



Old News

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Labor Records

The history of labor in Wyoming can be found at the State Archives. In the early part of the twentieth century, various workers organized trade and craft unions to protect their respective livelihoods, including barbers, bartenders, bricklayers, carpenters, cigar makers, clerks, cooks, laundry workers, miners, musicians, painters, plumbers, railroad workers, teamsters, and typographical workers. While overshadowed by mining and agriculture, labor played an important part in the history of Wyoming. Some records pertaining to this interesting aspect of Wyoming history are housed in the Archives.

Within the railroad industry there were numerous trade brotherhoods. Probably one of the most influential was The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen. The Archives has an extensive collection of early records: minutes (1906-1948), minutes and expenses of the Joint Protective Board of the Colorado & Southern Railway (1906-1913), minutes of the general grievance committee (1913-1948), correspondence (1919-1948), reports of grievance committee (1925-1941), joint executive committee report (1921-1927), monthly reports (1920-1942) and seniority lists (1925-1947).

Encompassing various local unions, the Laramie Central Labor Union was organized for the purpose of promoting union work. The records in the Archives include minutes (1922-1935, no inclusive), membership book (1937) and correspondence (1933-1936).

The Railway Postal Clerks Union, Cheyenne Branch monitored the work environment and employment of its members. The collection is comprised of constitution and by-laws (ca. 1924), correspondence (1905-1927), minutes (1891-1927), and membership roster (1914).

The records of the Wyoming AFL-CIO consists primarily of published annual proceedings (1910-1984, not inclusive).

Typographical unions were organized across Wyoming by workers in the publishing business. The Archives has the 1890 constitution and by-laws of the Wyoming Typographical Union, No. 184, Cheyenne.

The Citizen's Alliance of Cheyenne was reportedly a non-partisan organization comprised of businessmen and workers and was opposed to any acts by labor unions adversely affecting business and labor. The Archives has the organization's by-laws. Little else is known about the Alliance.

The newspaper *Wyoming Labor Journal/Wyoming-Utah Labor Journal* was devoted exclusively to issues of labor and was the voice of labor from 1917-1950.



Photograph From the Archives

A photograph of ditch cleaner near Pavillion, Wyoming, 1941. The caption reads: "A machine cleans the ditch of mud & weeds, allowing the life giving water to flow on its way. Typical desert land still untilled, lays behind the machine." (Collection P-92-5, Community Methodist Church United States Reclamation Project, Pavillion, Wyoming)

Holden "Pete" Peterson Collection (H91-33)

Holden "Pete" Peterson (1841-1937), a Norwegian-born blacksmith, immigrated to Illinois about 1864 and came to Fort Robinson about 1868. By the 1880s, he had moved to the Fort Fetterman area. Later he moved to Winthrop in Natrona County, and homesteaded in the Bates Hole country. About 1930, due to

old age, he moved to Casper. Holden Peterson never married and died in Casper at the age of 97.

The collection consists of ledger books and pages, and business, friends, and family correspondence from 1867 to 1934, including several letters written in Norwegian.

Legislative Incidents in Wyoming History

1886 – Schools were required to teach about the harmful effects of alcohol and narcotics.

1895 – The legislature called upon Congress for a constitutional amendment for direct election of senators. The reason behind this request was both practical and ethical: “The temptation to corruption and the inducements to influence legislators by questionable means would be entirely removed if the election of Senators were transferred to the people. It is believed the business of the Legislature should be confined to matters of legislation” The seventeenth amendment to the US Constitution for the direct election of senators was passed in 1913.

1897 – The Governor could restore the right of citizenship to individuals discharged from the penitentiary. The legislature had previously handled this duty.

1917 – High schools were permitted to establish normal training departments. Upon completion of the coursework, students were certified to be bona fide teachers in rural schools.

1925 – The office of State Entomologist was created. It was discontinued in 1991.

1955 - “The Wyoming Communist Control Act of 1955” prohibited the names of communist candidates from being placed on the ballot. The law required communist party members and organizations to be registered with the secretary of state. Failure to do so was punishable by a fine of \$10,000 or imprisonment between two to ten years or both. Party candidates were not printed on the ballot and communists were forbidden from holding any non-elected public job.

Charles Earl Cady, Wyoming Songwriter



Charles Earl Cady (1889-1967) was a grocer and city treasurer of Laramie. During his life, he was well-remembered for these two endeavors, but he had a artistic side as a song writer. Cady enjoyed music, and among other things was a member of the municipal band of Laramie. How Cady became interested in music is not known, and like many artistic expressions, this facet of his life was not recorded for posterity. Nonetheless, he composed numerous songs – “Mother’s Still Waiting For You” (1909), “You Are Like The Flowers” (1910), “That’s What The Daisy Said” (1911), “Driftwood” (1913), and “The Girl By The Yellowstone” (1913). He self-published his last three songs and the last two were by The Star Publishing Company, which he operated. (His grocery store at the time was Star Grocery.) “Mother’s Still Waiting For You” is about the security of home that awaits those for whom the doors of opportunity and the wider world have shunned. On the opposite “Driftwood” is a song about being a tramp. The other songs are seemingly romantic and overly sentimental by our standards but are reflective the kind of music enjoyed at the time. The collection of his songs is found in H74-27.

New Books

Delivering Aid: Implementing Progressive Era Welfare in the American West. By Thomas Krainz. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

Governor Lady: The Life and Times of Nellie Tayloe Ross. By Teva J. Scheer. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005.

I need your feedback! If you have questions, comments, suggestions, or complaints, please contact Carl Hallberg by phone at 307/777-6423 or by email at challb@state.wy.us.

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