THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR RECORDS:
THE SAMUEL GOMPERS ERA

Guide to a Joint Microfilm Edition
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR RECORDS:

THE SAMUEL GOMPERS ERA

Guide to a Joint Microfilm Publication
AFL Executive Council, November, 1906—November, 1908. Front row, left to right: James Duncan (Granite Cutters), President Samuel Gompers (Cigar Makers), John Mitchell (Mine Workers). Back row: Secretary Frank Morrison (Typographical Union), Denis A. Hayes (Glass Bottle Blowers), James O'Connell (Machinists), Max Morris (Retail Clerks), Joseph F. Valentine (Iron Molders), Treasurer John B. Lennon (Tailors), Daniel J. Keefe (Longshoremen). Not included is William D. Huber (Carpenters).
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR RECORDS:
THE SAMUEL GOMPERS ERA

Guide to a Joint Microfilm Publication

PART 1
Records Held by the
AFL-CIO
Edited by Peter J. Albert
A Project of the Samuel Gompers Papers
University of Maryland and Pace University
Stuart Bruce Kaufman, Editor

PART 2
Records Held by the
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Edited by Harold L. Miller
A Project of the
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

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PREFACE

THIS MICROFILM EDITION brings together American Federation of Labor records dating from the Gompers era now held by two institutions, the AFL-CIO, at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, in Madison. It was a joint undertaking of the Samuel Gompers Papers documentary editing project at the University of Maryland and Pace University, and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; it was sponsored by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

The publication consists of two parts. Part 1 contains the records from the AFL-CIO; their preparation for publication, and their description in the guide and in explanatory targets on the film were the responsibility of the Samuel Gompers Papers project. Part 2 contains the documents held by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; their organization, description, and filming were a project of the Society.

The Gompers Papers project and the Historical Society proceeded independently with arrangement, filming, and description of records under their supervision, and in the preparation of indexes, calendars, and other finding aids. The end products of the two projects have been joined in this edition for the convenience of researchers. In addition, the Gompers Papers staff wrote the essay on the history of the records and the Society compiled the AFL chronology and acted as publisher of the guide. The Microfilming Corporation of America is responsible for sale and distribution of the edition.
### AFL CHRONOLOGY

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<td>1881</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada (FOTLU) formed at Pittsburgh convention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Gompers testified before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor.</td>
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<td>1884</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>United States Bureau of Labor Statistics established (then part of the Interior Department and called the Bureau of Labor).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Haymarket Square riot, Chicago.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>FOTLU dissolved and the AFL formed at convention in Columbus, Ohio. Gompers, P. J. McGuire, and Gabriel Edmonston elected president, secretary, and treasurer respectively, and Federation headquarters established in New York City.</td>
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<td>1890</td>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>Sherman Antitrust Act signed into law.</td>
</tr>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>John McBride of the United Mine Workers defeated Gompers for the AFL presidency. AFL headquarters moved to Indianapolis, Indiana.</td>
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<td>1895</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>National Association of Manufacturers organized.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Gompers attended British Trades Union Congress as fraternal delegate of the AFL.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Gompers re-elected AFL president.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Frank Morrison of the International Typographical Union elected AFL secretary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>AFL headquarters moved to Washington, D.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>National Civic Federation formed.</td>
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<td>1901</td>
<td>December 14</td>
<td>The “Scranton Declaration,” a report by Gompers, James Duncan, and John Mitchell to the 1901 AFL convention, defined the rights of AFL affiliates within their jurisdictions.</td>
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American Federation of Labor Records

1902, May 12-October 21 Anthracite coal strike conducted by the United Mine Workers.

1903, February 14 U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor established.

1906, March 21 Labor’s “Bill of Grievances” issued by the AFL, protesting the failure of Congress to pass an effective eight-hour law, to regulate convict labor, and to curb immigration, and marking the AFL’s active entry into politics on a nonpartisan basis.

1907, December 18 Bucks Stove and Range Company injunction prohibited the AFL from listing that company in the American Federationist’s “we don’t patronize” list.

1908, February 3 Danbury Hatters (Loewe v. Lawlor) ruling declared that secondary boycotts by labor unions were conspiracies in restraint of trade within the meaning of the Sherman Act.

February 10 Conference of AFL building trades unions established AFL Building Trades Department.

December 23 Gompers, John Mitchell, and Frank Morrison sentenced to prison for violating the Bucks Stove and Range Company injunction.

1909, July-October Gompers toured Europe and attended the conference of the International Federation of the Secretariats of the Trade Union Centers and the British Trade Union Congress.

July-1911, August U.S. Steel struck by the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers and by the Tin Plate Workers’ Association. During the strike the AFL sponsored an investigation and lobbied for antitrust action against the corporation.

1910, October 1 Los Angeles Times building destroyed by an explosion.

1911, April 22 J. J. McNamara “kidnapped” by authorities and extradited to Los Angeles. J. J., his brother J. B. McNamara, and Ortie McManigal, all of the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers’ union, indicted for murder in connection with the Times bombing. In the months that followed, Gompers and the AFL heavily involved in fund-raising activities for the defendants.

December 1 The McNamaras pleaded guilty to charges stemming from the bombing.

1912, February 8 AFL Mining Department organized.

1913, March 4 Cabinet-level Department of Labor established.

July 15 Newlands Act signed into law creating a Board
of Mediation and Conciliation to adjust railroad labor disputes.

1914, October 15 Clayton Antitrust Act signed into law.
1915, March 4 La Follette Seamen's Act signed into law.
1916, August J. W. Sullivan traveled to Europe on Gompers' behalf to make arrangements for a postwar labor conference.

September 3 Adamson Eight-Hour Act signed into law specifying the eight-hour day on interstate railroads.
October 31 Gompers accepted appointment to the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense. In this capacity he formed and chaired the Committee on Labor.

1917, March 12 A meeting of national and international union representatives approved "American Labor's Position in Peace or in War." The declaration recognized that war was possible and that the nation had a duty to protect itself from "injustice and invasion."

April 7 On the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Committee on Labor, the Council of National Defense urged employers and employees not to take advantage of the war emergency to change existing standards. Widely interpreted as a "no strike" pledge, the statement created controversy inside and outside the labor movement.

June 19 Cantonment construction agreement signed by Gompers and Secretary of War Newton D. Baker. John R. Alpine of the Plumbers' union was named labor representative on the commission appointed to adjust disputes.

August 20 Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board established. A. J. Barres of the AFL Metal Trades Department served as labor representative.

September 5-7 The American Alliance for Labor and Democracy formally launched at a convention in St. Paul, Minnesota. Funded largely by George Creel's Committee on Public Information, the Alliance was intended to build support for the war within the labor movement and among the foreign-born. Gompers was president of the Alliance and Robert Maisel was the director.

1918, January The committees and subcommittees of the Committee on Labor of the Council of National Defense transferred to the control of the Department of Labor.
American Federation of Labor Records

1918, April 8  
National War Labor Board established.
August-October  
Gompers headed a U.S. labor mission which visited England, Scotland, France, and Italy.
November 13  
First Pan-American Federation of Labor conference held at Laredo, Texas.
1919, January-March  
Gompers and other AFL representatives in Europe in connection with the peace conference.
July 25-26  
The Amsterdam conference at which the old International Federation of Trade Unions dissolved. After adjournment, a new conference convened (July 28) and launched a new organization under the same name.
September 22-
1920, January 9  
U.S. Steel struck by a coalition of twenty-four unions making up the National Committee for Organizing Iron and Steel Workers.
October 26  
International Labor Conference opened in Washington, D.C.
1920, February 28  
Esch-Cummins Act signed returning railroads to private ownership, establishing the Railroad Labor Board to adjust disputes, and widening the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission.
May 28  
Gompers debated Kansas Governor Henry J. Allen over compulsory arbitration and the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations.
1921, January 3  
February  
A meeting of union officials held to discuss methods of publicity. This conference led to the formation of the AFL Information and Publicity Service.
March  
International Federation of Trade Unions membership rejected by the AFL Executive Council.
May 26  
The Conference Committee of Trade Union Legislative Representatives formed.
1922, May 16  
1924, August 2  
Robert M. La Follette's third-party presidential candidacy endorsed by the AFL Executive Council.
December 13  
Samuel Gompers died in San Antonio, Texas.
HISTORY OF THE RECORDS

THIS MICROFILM EDITION contains approximately 300,000 pages of American Federation of Labor records from the Gompers era. It reproduces documents now held, in the original or in microform, at the headquarters of the AFL-CIO in Washington, D.C., and records donated by the Federation to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison.

The records program initiated by the Federation in 1953 was a significant factor in determining the number and disposition of the documents published in this collection. Motivating AFL officials to undertake it at that time was their concern with the amount of space required to store the massive archive of non-current Federation records and the condition of the documents themselves, the majority of which were housed in the basement of the old AFL building. The program to overhaul and streamline the files was largely supervised by E. Logan Kimmel, the administrator of the AFL "General File"; this department had custody of most of the non-current correspondence and other records at Federation headquarters. Kimmel and his staff began reviewing and weeding the files, selecting for preservation the documents they considered to have administrative or historical significance. They began microfilming the records culled in this way, using a rotary camera with a high reduction ratio.

By 1955 they had processed and filmed a number of record groups containing files dating back to the Gompers era. These included records pertinent to issues considered at AFL conventions; most of the correspondence with national and international unions, largely dating after 1900; documents relating to jurisdictional disputes; and circulars and neostyles. They discarded the original records after filming them. (Duplicates of the reels containing Gompers-era documents, from the Federation's microfilm of these record groups, are published in this edition as reels 25 through 57.) Kimmel and his staff, by 1955, had also filmed and disposed of record groups containing few or no early documents, such as President Green's copybooks, and they were working with the records known as "President Gompers' Files," consisting of Gompers' personal files of correspondence arranged by subject, and other manuscript and printed material. Other AFL departments, which retained their own records, apparently proceeded independently to review and discard unfiled some of their non-current files.

At this point, in the spring of 1955, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin approached the AFL with a request for the non-current records that
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the Federation was discarding. It acted on the recommendation of Vaughn Bornet, a historian who had worked with the Federation’s archives and had recently learned of the program to review and film these files. The AFL’s Executive Council approved the request in August, and the Federation began sending records to the Society in November. The shipments continued until 1965. The principal Gompers-era records the AFL sent to Wisconsin included early files of correspondence with national and international unions, Mining Department correspondence, and President Gompers’ files. The AFL weeded and filmed most of these record groups prior to shipment; the most notable exceptions were a collection of “political correspondence” from Gompers’ files and a number of scrapbooks. The Society retained the AFL’s organization of the union correspondence, that is, by union; it received President Gompers’ files in disorganized condition and for that reason placed correspondence from that collection in chronological order and organized separately such other records as speeches, conferences, hearings, reference material, and appointment records. It judged that the scrapbooks contained material available elsewhere and discarded them. The Society’s microfilm of these Gompers-era AFL records, specifically, Gompers’ files (referred to by the Society as the Files of the Office of the President), correspondence with national and international unions, and records of the Mining Department, is published in this edition as reels 59 through 144.

The Federation retained some Gompers-era records in the original because it was not thought feasible to microfilm them using the rotary camera. The Gompers Papers project’s microfilm of these materials, namely, early Federation records, Executive Council minutes and vote books, and miscellaneous correspondence, letterbooks, and scrapbooks, is published in this edition as reels 1 through 24.

Some AFL files from the Gompers period are not included in this publication. Among those at the AFL-CIO are microfilmed records of federal labor unions and city centrals; the little that remains of these records from the Gompers years is of a routine nature, seldom involving Gompers himself. Also not included are miscellaneous documents in the AFL-CIO Library, in the Legislative Reference Files, and in President Green’s files; these will be published at a later time by the Gompers Papers project. Finally, the film does not contain a small number of the Gompers-era documents sent by the Federation to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, specifically, those in the Strikes and Agreements Files and the Legislative Reference Files.

This microfilm publication reproduces a significant portion of the surviving official and unofficial papers accumulated at AFL headquarters during Gompers’ tenure as AFL president. There are, however, other major collections of Federation records from this period. These include Gompers’ files of addresses, interviews, articles, biographical data, and additional material that the AFL sent to the New York Public Library after his death; the Gompers letterbooks of outgoing correspondence that the Federation donated to the Library of Congress in 1966 and 1969; and the Frank Morrison letterbooks that it deposited at Duke University in 1969.
Samuel Gompers, 1901.
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
RECORDS:

THE SAMUEL GOMPERS ERA

PART 1

Records Held by the AFL-CIO

Edited by Peter J. Albert

A Project of the Samuel Gompers Papers
University of Maryland and Pace University
Stuart Bruce Kaufman, Editor
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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE SAMUEL GOMPERS PAPERS is a documentary editing project, at the University of Maryland and Pace University, to collect and publish the papers of Samuel Gompers. Part 1 of this microfilm edition, consisting of Gompers-era records held by the AFL-CIO, is the first segment of the project’s comprehensive microform publication of Gompers’ papers. Forthcoming microform publications by the project will contain Gompers documents held by other repositories in this country and abroad, including union archives, except for those records already available on microfilm—for example, the Gompers letterbooks at the Library of Congress and the Gompers scrapbooks at the New York Public Library. The project will also publish a selective, multi-volume printed edition of Gompers’ papers.

THE SAMUEL GOMPERS PAPERS project is indebted to the AFL-CIO and its officers for their permission to reproduce and publish the American Federation of Labor records from the Gompers era that remain in the custody of the Federation, and for their invaluable assistance from the inception to the completion of this microfilm project. During the course of the project, members of the Federation staff located and brought to our attention records from the Gompers era that were thought to have been lost, as well as the Gabriel Edmonston Papers, documents previously unknown to scholars, that the Federation had recently acquired. In addition, they attempted to deal with the many questions that arose respecting the provenance and history of the records. The Federation provided work space at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and allowed the Gompers Papers staff to remove records from the building for microfilming. Indeed, the Federation put the entire collection at our disposal, including such confidential records as the Executive Council’s minutes and vote books, and the microfilm Jurisdiction File.

Many individuals at AFL-CIO headquarters gave their assistance to this project. We are particularly grateful to the late President George Meany; Lane Kirkland, formerly Secretary-Treasurer and now President of the Federation; and Wesley Reedy, Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Kirkland granted permission to the Gompers Papers to publish these
records. Other members of the Federation staff who made significant contributions to this project included Margaret Beall, Karl Bobb, Dora Kelenson, E. Logan Kimmel, Virginia Theas, and Jean Webber.

The Gompers Papers project wishes to thank the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for its assistance. The Commission, through its cooperation and financial support, played a vital role in making this publication possible. The project would also like to acknowledge the continuing support of the University of Maryland and Pace University, which has been fundamental to the ongoing work of the Gompers Papers. We are also indebted to the Program for Editions of the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency; the preparation of this guide was made possible in part by a grant from the Endowment.

Edward C. Carter II, editor in chief of the Papers of Benjamin H. Latrobe, made many valuable suggestions regarding the organization and content of the guide.

In the Preservation Services Division, National Archives and Records Service, Edward Armour gave the project technical assistance and advice, and provided the film-embossing press that was used to stamp the post-filming margin numbers on the film. Elsie Wilcox made the direct duplicate negative prints of the AFL-CIO's 16mm General File microfilm on 35mm stock. Vera White and William Rosemund counseled the project in setting up and using a microfilm camera from the Archives at AFL-CIO headquarters.

At the Capitol Data Processing Center, NCR Corporation, Thomas Kelly coordinated and supervised the work for the project. Carla Dunlap microfilmed the documents from the AFL-CIO archives. William Ludwig and William O'Holleran directed the processing of the microfilm and prepared duplicate negative prints of all the reels.

Aileen Arnold and Ginger Molvar Lenihan typed the various tables of contents and the targets for the microfilm.

Members of the Samuel Gompers Papers staff who assisted with aspects of this microfilm publication included Patricia Cooper, Elizabeth Fonse-Wolf, Dolores Janiewski, Phyllis Kaufman, Anna Leon, Margaret Raumer, Joan Bellistri Simison, and Marie Thomas.

Stuart Bruce Kaufman, editor of the Samuel Gompers Papers project, had general oversight and participated in all decisions respecting this microfilm publication, and provided advice and encouragement in too many ways to be recounted here.

Peter J. Albert
Peter J. McGuire, left, and an unidentified associate, possibly Gabriel Edmonston.
DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

A. Early Federation Records, 1881-1890, and
   The Papers of Gabriel Edmonston, 1881-1918 (1 reel)

   This reel contains three distinct bodies of material pertaining to the earliest history of the labor federation: first, a volume of the minutes of meetings and other records of the Legislative Committee of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada (FOTLU) and the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor; second, an account book from the first years of the AFL; and, third, the papers of Gabriel Edmonston.

   Minutes and Other Records (1 volume): The Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, founded in 1881, was the immediate predecessor of the American Federation of Labor. The Legislative Committee of the FOTLU and the Executive Council of the AFL were the executive bodies of those organizations and were responsible for the conduct of the federations' affairs between the annual conventions.

   The volume contains approximately fifty pages of material dating from 1881 to 1888. It includes handwritten minutes of five FOTLU Legislative Committee meetings (1881-85), clippings of the printed proceedings of the 1886 FOTLU convention, handwritten minutes of four AFL Executive Council meetings (1886-87), council votes and communications (1887), and a circular consisting of minutes and a financial report (1888).

   Account Book (1 volume): This handwritten volume of some 120 pages itemizes the receipts and expenditures of the AFL from 1886 to 1890. Income entries generally relate to the payment of charter fees and per capita assessments by unions affiliated with the Federation; expenses include such items as office supplies, salaries, travel by members of the Executive Council, and donations to affiliates.

   Edmonston Papers: Gabriel Edmonston was the General President of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America from 1881 to 1882, a member of the FOTLU Legislative Committee from 1882 to 1886, and Treasurer of the AFL from 1886 to 1888. The collection contains some 250 items, primarily letters to Edmonston; in addition, there are a number of flyers, circulars, and pamphlets. The letters dating from the early 1880's are
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mainly from Peter J. McGuire, General Secretary of the Carpenters from 1881 to 1901 and an officer of the AFL from 1886 to 1900. Concerned principally with the struggle to establish the carpenters' union and a national federation of trade unions, the letters from this period deal with local carpenters' disputes, the activities of the Knights of Labor, and McGuire's evaluations of Samuel Gompers' first years as AFL President. The letters dating from the late 1880's and 1890's are primarily from Gompers, and focus on Edmonston's roles as Treasurer of the AFL, lobbyist in Washington, D.C., and leader in the labor movement in the capital; also included is personal correspondence relating to Gompers' family. The few twentieth-century documents in the collection consist of personal items and material related to the carpenters' union.

B. Executive Council Records

The Executive Council records published in this edition include minutes, vote books, and correspondence.

1. Minutes, 1893-1924 (6 reels)

Description: The minutes of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor record the deliberations of the council at its formal sessions. The council, consisting of the AFL's officers, was the body empowered to conduct the Federation's affairs. The minutes deal with a wide variety of matters including organizing activities, lobbying efforts, jurisdictional disputes between unions, strikes and boycotts, and reports by officers of the Federation. While they outline the council's decisions on questions before it, they generally do not summarize the discussion nor record the votes of individual council members.

This microfilm edition includes the records from the Gompers era in the AFL-CIO's collection of Executive Council minutes; specifically, the first sixty-seven volumes of the collection are published here. Members of the AFL staff put the minutes in their present form in the early 1950's. They removed the individual pages of the minutes from the heavy paper to which they had been glued, renumbered them, and, together with typescript copies of some of the pages, inserted them back-to-back into heavy plastic pockets which they then bound into volumes. Some of the pages had been previously trimmed down, occasionally with the loss of some of the text. This compilation of the minutes does not include records of all council meetings during the Gompers era; it contains no account of meetings held prior to 1893 and lacks records for some later meetings held in conjunction with the annual AFL conventions.

The editor could not microfilm the original minutes because of the warped and highly reflective surface of the plastic pockets, so instead made paper photocopies of the documents and filmed these. The process exaggerated somewhat both the darkening of the original paper with age, and its discoloration from glue stains. The editor also prepared typescript copies of pages that were difficult to read; an explanatory note precedes each of these typescripts on the microfilm.

Organization: The minutes were filmed in chronological sequence by meeting.
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Finding Aids: Detailed, alphabetically arranged subject indexes, which the AFL prepared contemporaneously with the minutes, accompany most but not all meetings. On the film the indexes immediately precede the records of the particular meeting to which they relate. Researchers should note that the page numbers appearing in these indexes refer to the original page numbers of the minutes, not to the numbers that the AFL staff added when reorganizing the records in the 1950’s.

2. Vote Books, 1892-1924 (11 reels)

Description: The vote books of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor trace the council’s communications and decisions between its meetings; in this respect they complement the minutes of the Executive Council. The vote books contain correspondence from Gompers to members of the council, addressing specific issues upon which the council members then returned their votes, or conveying information which required no vote including, for example, the agenda for forthcoming council meetings. This microfilm edition includes the records from the Gompers era in the AFL-CIO’s collection of Executive Council vote books; specifically, the first seventy volumes of the collection are published here.

The vote books consist of large scrapbook volumes. AFL staff members attached the respective documents to the blank pages of these books with glue, staples, or paper clips, and later recorded the votes of the individual council members upon or alongside the letters. Two books are incomplete; they contained records dating from October 1913 to February 1914, and from April to August 1917.

Organization: Generally speaking, the AFL compiled the vote books in chronological order. In large part they consist of letters, numbered consecutively, from Gompers to members of the council. Typically, Gompers presented an issue in such a letter, briefly sketched its background, framed the question on which council members were to vote, and enclosed copies of relevant documents.

Finding Aids: At frequent intervals in the vote books are contemporary summaries of the council’s votes. These detail each issue on which votes had been taken, indicate by a number which Gompers letter referred to the matter, and recapitulate the votes of the respective council members.

3. Correspondence, 1901-1924 (1 reel)

Description: This reel contains two small collections of unbound correspondence between members of the Executive Council. One consists of approximately forty letters and other documents. They span the years between 1901 and 1924, but are concentrated in the post-World War I period. They consider such subjects as demobilization, postwar domestic and international problems, strikes, the AFL’s political activity, national and international union affairs, and personal matters concerning individual members of the council.

The other group of documents contains letters to the Executive Council from Frank Morrison, Secretary of the Federation from 1896 to 1939; it consists of some 150 letters dating from 1911 to 1914. Enclosed with the corre-
American Federation of Labor Records

Correspondence are other items such as speeches, clippings, pamphlets, and circulars. Among the most important subjects in this correspondence are strikes and other affairs of AFL affiliates, socialist activities, political developments, organizers' reports, National Civic Federation activities, and relations with the Canadian labor movement.

Organization: The two collections were filmed separately.

C. Files of the Office of the President

The records published in this series include letterbooks and scrapbooks.

1. Letterbooks, 1907-1924 (4 reels)

Description: The five letterbooks on these reels contain letterpress copies of Gompers' outgoing correspondence.

The three letterbooks on reels 20, 21, and 22 contain his correspondence as Commissioner and Chairman of the Committee on Labor of the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense. Congress established the council in 1916 to coordinate the resources and industries of the nation and to provide for their security and mobilization in wartime; it was the first of the large emergency agencies of World War I. The Labor Committee, of which Gompers was chairman, was to make recommendations with respect to the welfare of workers and the adjustment of employment problems. Major correspondents in these letterbooks include Newton D. Baker, Walter S. Gifford, Florence Jaffray Harriman, V. Everit Macy, Daniel Willard, and William B. Wilson.

There are two letterbooks on reel 23. In the first are miscellaneous Gompers letters dating from 1907 to 1924, many of which are marked confidential. Major correspondents in this volume include members of the Executive Council.

The second letterbook contains Gompers' correspondence during 1917 and 1918 as president of the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy. The Alliance was organized to counteract pacifist and anti-war sentiment in the labor movement. Major correspondents include Robert Maisel, Herman Robinson, and Chester Wright.

Many of the letterbook pages have deteriorated over time and are now barely legible. The General Correspondence section of the Files of the Office of the President, published in Part 2 of this microfilm edition, contains copies of some of these letters.

Organization: The documents are in letterpress books bound in chronological order.

Finding Aids: There is a contemporary name index of correspondents at the beginning of each volume.

2. Scrapbooks, 1886-1905 (1 reel)

Description: This reel contains two scrapbooks of clippings; members of the Federation staff entitled them, respectively, "Old Clippings Left by Mr. Gompers' Son" and "Labor Book." The first consists of clippings which
Samuel Gompers and R. Lee Guard in the President's office at AFL headquarters, 1916 or after.
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focus principally on Gompers; they derive from a large number of newspapers. While they span the period from 1886 to 1902, most date from between 1895 and 1900. The second scrapbook contains articles from a smaller group of newspapers, primarily those printed in the Boston area. They date from between 1899 and 1905, with most published after the turn of the century. They generally concern the Boston labor movement. Both books are in poor condition; their pages and clippings are brittle and crumbling with age.

Organization: Generally the clippings are arranged chronologically, but there are many exceptions to this, particularly in the first book.

Finding Aids: The Gompers Papers project staff prepared tables of contents for both scrapbooks, giving, where possible, the title, source, and date of publication for each clipping; on the microfilm each contents list precedes the scrapbook to which it pertains. The date or source of some clippings in the first scrapbook was not apparent on their front; it was sometimes possible to supply this information by reading the reverse sides of the clippings through the nearly transparent onionskin pages to which they are mounted. Where an article continued on the reverse side of a clipping, this material was transcribed.

D. AFL-CIO Microfilm Files

The reels in this section are copies of reels of 16mm microfilm held at the headquarters of the AFL-CIO; that original film was made by members of the Federation staff for in-house use. The documents could not be refilmed for this edition because the Federation had discarded them. The AFL-CIO microfilm is flawed in a number of respects. The jamming of the rotary camera during the original filming resulted in blurred images of some of the documents. Other pages were filmed at incorrect light settings and for this reason are virtually unreadable. Furthermore, the original print of the film, the master negative, has been scratched as a result of serving as the Federation’s use copy since the 1950’s.

The AFL staff filmed the documents on these reels at a high reduction ratio, approximately 40 to 1. Consequently, the images are quite small. Using a microfilm reader with a high magnification lens, preferably about 40x, will make reading them easier. The AFL staff filmed the documents in a duo-format arrangement. This means that each reel contains two parallel rows or “tracks” of images. “Track 1” reads from the beginning of the film to the end. “Track 2” runs parallel to “Track 1” and reads from the end of the film to the beginning.

For this edition the Federation’s 16mm film was duplicated on 35mm stock. To facilitate locating specific items or files, consecutive numbers were stamped at regular intervals along the margins of these copies of the film. Because of the duo-format arrangement, there are two sets of these margin numbers. The numbers 1000 to 1999, printed along one margin, relate to the documents on “Track 1.” The numbers 2000 to 2999, printed along the opposite margin, relate to the documents on “Track 2.”
Guide to a Joint Microfilm Publication

A Sample of the AFL-CIO Film as Published in This Edition

1. AFL Microfilm Convention File, 1909-1924; [1925] (9 reels)

Description: The AFL-CIO's microfilm Convention File contains documents pertinent to issues considered by the Federation's conventions. It consists of correspondence, reports, convention resolutions, and other records. The first nine reels of the Convention File, containing records of the 1909 through 1924 conventions, and a portion of the 1925 convention records, were duplicated for publication in this microfilm edition; each reel contains some 8,000 to 9,000 pages of documents.

The microfilm convention records complement the printed convention Proceedings. The Proceedings detail the conventions' consideration of resolutions, reports, and other matters; the microfilm Convention File for each convention consists of documents related to these activities. For example, the Proceedings of the 1909 convention indicate that it directed the officers of the Federation to press for passage of eight-hour legislation by Congress. The microfilm records of the 1909 convention contain a file entitled "Eight-Hour Bill"; the file consists of documents resulting from the convention's action. It includes extracts from Executive Council meetings that considered the legislation (January and March 1910), Gompers' circular letter to organized labor and the responses to it (January and February 1910), the text of a bill presented to Congress, and Gompers' correspondence on the subject with members of Congress (March through May 1910).

Organization: AFL staff members organized the microfilm chronologically by convention and subdivided the records for the respective conventions into individual files by topic. They prepared cover sheets which precede most files on the film and identify their contents.

Finding Aids: The Gompers Papers project staff prepared tables of contents which appear at the beginning of each reel of convention records microfilm published in this edition. Briefly, the contents give the name of each file on a particular reel, indicate how the file's subject is listed in the index to the printed Proceedings of a convention, and specify the location of the file on the reel in terms of consecutive numbers stamped along the margins of the film. The file names in the contents derive from the cover sheets, prepared by the AFL staff, which precede each file on the microfilm. The reference to the subject entry in the Proceedings index is in brackets; when
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the entry was the same as the file name appearing on the film, it is not repeated in the contents list. The following entry is from the table of contents for the 1909 Convention File:

96. [Civil Service] ..........1001.

It indicates that the cover sheet preceding the file carries the title “96”; that the subject, Resolution 96, can be found in the index of the 1909 convention’s Proceedings under the heading “Civil Service”; and that the file is located at margin number 1001 on the film.

2. AFL Microfilm National and International Union File, 1890-1937; [1938-1948] (13 reels)

Description: The AFL-CIO’s microfilm National and International Union File consists of correspondence and other documents relating to affiliates of the Federation. The first thirteen reels of the National and International Union File, containing records dating up to approximately 1937, and a portion of the records from 1938 to 1948, were duplicated for publication in this microfilm edition; each reel contains from 6,000 to 9,000 pages of documents.

Organization: For the most part, the AFL staff organized the documents on these reels by union, each of which was assigned a file number. For example, the first reel contains the records of six unions: Actors, Allied Metal Mechanics, Bakery Workers, Barbers, Blacksmiths, and Boilermakers; AFL staff members numbered these unions’ files one through six. They filmed the files of the Federation’s early affiliates in alphabetical sequence based on key words in the unions’ names, and the files of later affiliates in the approximate sequence of their affiliation. They generally subdivided the records of each affiliate into as many as three files, which they designated the “White,” the “Blue,” and the “Bonds” or “Red” files. The White files contain correspondence of the Federation with union headquarters; the Blue files, correspondence with local organizations of a union; and the Bonds or Red files, documents relating to the bonding of union officials. The Federation staff prepared cover sheets which precede most files on the film and identify the union to which the records in the file pertain.

A small number of documents are not grouped by union; the AFL collected some twenty files on the first reel of this series of film under the title, “Miscellaneous Information regarding Nationals.” These files relate to such subjects as the eight-hour day, salaries of union officers and union wage scales, the affiliation of unions with the AFL, and the Paris Peace Conference.

Finding Aids: The editor prepared tables of contents which appear at the beginning of each reel of the AFL-CIO’s microfilm National and International Union File published in this edition. The contents list the files of each union on a particular reel, the inclusive dates of the documents they contain, and the location of these records on the reel in terms of consecutive numbers stamped in the margins of the film. The file names and dates were taken from the cover sheets that the AFL staff prepared and placed before
Sketch of Samuel Gompers addressing a convention of the Cigar Makers' International Union, from the *Detroit Free Press*, October 18, 1896, Scrapbook 1, Reel 24.

each file on the microfilm. The following entry is from the table of contents for the first reel in this series:

[6.] Boilermakers: 1901-1937
   White File: 1901-1937 ........................................ 2457
   Blue File: 1900-1937 ........................................ 2663
   Bonds: 1900-1937 ........................................ 2742.

It indicates that the AFL staff assigned the number "6" to the Boilermakers' files; this number appears on many of the documents in the Boilermakers' records. Correspondence between the Boilermakers and the AFL can be found on the film beginning at margin number 2457; correspondence between local organizations of the Boilermakers and the AFL, beginning at margin number 2663; and the documents relating to bonding, beginning at margin number 2742.

To assist the researcher in locating the files of a particular union, the editor compiled a master index of all union files on the microfilm National and International Union File and the microfilm Jurisdiction File reels in this edition; a copy appears on each of these reels preceding the table of contents.
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3. AFL Microfilm Jurisdiction File, 1896-1924 (10 reels)

Description: The AFL-CIO’s microfilm Jurisdiction File contains correspondence and other documents relating to jurisdictional disputes involving affiliates of the Federation. The disputes contest such issues as the membership of workers in one or another union, or the work that might be performed by the members of a particular union. The Gompers-era records contained on the first ten reels of the Jurisdiction File were duplicated for publication in this microfilm edition; they date from 1896 through 1924. Only the Gompers-era portions of these ten reels are being published, however. For reasons of confidentiality, and under terms of the publication agreement between the AFL-CIO and the Samuel Gompers Papers project, the editor deleted the post-Gompers records, dating from 1925 to approximately 1950, from these copies of the film. For example, the Actors’ records on the first reel of the AFL-CIO’s original microfilm consist of fourteen files of documents, each file relating to a specific dispute. The four files from the Gompers era could be published; the ten dating from after 1924 could not. These were excised from the copy of the film prepared for publication. The original master negatives of the microfilm Jurisdiction File at the AFL-CIO remain complete.

Organization: AFL staff members organized most of the documents on these reels by union; they filmed the main files of the unions in alphabetical sequence based on key words in the unions’ names. For example, the first reel contains the main files of ten unions identified as the Actors, Bakery Workers, Bill Posters, Blacksmiths, Boilermakers, Bookbinders, Boot and Shoe Workers, Brewery Workers, Brick and Clay Workers, and Bricklayers. They subdivided each of these main files into individual case files relating to specific disputes of a given union with other organizations. The Federation staff prepared cover sheets which precede each main file on the film; these identify which union’s records the file contains and enumerate the case files included in that main file. For example, the main file of the Blacksmiths’ union includes case files of Gompers-era disputes with the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers, the Machinists, the Allied Metal Mechanics, and the Tunnel and Subway Constructors, as well as a Miscellaneous Jurisdiction File containing records of other disputes. The editor deleted the records dating later than 1924 from each main file.

On the tenth reel of this series, the AFL staff collected a small number of files relating to the Building Trades Department, the Metal Trades Department, and miscellaneous cases considered by the Executive Council and Federation conventions.

Finding Aids: The editor prepared tables of contents which appear at the beginning of each reel of the AFL-CIO’s microfilm Jurisdiction File as published in this edition. The contents identify the main files for each union on a particular reel, list the case files they contain, and specify their location on the reel in terms of consecutive numbers stamped along the margins of the film. The file names were taken from the cover sheets that the AFL staff prepared and placed before each main file on the microfilm. The following
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entry is from the table of contents for the first reel of this series:

Blacksmiths..........................................................1123
v. Bridge and Structural Iron Workers.................1123
v. Machinists......................................................1145
v. Metal Mechanics, Allied.................................1154
v. Tunnel and Subway Constructors.....................1184
Miscellaneous Jurisdiction File.........................1244.

It indicates that the main file for the Blacksmiths begins at margin number 1123, and that the case files relating to disputes with the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers, the Machinists, the Allied Metal Mechanics, and the Tunnel and Subway Constructors, and the Miscellaneous Jurisdiction File begin at margin numbers 1123, 1145, 1154, 1184, and 1244, respectively.

To assist the researcher in locating the files of a particular union, the editor compiled a master index of all union files on the microfilm Jurisdiction File and the microfilm National and International Union File reels in this edition; a copy appears on each of these reels preceding the table of contents.

4. AFL Microfilm Circular and Neostyle File, 1906-1937 (1 reel)

Description: The AFL-CIO's microfilm Circular and Neostyle File consists of circular letters, news releases, and conference minutes. This microfilm edition reproduces the first reel of the Circular and Neostyle File; it contains documents dating from 1906 to 1937.

Organization: The AFL staff organized the documents on this reel chronologically.
COME! COME!

Samuel Gompers

President of American Federation of Labor

And one of the most prominent and eminent figures in the labor world, will be in Ouray on

Thursday, May 18, '99

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon and will leave the next day at 10:30 a.m. During this brief stay an opportunity will be given the public in general to meet him.

A Procession of Various Trades Unions

And citizens generally, accompanied by the band, will meet President Gompers at the train and escort him to the hotel. At 8 o'clock he will address the people at Armory Hall, after which he will hold an informal reception at the Beaumont parlor.

Labor's Great Chieftain

President Gompers is a man of national fame. He wields a power through the federated trades unions that extends to every part of the fabric of our common wealth. He holds the destiny of our very industries in his keeping. That he is true to his trust is an axiom, keeping always the elevation of the laboring class in the foreground, and consequently the prosperity of the great middle class. He can call upon the entire fabric of federated labor to assist any part of it, and by these silent, irresistible forces possesses a means for the elevation and betterment of humanity second to no man on earth. We earnestly invite all persons to come and hear and meet him, and get a true insight into the province of organized labor and its far-reaching ramifications.

EVERYBODY IS INVITED

Handbill announcing Gompers' visit to Ouray, Colorado, May 18-19, 1899, Scrapbook 1, Reel 24.
REEL LIST

Reel     Contents

Early Federation Records and
The Papers of Gabriel Edmonston
1. Minutes and Other Records, 1881-1888
   Account Book, 1886-1890
   Edmonston Papers, 1881-1918

Executive Council Records

Minutes
2. January 1893–November 1905
3. March 1906–January 1911
4. June 1911–February 1915
5. April 1915–December 1918
6. May 1919–August 1921
7. November 1921–December 1924

Vote Books
8. December 1892–August 1903
9. August 1903–December 1906
11. July 1909–August 1911
12. August 1911–February 1914
13. February 1914–March 1915
14. March 1915–May 1916
15. May 1916–April 1918
16. April 1918–July 1921
17. August 1921–May 1923
18. May 1923–December 1924

Correspondence
19. Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1901-1924
   Frank Morrison Letters, 1911-1914

Files of the Office of the President
(Also see reels 59-137)

Letterbooks
20. Advisory Commission, Council of National Defense,
    February–June 1917
21. Advisory Commission, Council of National Defense,
    June–December 1917
22. Advisory Commission, Council of National Defense,
    December 1917–February 1920
23. Miscellaneous Correspondence,
    April 1907–September 1924
    American Alliance for Labor and Democracy,
    July 1917–May 1918

24. Scrapbooks, 1886–1905
American Federation of Labor Records

Reel

Contents

AFL-CIO Microfilm Files

AFL Microfilm Convention File

25  1909, 1910, and 1911 Conventions
26  1911, 1912, and 1913 Conventions
27  1913, 1914, and 1915 Conventions
28  1915, 1916, and 1917 Conventions
29  1918 and 1919 Conventions
30  1919, 1920, and 1921 Conventions
31  1921 and 1922 Conventions
32  1922, 1923, and 1924 Conventions
33  1923, 1924, and 1925 Conventions

AFL Microfilm National and International Union File*

34  Miscellaneous Information regarding Nationals
    Actors, 1900-1937
    Metal Mechanics, 1901-1906
    Bakery Workers, 1901-1937
    Barbers, 1901-1937
    Blacksmiths, 1901-1937
    Boilermakers, 1901-1937
    Bookbinders, [1902-1937]
    Boot and Shoe Workers, 1901-1937
    Brewery Workers, 1900-1937
    Brick and Clay Workers, 1901-1937
    Bridge and Structural Iron Workers, 1901-1937
    Broom Makers, 1901-1937
    Carpenters [Beginning], 1890-1937
    Carpenters [Conclusion], 1910-1937
    Amalgamated Carpenters, 1901-1913
    Carriage and Wagon Workers, 1901-1920
    Wood Carvers, 1901-1937
    Chain Makers, 1901-1911
    Cigar Makers, 1901-1937
    Retail Clerks, 1900-1937
    Coopers' International Union, 1899-1937
    Core Makers, 1902-1903
    Lace Curtain Operatives, 1902-1936
    Teamsters [Beginning], 1901-1937
    Teamsters [Conclusion], 1901-1937
    Electrical Workers, 1901-1937

*File names and dates in this series were taken from the cover sheets that the AFL staff prepared and placed before each file on the microfilm. Bracketed information was supplied by the editor.
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Reel  Contents

37 (con't.)  Coal Hoisting Engineers, 1901-1903
              Steel Plate Transferrers; Siderographers, 1906-1937
              Operating Engineers, 1904-1937
              Amalgamated Society of Engineers, 1901-1903
              Watch Case Engravers, 1900-1912
              Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen; Firemen and Oilers,
                   1901-1937
              Steam Fitters, [1901-1912]
              United Garment Workers, 1901-1937
              Ladies' Garment Workers [Beginning], 1900-1937

38  Ladies' Garment Workers [Conclusion], 1900-1937
    Glass Bottle Blowers, 1901-1937
    Flint Glass Workers, 1901-1937
    Amalgamated Glass Workers, 1902-1915
    Granite Cutters, 1902-1937
    Table Knife Grinders, 1902-1911
    Hatters, 1901-1937
    Horseshoers, 1901-1937
    Hotel and Restaurant Employees, 1901-1937
    Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, 1902-1936
    Jewelry Workers, 1901-1937

39  Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers, 1901-1937
    Laundry Workers; Shirt, Waist and Laundry Workers,
                   1901-1937
    Amalgamated Leather Workers, 1901-1914
    Leather Workers, 1902-1937
    Longshoremen, 1901-1937
    Machinists, 1901-1937
    Meat Cutters [Beginning], 1901-1937

40  Meat Cutters [Conclusion], 1901-1937
    Metal Polishers, 1901-1937
    Sheet Metal Workers, 1901-1937
    United Metal Workers, 1901-1905
    United Mine Workers, 1901-1937
    Mineral Mine Workers, 1902-1904
    Molders, 1901-1937
    Musicians, 1901-1937
    Oil and Gas Well Workers, 1903-1905
    Painters, 1901-1937
    Paper Makers, 1901-1937
    Pattern Makers, 1901-1937

41  Plumbers, 1899-1937
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Reel  Contents

41 (con't.)  Plate Printers, 1901-1937  
Printing Pressmen, 1897-1937  
Potters, 1901-1937  
Order of Railway Clerks, 1901-1902  
Street and Electric Railway Employees, 1901-1937  
Railroad Telegraphers, 1901-1937  
Maintenance-of-Way Employees, 1900-1937  
Seafarers; National Seamen's Union, 1901-1937  
Spinners, 1901-1920  
Stage Employees, 1901-1937

42  Stove Mounters, 1901-1937  
Tailors' Union, 1901-1937  
Mosaic and Encaustic Tile Layers, 1901-1918  
Tin Plate Workers, 1901-1913  
Meat Cutters, 1914-1937  
Tobacco Workers, 1900-1937  
Trunk and Bag Workers, 1901-1917  
Typographical Union, 1901-1937  
Upholsterers' Union, 1901-1937  
Watch Case Makers' Union, 1901-1903  
Elastic Goring Weavers; Elastic Web Weavers, 1901-1927  
American Wire Weavers, 1901-1937  
Woodworkers, 1901-1912  
Paving Cutters, 1901-1937  
Car Workers' Association, 1901-1912  
Foundry Employees, 1904-1937  
Operative Plasterers, 1901-1937  
Blast Furnace Workers and Smelters, 1901-1906  
National Paper Hangers' Protective and Beneficial Association, 1901-1902  
United Textile Workers; International Union of Textile Workers; American Federation of Textile Operatives [Beginning], 1901-1937

43  United Textile Workers; International Union of Textile Workers; American Federation of Textile Operatives [Conclusion], 1901-1937  
Amalgamated Window Glass Workers, 1906-1914  
Powder and High Explosive Workers, 1902-1937  
Piano and Organ Workers' International Union, 1901-1936  
Marble, Stone and Slate Polishers; Marble Workers, 1902-1937  
Compressed Air and Foundation Workers, 1904-1918  
Stereotypers, 1902-1937
Reel  Contents
43 (con't.) Window Glass Snappers, 1902-1908
        Tube Workers, 1902-1904
        Post Office Clerks, [1908-1937]
        International Association of Sign Writers of America,
           1901-1902
        Shipwrights, Joiners and Caulkers, 1902-1913
        Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, 1901-1902
        Brushmakers' International Union, 1904-1918
        International Association of Fur Workers, 1904-1937
        Paper Box, Bag and Novelty Workers, 1903-1907
        International Pilots' Association, 1903-1904
        Photo Engravers, 1904-1937
        Special Order Clothing Makers, 1902-1903
        Railway Clerks, 1907-1937
        Asbestos Workers, 1904-1937
        Cutting Die and Cutter Makers, 1904-1922
        Building Laborers' International Protective Union,
           1901-1902
        Brotherhood of Stationary Engineers, 1902
        National Mine Managers' and Assistants' Mutual Aid
           Association, 1902-1907
        United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers, 1902-1934

44        Sawsmills' Union of North America, 1902-1924 (1926)
        Commercial Telegraphers, 1902-1937
        Gold Beaters, 1902-1909
        Machine Printers and Color Mixers, 1902-1923
        Pocket Knife Blade Grinders, 1905-1917
        Print Cutters, 1902-1923
        Flour and Cereal Mill Employees, 1902-1906
        Amalgamated Rubber Workers, 1902-1905
        International Glove Workers' Union, 1902-1937
        International Alliance of Bill Posters and Billers of America,
           1903-1937
        Glass House Employees, 1903-1907
        Mattress, Spring and Bedding Workers, 1904-1905
        Freight Handlers, 1903-1915
        International Shingle Weavers' Union: International Union
           of Shingle Weavers, Sawmill Workers and Woodsmen,
           1903-1918
        Machine Textile Printers' Association of America, 1903-1907
        Brotherhood of Railway Expressmen of America, 1903-1904
        Hod Carriers, Building and Common Laborers' Union,
           1902-1937
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**Reel Contents**

44 (con’t.) International Association of Railway Clerks, 1903-1909
International Union of Elevator Constructors, 1903-1937
International Slate and Tile Roofers’ Union, 1903-1919
Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers, 1906-1919
United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers, 1919-1937
American Brotherhood of Slate Workers; Slate Quarrymen, Splitters and Cutters; International Union of Slate Workers, 1903-1917
International Brotherhood of Tip Printers; Hat Tip Printers, 1903-1918
Quarry Workers’ International Union, 1903-1937
American Brotherhood of Cement Workers, 1903-1915
Woodsmen and Saw Mill Workers; Brotherhood of Timber Workers, 1905-1913
Tackmakers’ International Union, 1903-1905

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International Union of Pavers and Rammermen; Pavers, Rammermen, Flag Layers, Bridge and Stone Curb Setters, 1905-1937
Lithographers, 1906-1937
Lake Pilots’ Protective Association, 1906-1907
Switchmen’s Union of North America, 1906-1937
Lobster Fishermen, 1907-1909
Stone Cutters, 1907-1937
Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers, 1909-1937
Lithographic Press Feeders, 1896-1917
Tunnel and Subway Constructors’ International Union, 1910-1929
Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, 1907-1937
Western Federation of Miners; Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, 1910-1937
Diamond Workers, 1912-1937
Railway Express Messengers, 1912-1913
Railroad Signalmen, 1914-1928
Railway Postal Clerks, 1914-1917
Steam Shovel and Dredgemen, 1915-1919
Masters, Mates and Pilots, 1916-1937
American Federation of Teachers, 1916-1937
Bricklayers, 1902-1937
Timber Workers; Shingle Weavers, 1917-1923
National Federation of Federal Employees, 1917-1932
Letter Carriers, 1917-1937
Marine Engineers, 1917-1923

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Reel   Contents
45 (con't.) Railway Mail Association, 1917-1937
       International Association of Fire Fighters, 1918-1937
       National Window Glass Workers, 1918-1928
       Draftsmen, 1918-1937
       Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers [Beginning],
           1918-1937
46       Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers [Conclusion],
           1918-1937
       Steel and Copper Plate Engravers, 1918-1925
       Railroad Patrolmen, 1919-1923
       Sleeping Car Conductors, 1919-1937
       Rural Letter Carriers, 1920-1937
       Building Service Employees, 1921-1937
       International Union of Fruit and Vegetable Workers,
           1921-1922
       International Metal Engravers' Union, 1921-1937
       United Wall Paper Craftsmen and Workers, 1923-1937
       Window Glass Cutters and Flatteners' Association,
           1925-1930
       Window Glass Cutters' League of America, 1928-1937
       Airline Pilots' Association, 1931-1937
       Sheep Shearers' Union of North America, 1932-1937
       Government Employees, 1932-1937
       Master Mechanics, 1933-1937
       Friendly Society of Engravers, 1933-1935
       Amalgamated Clothing Workers, 1933-1937
       Flat Glass Workers, 1934-1937
       United Automobile Workers, 1935-1937
       Rubber Workers, 1935-1937
       Sleeping Car Porters, 1936-1938
       Newspaper Guild, 1936-1937
       State, County and Municipal Employees, 1936-1937
       Cleaning and Dye House Workers, 1936-1937
       Ladies' Hand Bag, Pocketbook and Novelty Workers, 1937
       Post Office and Railway Mail Laborers, 1937
       Actors and Artistes, 1938-1948
       Bakery Workers, 1938-1948
       Barbers, 1938-1948
       Blacksmiths, 1938-1948
       Boilermakers, 1938-1948
       Bookbinders, 1938-1948
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Samuel Gompers. 1917.
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
RECORDS:

THE SAMUEL GOMPERS ERA

PART 2

Records Held by the
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Edited by Harold L. Miller

A Project of
The State Historical Society of Wisconsin
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INTRODUCTION

The American Federation of Labor Records: The Samuel Gompers Era, Part 2 was prepared under a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. It is the fifth Commission-supported microfilm documentary publication project undertaken by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The Society is extremely grateful for the Commission’s continued support for the Society’s program of disseminating its resources.

This project was begun in early 1975. Indeed it was nearly completed when the Society approached the Samuel Gompers Papers at the University of Maryland and Pace University with the idea of producing a cooperative, and much more comprehensive, edition. Combining these two efforts was not without its problems. However, the Society is convinced that the usefulness of the combined edition more than compensates for the difficulties encountered in its production.

A substantial number of people made valuable contributions to the Historical Society’s project. Numerous student assistants performed the tedious but necessary tasks of checking documents, editing microfilm, and preparing index and calendar entries. The contributions of three of these individuals, Dexter Arnold, Claudia Backus, and Nelson Jackson, were particularly valuable. W. Robert Austin of the Society’s microfilm laboratory supervised the production of the master negative microfilm, and the camera work was ably carried out by Christine Beck. Former Society Director James Morton Smith, and his successor, Richard A. Erney, provided a particularly high level of institutional support, and Associate Director Donald W. Wilson gave a substantial amount of his time at a critical juncture in the project. Thanks are due Reference Archivist Josephine L. Harper for the helpful suggestions and criticism she provided at various stages in the project; and to the rest of the Archives Division staff for their support. Finally, special thanks are due Wisconsin State Archivist and project director F. Gerald Ham. The project benefitted greatly from his experience with microform documentary publication, and from the guidance and direction he provided.

Harold L. Miller
SCOPE AND CONTENT

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN is the repository for a large collection of AFL records dating 1878 and 1885-1963. Reproduced here is that part of the collection which documents the era of Samuel Gompers’ leadership of the Federation. These records date primarily from the formation of the Federation in 1886 until Gompers’ death in December 1924. Just two items predate 1886, and only a few letters and other papers, mainly concerning memorials to Gompers, are dated from 1925 through 1937. The Society-held records of the Gompers era are divided into major series and subseries as follows:

A. Files of the Office of the President
   1. General Correspondence, 1888-1937
   2. Speeches and Writings, 1894-1925
   3. Conferences, 1901-1926, 1930
   4. Hearings, 1899-1924
   5. Reference Material, 1878, 1886-1936
   6. Appointment Records, 1902-1924

B. National and International Union Correspondence, 1885, 1890-1911

C. Mining Department Records, 1911-1915

The strength of the collection is its documentation of Gompers’ own activities. His general correspondence, speeches and writings, conferences, and congressional testimony make up the vast majority of the documents. Moreover, the National and International Union Correspondence, although not part of the Files of the Office of the President, consists largely of letters to and from Gompers.
INDEX AND CALENDARS

IN THE COURSE of this project, special finding aids were prepared for
several segments of the Files of the Office of the President. These include an
index to the general correspondence and detailed calendars of the speeches
and writings, conferences, and hearings. The index shows the names of
addressees and signers of all letters and documents in the general corre-
respondence and lists the dates of all items addressed to or signed by them.
The calendars provide the date and a brief description, and show the reel
and frame number location of each item in those subseries. Since these
finding aids were too lengthy to be printed in the guide, they have all been
reproduced on reel 58 (the first reel in Part 2) of the microfilm. When used
in conjunction with the narrative descriptions of records, these finding aids
greatly facilitate access to the collection.

In addition, each reel, except those in the general correspondence and
reference materials segments of the Files of the Office of the President, has a
detailed table of contents. In the case of the president’s speeches and writ-
ings, conferences, and hearings, these repeat the calendar entries for that
reel. For the others, the tables list the file headings or major divisions in the
series and show their frame number locations on the reel.
DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

A. Files of the Office of the President

This series corresponds closely to what the AFL-CIO General File staff termed "President Gompers’ Files," but the arrangement has been altered from the original file order. The general correspondence was once organized by subject but was received by the Historical Society in a disorganized state after being weeded and partially microfilmed by the AFL-CIO. At the Society the items were placed in strict chronological order. This arrangement has been maintained in the microfilm edition except that an effort has been made to reunite enclosures with covering letters. Other changes include interfiling addresses, magazine articles, and press interviews and statements to form one subseries (speeches and writings) and combining press clippings, biographical material, and miscellaneous reference material to form another subseries (reference material).

1. General Correspondence, 1888-1937 (51 reels)

The general correspondence is as varied in content as it is voluminous. Although there are substantial numbers of copies of outgoing letters, it contains primarily incoming correspondence* and generally deals with public issues confronting the Federation (politics, legislation, legal proceedings, relations with foreign labor groups, World War I, etc.). In addition to correspondence, the files contain resolutions, occasional reports, clippings, and other types of material. An index to all signers and recipients of letters and documents has been prepared and is included on reel 58 of the microfilm.

1888-1905

Correspondence for the Federation’s formative years is sparse. The earliest concentration of material deals with the European labor movement. Between 1888 and 1892 there is a substantial exchange of letters between Gompers and August E. Keufer of the Fédération Français du Travailleurs du Libre, repeated invitations for Gompers to attend the International Labor Congress in London in 1888, and letters regarding a proposed international labor congress to be held in Chicago during the 1893 World’s Fair.

* Most of Gompers’ outgoing correspondence is contained in his letterbooks held by the Library of Congress.
Labor Should be a Power in Congress

Outside on the Doorstep

The real man should not have to stand on the outside with his hat in his hand and humbly knock at the door.

**

“We have too many lawyers in Congress now. It is time the voice of labor was heard. If I go to Congress there will be one man on the inside who will hear the knock of the man on the outside.”

William J. Cary, in an address to the union of Telegraph Operators.

**

William J. Cary, Candidate for Congress from the Fourth District, is a union man. He was a telegraph operator before he was elected alderman from the seventeenth ward, and belonged to Local No. 2 of the Commercial Telegraphers Union of America. He helped organize the local union in 1892, and was one of the charter members. He belonged to the union when he was elected alderman, and carried his union card in his pocket when he walked into the common council. He always fought for the people’s rights when he was in the common council. He was twice elected a delegate to the Federation Trades Council, during the time he was alderman. He still belongs to his union and if he goes to Congress he will carry his union card in his pocket. Vote for the man who will vote for your rights.

AFL Collection SHSW-WH0 (X2) 30007

This illustration was used on the back of the campaign stationery of William F. Cary, a successful congressional candidate from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1906.
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In December 1894 Gompers was defeated for the AFL presidency by John McBride of the United Mine Workers. The election itself goes unnoted in the correspondence except for a copy of a single newspaper clipping. A small amount of McBride's 1895 correspondence is the only other evidence of his year in office.

Gompers regained the presidency in December 1895. The 1896 and 1897 files include information on the silver issue, labor problems in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and black workers in the Iron Molders Union (see letters of Martin Fox and W. S. Griscom). Most prominent in the 1898 correspondence are letters concerning an eight-hour law before Congress, and in 1901 the main concerns are alien contract labor, Chinese exclusion, and labor problems in Buffalo, New York. Also in 1901 is the first correspondence with the National Civic Federation and its secretary, Ralph Easley. Initial evidence of Gompers' long interest in Latin American labor affairs comes in the 1901-1904 period in correspondence with AFL organizer Santiago Iglesias, and Governor William Hunt of Puerto Rico.


1906-1908

In March 1906, the AFL issued labor's "Bill of Grievances" and the 1906 correspondence strongly reflects a preoccupation with politics, congressional elections, and pending legislation. On February 13 and June 18 Gompers reported to the Executive Council on the progress of eight-hour legislation, compulsory pilottage, ship subsidy, immigration, child labor, and other legislative interests. The June letters also contain a state by state listing of union men who were members of the state legislatures. Letters between Gompers and prolabor congressmen such as George A. Pearse, Charles H. Grosvenor, John T. Hunt, and Thomas Spight are also prominent. Other letters of interest include exchanges regarding Chinese immigration with Robert Wood of the Immigration Restriction League and Ralph Easley.

Between July and the November election the political nature of the correspondence is more pronounced. The Federation office became a virtual clearinghouse for information on congressmen and congressional candidates. The AFL did not officially endorse candidates, but upon request it provided a list of labor-related bills considered during an incumbent's tenure, and an analysis of his votes on these measures. The preelection period contains hundreds of these requests and replies concerning candidates from all over the nation. Labor's strongest efforts were directed toward unseating Congressman Charles E. Littlefield of Maine and Joseph G. Cannon of Illinois. Correspondence with D. J. McIlwicuddy, Andrew Furuseth, J. D. Pierce, George W. Perkins, John B. Lennon, and others document these campaigns. Additional records of interest include the AFL's annual financial report and Gompers' quarterly report to the Executive
American Federation of Labor Records

Council, both dated September 17, and extensive notes, in Gompers’ handwriting, from a September 27 Chicago meeting of the Progressive Alliance and the Independent League. Other important correspondents of the last half of 1906 include Max Morris of the Retail Clerks, William D. Mahon of the Amalgamated Association of Streetcar Men, Daniel J. Keefe of the Longshoremen, Marine, and Transport Workers, and AFL Organizer Herman Robinson.

Politics also runs heavily through the 1907 files. Letters requesting and giving information on congressmen form a large percentage of the year’s correspondence. By the end of the year Gompers and the AFL were also involved in a movement to deny William H. Taft the Republican presidential nomination. Other important topics in 1907 include immigration, arbitration, and the Danbury Hatters and Bucks Stove injunctions.

From late December 1906 until January 15, 1907, Gompers was in Cuba for health reasons and for an examination of the island’s labor situation. A letter to Daniel J. Keefe dated January 22 conveys Gompers’ impressions of Cuban labor. In mid-April 1907, Gompers spoke at an international conference in New York to consider the use of arbitration in international disputes. Prior to the conference he polled many union leaders on the arbitration question, and their responses make up much of the March and April correspondence. In September Gompers was approached by Boughton Brandenberg, apparently an agent of the National Association of Manufacturers, with a blackmail scheme designed to induce Gompers to resign the AFL presidency. The files for September through December contain considerable information on the incident.

The extent to which the AFL had embraced its political role is clearly reflected in the 1908 correspondence. Again prominent is information on congressional voting records and requests for support from nonincumbent office seekers. Moreover, Gompers worked vigorously on Democrat William Jennings Bryan’s behalf and the AFL had a full-time representative, M. Grant Hamilton, at the Democratic national headquarters. Gompers’ reasons for supporting Bryan are explained in a July 31, 1908, letter to John H. Brinkman, Exchanges with Hamilton, Democratic National Committee Chairman Norman Mack, and Edward N. Nockles of the Chicago Federation of Labor are especially important in showing Gompers’ role in the election. Virtual endorsement of the Democratic candidate also elicited considerable reaction both inside and outside the ranks of labor. Most labor leaders whose comments appear in the general correspondence seemed to agree with Gompers. One exception was Thomas J. Dolan of the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel and Dredgemen who favored Taft, an honorary member of the Brotherhood. A greater degree of protest is represented in the letters from rank and file union members. Some, such as Ira Giltner representing a carpenters’ local in Columbus, Indiana, protested any active involvement in politics, while protests showing socialist leanings are exemplified in letters from Jerome Mark and John Napier. Other notable correspondence from the period includes a long June 3 letter from Thomas Tracy of the AFL Legislative Committee detailing the progress of several labor-supported legislative matters; letters between Bryan and
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Gompers concerning the Democratic platform and other issues; a September 8 Gompers memo on the campaign in Joseph G. Cannon's district; and a November 4 letter from John B. Lennon concerning the lack of rank-and-file labor support for Bryan.

1909-1912

The volume of correspondence drops noticeably beginning in 1909. Three topics, the Bucks Stove and Range court case, Gompers' trip to Europe, and problems with United States Steel dominate the period.

On December 23, 1908, Gompers, Frank Morrison, and John Mitchell were sentenced to prison terms for contempt in connection with the Bucks Stove case. Reaction to the decision makes up a large portion of the correspondence of late December 1908, and January 1909. Especially interesting is a December 24 letter from Ralph Easley discussing the possibility that the verdict and sentence were influenced by Gompers' role in the 1908 presidential campaign.

Much correspondence in the first half of 1909 (including exchanges with Ben Tillett of the British Dock Workers Union, Carl Legien, secretary of the International Federation of the Secretariats of the Trade Union Centers, and German labor leader A. von Elm) deals with Gompers' European trip. Gompers was abroad from July through mid-October and attended the General Federation of Trade Unions meeting in Blackpool, England, the Conference of International Trade Union Centers in Paris, and the British Trade Union Congress in Ipswich. A June 18 letter from Gompers to the Executive Council gives a complete itinerary. Information on Gompers' European activities is found in his letters to his secretary, R. Lee Guard, and a long memo dated July 13.

Correspondence of late 1909, and much of 1910, concerns U. S. Steel's efforts to oust trade unions from its operations. Little information exists on the steel strike itself, but the Federation's subsequent investigation of the corporation and attempts to secure government antitrust action are fairly well documented. Attorneys Frank S. Monnett of Columbus, Ohio, and E. G. Ballard of Gary, Indiana, gathered most of the evidence for possible antitrust suits, and their correspondence forms the best record of the Federation's response to the steel trust.

Election and political correspondence is more limited than in 1906 or 1908, but still forms an important part of the 1910 files. For the first time extensive information on the voting records of senators as well as congressmen is included. Notable Gompers letters in 1910 include one on February 14 concerning a compulsory arbitration bill in Massachusetts; a June 3 letter to AFL Treasurer John B. Lennon regarding Lennon's activities in support of prohibition; and a September 27 letter to John M. Stahl, agent for the Farmer's National Congress, showing Gompers' views on legislation important to agriculturists.

The 1910 and 1911 correspondence also contains scattered information on the National Association of Trades and Workers, a "nonstrike" labor organization backed by breakfast cereal manufacturer C. W. Post. A two-page examination of the organization is dated 1910, and further information is found in letters of John H. Bourne, George Thompson, and George
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McKinley. The 1911 correspondence also contains numerous letters concerning the appointment of a successor to John Mitchell in his National Civic Federation position.

The key issue in the 1911 files is the *Los Angeles Times* bombing. First significant mention of the case is an October 16, 1910, letter from Schuyler Kelly. However, the real concentration of information comes after the April 22, 1911, extradition from Indianapolis of John J. McNamara. Throughout the remainder of 1911 the defense of J. J. and J. B. McNamara and Ortie McManigal, AFL fund raising, and the labor and public reaction to the case dominate the files. Most significant is correspondence of Frank Duffy, the secretary of a conference of national and international unions set up to raise funds and direct legal action in the case, Frank Ryan, chairman of the conference and president of the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers Union, AFL General Legal Council Leo M. Rappaport, and defense attorney Clarence Darrow. Additional information on the AFL’s fund-raising activities is found in letters of George W. Perkins and R. Lee Guard, and a financial statement of the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers’ McNamara Defense Fund dated June 18. A December 1 telegram from Darrow announced the confession of the McNamaras. The confession triggered a flood of sympathetic communications from labor leaders and prominent individuals from other walks of life.

![Telegram](image)

Telegram from Clarence Darrow informing Gompers of the McNamara's confession, December 1, 1911.

The 1912 correspondence is light, and the aftermath of the McNamara case continues as the prime topic. Information includes a summary report of the McNamara Ways and Means Committee, January 6; Frank Morrison's final financial statement for the defense fund, February 7; the fund's final audit, November 8; and an unsigned letter dated April 28 criticizing
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Darrow’s handling of the case and commenting on bribery charges subsequently filed against Darrow and on the backgrounds of several members of his staff.

The election is the other main topic of 1912. Important correspondents in this regard include Arthur Holder, head of the AFL Legislative Committee, Daniel Harris, president of the New York State Federation of Labor, Senator Thomas P. Gore, and John Keegan. Special interest was shown in the Senate campaign of North Carolina Supreme Court Justice Walter Clark. Also of interest is Gompers’ February 15 memo, handwritten during a Bucks Store court session, concerning Judge Daniel T. Wright’s bias, and a March 1 letter to the Legislative Committee concerning amendments for the Wilson anti-injunction bill.

1913-1914

Due in part to Gompers’ ill health, the volume of 1913 correspondence is light. From March through August he was under treatment for an ear ailment and was unable to carry on all his usual activities. In his absence much of the correspondence was routine in nature and handled by Miss Guard.

A theme which runs through the correspondence of 1913 and 1914 is legislative action and the building of a working relationship with the Wilson administration. A report on an early meeting between Gompers and President-elect Wilson is dated December 21, 1912. Several communications in February 1913, deal with the bill to create a cabinet-level Department of Labor and letters from Gompers to Wilson on March 14 and April 30, and to Frank Morrison on April 13, May 20, and December 20 deal with anti-injunction measures. Significant correspondence, especially in the August through October 1914 period, also concerns the seamen’s bill sponsored by Senator Robert M. La Follette.

Correspondence for 1913 and 1914 also includes information on jurisdictional disputes and organizing activities. A dispute within the United Garment Workers and relations between the United Garment Workers and the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union are covered in correspondence of Ralph Easley, AFL Organizer Hugh Frayne, and B. A. Larger. February and March 1914 correspondence, especially of James Duncan, concerns disputes involving the AFL Building Trades Department and the Bricklayers; a March 3, 1914, Frank Morrison letter reports on several Chicago area problems; and a June 2, 1914, letter from Gompers to Morrison describes a dispute between the International Association of Machinists and the Cleveland Federation of Labor.

In June 1914, the National Civic Federation prepared a survey showing the benefits of unionization in various trades. Included were questions on membership, wages, hours, fringe benefits, and other topics. Responses to the questionnaires from numerous national and international unions appear throughout the June and July files.

The first political correspondence of 1914 appears in April, but the election does not become a major concern until August. Correspondence of that month shows a special effort to insure renomination of Congressman Frank Buchanan of Chicago and several letters in September concern the Senate candidacy of Raymond Robins. Most of the political correspondence, how-
American Federation of Labor Records

ever, is in the familiar format of requests for information about an incumbent and replies based on his voting record on measures of interest to labor.

In the last few months of 1914, the European war emerges as a major topic of concern. Starting in August there are expressions of opinion on the war from numerous trade unionists. An example of Gompers' early aversion to the war is found in his August 6 letter to P. T. Daly of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labor Party. Other interesting war-related correspondence includes letters of Carl Legien, British labor leader W. A. Appleton, and Ralph Easley, who was already concerned about the antimilitary activities of various Socialist groups.

Numerous other issues are represented in single or small groups of letters in 1913 and 1914. Following is a listing of some of these topics with the names of correspondents involved with them: immigration, J. Harada and Ellison D. Smith; detective agencies and strike breaking, John P. Frey; anti-AFL attitudes of the Catholic Church in Canada, Frank Duffy; convict labor, Norman Hapgood and Patrick Gilday; Mexico, R. Zuberan; New York State factory inspection, Louis B. Schram; prohibition, Richard P. Hobson; scientific management, Robert F. Hoxie and Paul N. Mazur; and Pipefitters' jurisdictional dispute, E. P. Downey.

1915-1916

An unusually high percentage, perhaps half or more, of 1915's files are made up of copies of outgoing letters. Notable in the early months of 1915 is correspondence with various cabinet members including Secretary of War Newton D. Baker and Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory. Gompers frequently sought redress for specific grievances by forwarding information received at his office to the appropriate cabinet member or government official. In this period, for example, many communications with Baker deal with employee grievances at the arsenal at Rock Island, Illinois, and some exchanges with the attorney general concern the use of marble on the Lincoln Memorial from a firm which violated the government's eight-hour directive. Also prominent in January 1915 is information on New York State workmen's compensation legislation. In the spring and summer of 1915 Gompers was often called on to defend the Clayton Act against critics on both sides, as exemplified by correspondence with former Attorney General George Wickersham, and Margaret Robins of the national Women's Trade Union League. Other important correspondents in the first half of 1915 are the American Federation of Catholic Societies, and Australian Albert Hinchcliffe, who received a detailed explanation of the make-up and role of the "labor group" in Congress.

Correspondence of the summer and fall of 1915 is dominated by the war and related issues. Substantial effort was devoted to countering the work of antiwar labor groups such as Labor's National Peace Council and the Labor Committee of the Friends of Peace Association. Several June through August communications touch on the perplexing question of can, or should, labor use the war production situation for further organization and material gains. Information on alleged German efforts to foment strikes is found in July 14 and 19 Gompers' memos and other communications.
Standing on the festooned dais from left to right are Woodrow Wilson, Samuel Gompers, and Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson at the dedication of the AFL's new headquarters in Washington, D. C. on July 4, 1916.

1916's crisis situation on the Mexican border represents another of the AFL's major concerns. The June files contain an especially heavy volume of correspondence and memos on Mexico. Those involved with the issue include Florence Thorne, John Murray, Chester M. Wright of the New York Call, Mexican President Venustiano Carranza's representative, Edmundo Martinez, and Judge Charles A. Douglas. The AFL's advocacy of Carranza stirred renewed friction with the Catholic Church. In 1916, as in other years, correspondence of Frank Duffy is the key to information on the problem. Also related to the Mexican situation is the call for a Pan-American Federation of Labor, an idea discussed in a memo dated June 23, a July 6 letter addressed to the "Workers of All American Countries," and a July 21 letter to David Lubin.

In June 1916, Gompers attended the two major political conventions and visited Columbus, Ohio, the scene of labor problems involving the Machinists' union. Copies of the AFL's demands submitted to both major party conventions are dated June 1916. Correspondence regarding the 1916 congressional elections is fairly heavy in September and October and follows the familiar pattern of the AFL supplying information on the voting records of incumbent congressmen. Very little information exists on the presidential campaign.

Many letters of August and September 1916 concern J. W. Sullivan's European mission to arrange a postwar international labor conference.
American Federation of Labor Records

Other interesting correspondence for the year includes a letter to Ellen Gates Starr concerning a Chicago garment trades strike; a February 21 letter to Samuel T. Hughes about profit sharing plans; a copy of a September 15 letter from John P. Hart to Homer D. Call regarding organizing in the meat packing industry and importation of black workers; and a letter to Leon Jouhaux concerning the long-term effect of women entering the labor force.

1917-1918

Although only a two-year period, the 1917-1918 letters comprise over one-third the volume of the general correspondence. Nearly all the correspondence concerns the war and related domestic issues. Gompers used his influence and his position on the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense to secure labor appointments to war-related boards and committees, and to settle specific industrial disputes. The subseries contains hundreds of letters from local and national union officials complaining of offenses by government contractors and subcontractors. At the same time, the general correspondence reveals the steps Gompers took to safeguard gains made by labor in the prewar years. His Committee on Labor drafted model federal and state labor legislation and studied the effect on wages of women and blacks entering industrial employment. The work of several subcommittees of the Committee on Labor, including Welfare Work, Industrial Training for the War Emergency, and Women in Industry, is well documented.

Other important topics in the wartime correspondence include the activities of the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy (AALD), several foreign labor missions to the United States, and subsequent United States labor delegations to Europe. Important correspondents who appear throughout the period include Newton D. Baker, William B. Wilson, and other members of the Wilson cabinet; Bernard Baruch, Grosvenor B. Clarkson, W. S. Gifford, Hollis Godfrey, and Daniel Willard of the Advisory Commission; James W. Sullivan, Gompers’ special assistant for Advisory Commission affairs; Robert Maisel and Chester Wright of the AALD; and Ralph Easley and Gertrude Becks of the National Civic Federation and the Committee on Labor.

Many of the letters of January 1917 concern Gompers’ fiftieth wedding anniversary. February correspondence touches on United States and Mexican relations, and especially on efforts by William Randolph Hearst and various oil interests to secure United States intervention. With these exceptions, preparedness and the war dominate the series in the months immediately preceding the United States’ declaration of war. March correspondence contains extensive information on the March 9 meeting of national and international union officers which resulted in the publication of “American Labor’s Position in Peace or in War.” Especially significant is a March 17 letter from James Duncan which discusses several labor leaders’ criticisms of the document, and a highly critical March 30 letter from Teamster Daniel Tobin.

Shortly after the declaration of war, the Council of National Defense, on the recommendation of Gompers’ Committee on Labor, issued a statement
to employers and employees urging that neither take advantage of the war emergency to change existing standards. Reaction to this statement, which was widely interpreted as a "no strike" pledge, makes up a large part of the April and May correspondence.

In the April-July period major activities of the Committee on Labor were subcommittee appointments and drafting legislation for a separation allowance for the dependents of soldiers and sailors. These and other Committee activities are outlined in weekly reports from Gompers to W. S. Gifford. In late April and early May there is information concerning the appointment of a labor representative on a government-sponsored mission to Russia. Record of the trip itself and the findings of the mission are found in the correspondence of James Duncan. June and July letters of Gompers' assistant Arthur Holder largely concern his study of women entering machine shop employment. Letters of May 9 and 16 concern charges by trade union women that they were underrepresented on war-related labor boards and committees. A few letters, including one to F. R. Suduth and one from Herbert Gleitz, touch on problems caused by blacks moving into northern industrial employment. Additional significant topics in the April-July period include the Gompers-Baker agreement on cantonment construction, conscription, the Lever Food Regulation Act, and a jurisdictional dispute between the Carpenters and the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers. Letters of William Hutcheson are important on the cantonment agreement. Hutcheson, president of the Carpenters' union, was critical of the Baker agreement, and throughout the war was a frequent critic of Gompers' cooperation with the administration. A May 4 letter from J. A. Franklin encloses a copy of a company-imposed loyalty oath.

August correspondence with John Spargo, Chester Wright, Robert Maisel, and Herman Robinson includes significant information on the formation of the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy (AALD). The Alliance correspondence also contains data on the activities of the People's Council, an antirwar group which the AALD sought to offset. Also in the August file are several letters concerning the "deportations" of radicals from Bisbee, Arizona. Many other letters from late August through December deal with a major dispute between labor and shipbuilders on the west coast.

Likewise, the fall and winter months of 1917 are heavily taken up with Committee on Labor and AALD affairs. A September 10 letter from Gertrude Beeks Easley* to Mrs. J. Borden Harriman deals at length with allegations that Gompers and Mrs. Easley were obstructing the work of the Committee on Women in Industry. Reports by Frederick Lee of the Committee on Industrial Fatigue, Mary McDonald of the Committee on Foreign Born Women in Industry, and L. A. Coolidge of the Committee on Welfare Work were submitted in September. October correspondence contains H. E. Miles' report for the Section of Industrial Training of the Committee on Welfare Work, and October and November letters of Otto M. Eidlitz and Gertrude Beeks Easley concern an extensive housing study prepared by the Committee on Labor.

Correspondence with Maisel, Spargo, Robinson, Joseph Chykin, Chester Wright, and Frank Wolfe details major activities of the AALD. Many of

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*Gertrude Beeks and Ralph Easley were married in September 1917.
Gompers was a strong advocate of preparedness and of the war effort. This drawing by cartoonist William C. Morris appeared shortly after the issuance of “American Labor’s Position in Peace or in War.”

these letters deal with the formation of the National Party, a political party intended to unite prowar liberal and radical groups. Another AALD activity was surveillance of antiwar organizations. On several occasions the AALD sent observers to meetings of these organizations to report on any “pro-German” activities. Examples include a September 29 report on a conference held under the auspices of the National Non-Partisan League and a November 30 account of a joint meeting of the Conference of Consumers Cooperative Societies and the Cooperative League of America. An October 10 letter proposes a plan to infiltrate the Jewish Daily Forward.

Several more traditional labor campaigns are also documented in the files of September-December 1917. Letters of Organizer Emmet Flood, John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and John F. Hart and Dennis Lane of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters concern an organizing drive among meat-packing workers. Some of the Flood and Fitzpatrick letters also touch on conflicts between black and white workers in the packinghouses and the controversial activities of a black organizer named Sims. Many November and December letters deal with a streetcar strike in Minneapolis and with the dispute between the United Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; reports dated November 14 and 21 treat the use of convict labor on war work.

Government intervention in logging operations in the Pacific Northwest under the direction of Col. Brice Disque commenced late in 1917 and continued for the war’s duration. Gompers and local labor leaders initially
cooperated with Disque and his Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen, but conflicts soon surfaced. Information on these problems appears in the letters of C. O. Young, John H. Walker, and Clair Covert.

AALD correspondence in January and February 1918 centers around planning activities for Labor's Loyalty Week, a national demonstration to take place the week of Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Other interesting correspondence includes a January 17 letter in which William English Walling charges that the Creel Committee had a pro-Bolshevik attitude, and letters of Giles B. Jackson seeking Gompers' support for the formation of a Bureau of Negro Economics within the U.S. Labor Department.

European and Latin American labor issues are also prominent in early 1918. Correspondence with Britisher W. A. Appleton concerns plans for an international labor conference and the activities of a British labor delegation visiting the United States; a letter from Enrique Santibanez of the Alianza Liberal Mexicana outlines the role of oil interests in causing friction between the United States and Mexico; and numerous letters from Santiago Iglesias and Labor Department investigator F. C. Roberts describe labor problems in Puerto Rico. Also prominent are exchanges with James Wilson and several other individuals concerning an American labor mission to Europe.

Early 1918 letters of George W. Perkins and W. R. Gaylord are important for information on AALD activities outside New York City, and Robert Maisel's letters of March 12 and 15 outline the financial support provided by the Creel Committee. Other prominent correspondents are William English Walling on the National Party, August Busch on prohibition, Emmet Flood and Dennis Lane on stockyard organizing, William D. Mahon on a general strike in Kansas City, Hugh Frayne on his role on the War Industries Board, V. Everitt Macy on the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board, and James Lord on the recognition of the Soviet government.

Files from late June and early July 1918 contain responses of numerous congressmen to a Gompers' circular letter on prohibition. Many of the letters from the latter part of July are from people seeking appointment to a mission to Russia made up of Labor, Agriculture, and Commerce Department representatives. Letters of George Creel concern a Committee on Public Information decision to cease financial contributions to the AALD. Mexican-American relations are the subject of several memos in mid-July and of later correspondence of John R. Phillips and Ernest H. Greenwood. July and early August files contain a good deal of correspondence with Felix Frankfurter of the War Labor Board, some of which concerns IWW activity around Butte, Montana.

Gompers headed a labor mission to Europe which sailed August 16, 1918. The delegation visited England, Scotland, France, and Italy and returned in late October. Much of the correspondence while Gompers was in Europe is ceremonial in character (greetings, invitations, etc.). Gompers' letters to R. Lee Guard, and John R. Alpine (acting AFL president) outline his activities and impressions. Letters of William Stephen Saunders and W. H. Buchler, officials who escorted Gompers at different stages of his tour, relate his activities and gauge his mission's impact.
American Federation of Labor Records

Domestic correspondence of interest while Gompers was away includes letters of Matthew Woll, writing as Gompers' special assistant for the Committee on Labor. A September 23 letter from Woll to Grosvener B. Clarkson protests actions of the War Labor Policies Board affecting women workers. An October 3 letter from William B. Wilson to Clarkson gives further information on the topic. Much October correspondence pertains to a proposed national celebration to welcome Gompers on his return from Europe.

Most of the letters from the time Gompers returned until he left again for Europe in January 1919 concern changes brought on by the war's end, the upcoming peace negotiations, and the international labor conference which was to meet coincidentally with the peace conference. Correspondence between Gompers and Maisel deals with the AALD's postwar tasks and in a November 27 letter to Franklin Martin and President Wilson, Gompers outlines his thoughts on a postwar role for the Council of National Defense. A December 23 memo signed by Matthew Woll presents the Committee on Labor's view of the role of women workers in the postwar period, and in a January 7 letter to the members of the Committee on Labor, Gompers outlines what he considers to be the Committee's most significant achievements. Additional significant letters include exchanges with William M. Short regarding IWW influence in Seattle; a letter from Mary Anderson enclosing the Labor Department's draft standards for the employment of women in industry; and correspondence, mainly with William D. Mahon, concerning a streetcar strike in Kansas City.

1919-1921

Correspondence continues at a heavy volume for 1919, while that for 1920-1921 is substantially lighter. Some of the prime topics covered during the period are the peace conference, the AFL's relations with European labor, the 1920 election, and Catholic trade unions in Canada.

Gompers returned to Europe for the peace conference in mid-January 1919, and remained until the end of March. Controversy over the site and scope of the international labor conference is an important part of the correspondence for the period (see letters of W. A. Appleton). Lengthy Gompers memos on his activities and impressions at the peace conference are dated January 30, February 8, and February 19.

Much of the office correspondence for January, February, and March 1919, concerns the AALD and the AFL's increasing disenchantment with Director Robert Maisel. A January 24 letter from R. Lee Guard to Gompers predicted "the chances are ten to one that the Alliance may eventually if it has not already done so, result in more harm than good," and in a June 24 letter Chester Wright threatened to resign from his Alliance post unless Maisel was replaced.

Correspondence from April through August 1919 is light. Puerto Rican labor problems are reflected in the reports of organizer R. S. Sexton. In July and continuing through September are frequent exchanges with George N. Barnes of Great Britain concerning the international labor conference scheduled for October in Washington. That conference, called under the provisions of the Versailles Treaty, convened on October 26. A meeting of
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the International Federation of Trade Unions was scheduled to meet coincidentally. Also scheduled for October was an industrial conference called by President Wilson. Correspondence dealing with invitations to and arrangements for these three meetings forms a large percentage of the September and October files.

Also in September, an Executive Council committee sought opinions from a number of prominent individuals on the Plumb plan for government ownership of the railroads. Late September and early October letters contain detailed responses from several of these individuals including Nathan L. Amster of the Citizens’ National Railroad League, and Charles Edward Russell.

Correspondence on yet another conference (this one to identify common interests among the AFL, railroad brotherhoods, and farmers’ organizations) highlights the final months of 1919. Also in December are replies by several national and international union officers to Gompers’ request for advice on how to rid the Seattle Central Labor Union of IWW influence.

In 1920 Jan Oudegeest of the International Federation of Trade Unions and Albert Thomas and Ernest Greenwood of the International Labor Office (a League of Nations creation) are frequent correspondents. In May 1920, Gompers debated Kansas Governor Henry J. Allen over the industrial court law. Letters of early May deal largely with the debate, and include opinions on the court from attorneys Clarence Darrow and J. H. Ralston.

Political correspondence starts early in the year but is not as heavy as in the prewar period. A lengthy March 29 letter from the AFL’s National Non-Partisan Campaign Committee to Ogdon L. Mills of the Republican National Committee outlines AFL platform demands. Also interesting is an October 30 report on Warren Harding’s connections with the Warren, Ohio Employers’ Association, and a November 4 letter from John P. Frey concerning the opposition of many labor leaders to the AFL’s nonpartisan approach. Other correspondence of 1920 includes a January 5 report on a joint meeting on the Versailles Treaty of the AFL Executive Council and the League to Enforce the Peace Executive Committee; and correspondence with William English Walling and Asher Howard regarding the danger of Bolshevism.

Correspondence of Frank Duffy, Daniel J. Tobin, and Matthew Woll from August 1920, through the fall of 1921 touches on a special AFL committee on Catholic unions in Canada. On July 11, 1921, Gompers sent a letter to all national and international unions having affiliates in Canada asking for a comparison of wages and working conditions of their Canadian locals and of Catholic locals of the same trade. Many unions replied and their answers form a significant body of data on the Catholic union issue. An analysis of the replies is dated August 1921, and is filed with the reference materials on reel 133.

Much of the correspondence from January through April 1921, deals with the establishment of the AFL Information and Publicity Service. Additional topics covered in 1921 include interunion cooperation and the establishment of a regular conference of labor union legislative representatives, and the AFL’s role in the Washington Disarmament Conference. Minutes of
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many of the meetings of the legislative agent group appear in the conference subseries.

1922-1924

Files for the last years of Gompers' life contain a comparatively large number of personal communications from Gompers' cousins in France and England, a few old shopmates from Gompers' cigar-making days, and other acquaintances. Information gathering and publication arrangements for Gompers' autobiography are also frequently mentioned in the period.

A new wave of injunctions and the open shop drive carried on under the title of the American Plan are frequent topics throughout 1922. Correspondence with Albert Thomas shows a continued deterioration in relations between the AFL and the International Labor Office. Other important

OPEN SHOP
A TRUST and NON-UNION Method

INHUMAN
GREED

Protect Our Little Ones!

The AFL's response to the child labor problem and the open shop movement in the early 1920's is well documented in the general correspondence and conferences subseries.
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topics include a New York State compulsory arbitration law (March); railroad shopmen's strike (August-October); unemployment in the navy yards (letters of Edwin Denby); and the Workers' Party of Canada (letters of John A. Flett).

In February and early March 1923, Gompers was ill and his inactivity is reflected by the small volume of correspondence. Information on the railroad strike continues, including an interesting letter to C. W. Bowerman about the importation of strike breakers from England. Documentation on foreign issues includes a William English Walling letter concerning European union movements and the pro-Soviet attitude of British labor (June); discussions of financial aid for the German trade-union movement (November); and a letter from Charles Evans Hughes concerning the recognition of Russia (July 19). Additional items of interest in the 1923 file are a July 6 letter containing background information on the People's Legislative Service and a November resume of the achievements of the union legislative representatives' conference.

From late May until September 1924, Gompers' health again prevented him from attending to his normal duties. During this period the correspondence is very light, but does include significant information on the AFL's role in the presidential election. A June 9 Gompers letter outlines platform demands made to the Democrats. July and August letters from Matthew Woll, Frank Morrison, and R. Lee Guard keep Gompers informed on meetings with Robert M. La Follette. Also significant are exchanges between Gompers and Democratic nominee John W. Davis, and a long telegram from William Z. Foster attacking the AFL's political stance in the name of the Workers' Party of America, a surrogate of the Communist Party.

With the exception of a letter or two, the political letters abruptly end in September. Correspondence from then until Gompers' death is light and primarily concerns the publication of Gompers' autobiography, and his activities at the AFL convention and during his trip to Mexico City. In the days immediately following his death information on funeral arrangements appears, as do hundreds of messages of condolence. A report from the doctor who presided over Gompers' last illness is dated December 13. No information on the succession of William Green is included.

The few undated items in this subseries all date from Gompers' lifetime and are filed at the end of the 1924 correspondence.

1925-1937

Scattered correspondence, primarily of R. Lee Guard, stretches on for almost twelve years after Gompers' death. It mainly concerns the donation of certain Gompers material to the New York Public Library and memorials to Gompers.

2. Speeches and Writings, 1894-1925 (10 reels)

This subseries consists of public pronouncements by Gompers and the AFL covering numerous issues and events. Included are Gompers' speeches, magazine and newspaper articles, interviews and miscellaneous statements, as well as press releases originating with Gompers and other AFL officials.
American Federation of Labor Records

Only a few items exist for the 1890's and the first few years of the twentieth century, but the volume steadily increases from about 1904 until Gompers' death. Individual items range from eulogies and holiday messages to speeches to international union conventions and statements on some of the most important labor and public issues of the day. During the last few years of Gompers' life, press releases dominate the files. Arrangement of the records is chronological.

To facilitate access to this large and diverse group of papers, a calendar has been prepared for the contents. Located on reel 58 of the film, the calendar generally lists the date, nature of the item (i.e., address, press release, etc.), title and/or indication of subject matter, audience addressed or journal in which the item appeared, and the reel and frame number where the item is located. In addition, each reel has a table of contents which reproduces the calendar entries for that reel.

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3. Conferences, 1901-1926, 1930 (5 reels)

The conference subseries contains minutes, transcripts, proceedings, and memoranda from formal conferences and conventions which Gompers attended, and from his informal meetings with individuals or small groups of people. Topics range from specific labor controversies to legislation, government appointments, and other issues related only indirectly to labor matters. Arrangement of the conferences is chronological.

Accounts of very few conferences exist until the war years. In 1916 and 1917 there is considerable information on the AFL’s role in Mexican-American disputes, but the European war and related topics are the most frequent theme. Especially noteworthy are several conferences concerning the issuance of “Labor’s Position in Peace or in War,” conferences of or about the Committee on Labor of the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense, a meeting about women entering industrial employment, and several discussions on the sending of a delegation to the international labor conference to be held concurrently with the Paris peace conference.

For the postwar years the conference records constitute a very significant source of information on the key issues confronting the AFL including the open shop drive, railroad regulation and strikes, efforts at joint legislative action by labor and agricultural organizations, jurisdictional disputes, and many other issues.

Highlighting the 1919 and 1920 files are accounts of numerous meetings of the AFL delegation to the peace conference; conferences concerning the Plumb plan for government ownership of railroads, and other railroad matters; and discussions of overall strategy and specific contests in the 1920 election. On September 15, 1920, is the first of a series of accounts of meetings on disputes between the Plate Printers’ union and employing government agencies.

Minutes of numerous meetings of the Labor Union Legislative Representatives appear from 1921 on, and 1923 and 1924 files are dominated by three main topics: child labor, aid for the German trade union movement, and electric power. Gompers was interested in making electric power affordable to the working class, and in a world conference on electric power held in London in July 1924. Other topics include prohibition, women in industrial employment, black migration from the South, railroad legislation and strikes, and the 1924 presidential campaign.

The few items dated after Gompers’ death deal with funeral preparations and various memorials.

A calendar listing the date, participants, topic, and reel and frame number location of each conference or meeting appears on reel 58 of the microfilm. The table of contents for each reel of the subseries reproduces the calendar entries for that reel.

4. Hearings, 1899-1924 (3 reels)

Transcripts of Gompers’ testimony before congressional committees make up the bulk of this subseries. Also included are transcripts of a few hearings before the New York State Legislature, the United States Industrial Commission, and the Industrial Relations Committee of the New York
American Federation of Labor Records

State Constitutional Convention (1915). Topics include the eight-hour day, injunctions, antitrust legislation, workmen's compensation, the Taylor system, compulsory arbitration, conscription, prohibition, communism, and others.

The calendar for the hearings located on reel 58, shows the date, body hearing the testimony, topic, and reel and frame number where the testimony is located. The table of contents for each reel of the hearings subseries reprints the calendar notations for that reel.

5. Reference Material, 1878, 1886-1936 (10 reels)

The reference material is a chronologically organized potpourri of reports and studies, typescripts of clippings, biographical sketches of Gompers, resolutions, speeches, and other documents. Although the series covers a time span of nearly sixty years, the records are concentrated in the war years and, to a lesser extent, in the early 1920's.

For the early years this series is best characterized as a collection of miscellany. Some of the more interesting reports and studies include a sketch on the history of the union label (March 1898); a report on the formation and objectives of the National Civic Federation (March 28, 1901); an annual AFL financial report (October 1903); a report on the proceedings of the formative IWW meeting in Chicago (June 29, 1905); and a summary of the relative wages and conditions in open shops and union shops within various trades (1905). Additional information on this period is found in historical sketches on the eight-hour movement and the New York Federation of Labor which are undated and filed at the end of the subseries.

Between 1906 and the beginning of World War I the series continues to be quite fragmentary. 1906, 1908, and, to a lesser extent, other election years contain political materials such as party platforms, AFL platform demands, and candidates' policy statements. 1909-1912 files contain information on the AFL's conflict with United States Steel, and the McNamara case. Additional interesting items include the constitution and bylaws of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association (October 1, 1907); clippings concerning Gompers' European trip (June 1909); a list of AFL salaried organizers (May 23, 1914); and a study entitled "How Working Girls Live in New York City" (1914).

Most significant among the wartime records are the studies, reports, and other documents from the various committees and subcommittees of Gompers' Committee on Labor. Types of information included are minutes of meetings, reports of activities, and membership lists. Studies of working conditions in arsenals and other war industries prepared by the Committee on Women in Industry and Section on Sanitation of the Committee on Welfare Work are also included. Other items of interest are a report on the organization and activities of State Councils of Defense (June 18, 1917); a list of labor's liberty loan subscriptions by national union, and by state and city (1917); a report on the agricultural workers' strike in Puerto Rico (April 30, 1918); clippings from foreign and domestic papers regarding Gompers' visit in Britain (August-September 1918); and reports of several members of the labor delegation which visited Europe (November 1918).
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Early 1919 material centers on the peace conference and European labor meetings. Records for the last several months of 1919 are highlighted by information on the president's Industrial Conference and the postwar role of women workers. Minutes of meetings of the League to Enforce the Peace Executive Council appear throughout the year.

Major topics covered in the 1920-1924 period are the open shop campaign, the Kansas Industrial Court, the Washington Disarmament Conference (October 1921-February 1922), and Gompers' trip to the Panama Canal Zone (December 1923-January 1924). Significant documents include: a report on the formation of a labor publicity organization (March 25, 1921); an analysis of the impact of Canadian Catholic unions on various trades (August 1921); proceedings of the Second International Congress of Working Women (October 26, 1921); and a report on the convention of the Workers' Party of Canada (February 17, 1922).

The files following Gompers' death consist primarily of resolutions of condolence, and extensive lists of Gompers' publications, speeches, and other materials donated to the New York Public Library.

6. Appointment Records, 1902-1910, 1912-1924 (2 reels)

Records for 1902 include only a brief list of addresses delivered. Volumes for 1903-1924 (1911 is missing) provide a very detailed record of Gompers' activities and engagements. Generally included are lists of Executive Council meetings, invitations accepted and rejected, conferences held, hearings before congressional committees, and requests for newspaper and magazine articles. Each volume has a table of contents.

B. National and International Union Correspondence, 1885, 1890-1911 (6 reels)*

This series dates almost exclusively from 1890 through 1905 and consists of correspondence with or about affiliated and nonaffiliated national and international unions. Most letters are incoming and addressed to Gompers and Frank Morrison, or to Morrison's predecessors as AFL secretary, August McCraith and Chris Evans. Some correspondence of John McBride is also included. Organization of the series is alphabetical by key word in the union's name, and chronological thereafter. A complete list of file headings begins on page 63.

Many files are very small, including only one or two documents. Others such as the Journeymen Bakers and Confectioners, Carpenters, Cigar Makers, Granite Cutters, Seamen, Textile Workers, and Wood Workers contain one or more large folders of correspondence. Files on a particular union often contain records of predecessor or successor organizations and related trades organizations. The National Seamen's Union file, for example, includes correspondence of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, Sailors' Union of the Pacific, and the Atlantic Coast Seamen's Union. A few

*This series and the AFL national and international union file in Part 1 contain essentially the same types of material but cover different time periods.
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general categories such as Metal Trades, Building Trades, and Teachers' Associations are also included.

Whereas the general correspondence deals primarily with public issues, politics, and the war, this series concerns the basic trade union activities: organizing, granting of charters, jurisdictional disputes, dues payment, strikes, lockouts, boycotts, and similar matters. Due in part to the early period covered in the series, much of the correspondence deals with applications for affiliation with the Federation. Affiliation required the approval of the Executive Council and often gave rise to questions of jurisdiction. The Box Makers, Shirt and Waist Workers, Stogie Makers, and others were refused charters on the grounds that their trades were represented by already affiliated unions. Jurisdictional disputes between affiliated nationals and internationals are also an important part of the series. Controversies between the Brewery Workmen and Coopers, and between the Typographical Union and Machinists are particularly well covered.

The various members of the Executive Council often investigated and reported on specific disputes or problems. These letters are scattered throughout the series in the files of unions affected. However, large numbers of letters from Council members are concentrated in the files of the unions to which they belonged. Some of these are the Carpenters (P. J. McGuire), Glass Bottle Blowers (Denis A. Hayes), Granite Cutters (James Duncan), Tailors (John B. Lennon), and Wood Workers (Thomas I. Kidd).

Many other individual files are noteworthy. The American Agents Association file documents attempts to oust the Association from the AFL on the grounds that it was not a trade union and, in so doing, addresses the problem of defining a trade union. An internal dispute involving misappropriation of union funds by P. J. McGuire is thoroughly covered in the Carpenters file; the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen records have information about organizing black workers; the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' file contains a Gompers letter counseling against organizing Chinese restaurant workers since it would be contradictory with the AFL's stand against Chinese immigration; and the Plate Printers and Tobacco Workers' files both contain information on how the unions were coping with increased automation in their trades.

C. Mining Department Records, 1911-1915 (1 reel)

Beginning in 1908 the AFL chartered a number of departments, each comprised of national and international unions employed within the same industry. Records of one of these, the Mining Department, are reproduced here. Included are correspondence and a few other papers of James Lord who became the Department's first paid president at his election in January 1914. About half predate Lord's election and concern his activities as an official of District 12 (Illinois) of the United Mine Workers of America.

The letters are divided between general correspondence and small files of correspondence with three Mining Department affiliates: the Western Federation of Miners, the International Association of Machinists, and the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel and Dredgemen. In addition to general business of the Mining Department, the letters deal with United
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Mine Workers internal affairs, the establishment of cooperatives (Lord was chairman of a United Mine Workers committee on cooperatives), and coal mining disputes in Colorado and Montana. Among important correspondents are Mother Jones (Mary Harris Jones), Mining Department Secretary-Treasurer Ernest Mills, Chicago attorney Seymour Stedman, and John H. Walker of the Mine Workers and the Illinois Federation of Labor.

In addition, the records contain a file of correspondence, agreements, and decisions of a board made up of representatives of District 12 and the Illinois Coal Operators Association, intended to settle grievances covered by the contract between the two groups.
THE MICROFILM

MICROFILM of the records held by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin was produced in accordance with the standards of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The reduction ratio is generally 14 to 1, although it occasionally varies according to the size of the original documents. To aid in locating specific items or files, frames on the individual reels are numbered. These numbers are correlated with the calendars prepared for several of the subseries within the Files of the Office of the President, and with the tables of contents which appear on many of the reels.

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