

# A Record of Coal Strikes Since the First in 1849

### What the Causes Were and How the Struggles Turned Out.

### No Adequate Data as to the Number of Miners' Strikes.

THE first organized strike in the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania occurred just sixty-three years ago. Before that time there had been unnumbered differences between miners and operators, resulting in local suspensions of work, but of these no record has been kept, and the Schuylkill county strike of 1849 stands out as the opening battle of a long drawn out warfare which has kept the hard coal regions in a state of unrest ever since then, barring the last ten years.

There were occasional years between 1849 and 1902 when quiet prevailed for the most part throughout the region, but as a general thing disputes, threats and strikes occurred in one locality or another. How many hundreds or thousands of such strikes took place will never be known, for until comparatively recent times no adequate data have been preserved. The bureau of mines now supplies information of strikes since the time when it was organized. The coal companies have data, scattered through their voluminous records, and a weekly and daily newspapers published in the anthracite fields have preserved in their files such brief references to labor troubles as they have seen in the habit of printing. But it is left for a clergyman, the Rev. Robert Roberts of Mahanoy City, in the anthracite field, to make extensive research and to collate as fully as possible a record of strikes, which was published years ago in an elaborate treatise entitled "The Anthracite Coal Industry."

#### The First Strike.

It is interesting to note in the strike of 1849 the first recorded conflict between capital and organized labor in the anthracite industry; that the issues involved were about the same as in any great strike since then.

In 1848 a labor organization of anthracite miners was formed in Schuylkill county by John Bates, after whom was named. When the early spring of 1849 arrived Bates found it strong enough to put up certain demands to operators of mines—higher wages, shorter hours and recognition of the union. The operators declined to meet the demands, and in May a general strike was declared throughout Schuylkill, or lower field.

John Bates union held a meeting on May 2, 1849, in the village of Minersville, and another meeting on May 3 in adjoining township, at which resolutions were adopted stating that "we learned from Divine Providence that the laborer is worthy of his hire," and significantly that if any man prevented from working because his membership in the union they would all strike.

The same tactics were employed in the strike of 1849 that have been employed ever since. The men in the union armed themselves with clubs, formed themselves into bands, marched through the Black valley by methods of threat, intimidation and assault when deemed necessary, and urged men to quit work and join ranks.

After several weeks of struggle the operators and the workmen got together and effected a compromise, the strike was declared off, and the men went back to work.

#### First Strong Miners' Union.

It was in the latter part of 1867 that leaders in all the three anthracite fields—the upper, middle and lower—felt the necessity of having the men knitted together in one union, and after much careful consideration in July, 1868, the first comprehensive anthracite coal union was formed—the Workingmen's Benevolent Association, whose first president and organizing spirit was John Siney. In the more than months the "W. B. A." miners still call it, was strongly established in the lower and middle fields. So large a proportion of miners became members that it virtually controlled the situation there.

#### Big Shutdown of 1901.

It was on Sept. 12, 1901, that John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers, ordered a general strike for better wages, reduction in price of blasting powder, payment of wages every two weeks, etc. Within a month practically all of the 366 anthracite collieries were shut down. After a suspension of six weeks the operators agreed to a 10 per cent advance in wages. It is estimated that this brief strike of 1901 cost in money alone nearly \$20,000,000.

The last great strike, that of 1902, is well remembered. It lasted from May until October of that year and was marked by violence, which 10,000 troops failed to quell. Conditions at last became so intolerable that President Roosevelt appointed a commission to settle wage questions and all other disputes. John Mitchell accepted the terms of peace proposed and the 150,000 miners went back to work.

#### Woman Is State Librarian.

Governor Goldsborough of Maryland has appointed a woman, Miss Sallie Webster Dorsey, to fill the office of state librarian.

general strike to enforce demands for a sliding scale of wages, basing such adjustment upon varying prices of coal at certain points of shipment and delivery. This sliding scale was drafted by the men themselves and was a most complicated schedule for wage payments.

The operators took the position that nobody could tell definitely just how much money was actually due to the 35,000 or more individuals under such a basis of computing payments, that the plan could be understood only by a small proportion of the men and that it never would work satisfactorily. However, the men insisted, and almost all the operators agreed to this sliding scale. So the strike was declared off, the victory belonging to the union this time.

This was at the close of June, 1899. But the sliding scale worked out so little to the satisfaction of the men that in less than two months they demanded a 20 per cent advance. There was much parleying and compromising, but finally an agreement was reached and the men went to work again.

#### The Strike of 1870.

Early in 1870 the Schuylkill operators announced a reduction of wages. The union resisted and ordered another strike. The operators offered to compromise, but the union declined, until in July it effected an agreement with Franklin B. Gowen, newly elected president of the Reading railroad. In agreement with this "Gowen compromise" the strike was declared off in August and work was resumed.

In November, 1870, when three of the great companies announced a reduction of 30 per cent the men employed by these companies went on strike within a few days, and on Jan. 10, 1871, a general strike was ordered, which shut down practically every anthracite mine. After several months of idleness, rioting and terrorism the troops were called out, and in conflict with them several strikers were killed. The operators were victorious, and work was resumed.

Between this strike of 1871 and the "long strike" of 1875 there was no general organized suspension of work, although local troubles here and there were constantly coming up to be discussed, debated and settled somehow.

The "long strike" lasted for five months and was confined largely to the Schuylkill region, where operators announced a 10 per cent reduction in pay. After five months the miners gave in and went back to work at a 20 per cent reduction.

It was in 1884 that the Miners and Laborers' Amalgamated association was organized, and three years later it included some 30,000 members. During these years also the Knights of Labor were actively at work in the anthracite region, and in 1887 the two organizations became one in membership. A few months afterward the knights endorsed a strike which tied up the mines of the middle and lower fields. This strike ended in March, 1888, in a defeat for the men.

After eight or nine years of comparative peace, unbroken by any general strike, although punctuated with unnumbered "scraps" and disputes and local strikes, the anthracite region was visited in 1897 by emissaries of the United Mine Workers of America, an organization of bituminous coal workers, following a long drawn out dispute in the middle coal field, when a mob of several thousand rioters started to raid the city of Hazleton, but was stopped by word that the national guard was already arriving there on troop trains. Earlier that same day some thirty men in another wild mob at Lattimer had been shot to pieces by a squad of deputies in an effort to rescue the sheriff, who had been smashed to the ground and whose life was imperiled. This trouble also was ended after the military arm of the state had gained control, and work was resumed in the mines.

## DAMES AND DAUGHTERS.

Miss Ellen Emerson, the granddaughter of Ralph Waldo Emerson, is a nurse in the Massachusetts General hospital at Boston.

Miss Louise F. Brown of Wellesley college has the distinction of being the first woman to win the prize offered biennially by the American Historical association for the best essay on European history.

Little Askey Tercevo Martin, the four-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson Martin of Brooklyn, is showing phenomenal precocity for one of her age. Without any regular instruction she has acquired a fluent command of four languages.

Mrs. Carruthers is the first woman to be elected treasurer of the London Institute of Journalism. Mrs. Carruthers and Miss Patterson were recently chosen to represent the London district on the council of the institute, and Mrs. Carruthers' election as treasurer followed.

Frau von Gontard, who becomes a peeress through the distribution of honors in commemoration of the kaiser's birthday anniversary, is an American girl, the daughter of Adolphus Busch of St. Louis. Her husband, Dr. von Gontard, has been given corresponding honors. Frau von Gontard is one of the leaders of Berlin society.

## Tales of Cities.

Chicago's court of domestic relations has an official bridesmaid.

Between the hours of 9 and 10 in the morning more than 5,000 people enter the city of London every minute.

Teheran, the principal Persian city, has a population of 280,000. Tabriz 200,000 and Isfahan 80,000. Fewer than 1,500 Europeans reside within the empire.

The new social register of New York city contains 11,519 families. According to the social register, the social center of the city has moved within six years from Fifty-eighth street to Sixty-second and Sixty-third, and it will continue to move northward.

## Town Topics.

For the collection and disposal of garbage the city of Cleveland pays 80 cents a ton. For the same service the city of Chicago pays \$4 a ton.—Chicago Tribune.

Cincinnati seems to fear the advent in its courts of the suffragette. One of its judges permits lawyers and jurors to smoke "as a stimulant to thought."—Cleveland Leader.

A timid observer of New York remarks that "it is three times as dangerous to cross Broadway as the ocean." In the matter of gun play that town is livelier than an old time mining camp.—Providence Journal.

## Pert Personals.

"The Babbling Brooke" has turned her gifts to account by taking the lecture platform.—New York American.

Pierre Loti says that the white man is not acting very well toward the yellow and brown races. He should get up a joint debate on the subject with R. Kipling.—Chicago News.

Mayor Gaynor says Horace Greeley advised him not to go to New York. What a lot of trouble Mayor Gaynor would have saved himself if he had taken that advice. But his punishment is severe. They elected him mayor.—Watertown Times.

"What's the matter with Bliffers?" "Don't mind him. He's got a crazy notion that he's losing his memory." "What makes him think so?" "Why, he can't remember whether the Chinese emperor's name is Pu Yi or Chi Yu."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"A handsome man smiled at me in town today." "Oh, well, don't feel bad about it. Some women look even funnier than you do."—Houston Post.

Little drops of water  
In the can of milk  
Bring the milkman's daughter  
Pretty gowns of silk. —Judge.

NOTICE OF UNIFORM PRIMARIES.—In compliance with Section 3, of the Uniform Primary Act, page 37, P. L., 1908, notice is hereby given to the electors of Wayne county of the number of delegates to the State Convention which each party is entitled to elect, names of party officers to be filled and for what offices nominations are to be made at the Spring Primaries to be held on

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1912.

#### REPUBLICAN.

1 person for Representative in Congress.  
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.  
2 persons for Delegates to the State Convention.  
2 persons for Delegates to the Republican National Convention.  
2 persons for alternates to the Republican National Convention.  
1 person for Party Committeeman in each district in the county.

#### DEMOCRATIC.

1 person for Representative in Congress.  
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.  
1 person for Delegate to the State Convention.  
2 persons for Delegates to the National Convention.  
2 persons for alternates to the National Convention.  
1 person for Party Committeeman in each election district in the county.

#### PROHIBITION.

3 persons for Delegates to the State Prohibition Convention.  
7 persons for Delegates to the National Prohibitive Convention.

7 persons for alternates to the National Prohibitive Convention.

#### KEYSTONE.

1 person for Delegate to the Keystone State Convention.  
Petition forms may be obtained at the Commissioners' office.

#### PROHIBITION.

1 person for Representative in Congress.  
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.  
3 persons for delegates to the State Prohibition Convention.  
7 persons for Delegates to the National Prohibition Convention.  
7 persons for alternates to the National Prohibition Convention.  
3 persons for alternates to the state convention.

#### KEYSTONE.

1 person for Representative in Congress.  
1 person for Representative in General Assembly.

1 person for delegate to the Keystone State Convention.  
Petitions for Congress and Representative must be led with the Secretary of the Commonwealth on or before Saturday, March 16, 1912.

Petitions for Party officers, Committeemen and Delegates to the State Conventions must be filed at the Commissioners' office on or before Saturday, March 23, 1912.

#### JOHN MALE.

EARL ROCKWELL,  
NEVILLE HOLGATE,  
Commissioners.

Attest: Thos. Y. Boyd, Clerk.

Commissioners' Office, Honesdale, Pa., Feb. 26, 1912.

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We have a remedy that has aided to grow hair and prevented baldness in 93 out of 100 cases where used according to directions for a reasonable length of time. That may seem like a strong statement—it is, and we mean it to be, and no one should doubt it until they have put our claims to an actual test.

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Rexall "93" Hair Tonic is as pleasant to use as clear spring water. It is delightfully perfumed, and does not grease or gum the hair. Two sizes, 50c and \$1.00. With our guarantee back of it, you certainly take no risk. Sold only at our store—The Rexall Store.

A. M. LEINE.

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Republican Candidate for Representative  
In General Assembly

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## D. & H. CO. TIME TABLE---HONESDALE BRANCH

A.M.	P.M.														
8:30	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00
10:00	12:15	12:30	2:15	2:15	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00
4:05	8:00	6:30	1:15	7:55	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10	7:10
P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.										
5:40	8:45	6:20	2:05	8:45	8:05	1:35	5:50	11:25	8:27	11:14	8:17	11:14	8:17	11:14	8:17
5:50	8:55	6:30	2:15	8:55	7:54	1:25	5:40	11:14	8:17	11:03	8:13	11:03	8:13	11:03	8:13
6:04	9:09	6:34	2:19	8:59	7:50	1:21	5:34	11:03	8:13	10:53	8:04	10:53	8:04	10:53	8:04
6:11	9:18	6:42	2:27	9:18	7:31	1:03	5:18	10:53	8:04	10:43	7:54	10:43	7:54	10:43	7:54
6:17	9:24	6:48	2:33	9:24	7:25	1:00	5:11	10:43	7:54	10:37	7:39	10:37	7:39	10:37	7:39
6:26	9:32	6:57	2:42	9:32	7:17	12:49	5:06	10:37	7:39	10:32	7:32	10:32	7:32	10:32	7:32
6:32	9:37	7:03	2:47	9:37	7:09	12:43	4:58	10:32	7:32	10:27	7:28	10:27	7:28	10:27	7:28
6:38	9:43	7:10	2:54	9:43	7:01	12:36	4:51	10:27	7:28	10:22	7:23	10:22	7:23	10:22	7:23
6:39	9:43	7:20	3:03	9:43	6:53	12:29	4:43	10:22	7:23	10:17	7:18	10:17	7:18	10:17	7:18
6:43	9:47	7:24	3:07	9:47	6:45	12:22	4:44	10:17	7:18	10:12	7:13	10:12	7:13	10:12	7:13
6:46	9:50	7:27	3:10	9:50	6:38	12:15	4:44	10:12	7:13	10:07	7:08	10:07	7:08	10:07	7:08
6:50	9:55	7:31	3:15	9:55	6:30	12:08	4:40	10:07	7:08	10:02	7:03	10:02	7:03	10:02	7:03
P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.										

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