

Labor movement - U.S. (1977)

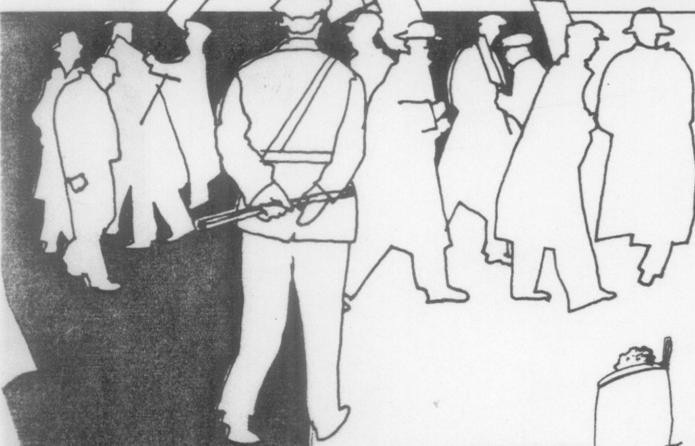
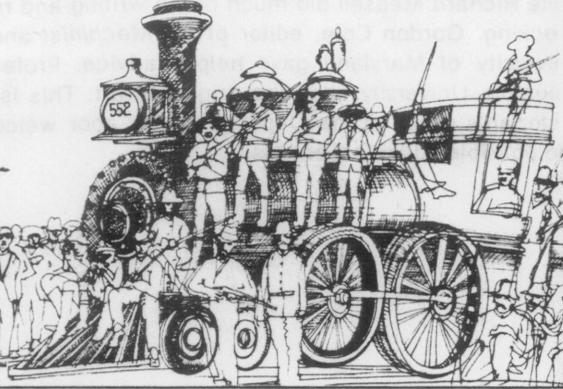
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Labor Firsts in America



U.S. Department of Labor
1977

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Acknowledgements

This pamphlet is a cooperative work. The original concept came from John Leslie, Director of the Office of Information, Publications and Reports. Dr. Jonathan Grossman, Historian for the Department of Labor directed the project while Richard Measell did much of the writing and research, and all of the fact checking. Gordon Cole, editor of the *Machinist* and Dr. Robert Knight of the University of Maryland gave helpful advice. Professor Richard B. Morris of Columbia University read the original draft. This is a pioneer edition and the Historian's office of the Department of Labor welcomes corrections of errors and possible additional entries.

Labor Firsts in America

U.S. Department of Labor
Ray Marshall, Secretary
1977



Preface

When was the first strike? What was the first women's labor organization? Who was the first labor official to be elected to Congress? This booklet supplies the answers to these and numerous other questions on these labor firsts. Labor firsts not only add color to one's narrative on a labor topic, but they also inform the public about the flavor of the times and the origins of many of today's social reforms.

Several problems arise in examining the subject of labor firsts. One is, who is a worker? This is especially true during the pre-industrial age when one deals with master craftsmen. Are master craftsmen workers or employers? For the purposes of this booklet they will be noted as workers.

Another problem is what is a first? Like the question who is considered to have discovered America—Columbus, the Vikings, or Indians crossing the Bering Straits—who had the first strike or what was the first labor organization is largely a matter of interpretation and definition of terms. Thus, there is listed a hierarchy of strikes, each being a bit closer to today's concept of a strike. For example, the first labor action that might possibly be called a strike occurred in Jamestown in 1619 when Polish workers were denied the vote. But the first labor action for economic reasons, the withholding of wages, took place in 1636. Some claim, however, that the first "authentic" strike was by printers in New York City in 1786. The development of labor organizations followed a similar evolution. When a few workers banded together temporarily to fight a grievance, did they constitute an organization? By the 1790s, however, labor organizations were formed that survived beyond a single confrontation and by the 1820-1830s city-wide, regional and national organizations were being created.

Labor legislation accounts for many firsts. Many early laws, however, were not enforced. Thus, the existence of child labor laws in some states does not always imply that no child labor existed in those states. The first labor law limiting the hours that a child could work was passed in 1842 in Massachusetts, but the first enforceable legislation in that state did not come until 1867. Although some laws may have been ineffective, they at least showed that workers and reformers clamored enough to get legislation on the books. Another issue is constitutionality since many labor laws were declared unconstitutional or rendered ineffective by the courts.

Some labor events fall into several categories. The first permanent labor organization was also the first to use collective bargaining. The first women's trade organization also held the first strike by women. Several labor laws also covered many areas. For example, the Walsh-Healey Act in 1936 had provisions covering minimum wage, length of work week and child labor. Because of this, the material is cross-referenced.

The uncovering of firsts is a very tricky adventure since there exist so many areas where labor firsts occur. This being the first printing of the booklet, corrections and additions are encouraged to help prepare future editions.

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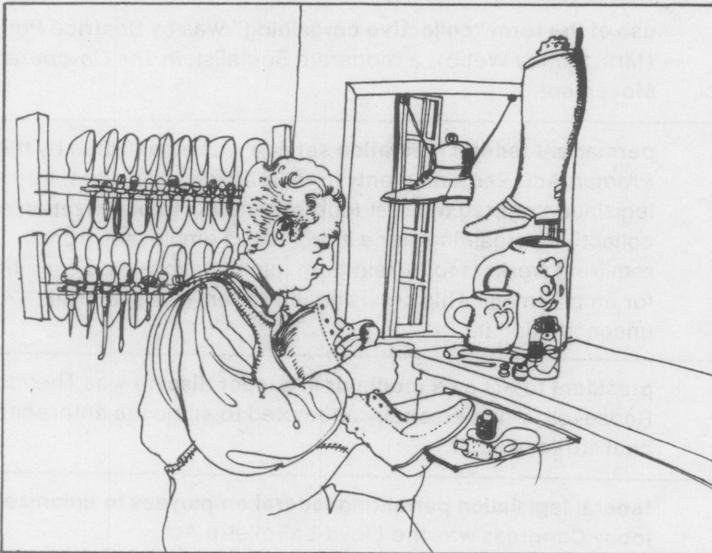
**Arbitration, mediation
and collective bargaining**

The first . . .

1792 **use of collective bargaining** was by an organization of Philadelphia cordwainers (leather workers). (See Labor organizations, Strikes)

1795 **collective bargaining agreement** was obtained by Philadelphia printers.

1799 **complete wage scale** was presented by the Franklin Typographical Society of New York City.



1805 **closed shop clause in a labor contract** was won by the Journeymen Cordwainers' Union in New York City.

1835 **formulation of the principle of exclusive jurisdiction** was by the General Trade Union in New York City.

1865 **use of arbitration and the sliding wage scale** was by Pittsburgh iron puddlers. (See Wages)

1878 **state legislation permitting the state to attempt to settle labor disputes** was in Maryland.

**Arbitration, Mediation
and collective bargaining (continued)**

The first . . .

1883	state legislation authorizing voluntary arbitration was in Pennsylvania.
1885	collective bargaining agreement in the building trades was gained by bricklayers in New York City.
1886	state to create a permanent agency to mediate labor disputes was New York.
1888	federal arbitration law was passed. It applied only to railroad workers and provided for voluntary arbitration by a presidentially appointed three-man board to arbitrate labor disputes. The Commissioner of Labor served as the ex-officio chairman.
1891	use of the term “collective bargaining” was by Beatrice Potter (Mrs. Sidney Webb), a moderate Socialist, in <i>The Co-operative Movement</i> .
1898	permanent federal mediation service was established by the Erdman Act. Pertaining only to railroad labor disputes, this legislation offered the first federal sanction to unionization and collective bargaining since it prohibited employees from requiring workers to refrain from joining unions as a condition for employment. This provision, however, was declared unconstitutional.
1902	president to act as a mediator in a labor dispute was Theodore Roosevelt, who personally attempted to settle the anthracite coal strike of 1902.
1912	federal legislation permitting federal employees to unionize and lobby Congress was the Lloyd-LaFollette Act.
1913	federal mediation service for labor disputes outside of the railroad industry was created by the Act creating the Department of Labor. The legislation authorized the Secretary of Labor “to act as mediator and to appoint commissioners of conciliation in labor disputes whenever in his judgment the interests of industrial peace may require it . . .” In 1947, the United States Mediation and Conciliation Service was made an independent agency.

**Arbitration, Mediation
and collective bargaining (continued)**

The first . . .

-
- 1920** **compulsory arbitration law** was passed in Kansas, but the Supreme Court declared parts of the act unconstitutional.
-
- 1922** **arbitration association**, the American Society of Arbitration, Inc., was formed in New York City.
-
- 1933** **federal legislation guaranteeing the rights of employees “to organize and bargain collectively . . . free from the interference, restraint or coercion of employers”** was the National Industrial Recovery Act. In May, 1935 the Supreme Court held that the law was unconstitutional, but in July, 1935 Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act, which established a board to supervise and enforce labor’s right to organize and bargain collectively.
-
- 1962** **machinery created to promote unionization and collective bargaining in the federal government** was established by Executive Order 10988 issued by President John Kennedy.
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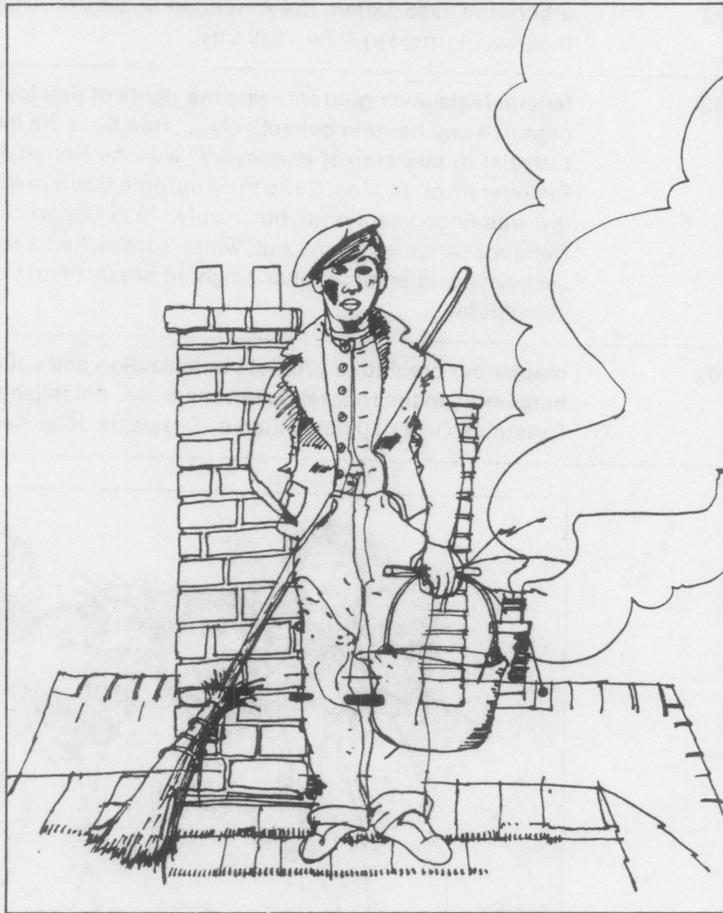


Black labor

The first . . .

1763

combination of black workers occurred when chimney sweepers in Charleston, S.C., refused to work unless their price scale was met. Rather than being a strike against employers, this was a protest against price controls.



1850

organization of black workers was the American League of Colored Laborers, located in New York City.

1869

organization of white workers to advocate the creation of black labor unions and to allow blacks to attend its annual meeting was the National Labor Union.

Black labor (continued)

The first . . .

-
- 1869** **national black labor organization** was the Colored National Labor Union.
-
- 1918** **federal bureau to attempt to ease labor-related racial tensions** caused by blacks leaving the South was the Division of Negro Economics, in the Department of Labor.
-
- 1941** **federal activity to promote fair employment practices** was the Fair Employment Practice Commission, which sought to eliminate discrimination in hiring in the defense industry.
-
- 1945** **state legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment** on the basis of race, creed or color was the Ives-Quinn Act in New York.
-
- 1957** **black vice-president of the AFL-CIO** was A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.
-
- 1964** **federal fair employment legislation** was the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
-

Child labor

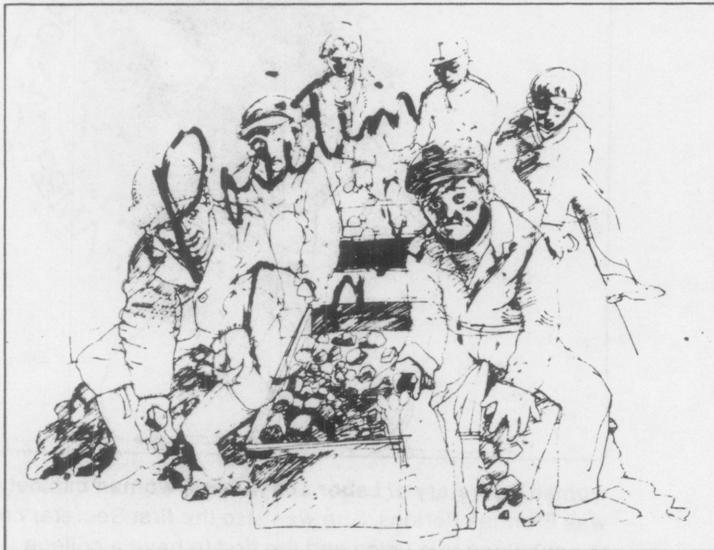
The first . . .

-
- 1640** **legislation dealing with child labor** was a Massachusetts Bay court order calling for town magistrates to investigate the possibility of "teaching the boys and girls in all towns the spinning of the yarn."
-
- 1813** **state law declaring that proprietors of manufacturing establishments** should teach their child laborers "reading, writing and the first four rules of arithmetic" was passed in Connecticut.
-
- 1825** **investigation into the relationship between child labor and school attendance** was in Massachusetts. This was also the first investigation into a labor problem. Partly due to this inquiry, a child labor law was passed in 1836.
-
- 1836** **state law restricting child labor** was in Massachusetts. It stated that no child under the age of 15 shall work in "manufacturing establishments" unless the child attended school for at least three of the 12 months preceding any year of employment. In 1842, enforcement provisions were added to the legislation.
-
- 1842** **state law limiting to 10 hours a day employment for children under the age of 12** was in Massachusetts.
-
- 1848** **state law setting a minimum age** of 12 for child employment in factories was in Pennsylvania.
-
- 1867** **state to have inspectors enforce child labor laws** was Massachusetts.
-
- 1906** **consideration of federal legislation dealing with child labor** took place when Senators Henry Cabot Lodge (Mass.) and Albert Beveridge (Indiana) and Congressman Herbert Parsons (N.Y.) proposed child legislation.
-
- 1912** **child labor bureau** was formed (Federal Children's Bureau), which Congress established within the Department of Commerce and Labor. In 1913, the bureau became part of the Department of Labor.
-

Child labor (continued)

The first . . .

-
- 1916** **federal child labor legislation** was the Keating-Owens Act. The law prohibited carrying in interstate or foreign commerce goods produced by firms employing children under 14 years old or who worked 14 to 16 hours a day. The law, however, was declared unconstitutional in 1918.
-
- 1918** **use of federal government contracts** to restrict the employment of child labor took place.
-
- 1919** **tax on the use of child labor** was the Revenue Act of 1919. The measure, however, was ruled unconstitutional in 1922.
-
- 1933** **federal legislation to set a minimum age for child labor** was the National Industrial Recovery Act. It placed a 16 year minimum age for general work and 18 for hazardous jobs. In 1935, the law was declared unconstitutional, but the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938 provided for minimum age requirements similar to the National Industrial Recovery Act. In 1936, the Walsh-Healey Act prohibited the employment of boys under 16 and girls under 18 in government contract work exceeding \$10,000.
-



Department of Labor

The first . . .

-
- 1869** **state bureau of labor statistics** was in Massachusetts.
-
- 1884** **federal labor bureau** was created by the Hopkins Act, which placed the bureau under the Department of the Interior. Its first commissioner was Carroll Wright.
-
- 1888** **United States Department of Labor** was established, but without cabinet status.
-
- 1901** **state Department of Labor** was in New York.
-
- 1913** **United States Department of Labor with cabinet status** was created with William B. Wilson as its Secretary.
-
- 1930** **native-born Secretary of Labor** was William Nuckles Doak. He was also first Secretary of Labor not to belong to the American Federation of Labor.
-



-
- 1933** **woman Secretary of Labor and the first woman cabinet officer** was Frances Perkins. She was also the first Secretary of Labor to not belong to a union and the first to have a college education.
-

Employment Services

The first . . .

1834	public employment office was in New York City.
1890	state-supported employment service was in Ohio.
1907	federal employment service was established under the Bureau of Immigration.
1918	distinct and separate United States Employment Service was created within the Department of Labor. In 1933, the Wagner-Peyser Act replaced the old service with a new employment service created by matching federal funds with state funds.

Labor holidays

The first . . .

-
- 1882** **labor day parade** was held in New York City under the auspices of the Central Labor Union on September 5. This initiated the practice of celebrating a "labor day".
-
- 1886** **May Day demonstration** was held as approximately 340,000 workers rallied for an eight-hour day in various cities. Beginning in 1890, such demonstrations became annual events.
-
- 1887** **state law establishing Labor Day as a holiday** was in Oregon. Similar legislation was passed in Colorado and New York later that year.
-
- 1894** **federal legislation designating Labor Day** as a national holiday was passed.
-

Labor and politics

The first . . .

-
- 1619** **political revolt by workers** occurred in Jamestown, Va., when Polish workers were denied equal voting rights. (See Strikes)
-
- 1734** **political party with considerable labor support** and leadership was the Popular Party in New York City led by Peter Zenger, a printer. After the party had won several seats on the common council, the infuriated governor of New York charged Zenger with libel. He was found innocent in a trial that established the precedent for freedom of the press.
-
- 1784** **labor organization to nominate its own political candidate** was the Mechanics Union, which ran a candidate for the New York State Assembly.
-
- 1828** **labor political party** was the Workingmen's Party formed in Philadelphia by the Mechanics Union of Trade Associations. The party, whose members included wage earners, craftsmen and farmers, sought to provide its followers mutual aid and protection during labor disputes. Some of its demands were equal public education and an end to monopolies, lotteries and compulsory military service. The party lasted until 1831.
-
- 1829** **labor organization to nominate and elect** its own political candidate was the Working Men's Party in New York City. Its nominee, Ebenezer Ford, the president of the Carpenters' Union, was elected to the New York State Assembly.
-
- 1830** **state-wide labor political organization** was in New York where three "Working Men's" parties existed. These parties ran candidates for various local and state offices.
-
- 1831** **regional labor organization** was the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and other Workmen. It was also the first major labor organization to include factory workers.
-
- 1834** **national labor political organization** was the National Trades' Union. (See Labor Organization)
-
- 1834** **labor official to be elected to Congress** was Ely Moore, the president of the General Trade Union of New York and the National Trades' Union. Moore served from 1835 to 1839.
-
- 1868** **significant labor lobby** in Washington, D.C. was established by the National Labor Union.
-

Labor organizations

The first . . .

-
- 1648** **labor organization was formed by the Boston shoemakers and coopers (barrel makers) guilds**, which obtained a three-year charter. Partially on account of the protests of local rural artisans, who believed that the guilds hindered free trade, the charters were not renewed.
-
- 1662** **friendly society** was established by porters in New York City.
-
- 1724** **labor organization in the buildin trades** appeared in Philadelphia as house carpenters created the Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia to establish a "book of prices" for paying for their work "so that workmen should receive the worth of his money." Its "Rules of Work" called for "A price scale bearing a proper proposition to the price of labor with due regard to the increased cost of living." Inconclusive evidence shows that this organization consisted of master carpenters. It was at their meeting house, Carpenter's Hall, that the First Continental Congress met in 1774.
-
- 1734** **women's labor organization** was established by maid servants in New York City to protest the abuses that they suffered from their mistresses' husbands.
-
- 1792** **workers to maintain a permanent organization** were Philadelphia cordwainers. The organization, whose name is unknown, was formed to maintain or improve wages by collective bargaining. The group lasted less than one year, but reappeared in 1794 as the Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers, which existed until 1806.
-
- 1806** **court decision declaring that labor combinations** that sought to pressure employers for wage increases were illegal conspiracies was *Commonwealth v. Pullis* issued in Philadelphia.
-
- 1825** **women's labor organization in a trade** was the United Tailoresses Society of New York. Later that year, this organization conducted the first strike by a women's labor organization.

Labor organizations (continued)

The first . . .

-
- 1827** **city federation of labor organizations** was the Mechanics Union Trade Associations in Philadelphia. This was the first coordinated movement by several trades. Its objectives were "to avert . . . the desolating evils which must inevitably arise from a depreciation of the intrinsic value of human labor; . . . to raise the mechanical and productive classes to that condition of true independence and equality . . ." By late 1828 the organization had collapsed. (See Labor and politics)
-
- 1828** **labor political party** was the Workingmen's Party. (See Labor and politics)
-
- 1830** **state-wide labor political organization** was in New York. (See Labor and politics)
-
- 1831** **regional labor organization** was the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and Other Workmen. (See Labor and politics)
-
- 1833** **city-wide trade union** was the General Trades' Union located in New York City.
-
- 1834** **national labor organization of city federations** was the National Trades' Union formed in New York City. Its 21,000 members sought "to advance the moral and intellectual condition and pecuniary interests of the laboring classes . . . and to unite and harmonize the effects of all productive classes of country." The organization lasted until mid-1837.
-
- 1836** **national trade association of a single craft** was established by cordwainers, who desired "to form a National compact of the craft." The National Co-operative Association of Journeymen Cordwainers gave financial aid to striking members in addition to cautioning its members against travelling to cities where strikes were occurring. The organization disappeared in late 1837.
-
- 1842** **court decision stating that labor combinations were not illegal** as long as their objectives were not harmful was *Commonwealth v. Hunt* issued by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.
-
- 1850** **national labor union that still exists today** is the International Typographical Union.

Labor organizations (continued)

The first . . .

1863	union of federal employees was formed by New York City letter carriers.
1867	national women's labor organization was the Daughters of St. Crispin, which consisted of female shoemakers. The union lasted until 1878.
1869	national black labor organization was the Colored National Labor Union.
1869	national labor organization whose membership was open to workers of every craft, creed and color was the Knights of Labor.
1874	labor union to use a union label was the Cigar Maker's International Union in San Francisco, which wanted to distinguish its cigars from those made by Chinese workers.
1881	national labor organization encompassing several trades was the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, which in 1886 became the American Federation of Labor.
1890	national organization of federal employees was the National Association of Letter Carriers.
1935	national federation of industrial unions was the Committee of Industrial Organization.

Occupational safety and health

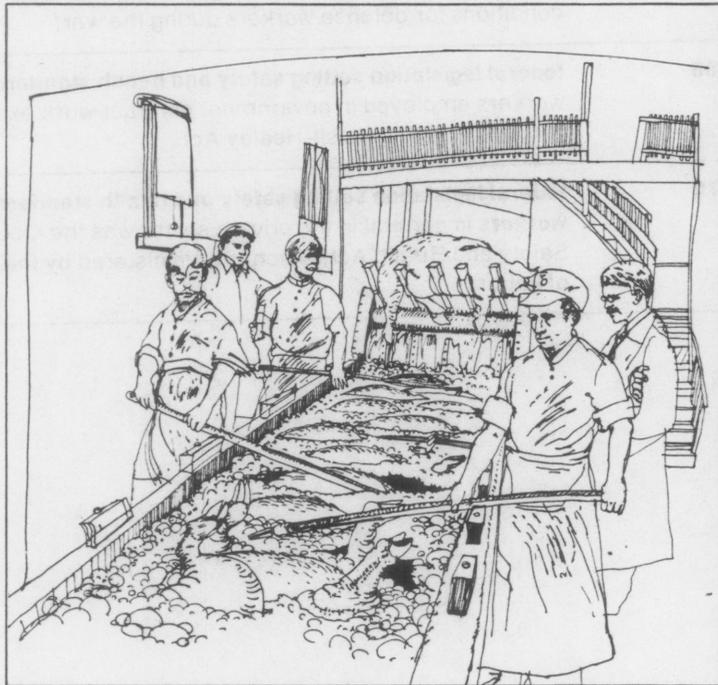
The first . . .

1837 **report on occupational health hazards** was by B. W. M'Cready, who wrote "On the Influence of Trades Professions and Occupations in the United States in the Production of Diseases."

1850 **state to study** occupational safety was Massachusetts.

1877 **state legislation requiring factory safeguards** was in Massachusetts.

1879 **state legislation requiring factory inspections** was in Massachusetts.



1886 **state legislation requiring the reporting of industrial accidents** was in Massachusetts.

1887 **company-financed medical department** with a full-time staff was at the Homestake Mining Company in North Dakota.

Occupational safety and health (continued)

The first . . .

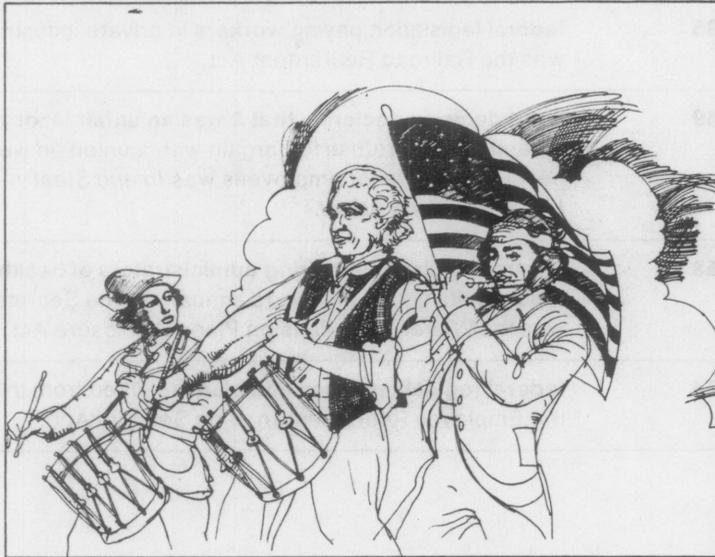
1893	baths installed in factories were at the J. H. Wilson Company in Brooklyn, N.Y.
1903	federal report on industrial hygiene was by C. F. W. Doehring, who wrote "Factory Sanitation and Labor Protection," published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
1911	state legislation requiring monthly physical exams for workers in hazardous industries was in Illinois.
1911	state legislation requiring the reporting of injuries due to occupational disease was in California.
1918	federal agency to promote occupational safety was the Working Conditions Services, which sought to improve working conditions for defense workers during the war.
1936	federal legislation setting safety and health standards for workers employed in government contract work exceeding \$10,000 was the Walsh-Healey Act.
1970	federal legislation setting safety and health standards for workers in general in the private sector was the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which is administered by the Department of Labor.

Pensions

The first . . .

1636 **pension** was established by the Plymouth colony for disabled soldiers.

1776 **federal government pension** was established to assist wounded and disabled Revolutionary soldiers.



1860 **private pension plan** offered by a labor organization was set up by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, a union of American and Canadian workers.

1875 **private pension plan offered by a company** was established by the American Express Company.

1880 **private pension plan set up entirely by American workers** was created by the International Molders' Union of North America.

1903 **investigation of old age associations** was done by the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics.

1907 **proposal for federal legislation** to provide old age pensions was made by Congressman William B. Wilson (D-Pa.), who became the first Secretary of Labor in 1913.

Pensions (continued)

The first . . .

1914	state to pass a pension bill was Arizona, but the law was ruled unconstitutional.
1915	pension law to be declared constitutional was in Alaska. The law covered all residents over 65, who had lived in the state for 10 years.
1923	state pension legislation to be found constitutional was in Montana.
1935	federal legislation paying workers in private industry a pension was the Railroad Retirement Act.
1949	court decision declaring that it was an unfair labor practice for an employer to refuse to bargain with a union on welfare or pension benefits for employees was <i>Inland Steel v. National Labor Relations Board</i> .
1958	federal legislation requiring administrators of health and pension funds to file financial reports annually to the Secretary of Labor was the Welfare and Pension Plans Disclosure Act.
1974	federal regulation of pension plans resulted from the passage of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act.

Strikes

The first . . .

-
- 1619** **dispute that may be labelled a strike** occurred in Jamestown, Va., as Polish workers protested against being denied the right to vote. In response to their action the Council of London yielded. The *Records of the Virginia Company of London* stated that "they shalle be enfranchised and made as free as any inhabitant there."
-
- 1636** **labor action caused by economic conditions** occurred when fishermen on Richmond Island, off the coast of Maine, struck to protest the withholding of a year of their wages.
-
- 1659** **strike by master craftsmen** was a protest by New York City bakers against the low prices they were receiving for their goods.
-
- 1677** **criminal prosecution of strikers** came after a strike of cartmen in New York City.
-
- 1768** **strike by journeymen** occurred in New York City as 20 journeymen printers refused to work unless they received "three shillings and six pence per day with diet."
-
- 1786** **strike in which the participants were assisted by a strike fund** took place in Philadelphia during a journeymen printers' strike for a dollar-a-day pay. After their demand was adopted, the fund was abandoned.
-
- 1791** **strike in the building trades and the first for a 10-hour day** was by the Journeymen Carpenters of the City and Liberties of Philadelphia. After they failed to win their demands for a 10-hour day and overtime pay, they set up a cooperative society that advertised rates underselling the master craftsmen.
-
- 1792** **strike by a permanent union** was by an organization of Philadelphia journeymen cordwainers, who protested against a reduction in wages. (See Labor organizations)
-
- 1805** **permanent strike fund** was established by New York City cordwainers.
-
- 1809** **local industry-wide strike** was by the Journeymen Cordwainers Society of Baltimore, which sought a closed shop.

Strikes (continued)

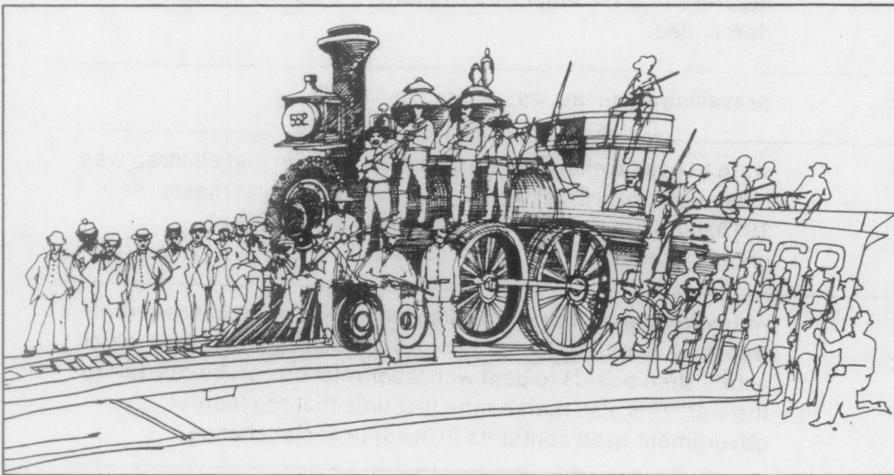
The first . . .

-
- 1824** **strike in which women participated** occurred in Pawtucket, R.I. (See Women's labor)
-
- 1825** **large-scale strike** for a 10-hour day was by 600 journeymen carpenters in Boston.
-
- 1825** **strike by a women's labor organization** was by the United Tailoresses Society of New York. (See Labor organizations)
-
- 1828** **use of a militia to break up a strike** took place in Paterson, N.J., when factory workers protested the changing of their dinner hour and eventually demanded a 10-hour day. The militia quelled the strikers, but the workers were successful in preventing the change of their dinner hour.
-
- 1834** **use of federal troops during a strike** was by President Andrew Jackson. At the request of the Maryland legislature, Jackson dispatched troops to end a violent labor disturbance among workers on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.
-
- 1834** **written expression on general strike theory** was by William Benbow, a Socialist, in "Grand National Holiday and Congress of the Productive Classes."
-
- 1835** **strike by federal government workers** was by navy yard workers in Washington, D.C.
-
- 1842** **sit-down strike** was by Pittsburgh puddlers and boilermakers, who seized a mill during a strike.
-
- 1877** **strike of national importance** occurred when railroad workers on several eastern and mid-western lines struck to protest wage cuts.
-
- 1886** **national general strike and the first designated "May Day" strike** occurred when approximately 340,000 workers demonstrated for an eight-hour day in several cities.
-
- 1913** **strike settled by the Department of Labor mediators** involved railway clerks. (See Arbitration, mediation and collective bargaining)

Strikes (continued)

The first . . .

-
- 1919** **city-wide general strike** took place in Seattle when approximately 60,000 workers refused to go to work in support of striking metal trades' workers who wanted a wage increase.
-
- 1932** **federal legislation effectively to restrict the use of court injunctions** against labor activity was the Norris-LaGuardia Act. An earlier attempt to exempt labor unions from the Sherman Anti-trust Act was the Clayton Act of 1914, but the Supreme Court declared that the legislation did not exclude labor from restraint of trade violations.
-
- 1936** **federal legislation to prohibit the transporting of workers** across state lines to break strikes was the Byrnes Anti-Strike Act.
-
- 1970** **massive strike** by federal employees was by postal workers.
-



Wages

The first . . .

1621	fixed wage rates were set by the governor of Virginia and the Council of London Company.
1630	wage legislation setting maximum wages occurred in Massachusetts Bay where workers in the building trades were limited to two shillings per day. Six months later, the regulations were abolished by an order stating that "wages of carpenters, joyners, and other artificers and workmen . . . shall be left at libertie as men shall reasonably agree."
1862	use of the prevailing wage concept (paying workers what the going wage rate is for the area) was for federal navy yard workers.
1865	use of the sliding wage scale was by Pittsburgh iron workers.
1879	wage payment law was passed in Massachusetts which required that "cities shall, at intervals not exceeding seven days, pay all laborers who are employed by them . . . if such payment is demanded."
1891	prevailing wage law was passed in Kansas.
1912	state to pass a minimum wage law for women and children was Massachusetts. Eight other states passed similar measures in 1913, but the Supreme Court declared all such laws unconstitutional.
1917	widespread use of the prevailing wage by the federal government was a result of the Cantonment Adjustment Commission, which established boards to deal with labor relations problems during the war. This also marked the first time that the federal government used contracts to institute social change.
1919	states to have equal pay legislation for women were Michigan and Montana.
1931	federal legislation regulating wages was the Davis-Bacon Act, which required the payment of the prevailing wage for construction workers employed under government contracts.

Wages (continued)

The first . . .

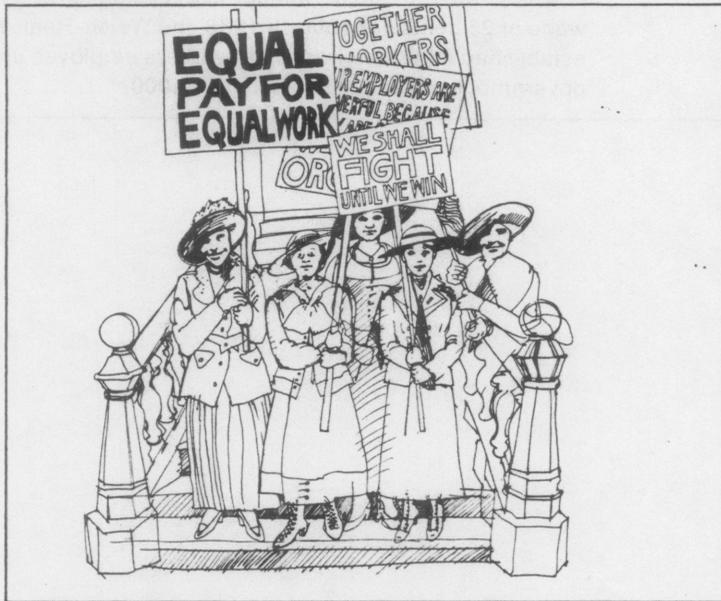
1933

federal minimum wage legislation for workers in the private sector was the National Industrial Recovery Act. In 1935, the measure was declared unconstitutional. Three years later, however, the Fair Labor Standards Act established a minimum wage of 25 cents per hour. In 1936, the Walsh-Healey Act established minimum wages for workers employed under government contracts exceeding \$10,000.

Women's labor

The first . . .

-
- 1734** **women's labor organization** was one of maid servants in New York City. (See Labor organizations)
-
- 1824** **women to participate in a strike** were female weavers in Pawtucket, R.I., who were resisting increased hours and reduced wages.



-
- 1825** **permanent women's labor organization** was the United Tailoresses Society of New York. (See Labor organizations)
-
- 1845** **government investigation into women's labor conditions** was in Massachusetts. The resulting report stated that conditions failed to warrant legislation since health was not being impaired and that reduced hours would affect wages and hurt competition.
-
- 1847** **law restricting working hours** for women to 10-hours was in New Hampshire (See Working hours)
-
- 1867** **national women's labor organization** was the Daughters of St. Crispin. (See Labor organizations)

Women's labor (continued)

The first . . .

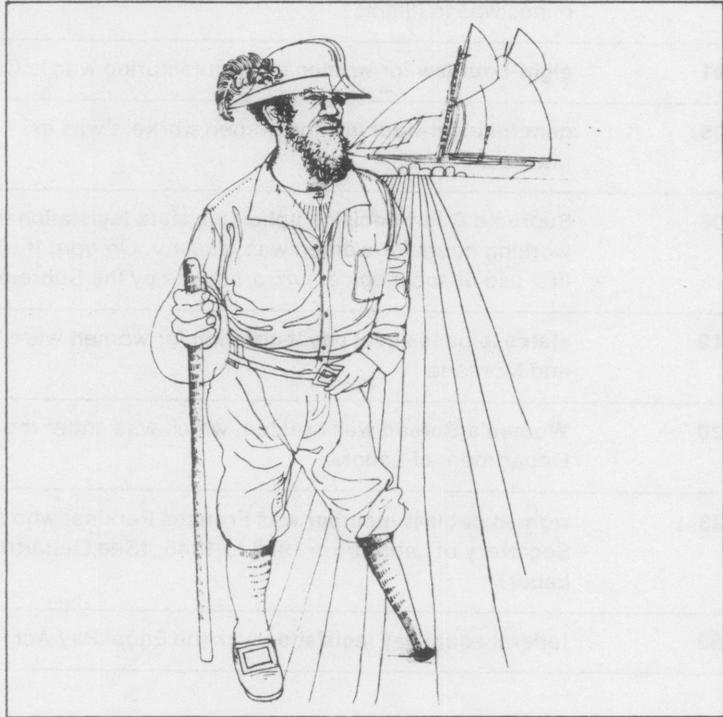
1872	anti-discrimination law against women was in Illinois.
1879	state legislation prohibiting the employment of women in coal mines was in Illinois.
1891	eight-hour law for women in manufacturing was in California.
1905	general eight-hour law for women workers was in Massachusetts.
1908	Supreme Court decision upholding state legislation that restricted working hours for women was <i>Muller v. Oregon</i> . It was also the first use of <i>sociological jurisprudence</i> by the Supreme Court.
1919	states to pass equal pay legislation for women were Michigan and Montana.
1920	Women's Bureau was created, which was under the Department of Labor.
1933	woman cabinet member was Frances Perkins, who served as Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945. (See Department of Labor)
1963	federal equal pay legislation was the Equal Pay Act.

Workers' benefits

The first . . .

1695

workers' compensation agreement was made between Captain William Kidd, the pirate, and his crew. "If any man should Loose a Leg or Arm in ye said service, he should six hundred pieces of Eight, or six able slaves."



1794

profit sharing plan was introduced by Albert Gallatin, who was Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Jefferson and Madison, at his New Geneva, Pa. glassworks.

1838

workers' compensation lawsuit involving the rights of an injured servant against his master was in South Carolina.

1856

employers' liability legislation was in Georgia. The measure applied only to railroad workers.

1889

use of the check-off system to deduct union dues from wages was by the National Progressive Union.

Workers' benefits (continued)

The first . . .

1893	stock ownership plan was established by the Illinois Central Railroad Company.
1894	guaranteed employment was offered by the National Wallpaper Company, which assured its workers 11 months of employment.
1902	workers' compensation act was passed in Maryland, but it was declared unconstitutional.
1906	federal employer's liability legislation was passed, but it was declared unconstitutional. A revised measure was adopted in 1908.
1908	employee's compensation act for federal workers was passed. President Theodore Roosevelt advocated the proposal by saying that "It is a matter of humiliation to the nation that there should not be in our statutes provisions to meet and partially to atone for such misfortune when it comes upon a man through no fault of his own while faithfully serving the public."
1909	state workers' compensation measure not declared unconstitutional was in New York.
1916	unemployment compensation bill was introduced in Massachusetts, but it failed passage.
1916	Congressional proposal for the appointment of a committee to study the feasibility of a compulsory system of unemployment insurance on a national level was by Meyer London, a New York Socialist.
1917	employer to establish an unemployment insurance plan was the Dennison Manufacturing Company of Farmington, Mass.
1932	state unemployment insurance law was in Wisconsin.
1935	federal legislation to provide unemployment insurance and old-age benefits was the Federal Social Security Act.
1942	state to pass a disability insurance law was Rhode Island.
1955	supplementary unemployment benefits were gained by the United Auto Workers.

Working hours

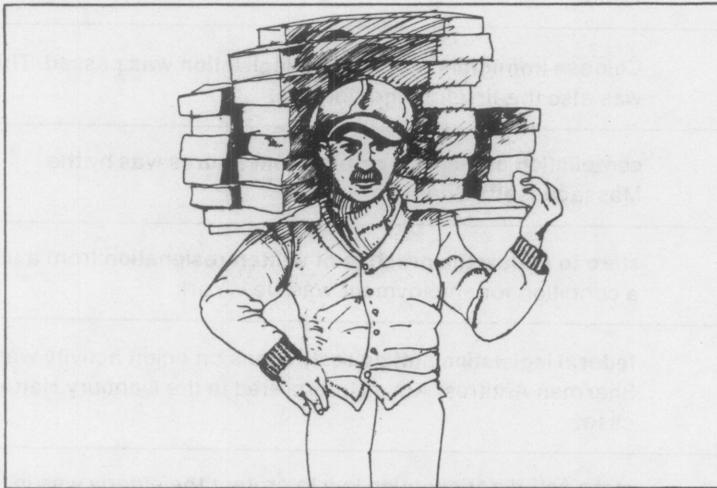
The first . . .

-
- 1791** **strike for a 10-hour day** was by Philadelphia carpenters. (See Strikes)
-
- 1802** **petition to a state legislature for a shorter working day** was presented by carpenters in Georgia, who sought to place their profession "upon a more respectable and recognized social footing."
-
- 1825** **large-scale strike for a 10-hour day** was by 600 Boston journeymen carpenters.
-
- 1840** **authorization for a 10-hour day for federal government workers** was by President Martin Van Buren, who issued an executive order giving navy yard workers a 10-hour day without a reduction in pay.
-
- 1842** **state law passed limiting the hours for working children** to no more than 10 was in Massachusetts for children under age 12.
-
- 1847** **state law authorizing the 10-hour day** for all workers was in New Hampshire. The committee investigating the matter believed that "a proper reduction in hours of labor would be found advantageous to all parties. Employers would realize a greater profit, even in less time, from labours more vigorous and able to work, from having had suitable time to rest; while operatives would be allowed that time for intellectual and moral culture, which duty to themselves and others most imperatively demand."
-
- 1853** **state law giving public workers, who were not under contract, a 10-hour day** was in New York.
-
- 1859** **call for an eight-hour day** by a labor union was by the Machinists and Blacksmith Union at its annual convention at Philadelphia.
-
- 1867** **state laws authorizing the eight-hour day** were in Connecticut, Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, Missouri and California.
-
- 1868** **federal legislation giving the eight-hour day** to laborers, workers and mechanics employed by the federal government was enacted.

Working hours (continued)

The first . . .

-
- 1870** **eight-hour law for state and municipal workers** was in New York.
-
- 1888** **federal eight-hour law for workers** at the Government Printing Office and letter carriers was passed.
-
- 1892** **federal eight-hour law for all workers** and mechanics employed by the United States and the District of Columbia governments on public works was passed.
-



-
- 1907** **federal legislation regulating the hours** of workers in the private sector was passed. The measure prohibited trainmen from working longer than 16 consecutive hours.
-
- 1936** **federal legislation calling for a 40-hour week** with time and a half pay for overtime was the Walsh-Healey Act, which applied to workers employed under government contracts exceeding \$10,000. (See Wages)
-
- 1938** **federal legislation setting a 40-hour week standard** for workers engaged in interstate commerce was the Fair Labor Standards Act.
-

Miscellaneous

The first . . .

1642	convict labor law was in Virginia.
1828	labor newspaper was the <i>Mechanics' Free Press</i> , published in Philadelphia.
1845	consumer co-operative was set up by Boston mechanics.
1854	use of public construction bonds for the alleviation of unemployment was in New York City.
1880	use of a suggestion system to improve productivity was set up by the Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company in Stamford, Conn.
1882	Chinese immigration restriction legislation was passed. This was also the first immigration law.
1886	compilation of monthly employment figures was by the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor.
1887	state to outlaw the practice of written resignation from a union as a condition for employment was New York.
1890	federal legislation putting restrictions on union activity was the Sherman Antitrust Act as interpreted in the Danbury Hatters' case.
1903	state anti-discrimination law to protect the elderly was in Colorado.
1915	federal government monthly unemployment figures were issued from payroll data collected from a few industries.
1917	federal legislation calling for paying states matching grants-in-aid money for vocational education and training of vocational teachers was the Smith-Hughes Act.
1920	federal legislation to provide funds for the training of disabled workers was the Smith-Fess Act.

Miscellaneous (continued)

The first . . .

1921	presidential committee to call for public works programs to fight unemployment and to stabilize the economy was under President Warren G. Harding's administration.
1929	use of public works projects by the federal government to fight unemployment was by the Hoover administration.
1931	Employment Stabilization Act creating a board to advise the President on the economy and to collect data on the economy was passed.
1931	state-wide relief program was in New York.
1945	Congressional attempt to guarantee jobs to those who wanted them was the Full Employment Bill of 1945, which stated that all Americans "have the right to useful, remunerative, regular, full-time employment." However, the measure was defeated.
1946	full employment act was passed which called for the federal government to maintain maximum employment and purchasing power.
1961	federal legislation that sought to bring industry into depressed areas and train workers in those areas was the Area Redevelopment Act.
1962	federal legislation to train the unemployed and the poor for better occupations was the Manpower Development and Training Act.
1967	federal legislation to prohibit age discrimination in employment was the Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

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