



Special Collections and University Archives

**The Anthracite Board of Conciliation
Manuscript Group 108**

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**The Anthracite Board of Conciliation, Manuscript Group 108
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Special Collections and University Archives
129 linear feet**

Historical Note

The Anthracite Coal Strike Commission established the Board of Conciliation under its fourth award on March 18, 1903. The Commission called for a “permanent joint committee, to be called a Board of Conciliation” that would mediate grievances or disputes “arising under this award, either as to its interpretation or application” and which could not be settled at the mine. The joint committee was to include three members representing a majority of mine workers and three members representing the operators from each district in the anthracite industry. In instances where the Board could not reach a decision, then the case would be referred to an umpire appointed by a circuit judge from the third circuit of the United States. Any decision made by either the Umpire or the Board was binding and final. Also, while a grievance was in hearing suspension of work by either lockout or strike was not permitted.¹ The decisions rendered by the Board or Umpire were then considered common law for the anthracite industry with past decisions acting as precedent for future settlements.² As the Honorable Judge George Gray, who served as an Umpire for the Board in the 1910s, suggested “Great respect should be paid for former decisions . . . a departure from views already promulgated in former cases, should not be taken in subsequent cases.”³

The first meeting of the board took place on June 25, 1903 in Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. The structure of the Board was organized by appointing a chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer. It was arranged that the chairman would be an operator representative and the secretary a mine worker representative.⁴ Two weeks after the initial meeting, the Board met to decide its first grievance in Pottersville, Pennsylvania.⁵ With the creation of the Board of Conciliation many hoped years of peaceful labor-management relations would follow. As the Honorable Carroll D. Wright, first Umpire and member of the Coal Strike Commission, remarked in his decision in Grievance number 8 “the spirit of the Award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission is

¹Report to the President on the Anthracite Coal Strike of May-October, 1902, by the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 81.

²Michael J. Kosik, p 1.

³As quoted in Digest of Decisions: Anthracite Board of Conciliation, compiled by B. Frederick Skinner and William A. Skinner (Scranton, PA: 1928).

⁴In 1913 the Board appointed its first full-time Umpire, the Honorable Charles P. Neill, and in 1916 the Board appointed a full-time salaried secretary, James Gorman who 1929 would become Umpire. “History of the Anthracite Board of Conciliation,” unpublished manuscript prepared by Michael J. Kosik. Collection 108, Series 1, Box #4, file #2 The Special Collections and Archives of Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

⁵“Pertinent Facts About The Board of Conciliation,” unpublished manuscript prepared by Michael J. Kosik. Collection 109, Series 1, Box #4, file #2 The Special Collections and Archives of Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

not solely to carry out literally the Award, but to find some means by which peace and harmony shall prevail in the anthracite region.”⁶

Scope and Content Note

Manuscript Group 108: The Anthracite Board of Conciliation is housed in three series of archival boxes. This collection includes grievance files, executive minutes, photographs, and papers on the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission.

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files

Series 1 contains a variety of items dealing with the operation of the Board. Of particular note are the minutes of the executive sessions ranging from 1916 to 1962. There are eight executive minute books with an index by grievance number in each. The minutes reflect the inner workings of the Board, revealing how the Board voted and also the rationale behind the vote. Series 1 also holds additional scattered material relating to the Board's operation: a file on Umpires dating from 1930 to 1976, resolutions concerning resigned or deceased Board members, rules of the Board, and audits and treasurer reports from 1956-69. Also of great value are a group of photographs of the members of the Board of Conciliation, both operators, UMW representatives, and Board secretaries, from its earliest days until the 1960s. Various miscellaneous materials conclude the series, including material relating to the history of the Board. The series also includes the *Reports of the Anthracite Board of Conciliation*, Volumes 1-33 (Scranton, Pennsylvania: Allied Printing, 1906-1957).

Series 2: Grievance Material

Sub-series A-Card index to grievances

The index to the grievance is greatly detailed with many heading and extensively cross-indexed. Also included in the index are abstract of each grievance that includes what was at issue and the decision of the Board or Umpire.

Subseries B: Grievance files

The bulk of the Anthracite Board of Conciliation records is contained in Series 2. Here are the complete grievance files of the Board, starting from grievance one to grievance number 8458. These grievance files contain material beyond what is provided in the *Reports of the Anthracite Board of Conciliation*, including the testimony of the parties involved and correspondence between the Board involved parties. These are indeed rich materials as they represent the best understanding of the struggles the mineworkers faced in the mines. It offers a unique view of the mineworkers themselves, in their own words and thus the historical value of these materials is great.

Series 3: Anthracite Coal Strike Commission

Series 3 contains information pertinent to the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission. The information deals with the proceedings of this commission from October 27, 1902

⁶ As quoted in *A Half Century of Successful Labor-Management Relations*, (Lakewood, Pennsylvania, 1953), p. 5. Collection 108, Series 1, Box #5, file # 8, Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

through February 12, 1903. The volumes contain testimony given before the commission describing work rules operators formulated in response to concerns over local geological conditions, consumer demand, and the difficulty of monitoring workers' activities underground. While the set is missing a few volumes, it has enough information to gauge the commission's function.

Provenance

Unknown

Restrictions

None

Processor Note

Collection finding aid was compiled by Joshua Campbell Torrance.

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files**Box 1**

1. Minutes of Executive Sessions, May 1916-July 1923
2. Minutes of Executive Sessions, September 1923-August 1925
3. Minutes of Executive Sessions, April 1926-December 1928
4. Minutes of Executive Sessions, January 1929-December-1931
5. Minutes of Executive Sessions, January 1932-December-1935
6. Minutes of Executive Sessions, January 1936-Novembe 1939
7. Minutes of Executive Sessions, January 1940-December 1945
8. Minutes of Executive Sessions, February 1946-December 1953

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files**Box 2**

1. Minutes of Executive Sessions, January 1954-December 1962
2. Index to Executive Sessions, January 1932-December 1935, and June 1943-November 1953
3. Report of Anthracite Board of Conciliation, Volumes 1-18

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files**Box 3**

Report of Anthracite Board of Conciliation, Volumes 19-33

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files**Box 4**

1. Umpires, 1930-1976
2. History of Anthracite Board of Conciliation
3. Material relating history of Anthracite Board of Conciliation
4. Board information- History/Grievances
5. From the Files of Dr. Larkin- New Work, 1923
6. Digest of Decisions (Dr. Larkin) District One, 1951-1956
7. Anthracite Institute

8. Anthracite Board of Conciliation 50th Anniversary Dinner, 1903-1953
9. Rules of Board
10. Resolutions (Resignations and deceased Board members)
11. Audits and Treasurer Reports, 1956-1969
12. Anthracite Board of Conciliation miscellaneous

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files

Box 5 (28 audio tapes)

1-28 Audio Tapes: Testimony, Board Meetings (more recent grievances)

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files

Box 6 Photographs (8x10)

1. John Waters: President District 7, member of the Board of Conciliation, March 1909-May 1910
2. S.D. Warriner: President, Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. Member, Board of Conciliation, June 1903-January 1925
3. John T. Dempsey: President, District 1, UMWA. Member, Board of Conciliation, August 1911-November, 1918; August 1919-October 1920
4. William L. Connell: President, Connell Anthracite Mining Company. Member and Chairman, Board of Conciliation, June 1903-December 1923
5. Thomas D. Nicholls: President, District 1, UMWA. Member, Board of Conciliation, June 25, 1903-February 1909
6. Joseph Yannis: President, District 1, UMWA. Member, Board of Conciliation, December 1918-February 1919; June 1919-July 1919
7. W.J. Richards: President, Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member, Board of Conciliation, June 1905- July 1927. Chairman, Board of Conciliation, January 1925-August 1927
8. Major William W. Inglis: President: Glen Alden Coal Company. Chairman: Anthracite Coal Operators. Member: Board of Conciliation, December 1923-October 1947
9. George B. Hadesty: Vice President: Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, July 1927-February 1929
10. Martin F. Brenan: President: District 7 UMWA; District 9 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, June 1930
11. Michael Hartneady: President: District 7 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, January 1929-January 1935
12. Andrew Matthey: President: District 7 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, April 1926-January 1929
13. J.R. Warriner: President: Lehigh Navigation Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, December 1924-July 1951. Chairman: Board of Conciliation, October 1947-July 1951
14. George A. Ross: Vice President. Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, 1943-1951. Chairman: Board of Conciliation, July 1951
15. James McAndrew: President: District 9 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, April 18, 1929-June 30, 1930

16. Edward G. Fox: President: Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, December 1953
17. Evan Evans: President: Lehigh Navigation Coal Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, July 1951
18. Edward Griffith: President: Glen Alden Coal Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, October 1947-October 1951
19. James M. Pierce: Chairman of the Board: Pierce Management Corp. President: Coaldale Mining Co. Member: Board of Conciliation, December 13, 1957-?
20. Michael J. Kosik: President: UMWA District 1. Member: Board of Conciliation, August 1935-July 1951. Secretary: Board of Conciliation, July 1951-?
21. Hugh V. Brown: President: UMWA District 7. Member: Board of Conciliation, February 1935-June 1941
22. William J. Brennan: President: UMWA District 1. Member: Board of Conciliation, September 1921-July 1923
23. John Boylan: President: UMWA District 1. Member: Board of Conciliation, September 1928-July 1935. Secretary: Board of Conciliation, August 1935-May 1951.
24. Roland C. Luther: General Manager: Philadelphia & Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, June 1903-June 1905.
25. Thomas Lowry: President: UMWA District 1. Member: Board of Conciliation, February 1919-June 1919.
26. Joseph T. Kershetsky: President: UMWA District 9. Member: Board of Conciliation, October 1941.
27. August J. Lippi: President: UMWA District 1. Member: Board of Conciliation, July 1951.

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries A: Card index to grievances
Box 1 Card Index to Grievances

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 1 Grievance files, 1-120

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 2 Grievance files, 121-181

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 3 Grievance files, 182-255

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 4 Grievance files, 256-306

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 5 Grievance files, 307-383

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 6 Grievance files, 384-527

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 7 Grievance files, 528-679

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 8 Grievance files, 680-866

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 9 Grievance files, 867-1033

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 10 Grievance files, 1034-1170

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 11 Grievance files, 1171-1302

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 12 Grievance files, 1303-1394

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 13 Grievance files, 1395-1494

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 14 Grievance files, 1495-1606

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 15 Grievance files, 1607-1708

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Subseries B: Grievance files

Box 16 Grievance files, 1709-1796

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 17 Grievance files, 1797-1899

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 18 Grievance files, 1900-2000

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 19 Grievance files, 2001-2092

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 20 Grievance files, 2093-2225

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Box 21 Grievance files, 2226-2345

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Box 22 Grievance files, 2346-2486

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 23 Grievance files, 2487-2602

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 24-Box 34: Grievance files, 2603-3802

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Box 35 Grievance files, 3803-3899

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Box 36 Grievance files, 3900-3997

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Box 37 Grievance files, 3998-4096

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Box 38 Grievance files, 4097-4187

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Series 3: Anthracite Coal Strike Commission
Box 1 Proceedings of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, Vols. 1-7, 11-13, 16-18

Series 3: Anthracite Coal Strike Commission
Box 2 Proceedings of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, Vols. 20-55