

ROBERT W. DUNN COLLECTION

Papers, 1919 - 1937
(Predominantly, 1926-1937)

2 Linear feet

Accession Number 96
L.C. Number MS 72-828

The papers of Robert Williams Dunn which deal with labor and the automobile industry were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in May of 1964 by Mr. Dunn and were opened for research in 1965. They were reprocessed in April of 1980.

Robert W. Dunn was Born in Huntington, Pa. June 1, 1895. After graduation from Yale in 1918 he worked in New England for the Amalgamated Textile Workers Unions as an organizer and economic researcher.

He was an active member of the American Civil Liberties Union from its creation in 1920, and was secretary of their affiliated division, the New England Civil Liberties Committee. In 1923 he joined the ACLU National Committee, and from 1933 through 1941 he served on the Board of Directors.

In 1927 he founded the Labor Research Association and was its executive secretary until 1975. The Association assembles economic data on American labor for trade unions. Among its publications is The Labor Fact Book, a biennial reference volume, of which Dunn edited seventeen volumes.

In the 1920's he was interested in the Soviet Union and made two trips there, one as research director of the Quaker Relief Committee in 1922-1923 and later as secretary to the American Trade Union Delegation to Russia in 1927. He was a co-author with Stuart Chase and Rexford Guy Tugwell of the report, Soviet Russia in the Second Decade.

Among his other principal books were: The Labor Spy with Sidney Howard (1924), American Foreign Investments (1926), Company Unions (1927), The Americanization of Labor (1927), Soviet Trade Unions (1928), Labor and Automobiles (1929), and Labor and Textiles with Jack Hardy (1931). He also wrote pamphlets and wrote extensively for the Federated Press and labor journals.

He died in January 1977 and is survived by a son, Roger Williams Dunn.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

Series I:

Automobile industry (files are arranged by specific subject)

Series II:

- Auto industry unionization - UAAVWA
- Industrial accidents
- Irregularity of auto employment
- Labor spies
- Open shop
- Speed-ups
- Unemployment
- Wages and wage cuts
- Working conditions

Series III:

- Bennett, Harry H.
- Communists
- Depression
- Ford Hunger March
- Ford Motor Co. labor policies
- Ford Service Dept.
- Foster, William Z.
- Unemployment

Series IV:

- Auto Workers' Union
- Mechanics Education Society
- Speed-ups
- Strikes:
 - Auto-Lite - Spicer Strike (Toledo) 1934
 - Bohn Aluminum (Detroit) 1936
 - Briggs (Detroit) 1933, 1937
 - Chrysler (Detroit) 1937
 - Fisher Body (Flint; Cleveland; Tarrytown, N.Y.) 1934
 - Fisher Body - Chevrolet (St. Louis, Mo.) 1934
 - Ford (Chester, Pa.; Edgewater, N.J.) 1933
 - Ford (Kansas City) 1937
 - Ford (Richmond, Calif.) 1937
 - General Motors (Toledo) 1935
 - General Motors (Flint) Sit-down 1937
 - General Motors (Oshawa, Ont.) 1937
 - General Motors (Pontiac) 1937
 - Hudson (Detroit) 1933, 1934, 1937
 - Hupp Motor Co. (Detroit) 1935
 - Kelsey-Hayes Sit-down (Detroit) 1936
 - Libby-Owens-Ford (Toledo) 1936
 - Motor Products Corp. (Detroit) 1933, 1934, 1935
 - Murray Body (Detroit) 1935
 - Nash Auto Co. (Kenosha) 1933, 1934
 - Nash Auto Co. (Milwaukee) 1934
 - Nash Auto Co. (Racine) 1934

Reo (Lansing) 1937
Seaman Auto (Milwaukee) 1934
Tool and Die Makers Strile (Detroit) 1933
Willys-Overland (Toledo) 1933
UAW recognition as bargaining agent 1937
Wage cutting

The important correspondents are:

Baldwin, Roger
Chalmers, William
Raymond, Philip

Contents

2 manuscript boxes
1 card file

- Series I, Labor and Automobiles, Research Notes, 1919-1928; Boxes 1-2:
Notes, clippings, press releases, and other materials used by Robert W. Dunn in writing the book, Labor and Automobiles. They are concerned with the structure of the automobile industry, working conditions, unionization, and strikes.
- Series II, Labor and Automobiles - Related Material, 1928-1929; Box 2:
Articles, both published and in manuscript form, by Robert Dunn and others, correspondence, minutes, and reports concerning the automobile industry and the Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers of America.
- Series III, Ford Hunger March - 1932; Box 2-3:
Articles, newspaper clippings, manuscripts, and correspondence regarding the Ford Hunger March.
- Series IV, Automobile Industry Strikes - 1930-1937; Box 3:
Correspondence, articles, press releases, and newspaper clippings on automobile industry strikes in the 1930's.

ACLU American Civil Liberties Union

FP Federated Press

LRA Labor Research Association

TUEL Trade Union Educational League

UAAVWA United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers of America

Series I
Labor and Automobiles - Research Notes 1919-1928
Boxes 1-2

Box 1 contains the research note cards used by Robert Dunn in writing Labor and Automobiles. In many cases these cards indicate the sources of the information he used, and articles and clippings used as sources are pasted to the cards. These cards are arranged alphabetically by subject. Material which was folded up between cards has been removed and placed in correspondingly labeled folders in Box 2. The material is dated from 1919 through 1928, but most is from the period 1926 through 1928.

Box 1 (divider headings and sub-headings)

- Detroit
- Employers' Organizations
- Employment Methods and Policies:
 - Employment
 - Foreign Born Workers
 - Negro Workers
 - Skilled Workers
 - Types of Workers
 - Young Workers
- Grievances
- Health and Accidents
- Hours and Wages:
 - Bonuses
 - Hours
 - Overtime
 - Wages
 - Wage Cuts
- Irregularity of Job:
 - Layoffs and Unemployment
 - Method of Firing
 - Unemployment
- Methods of Wage Payment
- Organizing (and Unionization)
- Speed-ups and Productivity:
 - Monotony
 - Skill
 - Technical Advances
- Sporadic Strikes
- Welfare Workers
- Women and Wages
- Bibliography

Box 2

1. Employer's Organizations
2. Employment Methods and Policies
3. Grievances
4. Health and Accidents
5. Hours and Wages
6. Irregularity of Employment
7. Methods of Wage Payment
8. Organizing
9. Speed-ups and Productivity
10. Sporadic Strikes
11. Welfare of Workers
12. Women and Wages

Series II
Labor and Automobiles - Related Material 1928-1929
 Box 2

Articles both published and in manuscript form by Robert Dunn and others, correspondence, minutes, pamphlets, and reports concerning conditions in the automobile industry and organizing efforts by the United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers of America in the late 1920's. Some of this material may have been used by Dunn in the preparation of Labor and Automobiles. The files are arranged alphabetically by author, title, or name of the organization.

Box 2

13. "The Automobile Industry," Social Service Bulletin - 1 Sep 1929
14. Brown, Joe - "Body by Fisher: How a GM Concern Cuts Wages" -
Jul 1928
15. Chalmers, William (?) - Correspondence - 16 Aug 1927
16. Chalmers, William - Correspondence - 9 Dec 1928
17. Chalmers, William (?) - "An Interpretation of Wages in the
Automobile Industry"
18. Cruden, Robert L. - "Ask the Man Who Works There" - 1928
19. - "No Loitering: Get Out Production,"
Nation - 12 Jun 1929
20. - "While Packard Prospers . . ." -
8 Feb 1929
21. - "The Worker Looks at Ford," Labor Age -
Jun 1928
22. "Detroit Auto Workers: Do You Want Slavery or Freedom?" -
IWW Flier - 1928
23. Dunn, Robert W. - Company Unions Today - 1935
24. - "Ford Resorts to Stool Pigeons . . ." -
13 Feb 1929
25. - "On the Belt"
26. - FP Articles - 1928-1929
27. - "Steady Jobs in the Auto Industry" - ms.
28. Federation News - 9 Feb 1919 - GM Article
29. The Ford Worker, Workers (Communist) Party of America -
15 May 1927
30. Foster, William Z. - "Organizing the Automobile Workers -
Feb 1929
31. Labor Age - Apr 1929 - Articles by Dunn, Cruden, etc.
32. Nash Motor Co. - Correspondence and Articles - 1926
33. O'Connor, Harvey - FP Article - 1929
34. Rohen, Arthur E. - "Detroit Automobile Conference," Labor
Unity - 1928(?)
35. UAAVWA - Correspondence - 2 Mar 1928 (Philip Raymond)
36. - Auto Workers' Union Minutes - 13 Jan 1929
37. - Report of Auto Workers' Union General Executive Secretary
38. Ulrich, Walter E. - On the Belt - 1929

- 9 -

Series III
Ford Hunger March 1932
Boxes 2-3

Articles, newspaper clippings, manuscripts, and correspondence regarding the Ford Hunger March on March 7, 1932 and its aftermath. The clippings are from a variety of Detroit and New York newspapers. The files are in two groupings: firstly, articles, manuscripts, and correspondence arranged alphabetically; then secondly, newspaper clippings arranged chronologically.

Box 2

- 39. ACLU Press Releases - Apr 1932
- 40. Correspondence, Roger Baldwin - 30 Mar 1932
- 41-42. Cruden, Robert L. - "Bloody Monday at Ford's" - ms.
- 43. - "Open Letter to Edsel Ford," - New Masses,
Apr 1932
- 44. FP Articles, 1930-1932
- 45. "Ford Massacre Number," The New Force, Mar-Apr 1932
- 46. The Ford Worker - Mar 1932
- 47. Grossman, Mary - "Bloody Monday at Ford's." Labor Defender
- 48. Johnson, Oakley - "After the Dearborn Massacre," New Republic -
30 Mar 1932
- 49. LRA - "Background of the Ford Massacre"
- 50. Morrow, Felix - "Class War in Detroit," New Masses - May 1932
- 51. Sugar, Maurice - "Bullets--Not Food--for Ford Workers," Nation
23 Mar 1932

Box 3

- 1-10. Newspaper Clippings - 7 Mar 1932 to 30 Jun 1932

- 10 -

Series IV
Automobile Industry Strikes 1930 - 1937
Box 3

Correspondence, articles, news releases, and newspaper clippings regarding automobile industry strikes in the 1930's. There is material on most of the major strikes of that period with particular attention to strikes in GM plants and also on GM recognition of the UAW as sole bargaining agent for their workers. The files are divided into two groups; correspondence, articles, and news releases arranged alphabetically by author and title, and then newspaper clippings arranged chronologically.

Box 3

11. AFL Correspondence: Hudson Motor Strike (1934?)
12. Auto Strikes List - 1935
13. "The Automobile Industry," Social Service Bulletin - 1 Sep 1929
- 14-18. FP Articles - 1933-1937
19. GMC: Ex-dealer Correspondence - 1 Feb 1937
20. LRA - "Memo on the Briggs Manufacturing Co." - 31 Jan 1933
21. Magil, A. B. - "The Flint Auto Strike," Labor Unity - Jun 1934
22. Mydans, Carl - "Why Ford Workers Strike," Nation - 25 Oct 1933
23. Raymond, Phil - "The Briggs Auto Strike Victory," Labor Unity -
Mar 1933
24. Romer, Samuel - "The Detroit Strike," Nation - 15 Feb 1933
25. Stachel, Jack - "The Strikes in the Auto Industry," Labor Unity -
Mar 1933
26. UAW Open Letter: Flint Sit-down Strike - Jan 1937
- 27-37. Newspaper Clippings - 1930-1937
38. Newspaper Clipping - 9 Dec 1951