-85: AUD 505,
- Interview with Donna Jones; AUD 465, Des Dutfield.

The SWCC can be searched online through the following link: <http://www.swan.ac.uk/swcc/>

However two further printed catalogues of material are available in the Archives. A number of the

photographs can be seen and audio material heard through the Coalfield Web Materials site, <http://www.agor.org.uk/cwm/>

Contact: The SWCC is held at two different locations. Manuscript archives and photographs are held at: Archives, Library & Information Services University of Wales Swansea Singleton Park Swansea SA2 8PP

Tel 01792 295021

Fax 01792 295851

Email [archives@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:archives@swansea.ac.uk)

Web [http://www.swan.ac.uk/lis/historical\\_collections/archives.asp](http://www.swan.ac.uk/lis/historical_collections/archives.asp)

Audio and video, banners, posters and printed material are held at: South Wales Miners Library Hendrefoelan House Gower Road Swansea SA2 7NB

Tel 01792 518603

Fax 01792 518694

Email [miners@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:miners@swansea.ac.uk)

## **The Welsh Political Archive, National Library of Wales**

The Welsh Political Archive was established in 1983 to coordinate the collection of archives and documents relating to the political history of Wales. Its content includes the papers of individual Welsh politicians (such as David Lloyd-George); leaflets and pamphlets from Welsh political parties (including Plaid Cymru) and information on Welsh nationalist movements such as the Parliament for Wales Campaign and the fight for political devolution in Wales.

The South Wales and Monmouthshire Coalowners' Association Records Hold a wealth of material on the south Wales coal industry, including numerous records on strikes and lockouts. These include the Minute Books of the Joint Sliding Scale Committee, Oct. 1875 - Nov. 1902, the General Minute Books of Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners Association (21 vols, 1873 - 1944), six folders containing letters, telegrams, newspaper cuttings, statistics, etc., dealing with disputes and strikes at collieries throughout South Wales; Scrapbooks (3 vols) containing newspaper cuttings on all matters relating to the coal and allied industries, especially in south Wales, explosions, conferences of miners, coal shipments, bankruptcies, the Miners Permanent Provident Society, etc. The 3 volumes respectively cover the periods Oct. 1882 - May 1884, Sept. 1884 - Dec. 1887, and April 1894 - May 1895; notices to terminate contracts and strikes on the non-unionist question from Sept. 1899 - 1939; and Minute Books of the Board of Conciliation for the Coal Trade of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 31 March 1903 - 29 Nov. 1918 (6 volumes).

There are letters relating to strikes in the iron industry in south Wales in the Tredegar Park muniments, the Lord Merthyr 1947 collection, and the Maybery archive, and to strike action in the early coal industry in the Bute archive. The Dolaucothi archive has letters discussing strike action in early twentieth century Wales.

Material on strikes in the north Wales slate quarrying industry is available in the papers of W. J. Parry and among the extensive correspondence of D. R. Daniel, T. E. Ellis MP and Sir Owen M. Edwards. The papers of Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos also include some material on strikes in the north Wales slate quarrying industry. There are some letters on strikes in south Wales in the early years of the twentieth century in the Dolaucothi correspondence.

The miners' strike of 1984-85 has generated a substantial archival output. Some of the more significant holdings at the NLW are the Bert Pearce Papers (i.e. the archive of the Welsh Communist Party), Councillor Ray Davies of Bedwas, Erastus Jones, the Wales TUC records, the Ty Cenedl records, the Welsh Political Ephemera collection, and NLW ex 787-88 and 859.

In the general series of NLW manuscripts, the following would seem to be the more relevant items: NLW MS 22674: letters, 1853, relating to strikes at the Merthyr Tydfil ironworks. NLW MS 22574: letters and papers, 1912, relating to the British coal industry. NLW MS 23380: papers containing references to the British coal industry, 1951. NLW MS 23133: letters concerning the 1921 national coalminers' strike. NLW MS 23166 material on the 1926 General Strike. and 23523:

There are also, of course, scores of relevant stray items in other archives and collections held at the NLW.

Contact: The Welsh Political Archive, The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3BU

Tel 01970 632800

Email [gofyn@llyfrgell.cymru](mailto:gofyn@llyfrgell.cymru)

Web [www.library.wales/welshpoliticalarchive](http://www.library.wales/welshpoliticalarchive)

## **The Working Class Movement Library**

The WCML is a national collection of the history of British and Irish radical and labour movements from the late 18th century up to the present day. It includes books, pamphlets, leaflets, banners, pottery, prints, photographs, personal papers, posters, videos, trade union records and much else that documents and illuminates the story of working class struggles for social justice, democracy and equality. The Library is open to everyone to visit by appointment between 10am and 5pm Tuesday to Friday, and the catalogue is available online at [www.wcml.org.uk/catalogue](http://www.wcml.org.uk/catalogue) - although not all material has yet been catalogued, this is often a useful first port of call.

***Relevant sources on the history of strikes and lock-outs are as follows, in chronological order of events described. A great deal of other material is contained within WCML's holdings of trade union reports and papers:***

**Mick Jenkins** papers (in the process of being catalogued, 2019)

Mick's book *The 1842 general strike* contends that what were known as the Plug Plot riots were in fact an organised attempt to bring about a General Strike. In his papers WCML has the notes which he generated while researching the subject. It would seem that only a small proportion of that information was incorporated into the book, so it represents a gold mine of source material. Extent: 4 boxes.

### **1890/91 North British Railway Company Strike**

*Strike riots:* handwritten brief for the prosecution dated January 1891, including accounts of the riots and witness statements. 8,500 men were said to be on strike by Christmas 1890, and the North British Railway Company took legal action against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, claiming £20,000 damages. The strike ended in compromise. Shelfmark: Oversized Box 3 (Strikes folder).

## 1911 Salford General Strike

Eddie and Ruth Frow: research materials for their pamphlet *The General Strike in Salford in 1911*, including photocopies (mainly of press cuttings, including issues of *Syndicalist Railwayman*), articles, handwritten notes and correspondence. Extent: 3 folders, shelfmark F12 FROW Box 62 and Box 72.

Also a cassette tape of a talk given by Eddie and Ruth Frow on the subject, shelfmark Tape/098.

## 1926 General Strike archival material

- Labour Research Department general strike questionnaire sent to local trades councils, with copies of the completed questionnaires [bound with *The Workers' Bulletin*]. Shelfmark: AG General Strike Box 2.
- Trades Union Congress material (Shelfmark: AG General Strike Box 3) including:
  - Memorandum dated 1 May 1926 on 'The mining situation'
  - Circular to secretaries of strike committees, trades councils and trade unions on the Trades Union Congress policy regarding publication of strike bulletins
  - Speakers' notes on conditions in the mining industry issued by the Publicity Committee
  - GEC Bulletin no.10 pp 2-5 [p.1 missing], which deals with announcement of end of General Strike, victimisation, and prints statement by Ramsay Macdonald at Parliamentary Labour Party
  - Official bulletin no.1 with covering letter and messages of support
  - Undated paper with message of support and solidarity from international labour movement organisations
  - Circular headed 'The strike will end', giving details of the negotiations between Herbert Samuel and the Trades Union Congress
  - Extract from official TUC report of negotiations with Cabinet regarding the breakdown in negotiations
  - Message to secretaries of all affiliated unions re settlement of strike
  - Copy of a telegram despatched to affiliated unions on 13 May regarding attempts by employers to enforce humiliating terms as conditions of resumption of work
  - Scottish Trades Union Congress, 30th annual report 1927
- Eleven photographs of the derailment of The Flying Scotsman at Cramlington – ref R128/2-4, R128/6, R128/8-11, R128/13, R129/22, R129/26.
- Frow, Edmund and Ruth. Research material and correspondence regarding their book *Strikes: a documentary history*, written together with Michael Katanka. Includes a typed manuscript 'The Liverpool General Transport Strike, 1911', handwritten notes, leaflets, circulars, press cuttings. Shelfmark: Frow boxes Box 64 and 131.

1926 General Strike periodicals include:

- A wide range of one-off or short run locally produced news-sheets eg *Altrincham Express*, Nos 4, 6-10, 12 (7, 9-14 May 1926); *Bethnal Green workers bulletin* No 3 (10 May 1926); *The Hackney piano worker* No 2 (Strike Issue), 1926; *Leeds Citizen* Special strike bulletin (8 May 1926); *Nottingham strike bulletin* Nos 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 10 (6, 8, 10-14 May 1926), Special No 3 (13 May 1926), two undated issues. For full details of relevant periodicals see online catalogue - Shelfmark: General Strike - Periodicals A-Z
- Daily wireless bulletins, British Broadcasting Corporation, 4-18 May 1926. Shelfmark: General Strike - Periodicals A-Z.

### **Pit and factory papers**

These often cyclostyled magazines were produced by small communist cells and distributed in their places of work. WCML has over 100 of them, dating from 1925 to 1937, with a focus on the North West of England. Many were duplicated items, so were ephemeral by nature - few have survived. The viewpoint expressed gives a clear view of the working lives of people in these mines and factories. They are very useful for evaluating the local Communist Party of Great Britain response to the 1926 General Strike. The papers often have crudely drawn but effective graphics, and excellent titles, including *Bentley Turnplate*, *Eighth Notch*, *Ko-Ko-Kick* (Cadbury's), *Rossington Ringer* and *The Thorne Butty Squasher*. Shelfmark: Periodicals main sequence (Pit and Factory papers).

### **Roberts-Arundel Strike** collection (in the process of being catalogued – Mar 2019)

This Stockport strike of 1966 to 1968 was described by *The Morning Star* as one of the “biggest strikes in the history of the trade union movement and it involved the most basic freedom of all workers’ – the right to organise. The strike involved mass picketing, two “riots”, a pro-union spy being installed in the factory, and a major campaign of “blacking” of the Roberts-Arundel Company and also of the companies that traded with it. Extent: 6 boxes.

### **Grunwick Dispute** collection (ref EVT/GRUNWICK)

Collection of APEX papers, 1973-1989, relating to the Grunwick Processing Laboratories dispute. It consists mainly of correspondence relating to the dispute including letters of support/donations, TUC correspondence, and correspondence and papers relating to the ‘blacking’ of the Laboratories by the Union of Post Office Workers. Other material includes files about the Court of Inquiry into the dispute chaired by Lord Scarman; the Central Arbitration Committee schedule 11 claim relating to wages; marching, picketing and various legal actions; strike funds and pay; and the National Association for Freedom. Full details at [www.wcml.org.uk/catalogue](http://www.wcml.org.uk/catalogue). Extent: 12 boxes.

### **Salford Electrical Instruments equal pay strike** (Jun-Aug 1973) (ref SUBJ/STRIKES/1/20)

Beattie Muskett's papers relating to the strike, including correspondence, press cuttings, photographs and other papers. Extent: 1 folder. Shelfmark: AG Strikes Box 4

### **Silentnight Dispute** collection (ref EVT/SILENTNIGHT)

Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union and Tom Stott papers, dating between 1978 and 1997, relating to the 1985-1987 Silentnight strike. Extent: 5 boxes and 7 files.

### **Miners’ Strike** 1984-85 (ref EVT/MINESTRIKE plus many other parts of the WCML collection)

A very large amount of archival, printed and commemorative material, including:

- National Union of Mineworkers papers on the strike (ref EVT/MINESTRIKE/1) including: Circular letters from NUM head office to TUC affiliated unions and trades councils; Other

head office correspondence; Agcroft Strike Committee papers; Walkden Workshops Strike Committee papers; Bold Branch papers; Other branch papers. Extent: 3 folders. **NB that this material is closed until 2069.**

- Support group papers (ref EVT/MINESTRIKE/2) including: DVD of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners archive (original material deposited at People's History Museum); Papers of Miners' Family Support Group; North West Miners Defence Campaign; Salford District Miners Support Group; Stockport Miners Support Committee and other north west-based support groups; Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign; Women's support groups. Extent: 2 folders.
- Other solidarity material including:
  - Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom: file of papers relating to the Miners' Strike and the media;
  - support for the strike from other unions eg Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union, GMB;
  - Bill Whittaker: Manchester Miners Support Committee 1984, printed and typewritten correspondence and publicity materials.
- David Jones's strike diary, handwritten photocopy, Jan 1983-Mar 1985 (Ref EVT/MINESTRIKE/4).

Also a collection of press cuttings, leaflets and articles pasted onto computer papers; cassette tapes of interviews; posters; badges; commemorative plates etc etc.

#### **Cammell Laird Strike, 1984 (ref SUBJ/STRIKES/1/8)**

Small collection of papers relating to a 1984 strike by Cammell Laird workers at Birkenhead, including a poem and two sketches by John Dooley. Extent: 1 folder. Shelfmark: AG Strikes Box 3.

#### **Tameside Care Workers collection (ref ORG/TCG)**

Material relating to an industrial dispute at Tameside Care Group, a private residential care provider, where in March 1998 over 200 workers, most of them women, went on strike against the implementation of new contracts which enforced pay reductions. The collection includes strike committee minutes, letters of support and newspaper cuttings, as well as useful background to the company and dispute.

#### **Other:**

Much other material including folder about a strike at Keeton, Sons and Company, Sheffield in 1987 (Shelfmark: AG Strikes Box 4), and various other files including the 1960s national apprentices' strike, and named companies e.g. Staveley Machine Tools 1972, Walmsleys lockout 1972, Ferodo 1970, Garners Steakhouse 1978, but also going as far back as the Penrhyn Quarrymen dispute of 1897.

Apprentices' strike = TU/ENG/7/35/4 and TU/ENG/7/35/5 AEU, Stockport, Apprentices disputes Engineering Box 59 [2 folders – 1 open, 1 closed]

Liverpool Dockers strike 1995-1998 = SUBJ/STRIKES/1/4 – AG Strikes – Box 2

P&O strike 1988-1989 = TU/SEA/3/3 – AF Sea Box 2

Penrhyn Quarry disputes = SUBJ/STRIKES/1/19 – AG Strikes Box 4

Staveley Machine Tools = PP/ROTHMAN/1/B/1– AG Rothman Box 21

Walmsleys (Bury) = TU/ENG/6/H/102 – AF Engineering Box 50

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