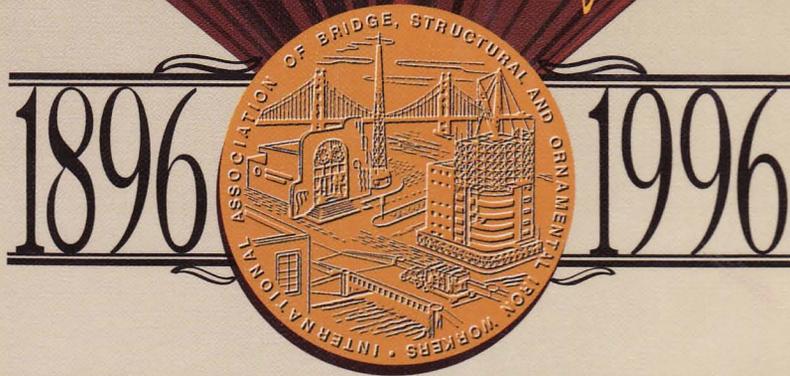


# IRONWORKERS

100<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary



**A History of the  
Iron Workers Union**



# Setting The Stage

## A Historical Perspective Leading Up To The Birth of Our Union

**I**n the last few years we have all heard people say, "Unions were all right in the past, but we don't need them today." However, from the earliest times workers have organized, demanded training in needed skills and their democratic rights on the job. As long as selfishness and greed exist in this world unions will always be needed.

It is also true that the history of the Ironworker goes back to even biblical times. In Genesis, Chapter 4, 22, one of the descendants of Adam named Tubal-Cain is described as the instructor of workers in brass and iron. This would make him the very first ironworker apprenticeship instructor.

An article on apprenticeship written by General President Jake West in the May, 1993 issue of *The Ironworker* mentioned the following:

*"The world's first written code of law, the 'Code of Hammurabi,' named after the King of Babylon in the 18th century B.C. included the formalization of the training which we identify today as apprenticeship."*

Among the Greeks and Romans, Vulcan was the god of fire and iron. He was often portrayed as a blacksmith standing by his anvil. Due to their resistance to corrosion, objects of utility and decoration, fashioned from brass, bronze, gold, silver, etc., are still in existence as records of the early civilization which produced them. The iron works of ancient peoples, however, have long rusted away, but we know from the earliest written records that iron was in common use.

The earliest known labor-management agreement

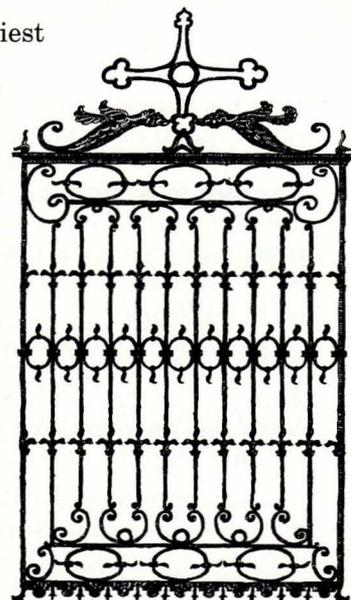
dates back to 459 A.D. and is known as the Sardis Building Trades Agreement. An American archeologist, W.H. Buckler, while digging at the site of the ancient city of Sardis in what is now modern Turkey, discovered a very large gray marble slab with an inscription on it. When Buckler translated the inscription he was surprised to find it was a collective bargaining agreement between the local Roman pro-consul and the Sardis Building Trades Crafts. This marble slab was hardly the kind of contract that you would carry around in your pocket.

It seems that the city of Sardis was experiencing a building boom, and contractors were finding that there was a shortage of labor. This put construction workers in the position of being able to demand higher wages as they moved from one contractor to another. The Roman pro-consul then negotiated a collective bargaining agreement.

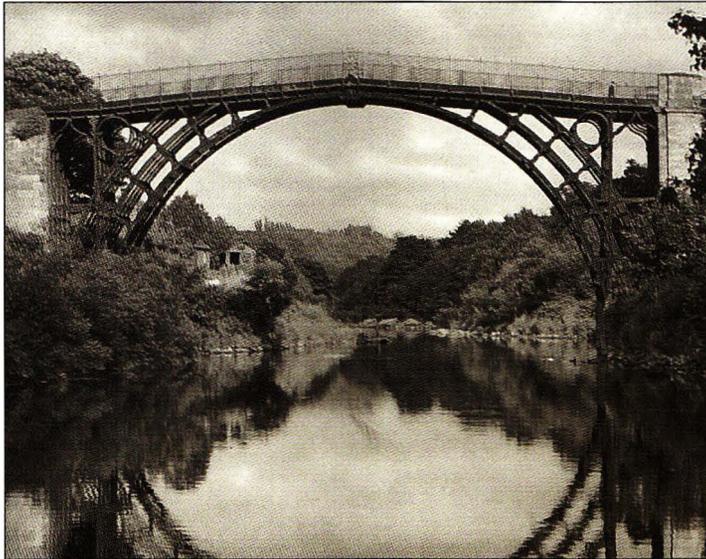
Although this is the earliest agreement that has been found certainly even earlier agreements must have existed between workers and employers.

With the collapse of the Roman Empire new means of protecting workers developed during the Middle Ages. This new system was the "Craft Guilds."

Everyone in a particular field in a town or district belonged to a guild. Ornamental ironworkers had such an organization. The members drew up the statutes of the guild, elected their own officers, and paid dues. Once a guild was orga-



*Ornamental Ironworkers belonging to the Craft Guilds designed and fabricated wrought-iron window grilles in the 15th Century.*



The Iron Bridge. The first bridge in the world to use iron as the basic construction material, was built in 1779.

nized only its members could work in that field. Members included the master, the apprentices, and the journeyman. The theory was that after years in a trade a journeyman would become a master.

An article in *The Ironworker* described the way the system worked:

*"In medieval England, apprenticeship agreements called indentures were made between master and apprentice. The English word 'pre-tence' or 'apprentice' came into use during this time; it derives from the latin word apprehendere, 'to lay hold of.'*

*The relationship between master and apprentice was much like parent and child, with the master's authority extending to every phase of the apprentice's life; the master provided food, clothing, housing and tools. He taught the trade and instructed in ethics, morals and proper behavior, usually for a period of seven years.*

*At the end of training, the apprentice had to develop a 'masterpiece' as a final exam. If he passed he became a 'journeyman.' When he could pay the necessary fees and could set-up his own shop, he became a master."*

Once an apprentice finished his training he would become a member of his craft guild. At their height, the guilds performed many of the same functions that unions perform in America today. They engaged in political action to secure liberties for their members and the community. They regulated trade and industry and provided education for their members. They helped sick members and provided them with a decent funeral. They were involved in both the artistic and religious life of their communities.

However, after the 14th century the masters gained control of the guilds and refused to allow journeymen to join the ranks of the masters. The journeymen then formed "journeymen guilds" and they engaged in strikes in order to gain higher wages. Thus was born the prototype of our modern trade unions.

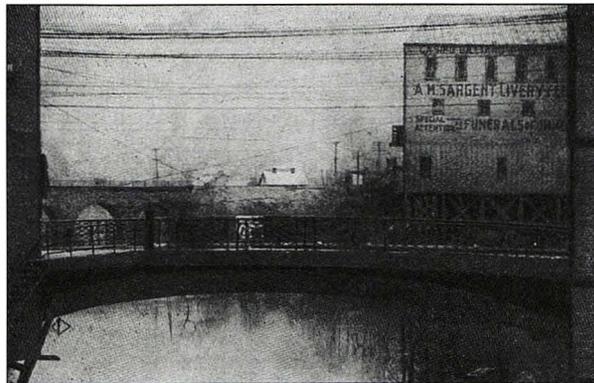
Former General President John H. Lyons Jr., wrote the following in the September, 1975 issue of *The Ironworker*.

*"One very important early American was the Iron Worker, whether he was known as a Bridgeman, Blacksmith, 'Mechanic', Rigger, or Housesmith...They erected bridges of heavy wooden timbers, using primarily rigging skills with ropes, blocks, rollers and skids as their tools. We know, for example, the first ironworks was built in 1619 north of Jamestown and continued in operation until the workers were killed in an Indian raid."*

The first iron bridge was built by Abraham Darby in 1779. It crosses the Severn at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire, England, and has a span of about 100 feet, rising to a height of 50 feet. It is built of cast-iron ribs hinged at the springs and the crown. Even with this development, iron remained unsuitable for general bridge construction. Not only was it difficult to obtain a reliable enough supply of cast iron, but the brittle quality of the material precluded its use in tension. The only

form in which cast iron could be used successfully was in the form of an arch, which is always in compression. This Iron Bridge is a national monument in Great Britain.

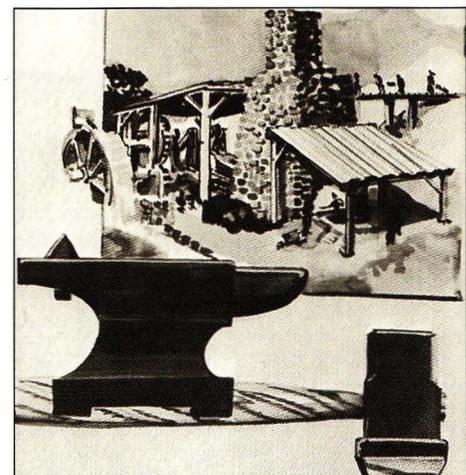
American workers would not have the industry or skill for such iron construction, and at this time bridges in the colonies were built of either wood or stone. Even a wealthy planter like George Washington could not get the skilled carpenters to build his home. Mount



The first cast iron bridge located in Brownsville, Fayette County, Pennsylvania was completed in 1836.

The colonial iron industry, long restricted by British regulations, quickly geared up and produced vital products for the American cause.

Large foundries and small workshops employed many skilled workers doing a variety of tasks.



Vernon is actually a “prefab”. All the sections were constructed in England and then shipped to America.

The colonial iron industry, long restricted by British regulations, produced vital products for the American cause. Large foundries and small workshops employed many skilled workers doing a variety of tasks. These workers were actually some of the first Shop Ironworkers. At Fredericksburg (Virginia), production began very quickly. Thousands of new muskets were made and others repaired between 1775 and 1782.

The Westham foundry, near Richmond, was larger and took longer to begin operations. By March 1779, the Shop Ironworkers began to turn out mill gudgeons, flat irons, sledge hammers, spikes and nails. Production of cannon balls, grape and canister shot began in April. By September, cannons were being cast.

The war’s demand of military hardware sparked a flurry of investment in new plants and stiff competition for scarce labor. The boom, however, lasted only as long as the war. Within a year after hostilities ended, all the major ironworks in Virginia and others throughout the nation had shut down.

By 1786, workers’ organizations were beginning to spring up. In New York, printers organized. Philadelphia printers engaged in the first organized strike in the history of the new nation, and they gained a minimum wage of \$6 a week. In 1794, during the middle of Washington’s term, the Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers of Philadelphia, an organization of shoemakers, was formed. Twelve years later this union was tried for criminal conspiracy after they dared to go on strike. The charges were (1) combination to raise wages and (2) combination to injure others. The union was found guilty and fined. The union became bankrupt and disbanded. This court decision established a precedent that was used against other unions in the years to come.

It should be noted that no permanent union could be established in America because British common law still prevailed, and unions were regarded as “conspiracies in restraint of trade.” Workers were still denied the right to vote in most states even though they were citizens. You had to own a certain amount of property, pay a certain amount of taxes or have so much money in the bank.

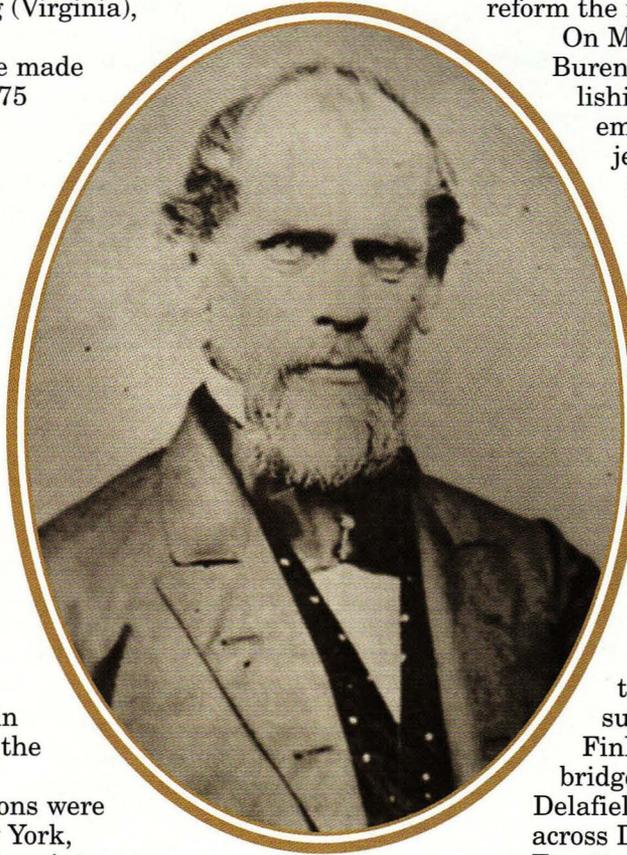
In the spring of 1828, the first labor party in America was founded in Philadelphia by the Mechanics Union. They ran workers for public office, and they referred to them as “Worky” candidates. In that same year, General Andrew Jackson, “Old Hickory”, was elected

President of the United States.

When Van Buren became president in 1837 he faced a difficult four years because of the depression. He was pro-worker and while working as a lawyer in New York State he had fought to end imprisonment for debt, and he was a champion of universal suffrage. He also got his home state to pass a Mechanics’ lien law and reform the militia system.

On March 31, 1840, President Van Buren issued an executive order establishing a ten-hour day for federal employees working on public projects. He also ordered that they should receive no reduction in pay. This idea had been suggested to him by various groups of mechanics and laborers. Conservatives attacked Van Buren for establishing a dangerous precedent. But Van Buren replied that workers needed more money to “enable him to provide comfortably for himself and his (family) and to educate his children.”

The first all metal bridge built in America was a modest cast iron arch with a span of eighty feet consisting of five tubular arch rings. It replaced a suspension bridge built by James Finley around 1807-10. The new bridge, designed by Captain Richard Delafield to carry the National Road across Dunlap’s Creek at Brownsville, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, was completed in 1836 and, quite remarkably, has survived until the present. Although it has been strengthened, the original bridge castings, which carry the busy main street of the town, can still be found beneath the roadway.

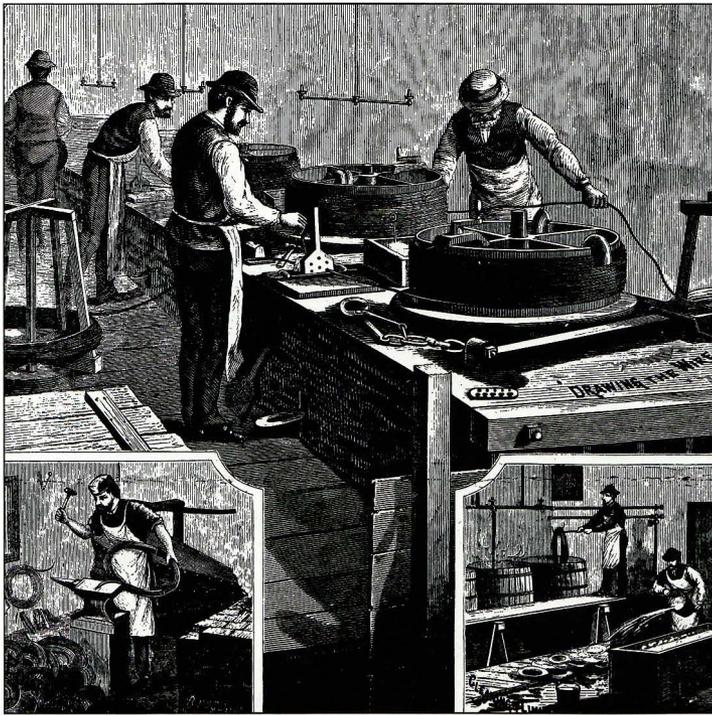


John Augustus Roebling  
(1806-1869)

## The Introduction of Wire Rope to America

John Augustus Roebling who would later promote and design the Brooklyn Bridge, was born in Mulhausen, Germany in 1806. He studied civil engineering at the Berlin Polytechnic Institute. Roebling came to America in 1831 where he tried farming for six years but in 1837 he went to work for the Pennsylvania Canal Company. Canal barges crossed the mountains on inclined planes like cable tramcars. They were pulled up and down by hemp ropes 6 to 9 inches in circumference. These ropes were a mile long and cost \$3,000 each. The problem was that these ropes often frayed and broke. Roebling witnessed one of them breaking and causing the death of two men.

Roebling remembered that wire ropes were being used in Europe. In 1842, he developed such rope and received a U.S. patent for the “Methods of Manufacture



Making of Wire Rope.

of Wire Rope". Now the farming community of Saxonburg, Pennsylvania became an industrial town with the founding of Roebling & Son. In 1849, Roebling would move his factory to Trenton, New Jersey. Wire ropes from this company would be used by our members in the 1930's during the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Roebling would eventually become exclusively a bridge builder. Since he worked for a canal company at this time, he built suspension aqueducts that carried barges across mountain valleys. When the canal era ended he would go on to build other types of bridges.

## Railroads and New Types of Bridge Construction

Soon the railroads were replacing the canals, since they were faster, cheaper, and could be used year round. By 1860 there would be a total of 30,793 miles of track laid. New types of bridge construction were required for these heavy trains, and early Ironworkers would build them!

The three leading bridge engineers of this period were Charles Ellet, Jr., Captain James B. Eads, who would build the Eads Bridge in St. Louis, and John Roebling, whom we have already discussed.

Probably the least effective engineer, but the most colorful was Charles Ellet, Jr., who studied in France. He was particularly interested in French suspension bridges. In 1840, he would build a suspension bridge at Fairmont, Pennsylvania. It was 357 feet long, but it had no stiffening girder and vibrated in the wind. However, it did remain in service until it was replaced in 1874.

In 1847 Ellet built a 1,011 foot span at Wheeling, West Virginia but it later collapsed and John Roebling

was brought in to rebuild it. In that same year, Ellet was awarded a contract to build a span of 750 feet at Niagara Falls, New York. By flying a kite he finally got two cables across the span. He then covered them with planking, and got his name in the paper by riding a horse across. He went into the business of charging people a toll to walk across, and pocketed \$5,000. This was not the kind of bridge his employer wanted, and they sued him. Eventually, John Roebling got the job and in 1855 he built the Niagara Bridge. This was the first suspension bridge to carry train traffic.

A key factor in American prosperity would be faster and faster means of transportation. Ironworkers and other trades would be the ones that provided this. The following figures show how travel time was shortened:

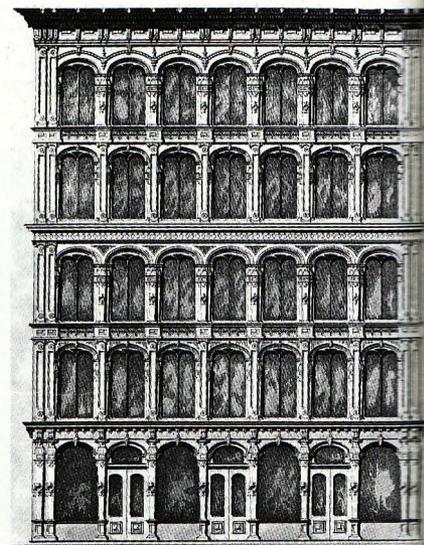
Philadelphia to Pittsburgh	Type of Transport	Time
1812	Stagecoach	6 Days
1834	Canal Boat	3 Days, 19 Hrs.
1854	Train	15 Hours

## Cast Iron Used As Building Material

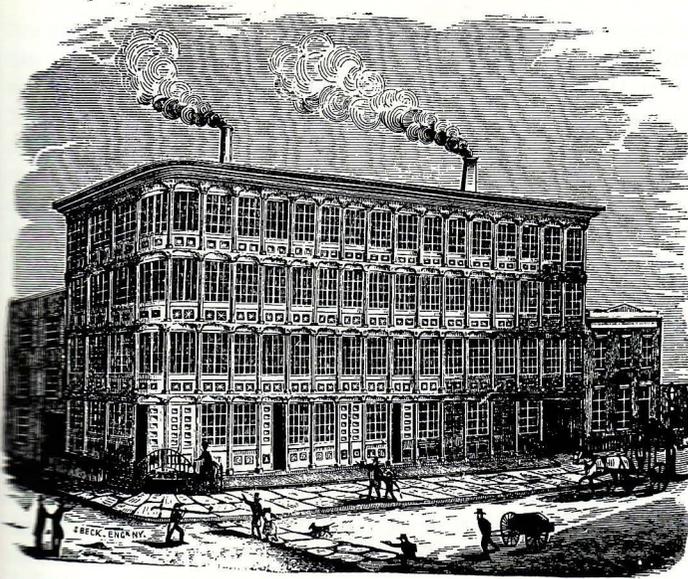
Cast iron construction is recognized today not only as the forerunner of the steel framed skyscraper, but also as an early example of prefabrication and modular design. The use of cast iron for bridges led some architects to see what could be done to utilize this material in building construction.

The first person who used iron as a building material for the exterior was Daniel D. Badger. In the year 1842, Mr. Badger erected, in the city of Boston, the first structure of iron ever seen in America. He also erected cast iron buildings in Albany, New York. Most of the cast iron was used only for the fronts of the buildings.

James Bogardus was another individual who designed cast iron buildings. Although there is some controversy regarding his claims, it is said that Bogardus invented the first complete cast iron edifice ever erected in America, or in the world. His patent was for the "construction of the frame, roof and floor of iron buildings." In 1850, Bogardus built a factory completely out of cast iron. Cast iron buildings were usually limited to five stories due to the weight of the material and at that time the elevator had not been invented.



One of Badger's cast-iron building fronts erected in Albany, New York for J. Kidd Construction Company in the 1850's.



The factory of James Bogardus, inventor and patentee of cast iron buildings. It is the first building ever erected completely from cast iron.

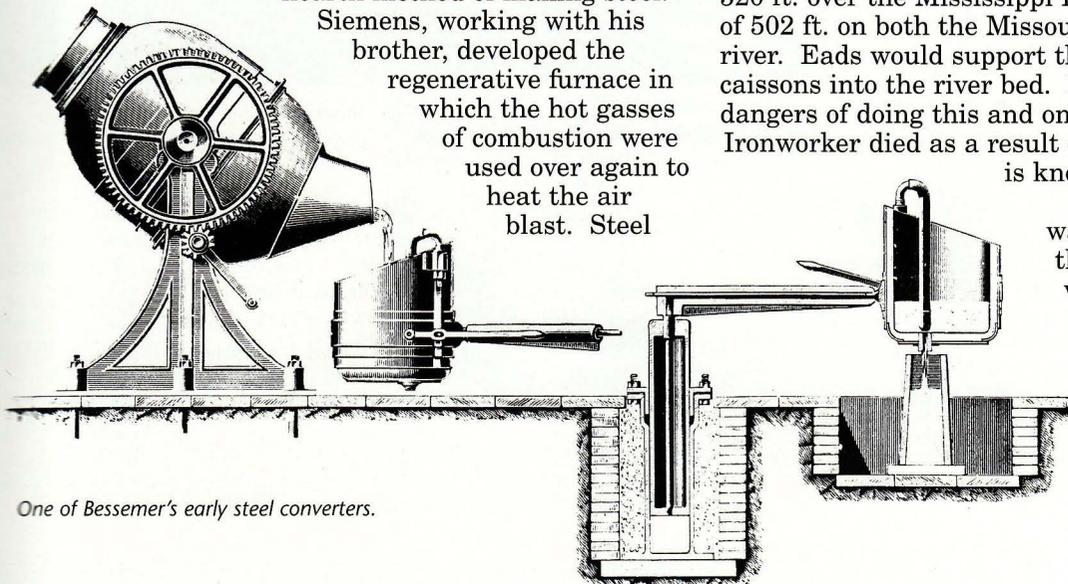
## The Early Production of Iron and Steel

Like cast iron, steel was used as a structural material for bridges before it was used for buildings. The objection against steel for bridges appeared to rise more from a lack of knowledge on how to use the material than from any deficiency in its quality.

Cast iron, though a marvelous material, has one great disadvantage. It is very brittle - it will hardly bend at all without cracking, therefore, this clearly limited its uses. Since very early days men had been aware of the comparative advantages of wrought iron and steel, but the making of steel in particular had always been a lengthy process. This changed in 1855 when the Englishman Henry Bessemer patented a process for making steel cheaply and in quantity.

While Bessemer was developing his invention, William Siemens was at work on the so-called open-hearth method of making steel.

Siemens, working with his brother, developed the regenerative furnace in which the hot gasses of combustion were used over again to heat the air blast. Steel



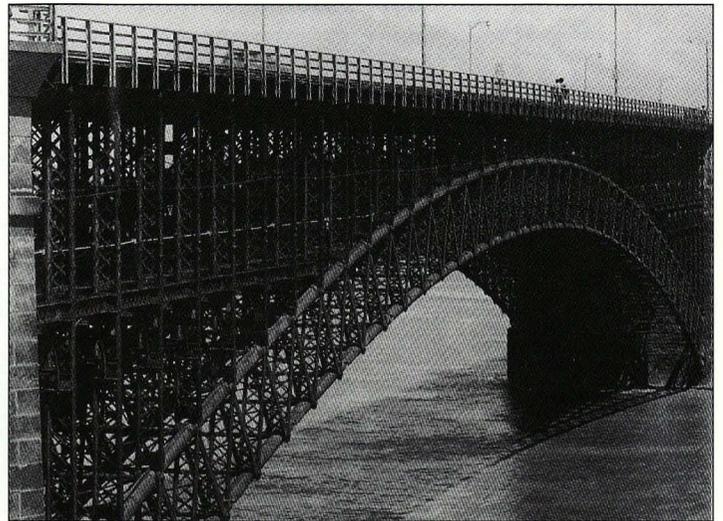
One of Bessemer's early steel converters.

was produced satisfactorily and more economically by the open hearth method after Siemens teamed up with a Frenchman, Pierre Emile Martin. The Siemens-Martin process, as it is known, soon became the favored method and has remained the basis for the modern steel industry.

## Bridge Construction After the Civil War

Bridge builders like Charles Ellet, Jr., Captain James B. Eads, General Sooy Smith and John Roebling gained experience prior to the Civil War. Sadly, many workers would die from some of the mistakes that were made. Many of these early bridges were canal aqueducts, but by 1861 the era of canals was ending. Also, steel was replacing iron as the material for construction.

Captain James B. Eads would build one of the three steel bridges that was built between 1874 and 1883. He would build the steel arched Eads Bridge in St. Louis



The Eads Bridge over the Mississippi River in St. Louis, Missouri, completed in 1874.

which was completed in 1874. This double-decked structure took five years to complete. The bridge was 520 ft. over the Mississippi River with approach spans of 502 ft. on both the Missouri and Illinois sides of the river. Eads would support the bridge by sinking huge caissons into the river bed. Little was known about the dangers of doing this and on March 19, 1870, an Ironworker died as a result of "caisson disease", which is known today as the "bends".

Although the Eads Bridge was built in part with steel, the first truly all steel bridge would be built by General Sooy Smith in 1879 in Glasgow, Missouri. It was built for the Chicago and Alton Railroad over the Missouri River. At first there was a great reluctance to use steel. Iron had earlier replaced timber as a construction

material, but there was fear of using this new lighter material known as steel. Engineers at first thought it might crack or be too brittle and break in the cold weather. But General Sooy Smith used this material, and the Glasgow, Missouri bridge became the first to be entirely built of steel. This bridge would remain until 1902 when it was replaced because of the need for a wider span to deal with the heavier railroad traffic.

## The Building of the Brooklyn Bridge

It would be the Brooklyn Bridge that would stand out as one of the great engineering achievements of the 19th Century. Also, many of the men and their sons who worked on this bridge would become charter members of Local No. 2 in New York City.

It would be the genius of John Augustus Roebling that would promote and design this bridge. But it would

be his son, Washington Roebling, who would make this bridge possible.

In 1867, John Roebling successfully completed a bridge at Cincinnati across the Ohio River. He also would build, about this time, the Sixth Street Bridge in Pittsburgh across the Allegheny River. But his great dream was to build a bridge over the East River to connect New York City to the then separate City of Brooklyn.

At this time the City of New York felt they had no need of such a bridge to Brooklyn. However, the officials of the small City of Brooklyn felt it was vital to their future growth. Brooklyn at this time was a very wealthy and very religious community. Many of the citizens did not want to pay higher taxes or to be connected with what they considered the urban evil present in New York City.

However, the winter of 1866-67 changed the minds of people on both sides of the river. The East River froze and no ferry boat could cross. All commerce came to a

# Founding of the Knights of Labor

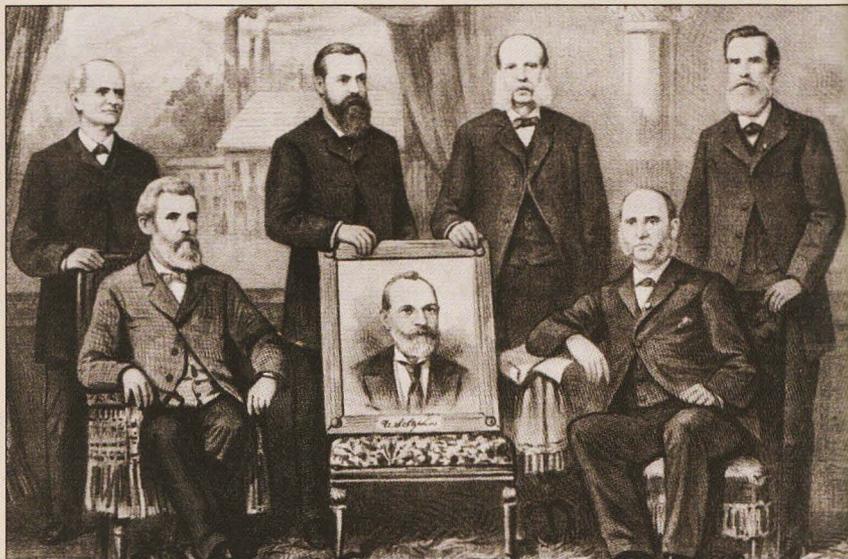
After the Civil War white northern workers found that their situation was little better than the former slave laborers that they had fought to free. Things did not get better when a recession hit the country from 1866 to 1868. When garment workers in Philadelphia spoke up and tried to improve their conditions they were fired and black-listed by their employer.

The leader of the Philadelphia garment workers, Uriah Stephens, a former minister, felt that a new labor organization needed to be established. Because workers could be black-listed by their employers if they knew they were union members, Stephens felt that membership should be kept secret.

In December of 1869, Stephens created "Local Assembly 1" with the high sounding name of the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor. Stephens knew Greek and had been a member of the Masons. Like the Masonic Orders, Stephens created for the Knights a number of secret rituals which the perspective member had to learn. This included a secret handshake, passwords, and countersigns. Members were never to refer to the organization by name. They called it the Five Stars. All meetings were announced by symbols chalked on sidewalks or fences. Members promised to defend the life, interest, reputation, and the family of all other members and never to reveal the name of the organization or the names of fellow members.

The cardinal principal was "to form a union of all wage-workers irrespective of race, creed or color". Even housewives could be members of the Knights but not...

*"..lawyers, bankers, stock brokers, dealers in intoxicating liquors, and professional gamblers."*



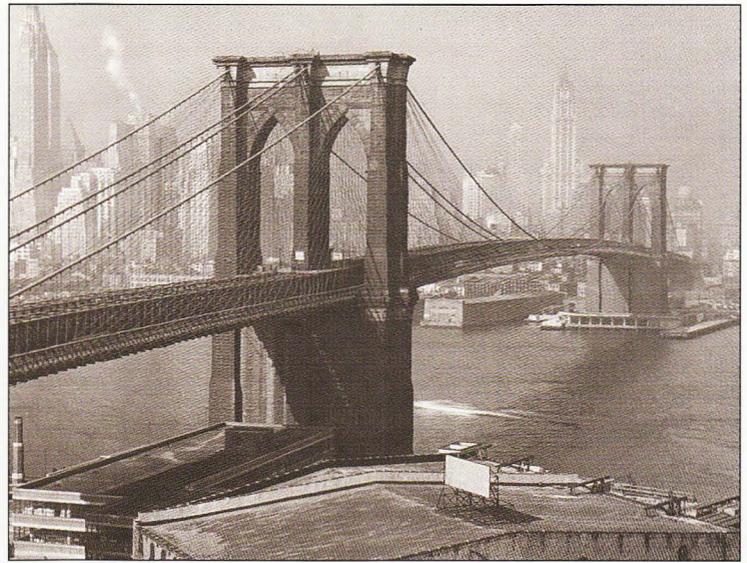
A lithograph showing Knights leaders grouped around a portrait of Uriah S. Stephens, founder of the organization. **Left to right** are William Cook, James Wright, Robert Maculey, James Hilsee, Robert Keen, and Joseph Kennedy.

The membership grew slowly at first. The structure was in "Local" and "District Assemblies." Like the later C.I.O., members could be in a variety of trades both skilled and unskilled.

At first skilled craft unions did not come in together and have their own Assembly, but this changed in 1879 when the Window Glass Workers of America joined and became Local Assembly 300. This local gained control of almost the entire window glass industry in the United States. The local even sent organizers to Great Britain and Belgium to organize. The Union lobbied in Congress successfully for the passage of the Foran Act of 1885 to stop the importation of contract labor. Sadly, this law provided

halt. Now even the State of New York saw the need for a bridge. The New York Bridge Company was set up in September of 1867 with the State of New York providing some of the funding. The original cost was to be seven million dollars with completion by 1870. But some state officials and engineers did not have faith in John Roebling's design and final approval was not given until 1869.

John Roebling was standing on some pilings near the Fulton Ferry docks, waiting for a signal to fix the position of the Brooklyn Tower of the bridge. He was concentrating so hard on his work that he failed to notice that a ferry boat was about to crash into the pilings. He lost his balance and his right foot was crushed between the pilings he was standing on. An incompetent doctor amputated his toes without using the proper anesthetic, and he developed tetanus. John Roebling died on July 22, 1869.



Brooklyn Bridge

for no federal inspector and was therefore not enforced.

**Three issues** would create dissension with the Knights of Labor. The **first** was the secrecy. It had helped the organization in the beginning, but it back-fired on them after the "Molly Maguires" incident, another supposedly secret organization which was verified in the conservative newspapers. Also, the Catholic Church at first condemned the Knights because there appeared to be some religious elements in their secret ceremonies. However, in 1881, Stephens was replaced as Grand Master Workman by Terence Powderly, a Catholic and the son of Irish immigrants. Powderly ended many of the secret rituals, and the Vatican and the Catholic Church in the United States and Canada in 1887 finally favored recognition of the Knights.

The Knights grew rapidly after the abandonment of the secret rituals. By 1884, there were 52,000 members and two years later 700,000 with many waiting to join. However, a **second issue** divided the membership. What should be the organization's role in regard to "political action"? Powderly approved completely of all political activities.

He had been active in the Greenback-Labor Party and had been elected Mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania for three two-year terms. But many of the skilled trade unions, that would later form the American Federation of Labor, supported the idea of work place action for wage increases and shorter hours with no political involvement either local or national.

The **third issue** that divided the membership within the Knights was the use of strike action by trade unions to achieve their goals. Powderly believed that strikes for wages and shorter hours were not the real problem facing American and Canadian workers. Powderly believed workers must form "producer cooperatives" that they would own. Then the problems of apprenticeship training, justice on

the job, shorter hours and higher wages, and child labor would be solved by the workers themselves.

However, the Knights found themselves involved in a number of strikes for wage increases and shorter hours. Some were won but most of them were lost. In 1882, Chicago bricklayers, who were affiliated with the Knights, went on strike and they won. However, the following year 4,000 telegraph workers that were members of the Knights lost their strike.

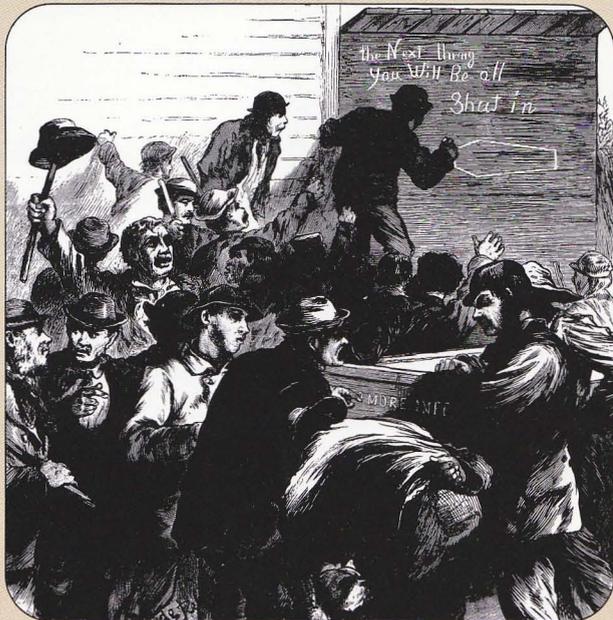
The downfall of the Knights would begin in 1886 with the movement for the Eight-Hour-Day. Powderly did not support a general nation-wide strike on May 1, 1886. Then, when the Haymarket bombing and the infamous trial took place, Powderly washed his hands of the entire incident. Samuel Gompers and the newly formed American Federation of Labor would support the nation-wide strike and supported the Haymarket Martyrs. Ironically, the Knights were blamed by the press for the Haymarket Affair even though they had nothing to do with it.

More and more workers would leave the Knights because of Powderly's indifference. This was especially true of the craft union members. By 1893, the membership of the Knights had dropped to only 75,000. Powderly resigned as Grand Master Workman and in 1896 he supported the Republican Party and its candidate for president, William McKinley. President McKinley rewarded Powderly in 1897 by appointing him United States Commissioner General of Immigration.



Women were welcomed into the Knights as members of separate assemblies. About 200 of these groups were affiliated when this picture was taken at a national meeting in 1886.





## The Molly Maguires and the Plight of the Miners

Our Union has always been interested in the plight of American miners. The early copies of *The Bridgemen's Magazine* were filled with articles about the low wages, long hours, unsafe conditions, and the use of child labor in the mines.

It is understandable that our Union would be interested in the miners, since they mined the coal, that would be turned into coke, that would be used to produce the steel, that would go into the bridges and skyscrapers that we would build. Another reason our members were interested was the fact that eventually the mines would be owned by the same businessmen that owned the steel mills and companies like American Bridge that were trying to lower our wages and destroy our Union.

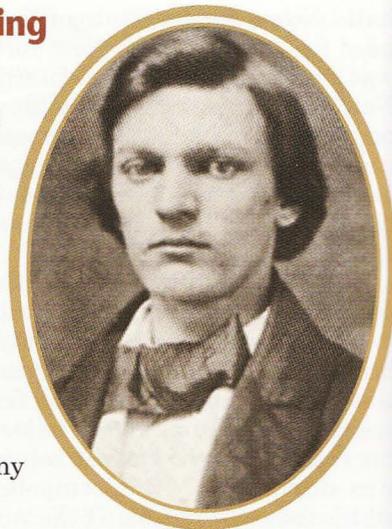
Miners began organizing in the anthracite coal field as early as the 1850's. In 1862, during the Civil War, Irish miners in Pennsylvania organized. Their organization was known as the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Like the early Knights of Labor, membership was kept secret because of the hostility of the mine owners.

When the Civil War was over the mine owners decided to break every union in the anthracite coal fields, especially those in Pennsylvania. Anti-union newspapers suddenly began to print stories about a secret organization called "The Molly Maguires" that was terrorizing the mine owners. Such an organization did exist in Ireland. "Mollies" organized to stop the encroachment

*continued on page 10*

## Washington Roebling Takes Over

After the death of his father, Washington Roebling became "Chief Engineer" of the Brooklyn Bridge. He was only 32 years old at the time but well qualified to carry on his father's work. He was born in Saxonburg, Pennsylvania in 1837. After his father's company moved to Trenton, New Jersey he attended school there. He studied engineering at our nation's best school at the time, the



*Washington A. Roebling  
(1837-1926)*

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. During the Civil War, Washington Roebling served in the New Jersey Militia building military bridges. After the war, he and his wife, Emily, went to Europe where he studied the new uses of steel as well as pneumatic caissons. When he returned, he worked with his father on the bridge over the Ohio at Cincinnati. When he took over his father's project he brought with him new ideas. He would modify considerably his father's design of stiffening girders for future traffic, and he favored an all steel design.

Washington Roebling was concerned about the Ironworkers and other laborers that worked on the bridge. The big problem was the caissons that had to be sunk into the river beds for the two bridge towers, one on the New York side and the other the Brooklyn side. The caissons for the New York tower had to be sunk 78 feet

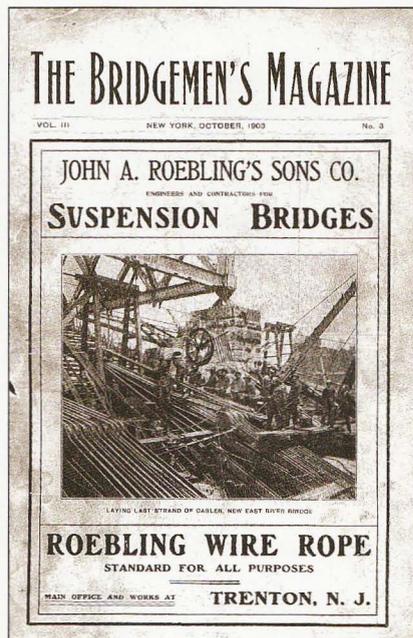
below water level.

The men working on this project were getting the same "caisson disease" that the workers on the Eads Bridge at St. Louis had experienced.

Three men died sinking the caissons and 107 had to be given medical care.

Washington Roebling went down with the workers, and he too was stricken and crippled for life!

During the early stages of construction, Roebling & Sons wire rope was used for walkways, trawlers, and other preparatory work. By April of 1877, the first of the suspen-



*Bridgemen's Magazine  
October, 1903*

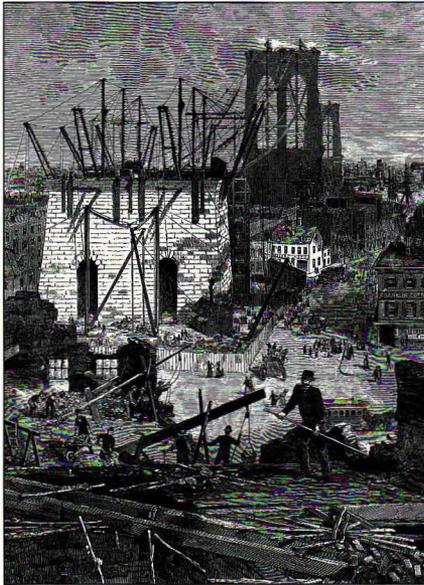
sion wires had been strung from anchorage to anchorage over tops of the towers and the wide expanse of the river. Wire by wire, the cables grew until the last wire was added in October of the following year. They seemed like giants, the four great cables each measuring almost sixteen inches in diameter. Though they look tiny beside the much greater cables of recent bridges, the Brooklyn Bridge cables represented one of the greatest advances in bridge engineering history.

They carried a much longer span than any that had been previously built, and they also stand as the first example of the application of steel wire to bridge construction. The wire cables of earlier bridges had been made of iron wires, however, for the first time galvanizing was used on the bridge suspension steel wires of this bridge as a means of protecting the wire.

After 13 years the bridge was finished. Some authorities said that between 30 to 40 workers had been killed,

but surprisingly no statistics were kept at that time. Newspapers reported the death of over twenty workers so we are sure of that number. Two workers were killed when one of the wire cable strands broke loose from the New York City side tower.

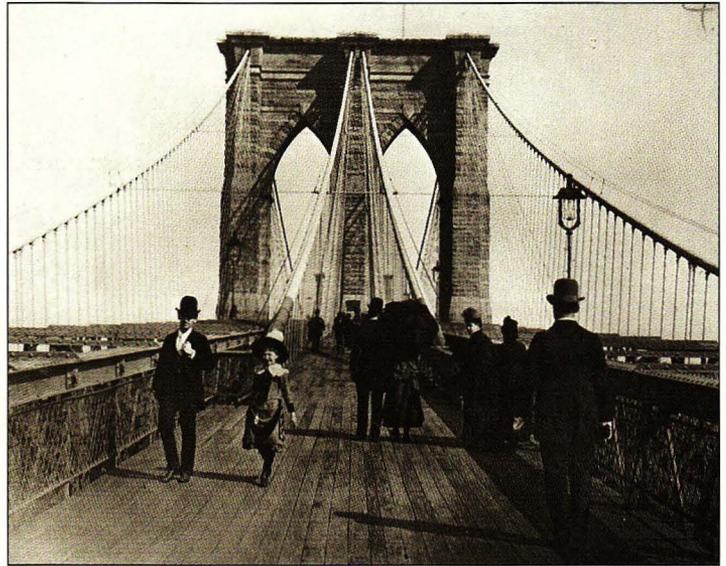
By 1883, the two stone towers of the bridge dwarfed the other buildings of New York City. They stood 275 feet above the high water mark. The



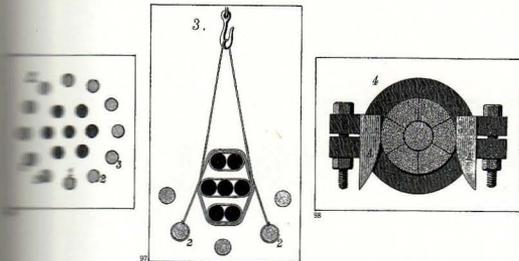
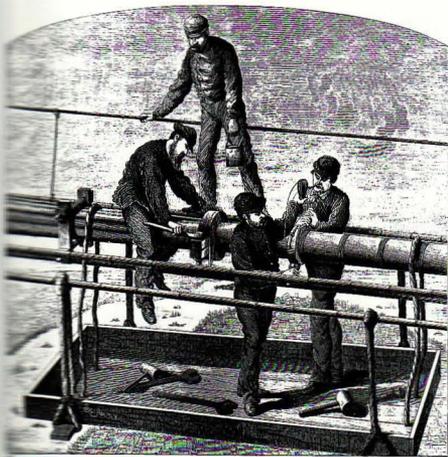
The New York anchorage of the Brooklyn Bridge with two bridge towers in the background.

bridge's single span was 1,595 1/2 feet long and clearance above the water was 133 feet.

The official opening day was May 14, 1883 and on that day 150,000 people walked across the bridge. President Chester Arthur spoke at the dedication. The President then took the entire dedication committee to the apartment of Washington Roebling to honor him and his wife, Emily, for their achievements. A plaque was placed on the bridge giving credit to Emily Roebling for her work, as well as, that of her husband. Unfortunately, no plaque lists the names of the many workers who built this bridge or the names of those who died on the job!



A walk on the promenade of the Brooklyn Bridge became one of New York's favorite pastimes.



Ironworkers making cable for the Brooklyn Bridge (1878). As the wires were bound together into strands and lowered into place, the strands were, in turn, bound together to form manageable bundles. Eventually, all 19 strands would be joined, but the first step was to bind up what was called the core - the seven middle strands.

## The Homestead Strike of 1892 and How It Affected Ironworkers

Five years after the execution of the Haymarket Martyrs, another event took place in the Pittsburgh area only four years before the founding of our Union...The "Battle of Homestead".

Ironically, the same steel companies that would later try to break our Union were involved in the destruction of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers (AAISW), which had organized many of the workers in Andrew Carnegie's Homestead Mills.

The Amalgamated Association was founded in August of 1876 by the merger of three existing unions: The United Sons of Vulcan, that were iron puddlers; the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers; and the Iron and Steel Roll Hands of the United States. When they were founded they only had 3,775 members, but by 1891 they had grown to 25,000 members in 290 lodges making them one of the most powerful unions in the country.

Both Andrew Carnegie and his business partner and chief lieutenant, Henry Clay Frick, wanted to get rid of unions in all their steel plants. Although Carnegie had allowed the union to exist at Homestead for many years, he now gave the go ahead to Frick to lock out all the

union workers on June 29, 1892, one day before the union contract expired. The men were paid by the tonnage produced. Frick demanded that the price be set at \$22 dollars a ton and not the \$25 that the union requested. Although the company claimed that workers earned as much as \$12 to \$14 dollars a day, in reality at the time of the strike 1,177 workers averaged \$1.68 to \$2.50 a day, and another 1,625 averaged \$1.40 or less a day. The company claimed they had the right to make an additional 15% profit, and they should get a greater profit based on the new machinery that they had installed.

Frick feared that the workers might storm the plant and take it over, so he erected a three mile long wooden fence topped with barbed wire around the plant. He also built sentry towers at strategic points for sharpshooters.

Frick contacted the Pinkerton Detective Agency in

Chicago for 300 private guards. Ironically, a number of students at Northwestern University, just north of Chicago, saw Pinkerton's newspaper ad for summer jobs and signed up not realizing what was in store for them!

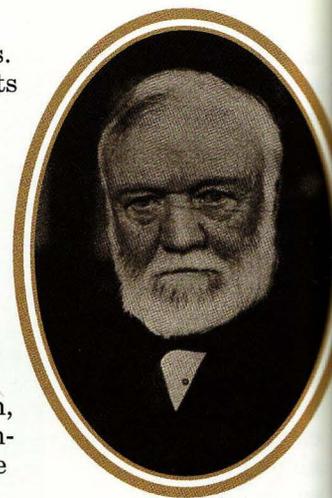
The 300 Pinkertons, armed with Winchester rifles, were taken by train to McKees Rocks on the Ohio River just below Pittsburgh. On July 5th, they were put on two steel company barges and floated up the Ohio River, then to the Monongahela River, and on to Homestead.

Aware of their coming, a crowd of about 5,000 including Hugh O'Donnell, one of the union leaders, and even John McLuckie, the Mayor of Homestead, took over the plant. Then they gathered along the river bank as the barges approached early on the morning of July 6th. A battle took place and by 5 p.m. 13 had been mortally wounded. The Pinkertons finally displayed a white flag agreeing to surrender their weapons in exchange for safe passage.

However, the feeling of the crowd of men and women of Homestead was bitter because of the death of seven men. As the Pinkertons came ashore they had to walk up the hill to the railroad station through a gauntlet of townspeople. Women and children armed with sticks, umbrellas, and rocks attacked the Pinkertons. Some children threw mud. Some of the Pinkertons later stated that this gauntlet was more terrifying than the earlier battle.

The workers were now in control of both the plant and their town. However, six days later Frick convinced the Governor of Pennsylvania to declare martial law and send in the state militia. Union leaders were brought to trial because of the attack on the Pinkertons. Scabs were brought in, and the plant was reopened with military protection. By the end of 1892, 2,000 strikebreakers had been hired, the union had been destroyed, and only 800 of the original 3,800 employees were rehired.

The Homestead Strike ended unionism in the steel industry for the next 44 years. Although our Union would try again and again to organize workers in steel plants, it would not be until Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930's and the passage of the Wagner Act that steelworkers in the mills would finally organize under the C.I.O.



Andrew Carnegie  
(1837-1919)

## The Molly Maguires and the Plight of the Miners, *continued*

in Ireland of Protestant landlords. It was part of the century old conflict between Catholics and Protestants. American mine owners saw this as a convenient label to give to the militant union miners.

One of the most anti-union mine owners was Franklin B. Gowen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and its subsidiary, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Gowen hired James McParlan, a Pinkerton detective, to infiltrate the union and find out the names of their members.

Certainly there was some violence in the mine fields, but most of these incidents took place after the Pinkerton detectives arrived. Many of the actual victims of the violence were not mine owners but union leaders and ordinary miners.

In the fall of 1875, twenty-four men, most of them actually members of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association were brought to trial. The evidence presented against them was totally fabricated. This trial was not unlike the McNamara Trial that was used by business to try to destroy our Union in 1911. Many of the men who testified against the Union were Pinkertons, like James McParlan, or criminals who were given immunity for their own crimes. The evidence was confusing and contradictory, but 14 of the men were sent to jail and 10 were hanged.

One of the men that was hanged was John (Jack) Kehoe, a leader of the Workmen's Benevolent Society. He was kept in solitary confinement for two years and then executed on Dec. 18, 1878. One hundred years later in January of 1979, Governor Milton Shapp of Pennsylvania would sign a bill posthumously pardoning Kehoe. The pardon was based on new historical evidence proving that he was innocent. The evidence showed he was framed by the mine owners in order to stop the growth of the union movement among their workers.



## Unionism Grows In Chicago

Chicago continued to be a strong union town even after the Haymarket Affair. At one time 25% of organized workers in America could be found in the Chicago area. One of the early groups to organize would be the structural and architectural ironworkers.

Many factors contributed to unionism among ironworkers in Chicago; for example, the Chicago River which passed through the central city and then broke into North and South Branches required wooden and

# Founding of the American Federation of Labor

The American Federation of Labor was originally called the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions or FOTLU for short. It was founded in 1881. After a series of small discussion meetings in the summer of 1881, a convention was held on November 15, 1881 in Pittsburgh. It would be in this same city 15 years later that the Iron Workers Union would be founded.

Attending was a total of 107 delegates of various craft unions such as the Printers, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, the Molders, Glass Workers, Cigar Makers, Carpenters, and various delegates from local assemblies of the Knights of Labor. The opening paragraph of the call for the convention read as follows:

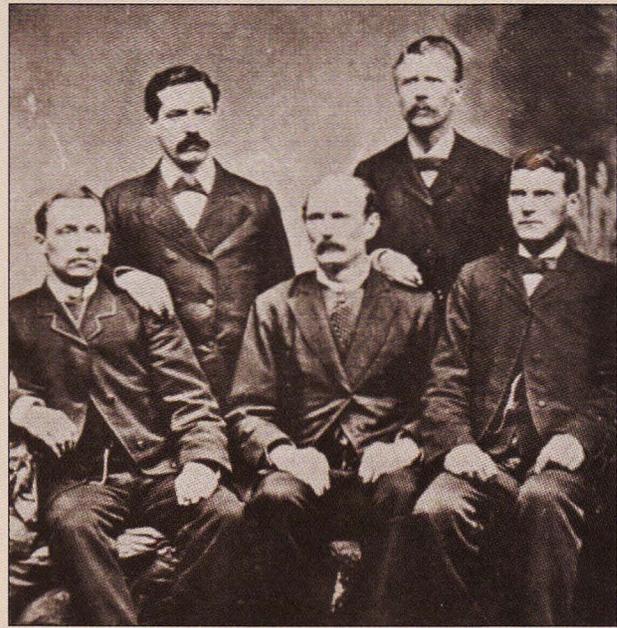
"Fellow-workingmen: The time has now arrived for a more perfect combination of Labor—one that will concentrate our forces so as to more successfully cope with concentrated capital."

Samuel Gompers of the Cigar Makers Union was elected chairman of the Committee on Organization. Gompers' committee suggested that the new organization be limited only to skilled workers of the United States and Canada. Gompers' committee wanted to change the name of the organization to the Federation of Organized Trade Unions and drop the word "Labor".

After the vote the name remained unchanged. However, at another convention in Columbus, Ohio in December of 1886, the name was changed to the American Federation of Labor. It was at that time that Samuel Gompers was elected president.

However, they agreed to recognize their founding date as November 15, 1881, based on the date of the establishment of FOTLU. This is why the Centennial of the AFL-CIO was celebrated in 1981 and not in 1986.

Our Union and the entire American labor movement have been responsible for so many of the things that Americans today take for granted. They do not realize how long and hard we struggled to achieve some of these reforms. The original Platform of FOTLU in 1881 called for the following reforms:



These men were the Executive Council of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, predecessor of the American Federation of Labor. Left to right are Charles Burgman, Samuel Gompers, Richard Powers, William H. Foster, and Alexander Rankin. Rankin was the president of the powerful Iron Molders Union.



Samuel Gompers -  
President of the  
American Federation of Labor.

1. Compulsory education of children;
2. Prohibition of child labor under age 14;
3. Uniform apprenticeship laws;
4. Enforcement of the National Eight-Hour Law;
5. Prohibition of convict contract labor;
6. A mechanics' lien law to guarantee you would be paid;
7. Repeal of conspiracy laws against unions;
8. Establishment of a Bureau of Labor Statistics;
9. Government regulation of railroads and telegraph companies;
10. Reclaim lands given by the government to the railroads that were not used for that purpose; and
11. Prevent importation of foreign contract laborers.

All of the above seemed revolutionary ideas at the time but eventually most of them became a reality. Today attempts are being made to turn-back-the-clock, and take away some of the protection that labor has won.

Although the AFL was in some ways similar to the Knights of Labor, it would differ in that it was made up of skilled trade unions. Gompers, as president, fought for shorter hours and more pay within the capitalistic system. The Knights wanted more workers to engage in cooperative ventures and to be more involved in politics.

AFL buttons, then and now, have the name of the union very large at the top and AFL-CIO (after 1955) very small at the bottom. Those of the Knights of Labor would have the organization's name very large at the top and the union...Mechanics, Molders, etc.... very small at the bottom.

Under the AFL more of the power was in the hands of the specific union and less in the hands of the national or international organization.

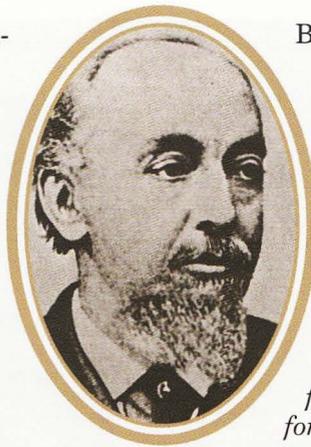


later iron and steel bridges to connect the various parts of the expanding city.

The first horse car lines were laid out in a "loop" which is now the downtown area of Chicago. As the land value increased in this area, the only way to go was up, and therefore the "skyscraper" and "steel skeletal" construction would begin here. In addition, the invention of the elevator made it possible to build buildings higher and higher.

Another factor was the Great Chicago Fire of October 1871. Any type of wooden construction would not be allowed in the downtown area and for some distance outside of it. This meant that new types of fireproof construction had to be developed to prevent future fires. The law required iron, and later steel, construction.

The first building to use the new type of fireproof construction was the Home Insurance Building built between 1884-85. It was designed by William Le



**William LeBaron Jenney**  
In 1884 he started an important era of architectural vitality by designing the first metal skeleton skyscraper, the Home Insurance Building at LaSalle and Monroe Streets in Chicago.

Baron Jenney who developed this type of construction. When Jenney died in 1907 an article about him and this building appeared in the July, 1907 issue of *The Bridgemen's Magazine*, pointing out the importance of this pioneer structure to the growth of the union. Part of the article read as follows:

*"Mr. Jenney's first important work as an architect was the application of the skeleton construction now in general use throughout this country. In the fall of 1883 he was appointed architect for an insurance company of New York City and instructed to prepare designs for a tall, fire-proof office building to be located on the north-east corner of LaSalle and Monroe Streets, Chicago, Illinois. The requirements were of such a nature that it was necessary to depart from*

## THE HAYMARKET AFFAIR:

Probably no single event has done more to influence the history of labor in the United States and even the world. It all began with a simple rally on May 4, 1886, but the consequences are still being felt today.

To understand what happened in Haymarket Square in Chicago on May 4, 1886 it is necessary to go back to the fall of 1884 when the Federation of Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU), the predecessor of the A.F. of L., met in Chicago and called for May 1, 1886 to be the beginning of a nationwide strike for the eight-hour day. This was not a particularly radical idea since the State of Illinois and Federal employees were supposed to be covered by an eight-hour-day law since 1867. The problem was that the federal government failed to enforce its own law and, in Illinois, employers forced workers to sign waivers of the law as conditions of employment.

With two years to plan, organized labor in Chicago and throughout the nation sent out questionnaires to employers to see how they felt about shorter hours, piecework, child labor, and other issues. Although perhaps a simplistic solution to unemployment and low wages, the "Eight-Hour-Day Movement" caught the imagination of workers across the country.

In 1886, the City of Chicago had one of the strongest labor movements in the country. Chicago had a large German population and many of them had been socialists in the old country. Also, many Chicago workers had fled the eastern cities when their unions were broken and they were "black listed." Once in Chicago they were ready to fight rather than move again.

On Saturday, May 1, 1886, reportedly 80,000 workers marched up Chicago's Michigan Avenue, arm-in-arm, singing and carrying the banners of their unions. The unions most strongly represented were the building trades, and among them certainly were the Bridge Builder's Mutual



*"We are peaceful," Samuel Fielden reportedly told the police a few minutes before the Haymarket explosion. During his trial, however, it was asserted that he urged workers to attack the police.*

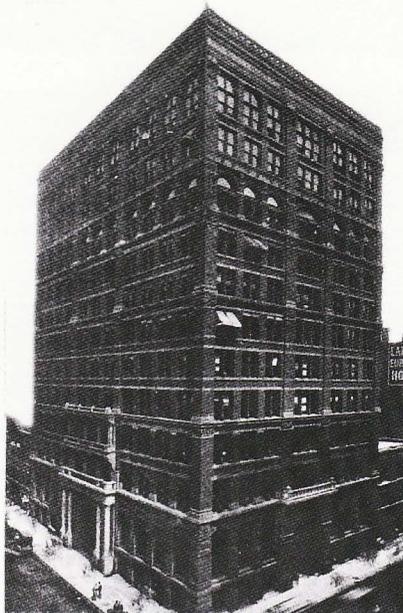
Association and various ethnic iron worker unions of that day. This solidarity shocked some employers, who feared a workers' revolution, while others quickly signed agreements for shorter hours at the same pay.

On Monday, May 3, the peaceful scene turned violent when the Chicago Police Department attacked and killed picketing workers at the McCormick Reaper Plant on the city's southwest side. It was this attack that provoked a protest meeting which was planned for Haymarket Square on the evening of Tuesday, May 4.

While the events of May 1 had been well planned, the events of the evening of May 4th were not. Most of the speakers failed to appear. Instead of starting at 7:30 pm, the meeting was

*the usual arrangements that were in style in building construction at that time. To meet all these new and untried propositions Mr. Jenney decided to substitute iron and steel for brick and stone, and the structural steel building of today is the result of his fertile brain."*

The columns in the building were of cast iron. The riveted columns of plates and angles were thought to be too expensive. It was in this building that the first Bessemer steel beams were used. They were manufactured by the Carnegie-Phipps Company, who stated that these beams were the first to be used in building construction. This departure from old methods not only introduced steel skeleton construction to the world



*The Home Insurance Building constructed in 1884. Note: The two upper floors were added in 1890.*

but made possible the formation of our International Association.

This pioneer steel structure, the Home Insurance Building was torn down in 1931 to make way for the Field Building, which is now known as 135 S. LaSalle Building. The Field Building would also be built by our Union and completed in 1934. In 1995, of the ten tallest buildings in the world, seven are located in Chicago.

A final factor in the growth of unions in Chicago was the development of the railroads and the fact that Chicago was a transportation center. This meant there was a need for the construction of numerous viaducts and railway bridges of unique types that would not interfere with the river traffic.



## The Eight-Hour Day Movement

delayed for about an hour. Instead of the expected 20,000 people, fewer than 2,500 attended.

Although Mayor Harrison who attended the meeting had told the police to leave, the minute he was out of sight, the crowd now numbering only about 200 was attacked by 176 policemen carrying Colt Lightning revolvers. Then someone, unknown to this day, threw the first dynamite bomb ever used in peacetime in the history of the world.

The police panicked, and in the darkness many shot at their own men. Eventually seven policemen died, only one directly accountable to the bomb. At least four workers were killed, but there may have been more since bodies were dragged away in fear of police harassment. Hundreds of labor leaders were arrested and all union newspapers were closed down.

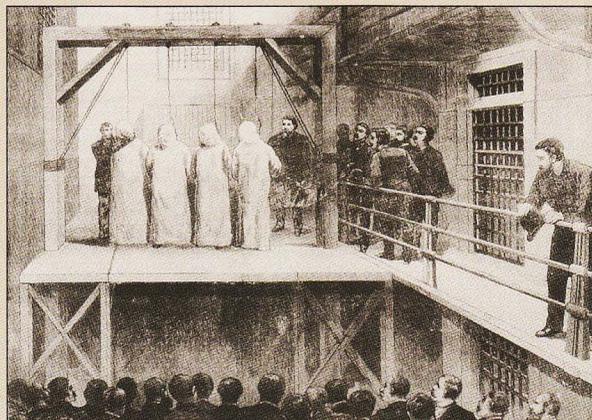
Eventually eight men, representing a cross section of the labor movement, were selected and brought to trial. Only two of the men were at the Haymarket Square that night. Three of the men were sent to Joliet State Penitentiary and five were condemned to be hanged. On November 11, 1887 four of the men were hanged. One had died in jail prior to the execution.

Two years later the Haymarket Affair would take on world-wide dimensions. In Paris, France in July of 1889, Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor sent a delegate to the World's Fair held in that city to celebrate the centennial of the French Revolution. It was at that time that the 934 foot Eiffel Tower was built, proving the possibilities for iron and steel construc-

tion. The A.F.of L. delegate recommended that a day be set aside to honor the Haymarket Martyrs, and the day that was selected was May 1st. Today, almost all the major industrial nations of the world, including Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Norway, Israel and all the nations of Central and South America have May 1st as their "Labor Day". Only in the United States and English speaking Canada is this day not honored on May 1st.

After the Haymarket Affair, unions throughout the country found themselves under attack. Management used the Haymarket bombing to stereotype all union members as wild-eyed bomb throwers. Even the meaning of the word "anarchist" was changed from the original ideas of Plato and Socrates, of a world without armies, or police ...a kind of "Utopia." The new meaning became "someone who wanted to destroy everything through violence."

Although the Knights of Labor continued, its days were numbered. The fact that Terence Powderly had turned his back on the Haymarket Martyrs, and failed to support the "Eight-Hour-Day Movement" had disillusioned many workers with that organization. And the fact that Gompers had come to Springfield, Illinois to plead with Governor Ogelsby for the lives of the Martyrs, gave great credibility to the craft unions and the new American Federation of Labor.



*The law vindicated - four of the Chicago anarchists pay the penalty of their crime.*



# The Turbulent Years— 1906 Through 1912

**A** resident Ryan and McNamara ran into difficulties immediately after assuming office in October, 1905. Ryan and American Bridge's S. P. Mitchell discussed the strike then in progress. Mitchell offered to employ only union Ironworkers on American Bridge's own erection work, but would not give that guarantee for work sub-let by American Bridge. Ryan decided to strike all jobs considered to have been sub-let by American Bridge. In his hometown of Chicago, he wanted work stopped on two jobs and the majority of the Local No. 1 members agreed. Frank Buchanan was one of the dissenters.

Cleveland Local No. 17 refused to call off its members from jobs sub-let by American Bridge and McNamara caused his own local to be temporarily suspended. Ryan also ran into trouble over the Tube Mill job being erected non-union, by National Tube Company, at McKeesport, Pennsylvania, within the jurisdiction of Pittsburgh, Local No. 3. National Tube and American Bridge were both subsidiaries of U. S. Steel Corporation; however, the Union's few friends at American Bridge couldn't order National Tube to use union Ironworkers, such interference being contrary to the parent company's established policy. Local No. 3 officers were adamant in their demand for union Ironworkers on the Tube Mill job, however the work continued non-union.

The American Bridge Company President, August Ziesing, decided to make Ryan an offer he couldn't refuse. In the presence of U. S. Steel officials, Ziesing proposed to Ryan that his company would use union Ironworkers exclusively on direct contract work and work done under sub-contract. He did not offer a signed agreement, but would put his offer in writing to hire and employ union men to work the uniform number of hours for the recognized wages. The Union would have to waive the claim to the work at McKeesport.

President Ryan tried to convince Local No. 3 to change its position on the Tube Mill job. The Local offi-

cers wouldn't budge. Ryan decided he then had to turn down American Bridge's offer, since the Local wouldn't waive its claim. Luke Grant, in *American Labor: From Conspiracy to Collective Bargaining*, recalls in an interview with AFL President Samuel Gompers circa 1915: Gompers considered "...this mistake one of the three most costly blunders made in recent years in the American labor movement."

This event was closely followed by the Post and McCord strike in New York, which Ryan insisted be called, though the local business agent said it would be fruitless. Ryan believed that Post and McCord and the American Bridge Company were the same entity, although that was denied by both firms. Luke Grant states that there is no "reliable information that Post and McCord ever was a part of the American Bridge Company." The Ironworkers struck Post and McCord on November 1, 1905.



"Roller Lift," being built by the Santa Fe R.R. across Channel Street at Third, San Francisco, California by members of Local Union No. 31.



Buildings after the San Francisco earthquake.

In part of his February, 1906 report to the Officers and members of affiliated local unions, President Ryan said: "In an effort to extend the benefits of our organization we have become involved in a strike that extends throughout the country, and was called on August 10, 1905, practically six months ago. This gang of conspirators, known as the United States Steel Corporation, have, during all that time used every despicable method to break the ranks of our organization through slander and bribery, and through their spy system they have worked every process that unprincipled men could invent to make criminals of honest men, that they might use them to do their nefarious work. So far they have failed to accomplish their object; the poor dupes they have in their employ as spies would soon be out of a job if they could succeed in disrupting our organization. They (the American Bridge Company) and their cohorts, have recently declared for the open shop, they would have us believe that it was a new policy they were adopting; on the contrary it has always been their policy, while at one time they had agreed to a closed shop, true to their natural instincts for dishonesty, they did not carry it out except through force of circumstances our organization compelled them to do so."

The National Erectors Association, under their new director, Walter Drew, formally declared for the open shop policy on May 1, 1906. American Bridge had been an open shop firm since the strike and other member firms fell in line for the open shop principle. However, the firms were pragmatic: they would employ union members



Members of Local No. 31, who cleared up part of the San Francisco ruins.

if any were willing to work for them and they would submit to union contractors, if advantageous - for example, if a union firm was the lowest bidder. When it came to profit, the open shop companies had no principle.

The open shop policy of employers would prove costly to the Union and present a constant immovable barrier to growth. This was a time of sharp tensions and a hardening of confrontations between the International Association and a militant, well financed group of open shop employers. The Union seemed headed for a dark interlude.

Although problems existed due to the strike, a great deal of work was being erected throughout the United States and Canada in 1906. Safety continued to be a big factor to our members. Loss of life continued to rise. Local No. 1, Chicago, reported that in 1905, 23 of their members were killed on the job, 17 totally disabled, and 83 suffered from injury. The membership of Local No. 1 was 880. It was determined that three men in every group of twenty-two workers will be killed or injured every twelve months.

In the June issue of the 1906 *The Bridgemen's Magazine* an article titled "**STEEL CITY WILL RISE ABOVE RUINS**": April 20, 1906 - Wednesday's frightful earthquake shocks demonstrated the utility of the steel frame buildings in this country. When San Francisco is rebuilt brick and stone will be rejected in favor of the steel skeleton building. Many such buildings are in ruins, but they have been destroyed by fire and not by the shaking of the earth.

Throughout the early hours of the day, while other buildings were toppling into the streets, the steel frame buildings remained intact. They swayed and swung on their foundations, but the bolted steel beams and girders hung together. The steel skeletons preserved their form, although tested to the utmost limit of flexibility.

It was interesting to note that cutting of structural steel beams and girders by the electric arc was used to clear the



Delegates to the Tenth Annual Convention.

wreckage and debris caused by the San Francisco fires. A 15-inch I-beam could be cut in 20 minutes, whereas to cut a beam of this size with a hacksaw would have required several hours.

**The Tenth International Convention** was held in Detroit, Michigan, September 17-27, 1906. Frank M. Ryan and J.J. McNamara were reelected. There were many issues and resolutions presented at the Convention. Locals in Canada and several in the United States requested Organizers be assigned to their jurisdictions in order to help organize non-union companies. There were a number of local unions that wanted to expand their territory which met with opposition from those local unions already controlling the area. Several resolutions requested increases in their scale of wages from 45 cents to 50 cents per hour and an 8-hour day rather than the 9-hour day most members worked.

It was decided to issue an Initiation stamp at a cost of 50 cents. It was felt that this would help in keeping better records on members, i.e., when they started as an Ironworker. Another resolution was passed to move International Headquarters from Cleveland to Indianapolis. The main reason was due to the fact that

most of the other International Unions were located in that city.

**The Eleventh International Convention** was held September 16-25, 1907 in Indianapolis, Indiana which is the city where our headquarters was located. Frank M. Ryan was reelected President and J.J. McNamara was reelected Secretary-Treasurer. The Convention dealt with many resolutions and issues. The delegates adopted the following Memorial:

*WHEREAS, it is with sincere regret that the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers learns of the death of fifty of its members in what is known as the "Quebec Bridge Disaster;" and*

*WHEREAS, by this appalling accident, consternation and dismay has been visited upon the relatives and friends of our departed brothers, and one of our Canadian Locals almost wiped out of existence; therefore, be it*



1907 badge worn by delegates to the 11th Annual Convention.

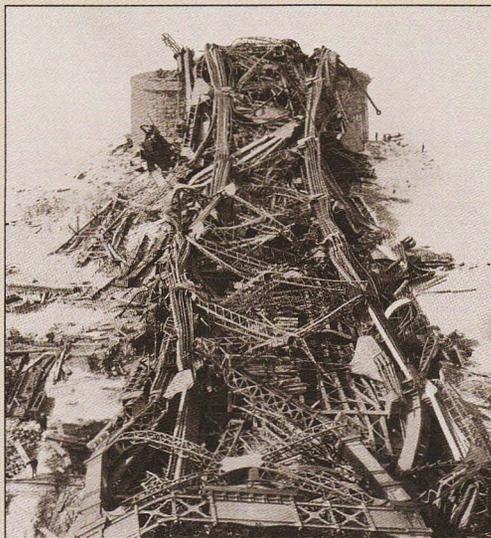
## The Quebec Bridge Disaster of 1907

On Thursday, August 29, 1907 the Quebec Railroad Bridge collapsed. A 20,000 ton section of the bridge fell 300 feet into the St. Lawrence River. A total of fifty Ironworkers and 36 other workers were killed.

D. B. Haley wrote a letter to *The Bridgemen's Magazine* about what happened and it was published in the October, 1907 issue. Haley was lucky he only had his legs and ankles badly sprained in his fall into the river. Haley had come from Wheeling, West Virginia in June of 1907 to work on the bridge. The work was being done by Local No. 87. The bridge was being built for Canada's transcontinental railroad about seven miles above Quebec City. It was to be the largest bridge of its kind in the world, designed to set a record for a steel cantilever span of 1,800 feet.

Construction was being done by the Phoenix Bridge Company. They hired men at 50 cents an hour from all over the United States and Canada. The company would have preferred only non-union men but they found they needed skilled workers for this job. However, many of the workers became dissatisfied. When a man quit, the company would deduct from his wages the amount they had paid for his transportation to and from the work site. On August 6th, almost two weeks before the collapse, many of the men had gone on strike because of the poor working conditions. By a vote of 40 to 36 they decided to go

View of Quebec Bridge just prior to collapse.



Wreckage of Bridge on August 29, 1907.

back to work on August 10th.

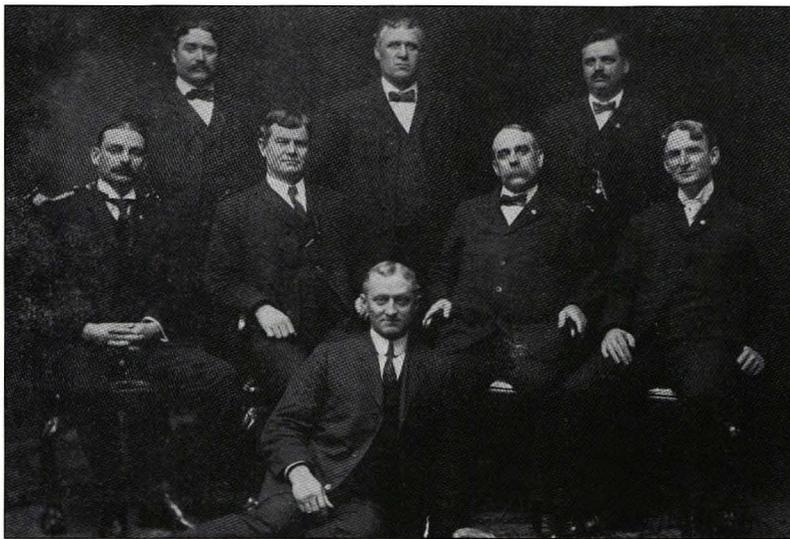
Engineers inspected the bridge on August 26th and 27th and noticed that some of the cantilever arms were buckling. None of the men were told about the problem in order to keep them from leaving the job. The general foremen disregarded the orders of the engineers and told the men to continue working.

On Thursday, August 29 the crash came without a moment's notice. Among those killed were 33 Canadian Ironworker Indian members. The Indians were members of the Caughnawaga Indian Reserve. They left 25 widows and numerous fatherless children behind. Six apprentices were also killed, along with some management personnel.

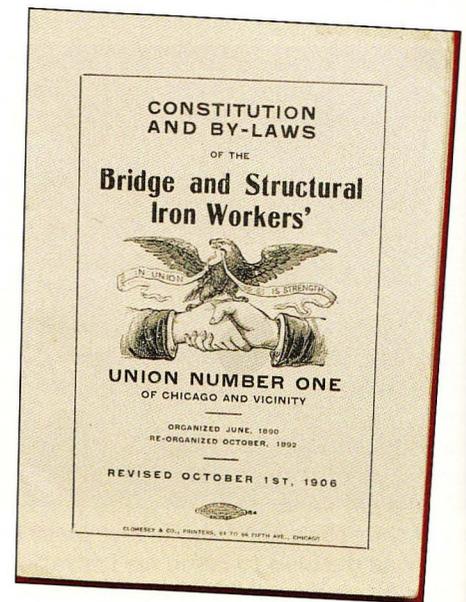
An investigation was conducted by a Royal Commission appointed by the Canadian government and published on March 14, 1908. It was very confusing, placing some blame on the engineers' design, the policies of the Phoenix Bridge Company, and the Quebec Bridge and Railway Company. As a result none of the wives were able to sue for damages.

A new bridge was designed. The central span also collapsed while being put in place in 1916. Fortunately no lives were lost at this time. The bridge finally was completed and opened for traffic in August of 1918. But the tragedy of 1907 ranks as one of the worst losses of life in the history of our Union.





1906-07 International Executive Board.



Local No. 1  
Constitution  
and By-Laws  
revised  
October 1,  
1906.

*RESOLVED, that the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers in convention assembled deeply deplores the loss of so many of its members and extends to the parents, relatives and friends of our deceased brothers heartfelt sympathy in this their hour of sorrow and great grief; and, be it further*

*RESOLVED, that as a mark of the esteem in which we hold our departed brethren, one page of the official proceedings of this convention be set aside as a suitable memorial to the memory of the victims of the Quebec Bridge Disaster.*

**The Twelfth International Convention** was held September 21-29, 1908 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Frank M. Ryan who was reelected President received a letter from Samuel Gompers, President, A.F. of L. It read as follows: "In the name of our great Trade Union movement, the movement for the uplift of American toilers, I send fraternal greetings to you and your assembled delegates. It was my hope to commission an organizer to attend your convention, but the proceedings to send Mitchell, Morrison and myself to jail for contempt of the VanCleave Buck Stove and Range Company's injunction made the performance of that and many other duties impossible. But despite their bitter and relentless antagonism, labor will triumph. The future is ours." J.J. McNamara was reelected Secretary-Treasurer.

Resolution 30 introduced at the Convention changed Section 11 of the Constitution by substituting the following language: "Representation shall be based upon the average number of monthly dues stamps purchased." The committee recommended the adoption of the amendment with the addition of the words, "during the fiscal year" after the word "purchased."

At the 1908 Convention, President Ryan, Vice-President Barry and delegate Butler, having received the highest number of votes, were

declared duly elected to serve as delegates to the next convention of the American Federation of Labor.

Earlier in the year, February 10, 1908, the Building and Construction Trades Department was founded and on March 20, 1908 the AFL issued the formal charter to the seven founding members of the Department which included Ironworkers President, Frank M. Ryan.

**The Thirteenth International Convention** was held September 20-30, 1909 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Once again, Frank M. Ryan was elected President and J.J. McNamara was elected Secretary-Treasurer. In his report, President Ryan reminded the delegates that four years and two months had passed since the general strike was inaugurated. He reported that the International and its affiliates had successfully withstood all efforts made to reduce wages, and in several instances had succeeded in increasing wages and improving working conditions.

Many of the issues discussed at the 1909 Convention dealt with agreements with the Boilermakers, Carpenters, Sheet Metal Workers and the Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers unions. A Resolution to have International Conventions every two years was defeated.

**The Fourteenth International Convention** was held September 19-26, 1910 in Rochester, New York. Both President Frank M. Ryan and Secretary-Treasurer J.J. McNamara were reelected.

It was reported that many of the affiliate local unions increased their wages in 1910; for example, Local No. 1 increased their hourly rate from 62-1/2 cents per hour to 65 cents. The average increase for most of the local unions was 5 cents per hour.

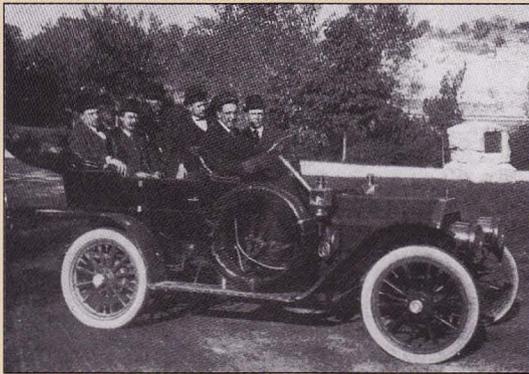
Frank Buchanan, former International President and member of Local Union No. 1, was elected on the Democratic ticket to represent the Seventh Illinois district in Congress.



Elks' Building and Temple Theater, Detroit, Michigan. 1906 Convention was held in Elk's building which appears on the right of the picture.



Delegates to the Eleventh Annual Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana, September, 1907.



How the delegates of Local No. 31 were entertained in Kansas City on their way back to Frisco. From left to right, Thomas Stack, No. 31; W.J. McCain, No. 10; E.P. Ryan, No. 10; J.W. Thompson, No. 10, driver, and D.F. Dwyer, No. 31.



A bunch from Local No. 8, who are erecting building for Charles Volkmann & Company



International Headquarters in Indianapolis.



Complete pile-driving outfit used as a float in the Labor Day parade by Local No. 77 of San Francisco, California.



Members of Local No. 24, Denver, erecting Auditorium where the Democratic Convention was held in 1908.



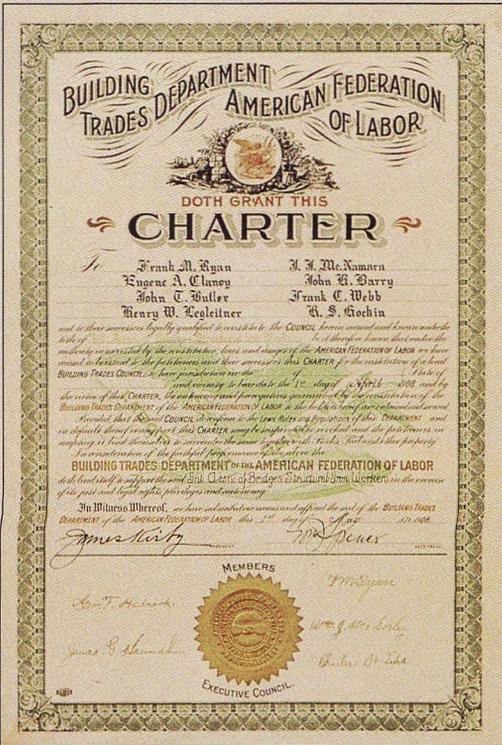
California delegation to Indianapolis Convention.



The baseball team of Local No. 31, San Francisco.



768 members of Local No. 31, San Francisco as they appeared in the Labor Day Parade.



Charter issued to the International from the Building Trades Department, AFL on May 1, 1908.



Delegates badge worn at the 13th Annual Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



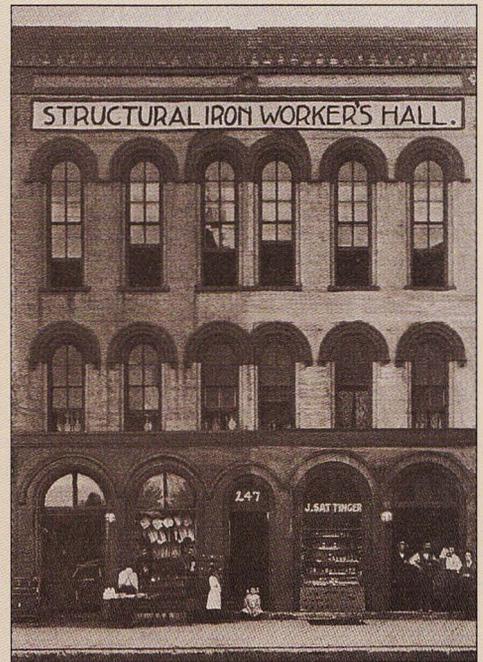
International Executive Board, 1908-09. Left to right: J.H. Barry, F.C. Webb, E.A. Claney, J.T. Butler, F.M. Ryan, J.J. McNamara, H.S. Hockin, H.W. Legleitner.



Enameled tanks being installed with members of Local No. 11, Newark, New Jersey.



Badge worn by a member of Local No. 13, Philadelphia to the 12th Annual International Convention in 1908.



Local No. 22 Union Hall where 1908 Convention was held.



Delegates and visitors to the Twelfth Annual Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, September, 1908.



Delegates to the Thirteenth Annual Convention held in Minneapolis in 1909.

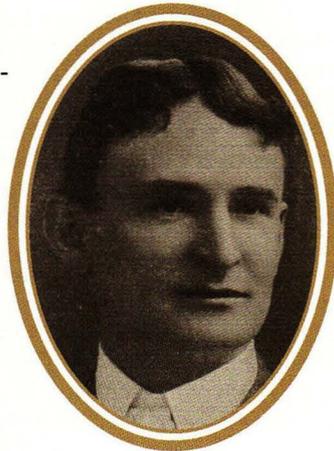
## The McNamara Case

Probably no event has affected the history of our Iron Workers Union and the entire American Labor movement more than the McNamara Case. It was called "The Crime of the Century" by the conservative, anti-labor papers of the day, although it only took place during the first decade of this century. Before we can understand the importance of this event it is necessary to examine the reasons why it took place.

As pointed out earlier, the U.S. Steel Company was totally opposed to unionism. In March of 1903, U.S. Steel, the American Bridge Company, and all the other companies involved in the erection of structural steel, banded together to form the National Erectors' Association (NEA). The aim of the NEA was to destroy all the unions involved in the building trades including carpenters, bricklayers, masons, and especially ironworkers. Article III of the Constitution of the NEA read:

*"The aim of the association shall be the institution and maintenance of the Open Shop principal in the employment of labor in the erection of steel and iron bridges and buildings and other structural and iron work."*

Although U.S. Steel and the NEA were able to crush many of the unions engaged in the fabrication, manufacturing, and transportation of steel, they were not able to crush the Iron Workers Union. Our International organized a nation-wide strike which totally frustrated the NEA and the American Bridge Company forcing them to sign a closed-shop agreement with our Union from May 1, 1903 until January 1, 1905. But in July of 1905, seven months after the agreement had expired, the American Bridge Company, which was owned by U.S. Steel, along with other members of the NEA, decided to break our International by not hiring any union Ironworkers. The NEA hired Walter Drew, an



John J. McNamara  
Secretary-Treasurer

exponent of the open shop, to coordinate a campaign against Ironworkers. Drew set up a network of spies, detectives, thugs, and provocateurs to carry

out the task of breaking our Union.

By 1906, a "Labor War" had developed between Drews' NEA and our Union. The NEA convinced judges to issue injunctions against strikes. The police and thugs were paid to break up picket lines, and hand-billing and mass meetings were outlawed. These were rights that should have been protected by our nation's Constitution and its Bill of Rights.

NEA contractors continued to try to crush our Union and this was especially hard on men who risked their lives on scaffolds, atop bridges and buildings without life nets to save them from falls onto the cement or into rivers hundreds of feet below. At this time over one hundred structural Ironworkers were killed on the job each year. This represented approximately one out of every hundred members of the Union. Even Secretary-Treasurer John J. McNamara saw a member of his family die. He said:



Richmond Hall, where the Convention was held in 1909.

*"We work with a man one week and the next we read of his falling to his death. We become so accustomed to it that I've never realized what it meant until I sat by my own brother's deathbed last year."*

This was war! Workers killed on the job, beaten by the police and thugs, and denied their rights to have a democratic union of their choice. All this was happening at a time when Ironworkers were paid only \$2.50 a day, and the NEA wanted to even cut this lowly wage.

Between the years 1908 and 1911, eighty-seven to one hundred and fifty bombings took place at work sites. Perhaps some of these were set by



Delegate's badge worn at the Annual Convention in 1910, Rochester, New York.

management themselves in order to create propaganda against unions. Perhaps some were set by individual union members disgusted with the treatment they were receiving. At some 70 sites where explosions took place companies quickly gave the Ironworkers Union recognition. No one was ever killed in any of these explosions and the average loss of property was about one thousand dollars.

Despite all the vicious attacks by U.S. Steel and the NEA to destroy our unions, the membership of the Iron Workers Union grew to 12,230 by 1911 and our members went from being the lowest paid workers in the building trades to one of the highest at \$4.30 for an eight-hour day. The militancy of the Iron Workers Union became a thorn in the side of the NEA and U.S. Steel!

Non-union workers were quickly imported from the Midwest and private detectives were hired to spy on strike leaders and assist the regular police force in an effort to crush the unions. But the unions stood firm. Pickets were orderly and no violence occurred until July 16, 1910, when the City Council passed its infamous anti-picketing ordinance.

The ordinance was strict enough to satisfy even the most militant of anti-union workers as "class legislation." Union pickets naturally defied the ordinance which ran counter to their constitutional principles. Fights broke out between strikers, strike-breakers, police, hired detectives, and professional sluggers. In such a blood-bath only the pickets were arrested, but as each defendant requested a jury trial, the court calendars were filled up until early the next year.

The arrested pickets received legal assistance from various organizations in San Francisco, where wages were about 30% higher, hours about 20% shorter, and labor conditions peaceful. The General Campaign Strike Committee, with headquarters in San Francisco, was requested to send lawyers down to Los Angeles to investigate claims of espionage, unlawful beatings, false arrests, unlawful detention, and third-degree treatment. The San Francisco Labor Council appealed to labor organizations all across the country for funds, and the executive council of the California State Federation of



Convention Headquarters, Hotel Eggleston, Rochester, New York in 1910.

Labor felt it necessary to order a special organizer to the Los Angeles area.

The strikers responded enthusiastically to the outside help. By the end of September, 1910, although every strike was thus far unsuccessful, the internal growth of the unions was phenomenal. Since the beginning of 1910 the Central Labor Council had nearly a 50% increase in strength: from 6,000 members of 62 unions in January to 9,500 members of 85 unions in September. Trade unionism was clearly on the rise in Los Angeles, and at that crucial time only some

atrocious act could discredit the movement and ruin the cause for organized labor.

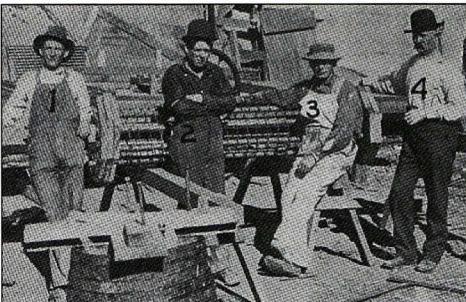
## The Los Angeles Times Explosion

Then it happened at 1 A.M. on the morning of October 1, 1910-- the so-called "Crime of the Century." An explosion ripped through the printing plant of the *Los Angeles Times*. As a result of the explosion and fire that followed, twenty *Times* employees were killed and many others injured. Although there was no evidence at the time that labor was in any way involved, the headline the next day read, "**UNIONIST BOMBS WRECK THE TIMES**".

The City of Los Angeles and the *Times* newspaper were completely controlled at the time by a man named Harrison Gray Otis, who loved to be called "General". Otis had fought in the Civil War and the Spanish American War and saw himself as "A General" fighting another war in Los Angeles against organized labor. Otis referred to unions as "...a tyranny--one of the most monstrous tyrannies that the world has ever seen."

Otis was determined to drive every sign of unionism from Los Angeles, and he was able to mobilize 85% of the city businessmen into the Merchants and Manufacturers Association (M & M). If any Los Angeles merchant hired union workers or declared for the eight-hour day, his business was no longer able to get credit from the banks or receive shipment of his goods.

Because of what he had done to the workers of Los Angeles, "General" Otis was so afraid for his life that he



First union job in San Diego, California for the Ironworkers, in 1910.



Delegates and visitors to the Fourteenth Annual Convention in Rochester, New York in 1910.

drove around town in a car with an operable cannon on the hood. Los Angeles became known as “Otistown of the Open Shop.” One writer described Otis as “..the most unfair, unscrupulous and malignant enemy of organized labor in America.”

Between 1910 and 1912, Otis had several reasons to be fearful. One was that the people of Los Angeles were becoming disgusted with one man rule. It looked like Job Harrison, the Socialist candidate for Mayor, might win the next election. This would mean the end of Otis’ control of the city. Also, the Los Angeles Metal Trades Council decided to go on strike for recognition.

While unions were fighting for recognition in Los Angeles, to the north in San Francisco unionism was strong. One observer said:

*“...not a hammer was lifted, or a brick laid, or a pipe fitted, or wall plastered or painted, or papered without the sanction of the unions.”*

Because wages and working conditions were so different in Los Angeles and San Francisco it was making it difficult for San Francisco workers to keep their good conditions unless equally good wages and hours existed in Los Angeles. Therefore, this is why the Los Angeles Metal Trades Council called a strike to begin on June 1, 1910. The demands included union recognition, the eight-hour day, and a minimum wage of four dollars a day. All of these things were happening in Los Angeles when the explosion took place at Otis’ *Times* printing plant on October 1, 1910.

## What Caused the Explosion?

For weeks before the explosion there were reports of a gas leak in the area around the *Times* building. Because of this the insurance company had raised the rates on the old printing plant; Otis had already moved his business papers out of the old building. A satellite printing plant had been established, and even after the explosion occurred the paper was able to print the morning edition, as if nothing had happened.

Supposedly sixteen sticks of dynamite were placed in the *Times* alleyway, known as “ink alley” near drums of highly inflammable materials. Later, James B. McNamara, brother of Iron Workers Secretary-Treasurer John J. McNamara, and Ortie McManigal would be blamed for the bombing. There are many unanswered questions about the cause of the explosion. The dynamite could never have caused the kind of explosion that destroyed the entire block. Ironically, both “General” Otis and his son-in-law and future heir, Harry Chandler, were in the building that evening and left only a short time before the explosion. If it was negligence on the part of Otis in not correcting the gas leak, Otis could have faced criminal charges and would not have been able to collect a half million dollars in insurance money. Could blaming it all on the union have been his way of covering up his own negligence? Also, it is difficult to understand why the police did not see someone entering “ink alley” to place dynamite charges there since the alley was clearly visible from the Los Angeles Police Department Headquarters directly across the street!



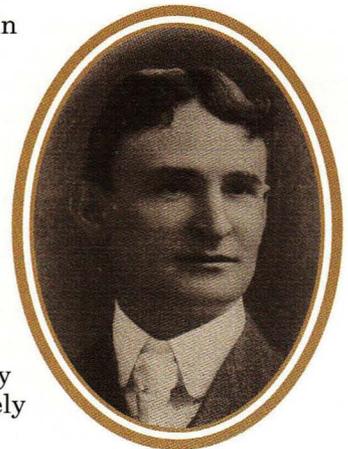
Rivet gang at work.

## The Investigation and the Arrest of John J. McNamara

Ironically, William J. Burns, head of the Chicago based Burns Detective Agency, arrived in Los Angeles the same morning as the bombing. Up to this point Burns had been a friend of the Progressive Movement and men such as Lincoln Steffens, who had exposed corruption all over the country. Several years before, Burns had exposed corporate graft in San Francisco and illegal take-overs of federal forest lands. “General” Otis did not like Burns at the time he first came to Los Angeles.

However, Burns was now in the employ of the National Erectors’ Association. He would also be hired by the Mayor of Los Angeles, George B. Alexander, to find the perpetrators of the *Times* bombing. Mayor Alexander offered Burns a reward of \$100,000.

The labor movement in California was disgusted with the fact that without any evidence, Otis had immediately blamed the unions for the explosion. Therefore, the California State Federation of Labor asked a distinguished panel to look into the cause of



John J. McNamara  
Secretary-Treasurer

the bombing. This panel found no evidence that the explosion was caused by a bomb, and concluded that it was caused by the gas leak.

Then another bomb exploded in Los Angeles on Christmas Day at the anti-union Llewellyn Iron Works. This was set by Ortie McManigal, who would later become the star witness against our International Union. The Llewellyn bomb caused \$25,000 damage and the nation became even more aroused.

There were reports, although not confirmed, that Ortie McManigal developed his dynamiting skills working in a quarry before his Ironworker career.

McManigal was supposedly recruited by Herbert S. Hockin, of Detroit Local No. 25 and an International Executive Board member, and paid \$125 and expenses for each job. Hockin used their mutual memberships in the Knights of Pythias to bring in McManigal - "do it for a lodge brother", as the saying goes. McManigal had difficulty finding and holding a job. Hockin figured correctly that McManigal was perfect for the kind of work he had in mind. McManigal was a better dynamiter than an Ironworker. Hockin had his man.

William Burns seemed to disappear from January to April of 1911, and the public was beginning to see the *Times* explosion as just a terrible tragedy. In March, Mayor Alexander even stopped paying Burns. Could Burns have then decided to combine the interests of several of his employers? The National Erectors' Association would forever be indebted to Burns if he could blame the International Bridge and Structural Iron Workers Union for the Llewellyn Iron Works bombings as well as all the others between 1906 and 1911. If he could find the culprits who bombed the *Times* he would receive the \$100,000 reward from the businessmen of Los Angeles. The enemies he had made when he was fighting with the muckrakers and progressives, such as Otis and other corporate interests throughout the United States, would now see him as the friend of big business instead of its enemy. There certainly was a great deal more money to be made if, like the Pinkerton Detective Agency, he fought unionism.

Then on Saturday, April 22, 1911 at 5:30 p.m., Burns and a squad of police burst into a meeting of the General Executive Board of our International at our headquarters in the American Central Life Building in Indianapolis. The Superintendent of Police requested that John J. McNamara, our Secretary-Treasurer, and General Executive Board Member Herbert Hockin accompany them to police headquarters. Both agreed willingly to go with the police. John McNamara closed the office safe before leaving with the officers.

International President Frank M. Ryan then tried to continue the Executive Board meeting, but the police and Burns refused to leave. When President Ryan tried to adjourn the meeting the police refused to allow anyone to leave. When Herbert Hockin returned alone, he

DATE	MONTHLY DUES	ASSESSMENTS	DATE	MONTHLY DUES	ASSESSMENTS
JAN. 1911	51		JULY 1911	86	
FEB. 1911	51		AUG. 1911	29	
MARCH 1911	51		SEPT. 1911	29	
APRIL 1911	86		OCT. 1911	29	
MAY 1911	86	Special Ass'n \$2.50	NOV. 1911	29	
JUNE 1911	86	Special Assessment \$2.50	DEC. 1911	29	



Membership Book in 1911 with a picture of Secretary-Treasurer J.J. McNamara on the "Assessment" stamps. This member worked in Locals No. 51, 86 and 29 in 1911. Closeup at right.

Secretaries—Stamps shall be attached to the squares in this book and date stamped plainly across the face so as to cancel stamp.

informed the Executive Board that Secretary-Treasurer John J. McNamara had been kidnapped. McNamara was very popular with the membership and the labor movement in general, therefore, it is logical that he would be the target of Burns. Starting in October, 1911 all the "assessment" stamps issued to the local unions had a picture of McNamara.

## The Kidnapping of John J. McNamara

What actually happened was that John J. McNamara was handcuffed, allowed no bail or trial, and rushed by car to Terra Haute, Indiana. The seven-passenger Owen Motor Car that could travel 75 miles an hour held John McNamara and several detectives.

At Terra Haute, John McNamara and the detectives boarded the 1:40 A.M. *Pennsylvania Flyer* which stopped at St. Louis. Here they had a very public breakfast in front of all the reporters. They let reporters see them buying tickets for another train, but they then re-boarded the *Pennsylvania Flyer* and traveled to Kansas City and then to Holsington, Kansas where another car was waiting. They then traveled across wild country to catch a local at Dodge City. At Dodge City they checked into a hotel where they waited for the *California Limited*, the fastest train into Los Angeles.

John J. McNamara did not know that his brother, James, was aboard the same train, but the entire nation knew it. Also aboard was Ortie McManigal, who was

prepared to betray the Iron Workers.

Burns saw to it that this cross country race to Los Angeles was well publicized. At the same time Burns claimed that the train might be blown up and that someone might help the McNamara brothers to escape, therefore secrecy was needed.

Actually, all of this secrecy was because the entire abduction of John J. McNamara was illegal. There should have been a proper court hearing in Indiana before he could be removed from the state. Neither a judge nor even the Governor of Indiana had the right to sign extradition papers in this case. According to Indiana law, John J. McNamara would have had to have committed a crime in California and then fled to Indiana. Then the Governor could have ordered his immediate extradition without a hearing. But John J. McNamara had never been in Los Angeles at the time of the explosion.

Another story that came up during the case, probably from McManigal, was that James McNamara claimed to have invented an "infernal machine", which he used to time the explosion of charges; a simple, cheap alarm clock wired with a battery so that when the alarm was set to strike, it would close an electrical circuit that would discharge a blasting cap. This impressed McManigal, who had timed explosives by splicing fuses to burn up to thirty minutes or so. But McNamara's "infernal machine" provided hours of delay and permitted the setter to be miles away, even in an adjoining state, when the explosion occurred. The new device would now be their preferred technology.

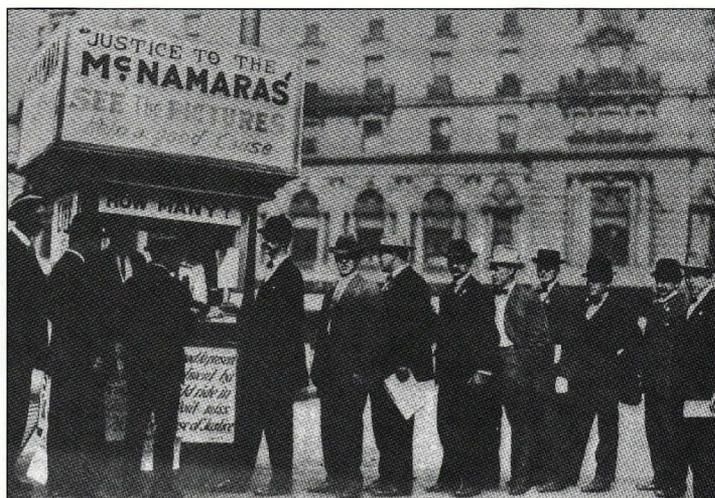
## What Happened at the International Offices?

Meanwhile, on the evening when John J. McNamara was first kidnapped, the police illegally broke into the Union's safe and removed papers as well as over \$400 which was never returned.

At the time the police entered the International's office, President Ryan noticed a mysterious figure who began searching through the Union's file and papers. This person turned out to be Walter Drew, Commissioner of the National Erectors Association. Totally disgusted with the police and their violation of the law, the officers of the Executive Board tried to call the Union attorney, Leo Rappaport. Since it was a weekend and very late and many of the Executive Board members were from out of town, they did not know how to reach their attorney. Finally, they were able to get in touch with him and Attorney Rappaport arrived around 2 A.M..

Not content with just searching the offices of the International's headquarters, Burns supposedly had a tip that John J. McNamara had rented a barn outside of town. Burns and some men, as well as a group of reporters, left to search it. They returned claiming they had found two quart cans of nitroglycerin and fifteen sticks of dynamite in a piano box.

Burns then returned to the offices of the International in the American Central Life Building demanding a key to a vault in the basement. Burns went into the basement followed by reporters and sup-



*In line for tickets at Indianapolis, Indiana for the movie "A Martyr to His Cause"*

posedly found seven packages of dynamite weighing 200 pounds along with percussion caps and many yards of fuse, plus a dozen small alarm clocks.

## What Was the Attitude of the Public?

Union members and even a large segment of the general public all over the United States felt that the entire event looked staged. It was discovered that after Burns' salary was cut off by the Mayor of Los Angeles, he borrowed \$10,000 from friends and would only be able to repay it if he was able to get the \$100,000 reward. Many Americans saw this as another frame-up similar to the Haymarket Affair, Debs' trial after the Pullman Strike, and the Haywood-Moyer-Pettibone Case of 1907. This latter case involved "Big Bill" Haywood and two other members of the Western Federation of Miners who were accused of a murder in Idaho. They were kidnapped from Colorado by Pinkerton detectives, handcuffed, and taken in a special train to Boise, Idaho to stand trial. Clarence Darrow, who had defended Debs after the Pullman Strike, was regarded as the lawyer of the oppressed. He successfully defended Haywood and the other two defendants and saved them from hanging.

Trade unionists and the general public throughout the country had an opportunity to witness the production of a motion picture titled "A Martyr to His Cause" which was produced to raise money for the McNamara brothers' defense and to show the public how a citizen was dragged from his home and friends and spirited to a distant part of the nation contrary to law and the traditions of the United States.

## Clarence Darrow Hired to Defend the McNamaras

Samuel Gompers and other union leaders in the American Federation of Labor felt that Clarence Darrow would be the ideal lawyer to defend the McNamara brothers. But Darrow, now in his early 50's, was exhausted. His wife, Ruby, had made him promise her that in the future he would only take on easy cases. At

first Darrow refused pleas from Gompers and Ryan to take on the case. Then he received the following telegram from Gompers:

*"There is no other advocate in the whole United States who holds such a commanding post before the people and in whom labor has such entire confidence. You owe it to yourself and to the cause of labor to appear as the advocate of those men so unjustly accused."*

Darrow finally agreed to take the case under the following conditions: The labor movement would raise \$200,000 out of which Darrow would receive a fee of \$50,000 after expenses. The union movement agreed to his terms and our Union began a fund raising effort to help defray the costs of the trial. McNamara buttons, stamps for the backs of letters were sold. The following appeared in the September, 1911 issue of *The Bridgemen's Magazine*.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

*"Are you wearing a McNamara button and are you using McNamara stamps on the backs of your envelopes? Also look into your membership book and see if the McNamara assessment stamps are in it for the months of May and June."*

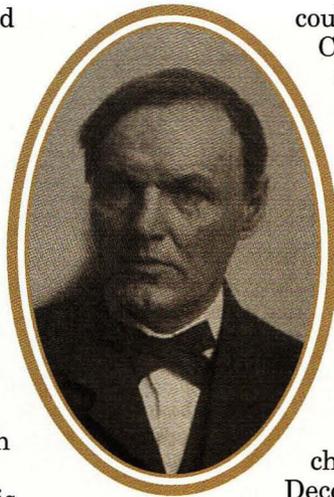
Darrow arrived in Los Angeles at 9:15 A.M. on May 14, 1911 surrounded by reporters. He went directly to the jail where the McNamara brothers were being held. He then went to see John Harrington, who had been representing the McNamaras up to this point and would continue to assist Darrow. John Harrington was also a candidate on the Socialist Party ticket for Mayor of Los Angeles. His election looked certain, but it all hinged on the outcome of this case.

It did not take Darrow long to realize that the evidence, whether true or false, against the brothers was overwhelming and it would be impossible to get a fair trial in Los Angeles' "Otistown".

### Lincoln Steffens Enters the Scene

Lincoln Steffens was the most famous of the muck-rakers of his day. He was from a wealthy California family, whose former home is to this day the Executive Mansion of the Governor of California. He was a close friend of President Teddy Roosevelt and his magazine articles on important Progressives like "Fighting Bob" LaFollette of Wisconsin had made them into national figures. His book *Shame of the Cities* had helped to rid many communities of their corrupt mayors and city councils. In 1911, Steffens would come to Los Angeles on behalf of a newspaper syndicate in the East to report on why the McNamaras had bombed the *Times*.

Steffens believed that the brothers were guilty but wanted the nation to understand why men had resorted to such means to bring about change. He thought he



Clarence Darrow

could settle the case by appealing to Otis, Chandler, District Attorney John Fredericks, and twenty businessmen as "Christian men."

Darrow began to realize that the McNamara brothers could never get a fair trial in Los Angeles, and both of them would be given the death penalty. Throughout Darrow's life he opposed the death penalty. He often stated that no client of his had ever been executed, no matter how hideous the crime. Therefore, Darrow began to listen to Lincoln Steffens' proposal. It would be as follows:

1. Both of the McNamara brothers would change their plea from not guilty to "guilty" on December 1, 1911.

2. John J. McNamara would be set free but his brother James B. would be imprisoned for life.

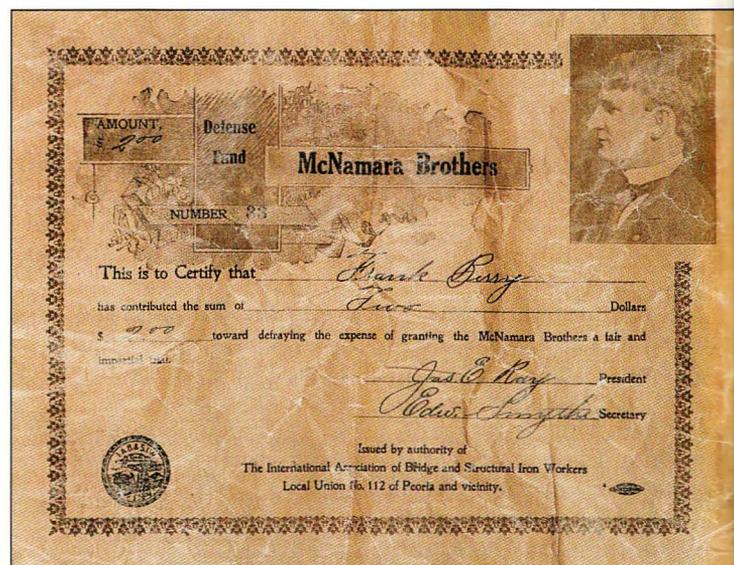
3. The pursuit of other Ironworkers would be abandoned and the cases against President Ryan and other officers of the Executive Board would be dropped.

4. Labor and Los Angeles businessmen would meet in a city-wide conference to discuss their problems and restore good labor-management relations to the city.

### The Plea Bargain Is Violated

A plea bargain was reached but it was never put in writing. The businessmen refused to allow John J. McNamara to go free and insisted on a ten year jail sentence. The defense agreed to this but later the judge refused and increased John's sentence to 15 years.

The joint labor-management meeting in Los Angeles never took place. Because of his role as a lawyer for the defense, John Harrington lost the mayoral election. A "Good Government" slate backed by "General" Otis and the Merchants and Manufacturers' Association won the election, and the union movement in Los Angeles suffered.



McNamara Defense Fund Certificate issued to Local No. 112, Peoria, Illinois. Every Ironworker had an opportunity to contribute to the Fund.

Not satisfied with their victory over the unions, Otis and his friends went after Clarence Darrow, who was brought to trial on bribery charges. Bert Franklin, who had been hired by Darrow, was supposed to have bribed a juror in the McNamara case for Darrow. Franklin turned out to be a former Los Angeles detective and a friend of the prosecutor, District Attorney John Fredericks. After two years in Los Angeles, Darrow was finally found not guilty. He returned to Chicago financially ruined. He would never again return to California.

The American Federation of Labor as well as every union member was crushed when they read about the guilty plea made by the McNamara brothers. This case would have the effect of making the American labor movement more and more conservative in order to be acceptable to the general public. Immediately the A.F. of L. and its many individual unions would try to distance themselves from this case. Clarence Darrow would never again work for any union. "General" Otis and the *Times* as well as conservative papers across the country had won.

## Were They Guilty?

As you can see, there were many loopholes in this case. No one seemed to pay any attention to the earlier report that the gas leak had caused the explosion. Why had Otis and his son-in-law, Chandler, moved all their papers out of this location earlier and prepared a second printing site? Why would the Ironworkers be interested in bombing this site which employed none of their workers? The staging of the kidnapping of our Secretary-Treasurer was certainly illegal. The entire case served to keep Los Angeles in the control of Otis and gave the National Erectors' Association what it had wanted for years...a chance to try to break the only remaining union in the steel industry.

The chief prosecution witness in both Los Angeles and Indianapolis, Ortie E. McManigal, would write a book titled *The National Dynamite Plot*, published by the Neale Company of Los Angeles. He called it "...the authentic account of the attempts of Union Labor to destroy the Structural Iron Industry." Like a similar book published to promote the Pinkerton Detective Agency after the Haymarket Affair, this book helped to promote the Burns Detective Agency in its union busting efforts. It is interesting that all the private McNamara papers of both "General" Otis and his son-in-law, Harry Chandler, were destroyed. What an interesting story they might have told!

Certainly there were bombings on some job sites, but no lives were lost and the damage was small. After the guilty plea by the brothers, Eugene Debs wrote the following to a friend:

*"Every floor in every skyscraper represents a workingman killed in its erection. It is easy enough for a gentleman of education and refinement to sit at his typewriter and point out the crimes of the workers. But let him be one of them himself, reared in poverty, denied education, thrown into the brute struggle for existence from childhood, oppressed, exploited,*

*forced to strike, clubbed by police, jailed while his family is evicted, and his wife and children are hungry, and he will hesitate to condemn these as criminals who fight against the crimes of which they are the victims of such savage methods as have been forced upon them by their masters."*

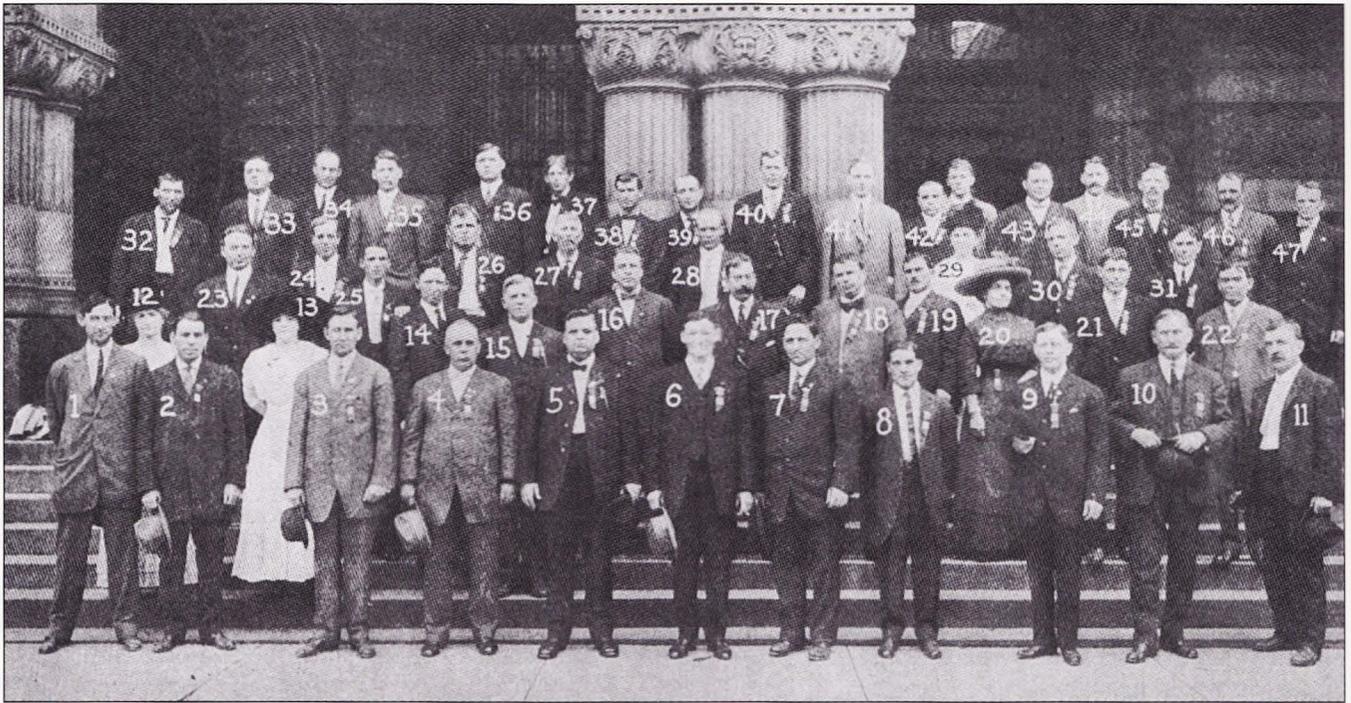
While J.J. McNamara was in jail and the case was being processed, the International Association and its affiliates had to carry on the day-to-day business. Many articles from labor leaders and business men appeared in *The Bridgemen's Magazine* supporting Secretary-Treasurer McNamara.

Although 1911 was a bad year for the International, many jobs were being erected in the United States and Canada.

**The Fifteenth International Convention** was held September 18-25, 1911 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. As can be expected, a great deal of the Convention business dealt with the McNamara case. The delegates reelected Frank M. Ryan as President (no opposition). President Ryan requested that he be permitted to place in nomination for the office of Secretary-Treasurer, the



St. Charles Hotel where 1911 Convention was held.



Delegates and visitors to the Fifteenth Annual Convention held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1911.

**International Association**  
OF  
**Bridge and Structural**  
**Iron Workers**  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP CARD



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Formerly of \_\_\_\_\_  
Admitted Gen. Member \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Initiation \_\_\_\_\_ Ago  
No. Card \_\_\_\_\_ Ledger Page \_\_\_\_\_

Gen'l Sec'y-Treas.  
Members holding a General Membership Card and failing to deposit same after going to work in any town or city where a union exists, will be suspended and deprived of all the rights and privileges of the International Association.

Membership Card



Members of Local No. 1, Chicago, working on the Peoples Gas Light and Coke Co. building.

name of J.J. McNamara. The nomination was seconded by Delegate Cunnane and several other delegates, after which Delegate Pohlman moved that the election be made unanimous by a rising vote of the delegates.

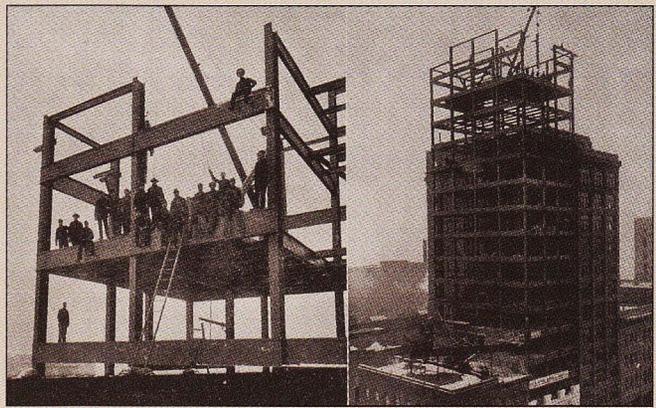
The vote was called for, and all the delegates arose, and J.J. McNamara was declared reelected as Secretary-Treasurer, after which three cheers were given by all the delegates for the absent brother.

The year 1912, despite all of the trials, troubles and tribulations through which our International Association had passed, was one of unexcelled progress and prosperity, in so far as an abundance of good union work throughout the entire United States and Canada was concerned, together with the excellent working conditions enjoyed by the entire membership. During 1912, charters were granted to nine new locals, bringing into the ranks over five hundred new members. In addition to this, existing locals throughout North America brought into the International about 420 new members. The members of four locals, amounting to 2,100 men, received a wage increase of 15 to 20 per cent. On a sad note, 123 members lost their lives - 66 being accidental, 56 natural and 1 suicide.





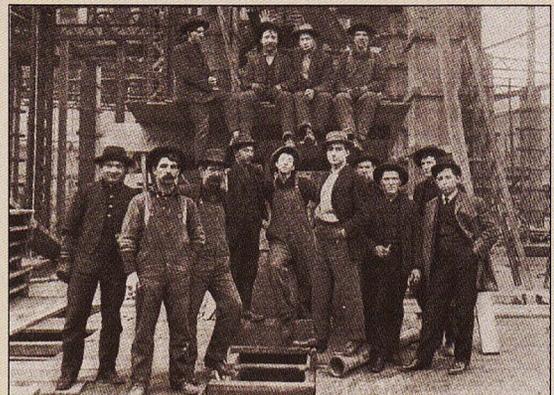
768 members of Local No. 31, San Francisco as they appeared in the Labor Day Parade.



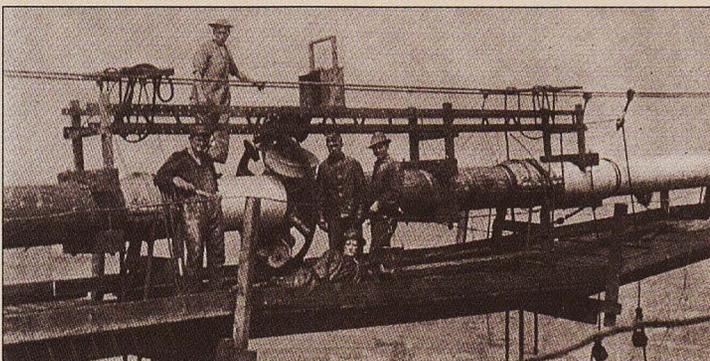
Two views of work being erected at Columbus, Ohio in 1906 by members of Local No. 17.



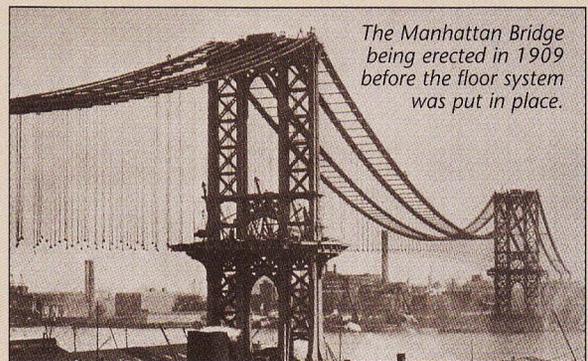
Members of Local No. 4, Toronto, Canada who are erecting work at the gas plant for the Dominion Bridge Company.



Members of Local No. 86, Seattle, Washington.



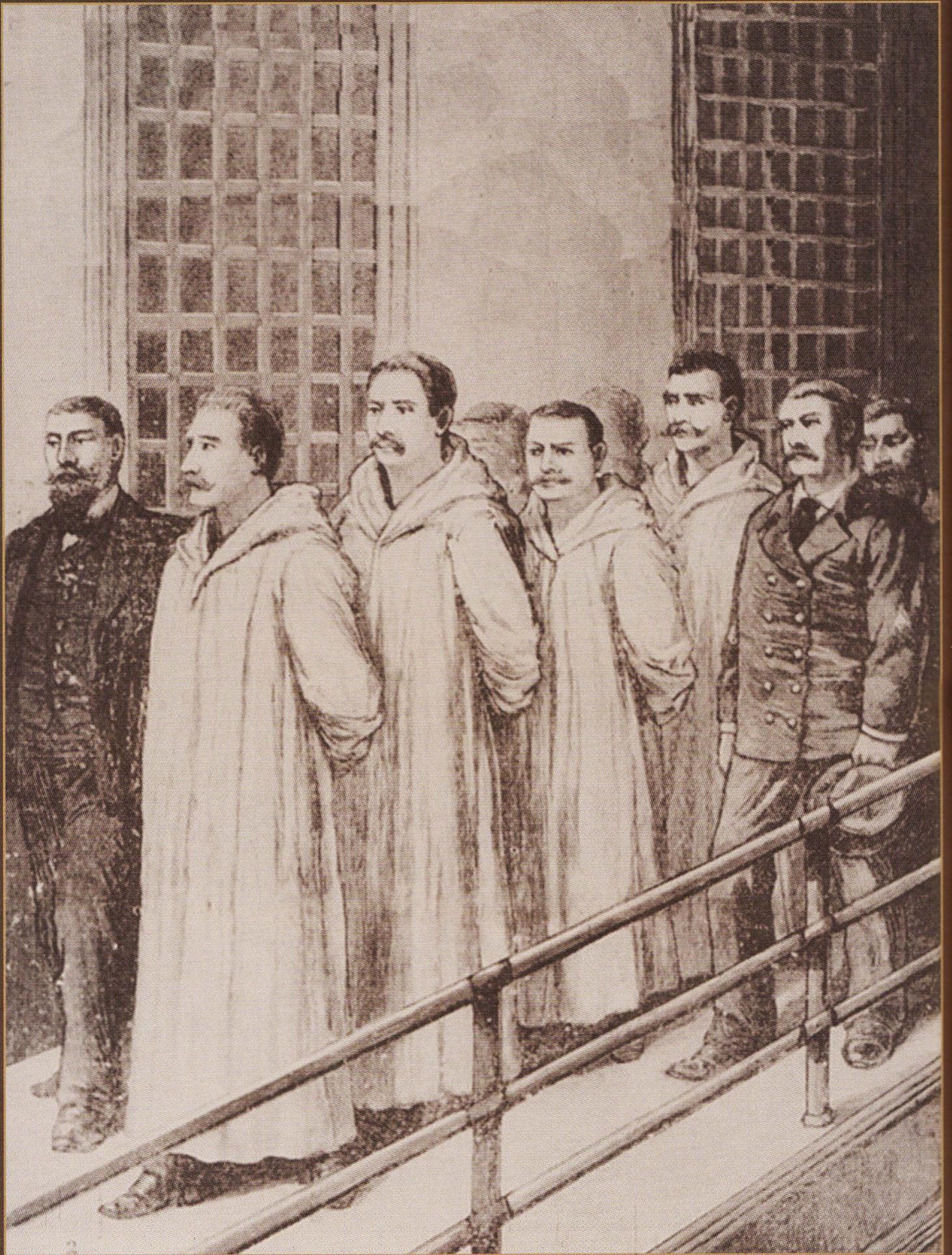
Ironworkers wrapping the cables of the Manhattan Bridge.



The Manhattan Bridge being erected in 1909 before the floor system was put in place.



Members of Local No. 3, Pittsburgh, Pa., working at Shipperville, Pennsylvania., on cantilever bridge for the Lake Shore Railroad.



# The Conspiracy Trials and Aftermath

**T**he **Sixteenth Annual Convention** of the International Association originally scheduled for Peoria in September, 1912, was postponed for six months. Difficulties stemming from the indictments on dynamite transport conspiracy charges against forty-six

International and local union officials precluded a convention at that time. The conspiracy indictments of several men from other trade unions kept the trial from being strictly an Iron Worker event.

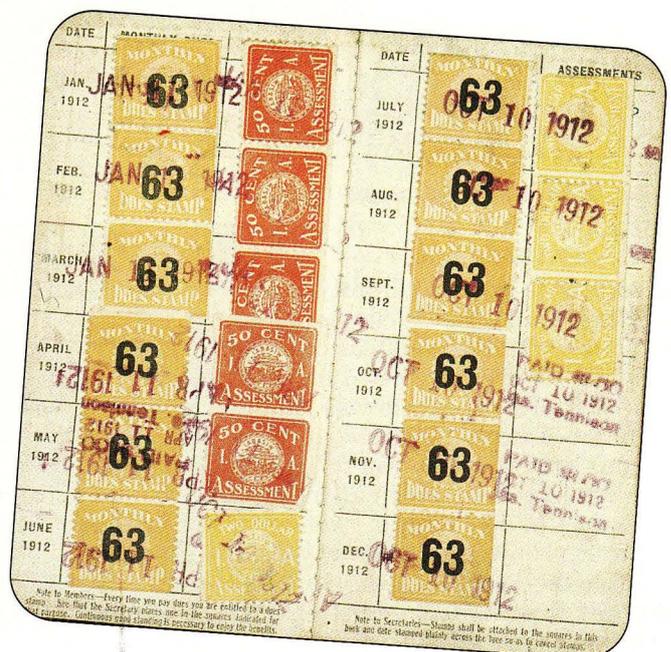
Other union men accused were California Building Trades officials Olaf Tveitmoe and Anton Johannsen; two United Brotherhood of Carpenters officials of Indiana, Spurgeon P. Meadows and Hiram Cline; Clarence Dowd, Machinists Union, Syracuse; and William K. Benson, president of the Detroit Building Trades. Confessed dynamiter Ortie McManigal, who had been hidden away in the Los Angeles area and guarded by local law enforcement officers, and the McNamara brothers, who were serving their sentences at San Quentin, were also named as conspirators on the long list of Federal indictments. The Federal Government consolidated all indictments into one proceeding.

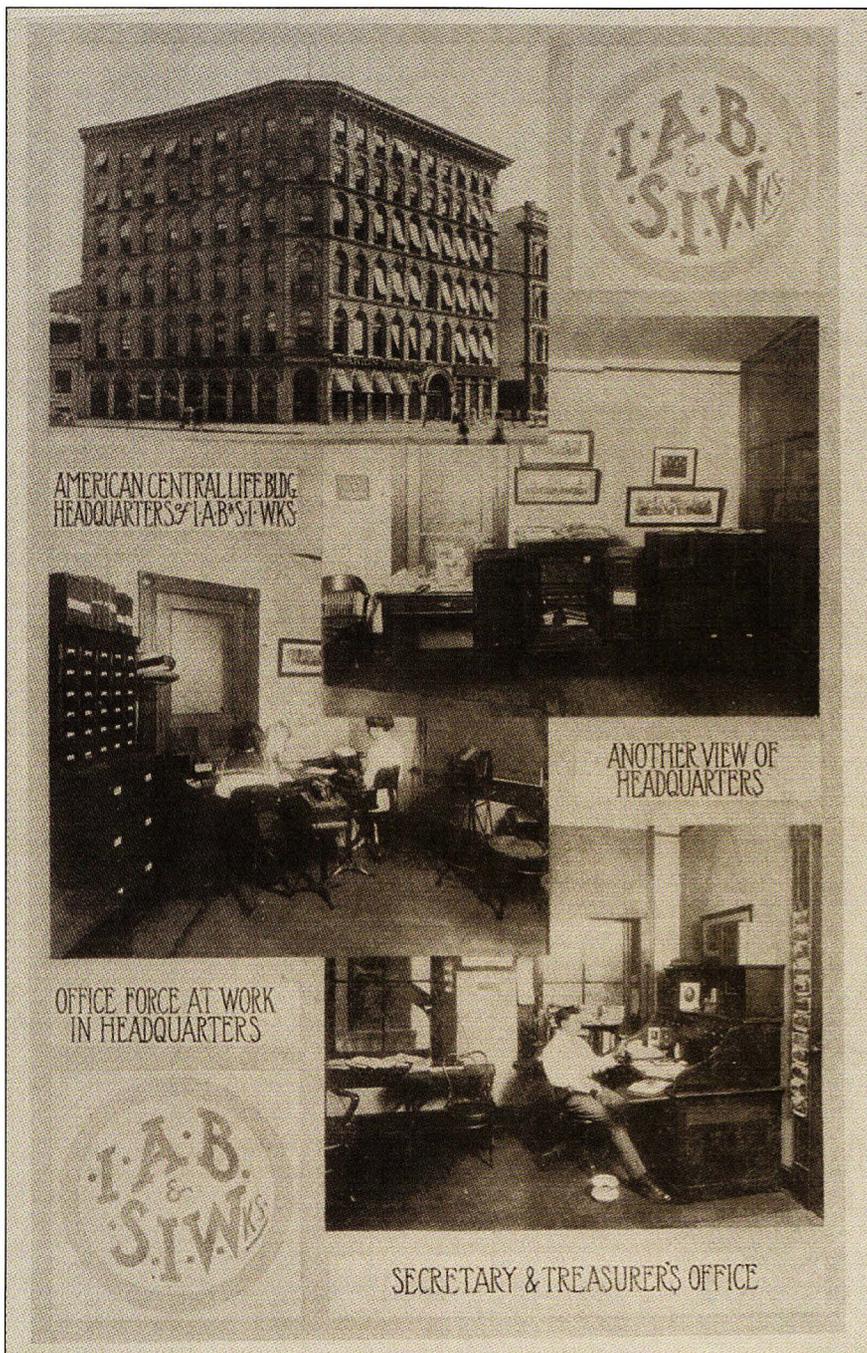
General President Frank Ryan, acting Secretary-Treasurer Herbert S. Hockin, International Executive Board members and many of the most dedicated and diligent local officers were among the forty-six Ironworkers charged. The list of those indicted included a past, present, and a future General President of the Iron Workers.

Early indictments were issued on December 30, 1911, against two Ironworker officials, Eugene A. Clancy, of San Francisco and James E. Munsey, of Salt Lake City, as well as California labor officials Olaf A. Tveitmoe and Anton Johannsen for "conspiracy to transport dynamite over Federal territory," according to the *Los Angeles Record* of December 31, 1911. *The Indianapolis News* of the same date reported that the indictments were "returned under United States laws controlling transportation of explosives in interstate

commerce." Indictments at this time were also issued for Ortie McManigal, James B. McNamara and John J. McNamara. This was just the beginning. These seven men would be included in the sweeping Federal indictments five weeks later.

Detective William J. Burns, the structural steel employers' hired hand, responsible for the McNamara and McManigal arrests, still maintained a wrong-headed belief that A.F. of L. President Samuel Gompers was involved in the conspiracy. He based his inane judgment on the fact that Olaf Tveitmoe and Gompers were friends--guilt by association. He also believed Tveitmoe to be the instigator and planner of the *Los Angeles Times* bombing. Burns and his open shop sponsors wanted desperately to entangle Gompers in the conspiracy. If they were successful in their efforts to enmesh America's most respected trade unionist, they would cause irreparable damage to the labor movement. Burns unethically tried to persuade the Government





View of International Headquarters in 1912 and various offices in Indianapolis.

prosecutor to grant immunity to Tveitmoe, if he were to implicate Gompers. Tveitmoe would not lie about his friend to walk free, and was convicted. Later, the Appellate Court overturned his conviction. The decision against Olaf A. Tveitmoe was reversed, as W. W. Robinson writes, "...because, it was stated, part of the Pacific Coast file [relating to Tveitmoe] was missing from the files impounded at Indianapolis." No one could account as to how the file "was missing," however, there was much conjecture as to why it "was missing."

After the Federal Grand Jury in Indianapolis returned the fifty-four indictments on February 6, 1912, Ryan reported to the Iron Worker membership that the indictment list named "nearly all those who have served

as International officers since 1906." Ryan also wrote that the executive director of the National Erectors Association, Walter Drew, "is reported to have said that he expected to break us financially before this case is finished."

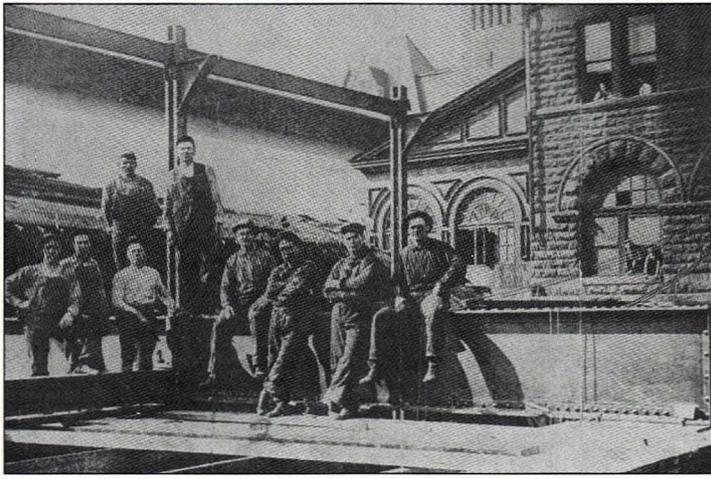
Ryan, Hockin, and John T. Butler, First Vice President (and former General President) were arrested at headquarters in Indianapolis on St. Valentine's Day, February 14, 1912. As Butler put it, he "received a valentine in the form of a warrant from...a United States Marshall." They made bond that day. The bonding companies in town, however, wanted only cash surety for the \$10,000 bonds for International officers. The Union also was to provide bonds for all indicted members. Some Indiana firms threatened to withdraw their business from any companies providing bond money to the International. Only one company, the Southern Surety Co., of St. Louis, would accept the Union's real estate worth to secure bonds. The excessive cash amount for bonds, the legal fees, and the cost of a protracted trial made Walter Drew's expectation and hope likely to become a reality.

The men indicted were arraigned on March 12, 1912, in Indianapolis, before Federal District Court Judge A. B. Anderson. To a man, they pleaded "not guilty." Some observers and newspaper publishers and editors were surprised by the pleas, having expected guilty pleas. Judge Anderson set the trial date for October 1, 1912.

Forty-six men, lined fifteen abreast, banked three deep, with one lonesome end, stood in the Federal Court room in Indianapolis to hear the charges against them. The group included forty-two Ironworkers. Several indictments had been dismissed.

The trial sparked great interest, coming just one year after the McNamaras' trial for the "Crime of the Century," as the newspaper tabloids called it. The conspiracy trial was not as sensational as the earlier trial. The public, however, was curious about, and were amazed by, the men who reportedly rode in rocking railroad cars with cases of dynamite and nitroglycerine they steadied with the balls of their feet, as they transported explosives to chosen sites.

To bolster its case against the defendants, the Government brought Ortie McManigal under heavy guard from California. His affirmation in this trial was quite similar to his confession which implicated the McNamara brothers; however, he broadened his testimony to include several indicted Ironworkers about whom he had information. McManigal especially zeroed in on his old "control" and fleecer, International Secretary-Treasurer Herbert Hockin, with a vengeance. It was payback time.



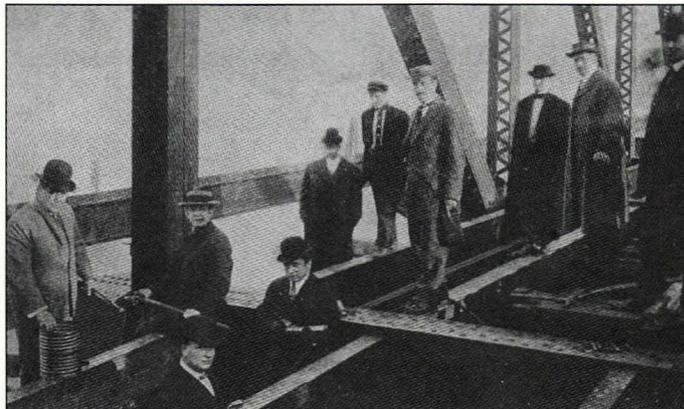
Members of Local No. 70, Louisville, Kentucky, working for the Louisville Bridge and Iron Company at Nashville, Tennessee .

During the trial, Herbert Hockin was forced to resign as acting Secretary-Treasurer "by reason of the surrender of his bond in the case pending in the United States District Court," according to the Executive Board minutes. Hockin could not retain his financial office without bond; he resigned on November 28, 1912. The Board immediately appointed International Executive Board member Joseph E. McClory, of Local 17, Cleveland, to fill the position until the next convention, in March, 1913, when Harry Jones of New York was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

Philip Taft in his labor history book *The A.F. of L. In The Time of Gompers* points out, "A member of the Executive Board, H. S. Hockin, testified against his colleagues." Since Hockin had been a prime player in the dynamite campaign from the beginning, he knew all the players involved - who did what, and when, and how.

L. L. Jewell, erecting manager of McClintic-Marshall Construction Company, was a prosecution witness during the dynamite conspiracy trial. He electrified the courtroom with his testimony that Hockin had informed him of several planned explosions during the last half of 1910 and early 1911. Only with Jewell's testimony did the Iron Worker officials positively learn what some had suspected, that they had an informant in their midst.

Cases against some of the local officers who went on trial were dismissed; however, on New Year's Eve of 1912, thirty-nine men were found guilty and sentenced, including Herbert Hockin whose testimony against his fellow Ironworkers did not win him acquittal. Five men received suspended sentences, other sentences ranged from one year to six years, except for General President Frank Ryan, one of the oldest men. Judge Anderson levied the stiffest sentence against Ryan—seven years. All time was to be served at



A riveting gang at work on the bridge being erected across the Illinois River at Peoria, Illinois, by members of Local No. 112 .

the Federal Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas. Union attorneys immediately filed appeals of their convictions.

Although these were trying times, the International continued to function. A charter was granted to the Ironworkers of Lincoln, Nebraska. It was Local No. 123 and was composed of both "inside" and "outside" men. On November 22, 1912, Local No. 97, Vancouver, British Columbia, was granted permission to open their charter to take in reinforcing Ironworkers. At that time, the business agent of Local No. 97 was only appointed two weeks at a time. Also, in 1912, architectural and ornamental Local No. 119 was chartered in Montreal, Quebec.

In the same year, Local No. 78, San Francisco, which was a local that had shopmen in addition to outside men, reported that they had demanded an eight-hour day for their shopmen inas-



Tug-of-War team of Local No. 97, Vancouver, B.C.

much as the outside men and the other iron trades were working an eight-hour day. The other issues were: the ratio of one apprentice to every four mechanics; the rate of pay for shopmen who worked on the outside on three-days or less jobs (the employers took the stand that the shop rate was paid); and only allowing the business agent to visit the shops during the lunch hour. All the issues were resolved to the satisfaction of Local No. 78, except the eight-hour day. Three new Shopmen locals were organized in Chicago, Illinois. They were organized along ethnic and language lines, a practice quite common during this period. They were Local No. 132 (English), Local No. 133 (German) and Local No. 134 (Bohemian).

Three months after the trial, the International Association called the postponed **Sixteenth International Convention** from February 4 through March 6, 1913, in Indianapolis. The loyal delegates exhibited a rock-hard "semper fi" stance and reelected Ryan as General President, in the face of his conviction.

Harry Jones, Local No. 40, New York, N.Y. was elected Secretary-Treasurer. J.E. McClory, Local No. 17, Cleveland, was elected First Vice President.

AFL President Samuel Gompers addressed the delegates on February 27, 1913. He said among other things that "The Bridge and Structural Iron Workers are hard-working men, who are doing wonderful service to society; who are taking their lives in their own hands every



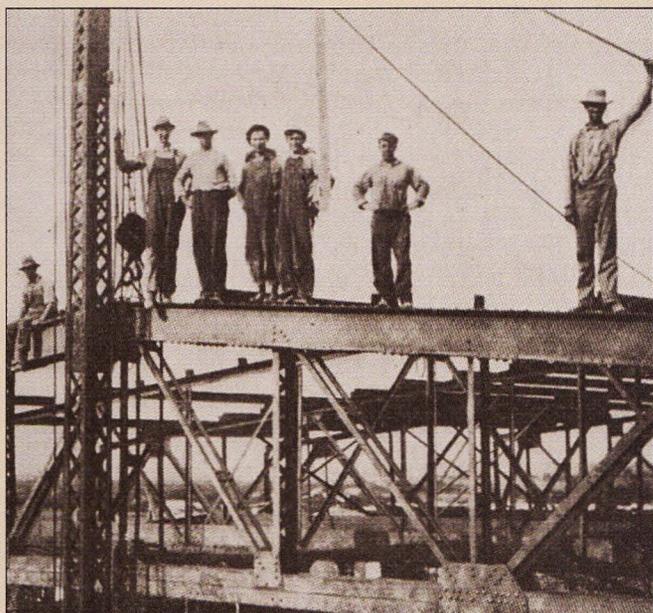
Members of Local No. 86, Seattle, Washington, on the 36th story of the Smith Building.



Members of Local No. 127, Savannah, Georgia.



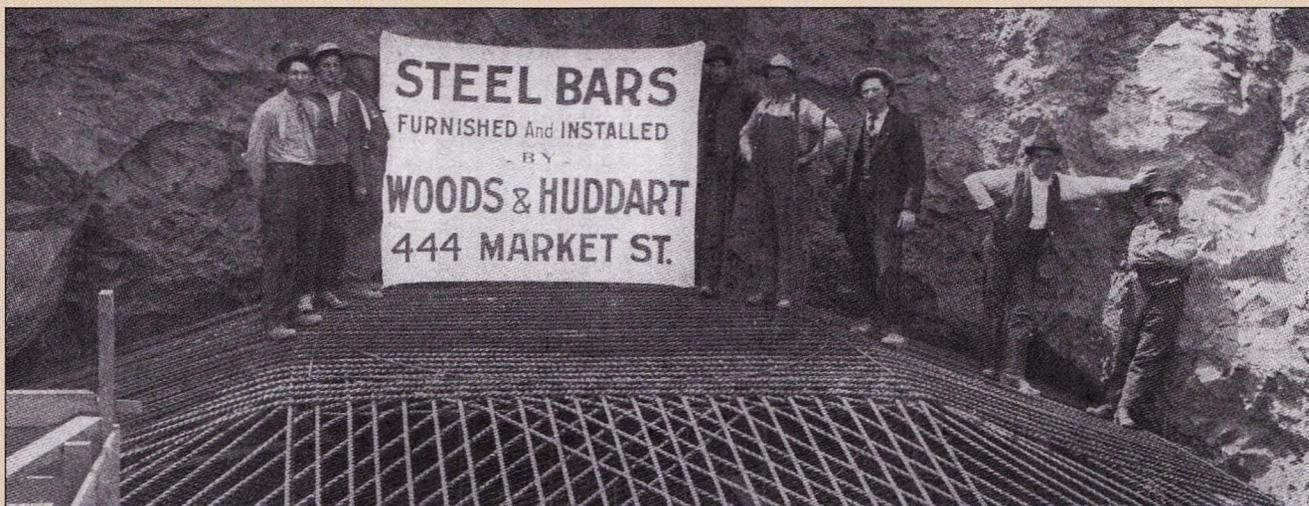
Members of Local No. 44, Cincinnati, Ohio, working on the new ball park.



Work being erected by members of Local No. 48, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



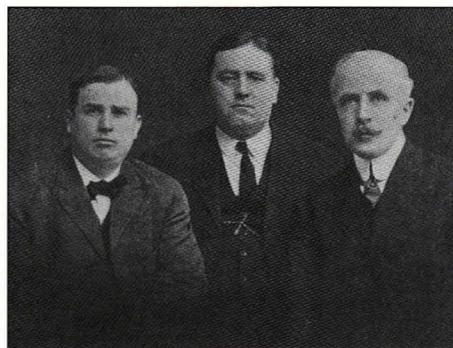
Members of Local No. 229, San Diego, California.



Rod work erected by members of Local 78, San Francisco, for pumping plant at the foot of Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge. Among those pictured are: F. Ginsberg, superintendent, J. Bowman, F. DeMartini, H. Hogan, G. Linberg, T. Clancy.



Delegates to the 32nd Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, Rochester, New York November 11 to 23, 1912.



F.E. Thoman, J.E. McClory, D.J. O'Shea, delegates to the 32nd Annual AF of L Convention and Building Trades Department.

day and every hour of the day they work. Without them, and without that service, modern industrial and commercial structures would be an impossibility." He also said in reference to the trials of the International and local union officers that "I am not in position to constitute myself the censor of their judges, or of men, nor am I in position to say that these men are innocent, and I am not going to say that they are guilty; but there is one thing which was evident to every fair-minded observer, and that is the entire case was conducted with a prejudice and bitter partiality against the men, that it raises the question of an honest doubt in the minds of honest men, and it was my pleasure, as I felt it was my duty, when the opportune moment came, the time to appear before the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate, to set forth my views as to who was responsible after all."

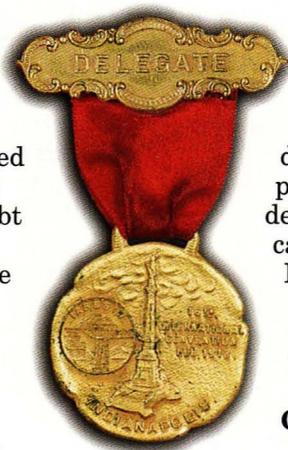
Five men were granted new trials by the Appellate Court, two decisions were reversed but the other convictions were upheld. The convicted men took their cases to the United States Supreme Court, which refused to review them. The Union appealed to President Woodrow Wilson on behalf of the men who were still out on bond. President Wilson pardoned four men. The remaining Union men including General President Frank M. Ryan, John T. Butler, a former General President, and Second Vice President Paul J. Morrin, a future General President, had to report to Leavenworth on June 25, 1914, to serve their sentences ordered by Judge Anderson on December 31, 1912.

For present day Ironworkers, the dynamite conspiracy and the bombings are neither a point of pride nor a reason for guilt. The Iron Worker leadership had



President Frank M. Ryan, reelected for the eighth consecutive time.

no real option other than to succumb in the open shop battle, which was unacceptable to them. In the context of the times, their behavior can be understood, if not condoned. (After all, Thomas Jefferson bought and sold slaves.) An immoral act is not relative; its nature cannot be changed by custom or circumstance. Trend or times can merely help explain such an act, not excuse it. McNamara, Ryan, Clancy, Butler, Morrin and the others may have done what they thought they had to do to preserve the International Association. And despite other consequences of the dynamite campaign, they did save the Union. The International officers stretched the limits of zeal in a righteous cause. Their strategy and tactics suffered--not the cause or validity of trade unionism.



Delegates badge to the Sixteenth Annual Iron Workers Convention held in 1913.

At the **Sixteenth International Convention**, the delegates amended Section 19 of the Constitution which increased the number of Officers of the International. The International Officers shall consist of a President, First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Vice Presidents and a Secretary-Treasurer.

Prior to this there were only two Vice Presidents. It was voted that the Executive Board would consist of the President and all the Vice Presidents.

Frank Ryan resigned as General President when he entered Leavenworth Federal Prison. The International Executive Board members then convened and appointed First Vice President Joseph McClory as acting General President effective July 1, 1914, to serve until the upcoming convention. McClory was elected unanimously as General President two and a half months later by the delegates at the **Seventeenth International Convention** held September 21-30, 1914 in Peoria, Illinois.

There was a great deal of discussion at the Convention regarding the "Inside Workers or Shopmen." The International granted new charters to several locals of shopmen. It was agreed by the delegates that the work of organizing this class of workmen should continue wherever possible.

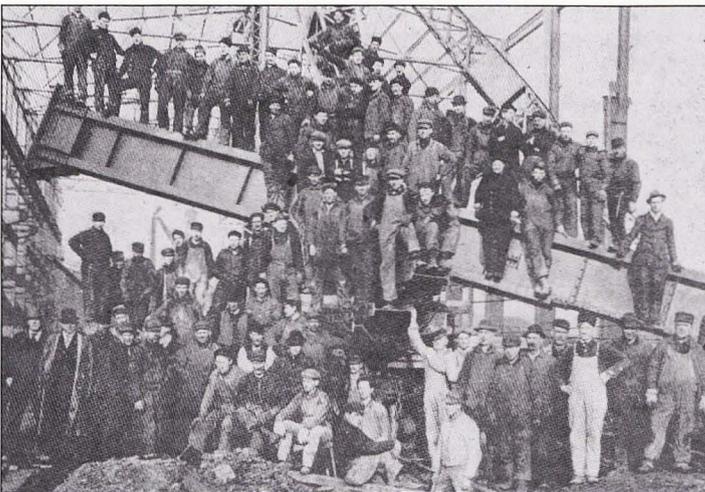
A very important resolution was introduced at the Seventeenth International Convention by Delegates Thoman and Clark, Local No. 63 and several other delegates.



Delegates to the Sixteenth Annual Iron Workers Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana, February 24 to March 6, 1913.

*"Whereas, In our official title a very component part of our trade does not receive the recognition it is rightfully entitled to, therefore be it*

*Resolved, That we change the title of our Association to - International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers."*



Work being erected at Lima, Ohio, for Worden Allen Co., by members of Local No. 55, Toledo, Ohio.

An amendment to the resolution was made to include the word "Piledrivers" to the title. The resolution and the amendment passed and the new title of the Association was "The International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers and Piledrivers." This title remained in effect until the end of 1917 when the International lost the Piledriver local unions over a problem with the AFL and Carpenters. If you are looking at an old badge or button with the International logo, you can determine approximately what period of time the badge represented; for example, if it had the lettering I.A.B.& S.I.W. it is before 1914. I.A.B.S. & O.I.W. & P.D. on a badge or button covered the period between 1914 through November, 1917. Beginning December, 1918, and up to the present day, the title of the Association is the "International

**Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers (I.A.B.S. & O.I.W.)."** The logo, not the wording, of the International was changed in January, 1950.

McClory was subsequently reelected at the **Eighteenth International Convention** held September 20-30, 1915 in San Francisco and the **Nineteenth International Convention** held in New Orleans in 1916. He offered to step down at this time; however, the delegates wouldn't hear of it. They convinced him to reconsider and reelected him to a two year term, since the 1916 Convention was the last scheduled annual conclave. The delegates decided the Union was mature enough to meet every other year, rather than annually. There was also some fear expressed of America being dragged into World War I.

Joseph McClory was a native New Yorker; his family, however, moved to Cleveland several years after his birth in 1877. His father was lured by a better job. Young Joe was educated by the nuns at St. Malachi's School, and they taught him well. In his late teens, he was attracted to ironwork, and on March 12, 1898, was enrolled as a charter member of Local 17.

Six weeks later, while McClory was working on the Victoria Bridge over the St. Lawrence River, Spain declared war on the United States. McClory, an adventurous and a patriotic soul, as well, informed his foreman that he wanted to return home to enlist in the U. S. Army. He did, and served honorably, as did a number of his fellow Ironworkers. (Since record keeping was somewhat casual in those days, no precise figure is available, just that "many Ironworkers...volunteered" for service during the short war.)

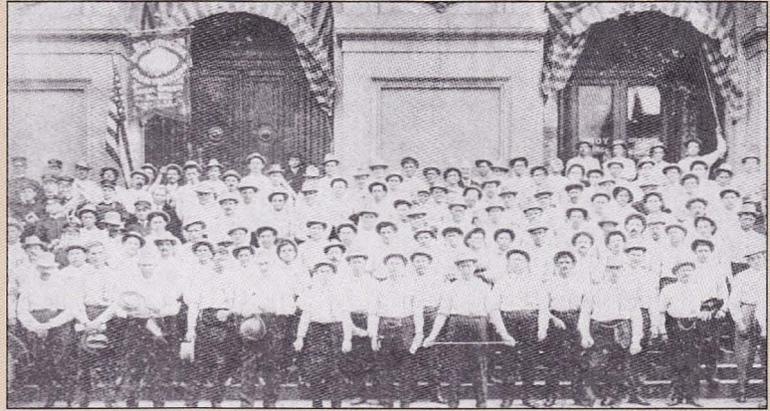
After his discharge from the Army, McClory joined the Gold Rush to the Klondike which had started two years previously. The luck of the Irish eluded him, however, and he decided to go home again. His misfortune in



*J.E. McClory, elected General President at the 17th & 18th International Conventions held in 1914 and 1915.*



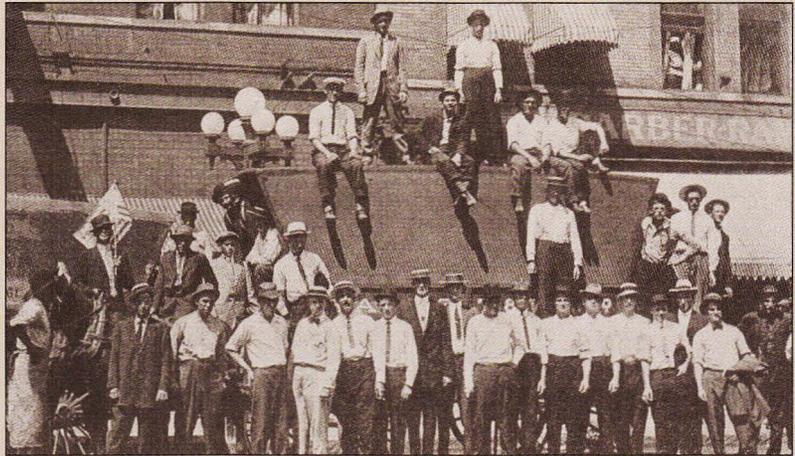
Members of Local No. 84, Houston, Texas, who erected the 13 story Texas Oil Company Building in Houston, Texas.



Members of Local No. 12, Albany, New York on Labor Day, 1913.



Gang on job of Snead Architectural Iron Works at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1913.



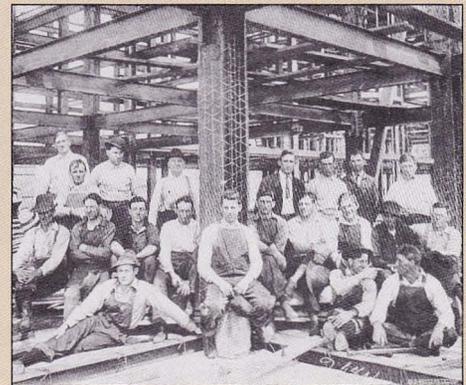
Members of Local No. 92, Birmingham, Alabama, starting for their Fourth of July Picnic.



Members of Local No. 129, working on the McLeod Building, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.



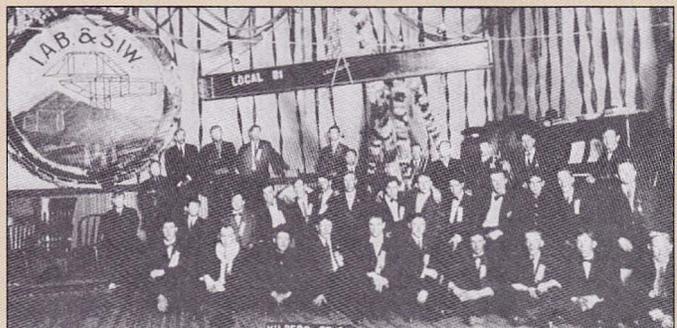
Wife of Brother J.N. Johnson taking a ten story trip at the Tutwiler Hotel in Birmingham, Alabama, July 25, 1913.



Members of Local No. 14, Spokane, Washington.



Some of the underground bridgemen at work on the Rapid Transit Subway, New York City. Harry Kelly, Local No. 40, at the forge.



Members of Local No. 81, Anaconda, Montana, at their Annual Ball in 1913.



1914 Ironworkers delegate's badge worn at the 17th Annual Convention in Peoria, Illinois.

not finding gold proved to be good fortune for the International Association. Back in Cleveland, he resumed his craft, became active in his local, and also in affairs of the International Association.

At the San Francisco Convention in 1915, after his first full year as President, McClory wired fraternal greetings to John J. McNamara at San Quentin and Frank Ryan, Eugene Clancy and the other Ironworkers at Leavenworth. Three days later, Ryan sent a telegram to McClory to read to the delegates expressing gratitude and appreciation from all sixteen Ironworkers in the Federal prison.

During McClory's years in office, he kept in touch with the Union men at Leavenworth through personal visits and letters and always through Second Vice President William J. McCain, of Kansas City. (McCain had been business agent of

Kansas City Local 10 and was indicted in the dynamite transport conspiracy case. Since there was no real evidence against the mild-mannered McCain, he was found not guilty). Other International and local union officers visited the men, and brought tobacco and fruit.

The visitors reported that at all times the Ironworker inmates were of good cheer, but from time to time John Butler and Henry Legleitner, of Pittsburgh, were confined to the hospital because of health problems.

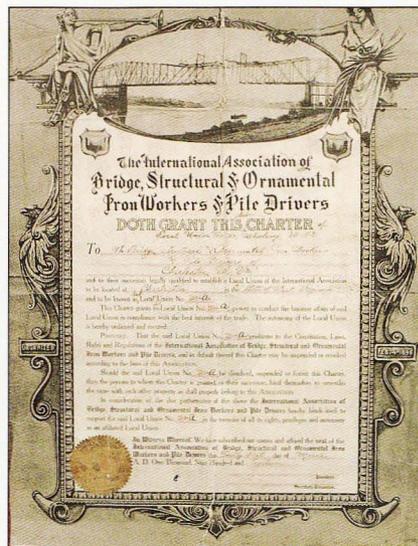
As evidence of their good spirits, the men formed Federal Iron Workers Local 1, of Leavenworth, with John Butler as business agent. Frank Higgins in a letter to the International in September, 1914, advised boomers and floaters "not to come this way looking for work just now."

McClory was a huge man with a heart to match. He helped prepare a resolution to provide weekly payments of \$25.00 to Mrs. Mary McNamara, the mother of John J. and James B. He also appointed many of the men as part-time organizers, as they were released from prison beginning in 1915, thus helping them get a fresh start after they paid their debt to society. Some men stayed with the International a relatively short time. Others such as former General President John T. "Jack" Butler,

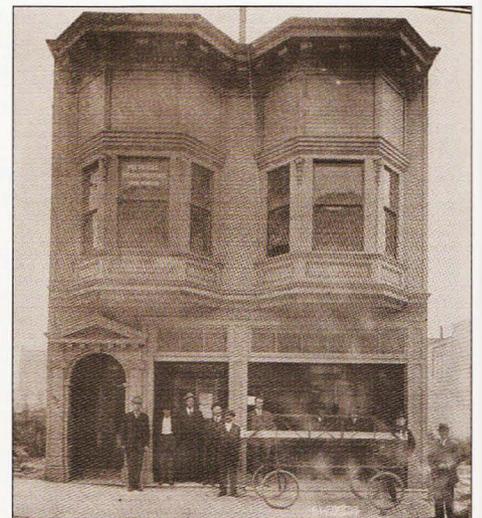


Delegates to the 17th Annual Convention held September 21-30, 1914.

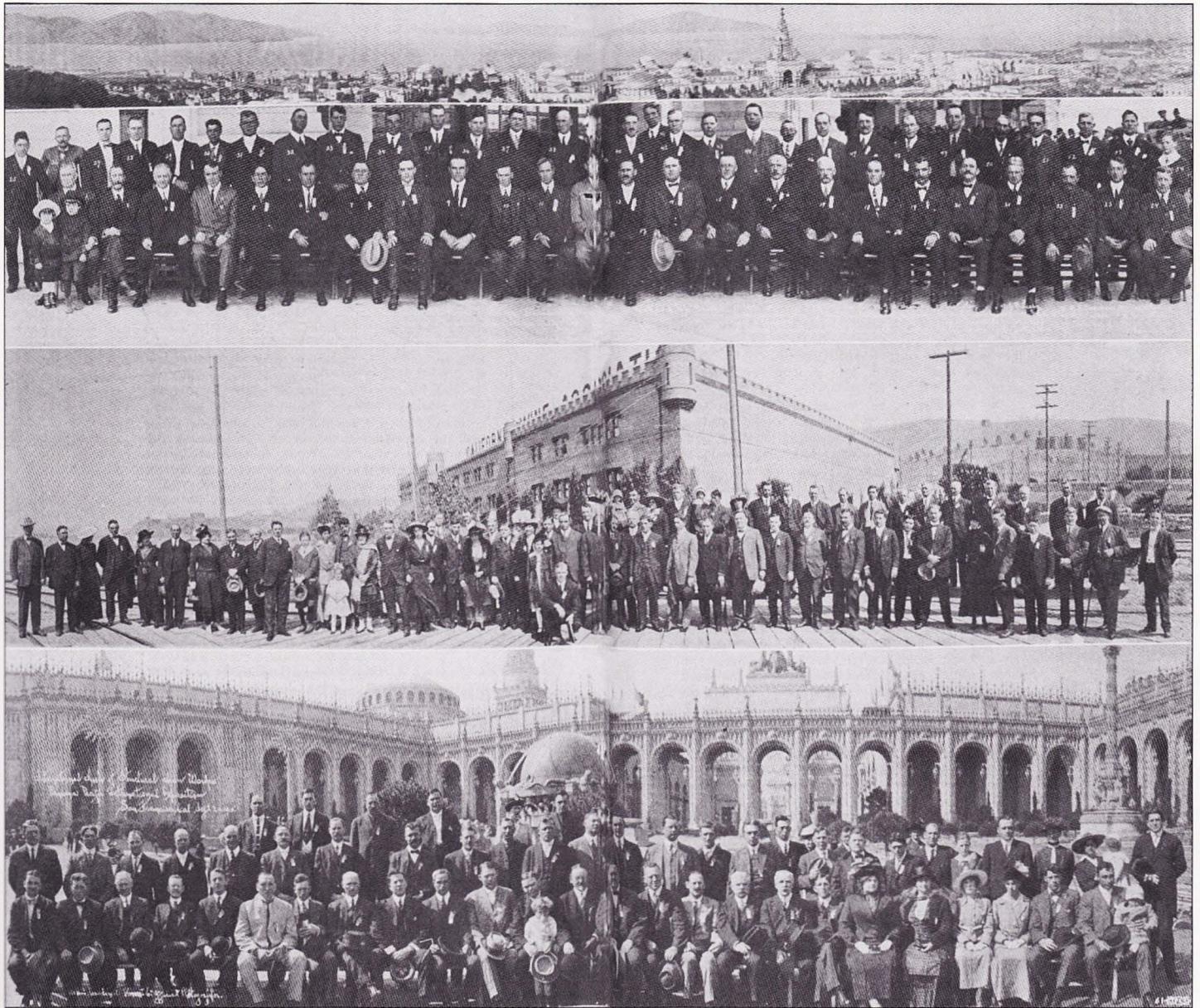
At the 17th Annual Convention, delegate F.E. Thoman of Local No. 63 presented the resolution that changed the title of the Association to the International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers. The resolution was amended to add the words "and Pile Drivers."



Charter with title that included "Pile Driver" issued to Local No. 20A, Charleston, West Virginia.



Headquarters of Local No. 77, 457 Bryant Street, San Francisco, California. This building was owned by Local No. 77.



Delegates and visitors at the 18th Annual Convention held September 20-30, 1915 in San Francisco during the Panama Pacific Exposition.

who was not in the best of health, remained for a couple of years. Stalwarts John H. Barry, of St. Louis, and James E. Munsey, of Salt Lake City, also stayed for extended periods. McClory looked forward to Frank Ryan's release; he wanted Ryan's assistance on keeping pile drivers in the International Association. This was not viewed as charity since the International could well use the expertise of the old hands and benefit from their experience.

In 1915, Shopmen's Local No. 164, New York City, reported on the success of their strike during the month of July. They increased their membership to over 1,000, increased wages by 75 percent, and reduced working hours by over 10 percent. They also negotiated a clause in the agreement where no inside men are to go to work on the outside. This was reported as being very helpful to Finishers Local No. 52.

## Pile Drivers and Suspension of the Iron Workers From the AF of L

As pointed out previously, the title of the Association was changed to the "*International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers and Pile Drivers*" in 1914. This title eventually led to the Iron Workers' temporary suspension from the American Federation of Labor and the Building Trades Department. Indeed, the change in title threatened the Iron Workers' existence as a union for a brief but crucial period.

As the A.F. of L. moved into the second decade of this century, it was still a relatively young organization, slightly over 30 years of age. It was exclusively made up of craft or trade unions. That is, each national or international union affiliated with the A.F. of L. was



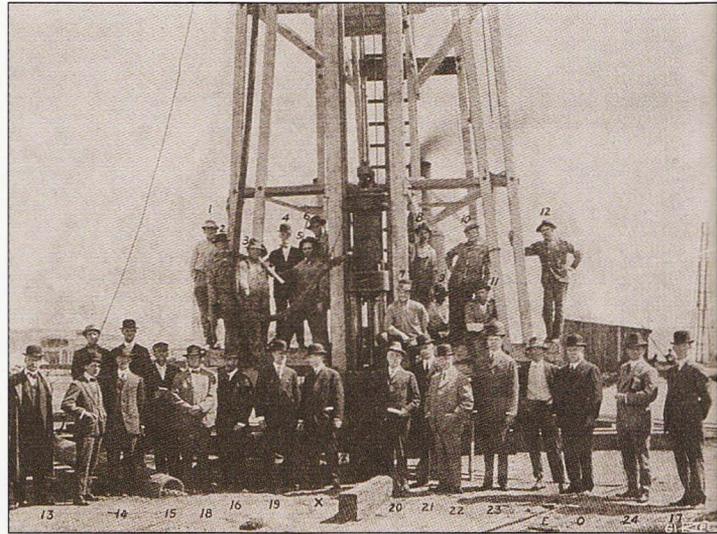
Brothers Sweetman, Ryan and Anderson, delegates to the 18th Annual Convention from Local No. 63, Chicago, Illinois.

made up of local unions with a membership which followed a particular trade or a specific craft. There were no such things as industrial unions, as we know them today. This was also a time of rapid technological change and industrial growth.

During this period, the A.F. of L. granted individual charters to each international union as they were created by a group of local unions getting together. Various Iron Worker local unions in 1896 did this very thing. The A.F. of L. also followed another procedure of granting charters to independent local unions in anticipation, at some later time, of

merging such independent unions into the appropriate international union or to create a new international union from a group of independently chartered local unions.

The A.F. of L., in granting charters of affiliation to the international unions, specifically spelled out in the charter grant what work the members of that international union performed by way of their trade or craft. Such identification or charter grant became commonly known as the work jurisdiction of the particular union. In granting charters, the A.F. of L. paid particular attention, as best they could, to drawing lines of demarcation so that no two international unions were granted



Pile Driver crew and members of Port Commission at Municipal Grain Elevator, New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1915.

a charter covering similar jurisdiction. The object, of course, was to stabilize and develop uniformity in wage rates and working conditions for people who followed the same trade or craft.

It was not too many years before the inevitable problems of such a procedure began to arise. And we still have them with us today. Technology changes and work operations, which were once recognized within the jurisdiction of a particular trade, gradually shifted and became more compatible to another trade. During this process, innumerable jurisdictional disputes arose. As these problems became more numerous and more serious, the A.F. of L., as the organization which originally granted the charter, accepted unto itself the responsibility of resolving the disputes.

It was within this framework and background that a significant technological change took place involving Ironworkers. It developed that piling of wood, which was part of the recognized jurisdiction of the



Delegates to the 19th Annual Convention held at New Orleans, Louisiana, September 18-25, 1916.

Carpenters, began to change from wood to steel H-beams and to reinforced concrete. As these changes in technology took place, many contractors, who had never been involved in the driving of wood piling, were able to purchase the H-beams and reinforced concrete piling and do the driving themselves in connection with their structural steel bridges or building projects. In so doing, these contractors merely used the available crews of Ironworkers. Gradually more Ironworkers were part-time, and some steadily engaged in the driving of steel and concrete piling.

The jurisdictional problems that this development would ultimately create began to crystalize in 1915. At this time, there was an independent local union of Dock Builders in New York City that was a direct affiliate local union of the A.F. of L. In February of that year, the A.F. of L. ordered the independent local of Dock Builders to affiliate with the Brotherhood of Carpenters. The Dock Builders, many of whom were actually Ironworkers laid off of other New York jobs and engaged primarily in the driving of steel and concrete piling, voted to reject the instructions to affiliate. Shortly thereafter, the A.F. of L. removed the charter of the New York Dock Builders.

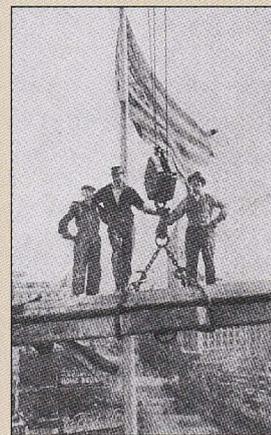
In July of 1915, the Dock Builders were on strike and felt a need for established support. They turned to the Iron Workers International which granted them a charter. They became known as Pile Drivers Local No. 177 of this International Association. The strike was won and a three-year agreement signed on August 10, 1915 with the Contracting Dock Builders Association for "all water front improvements and pile driving on foundation work."

At the San Francisco Convention of the A.F. of L. in November, a resolution in protest was introduced. The delegates voted to have President Samuel Gompers appoint a committee on the problems involving all Dock Workers in New York City. The committee met after the convention. They issued a report that said in part: "The chartering of the Municipal Dock Builders by the Iron Workers has brought about a state of chaos, and the tearing down of well established conditions in the industry, and is making for dissatisfaction and a feeling akin to bitterness throughout the labor movement in New York City." The committee further recommended that the A. F. of L. instruct the Iron Workers to revoke Local No. 177's charter, and finally that such local then affiliate with Local No. 1456 of the Carpenters. On January 29, 1916, Iron Worker President McClory wrote Gompers and claimed that the committee report was "from the very outset...one-sided and favorable to the Carpenters." In February, the Iron Worker Executive Council backed McClory's position and voted to hold meetings between the involved international unions to seek a solution. On March 20, 1916, a meeting of Iron Workers, Carpenters and Longshoremens failed to reach a compromise.

The pile-driving dispute was thus moved along unsettled to become a topic of heated debate at the November A. F. of L. Convention in Baltimore, later in 1916. Despite the fact that the Dock Builders and their employers were well-satisfied and there were no specific problems, the convention ruled that the Iron Workers must revoke Local No. 177's Charter before April 1,



Members of New York and Vicinity locals employed on the 7th Avenue Subway.



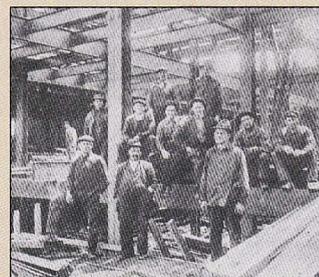
Three members of Local No. 5 on the Muncy Building in Washington, D.C.



Members of Local No. 45, Jersey City, New Jersey employed on Ore Dumper for the Lehigh Valley Railroad at Bayonne, New Jersey.



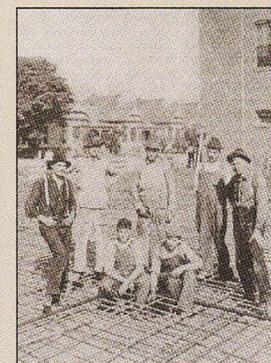
Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C. Erection of derricks and steel work being done by members of Local No. 5.



Members of Local No. 33, Rochester, New York, on job for the Genesee Bridge Company.



Members of Local No. 25, Detroit, Michigan, employed at Hastings, Michigan, for the Morava Construction Company.



Reinforcing rod work being installed by members of Local No. 115, of Fresno, California.

1917, or suffer suspension from the Federation. Under the pressure of such a mandate, the Charter for Local No. 177 was revoked.

However, the New York Dock Builders refused to affiliate with the Carpenters. Instead, they tried to remain in the Iron Workers' organization and requested Iron Worker Local No. 189 of Jersey City be made a sub-local. The request was granted. In turn, the A. F. of L. Executive Council on June 27 ordered that Local No. 189's Charter be revoked by July 1, again threatening the Iron Workers International with suspension. President McClory felt that he could not take the steps needed to carry out the order in the next few days allowed by the AF of L, since the matter involved Local



Members of Local No. 6, Buffalo, New York working on bridge job in Buffalo.

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***“Ironworkers, instead of being in a position to seek help from the A. F. of L., were suspended and without any representation. Not only would they be unable to seek help in the open-shop war with the large steel corporations; they instead were sitting on the outside while decisions were going to be made on whether or not their existing organization was going to be carved up by the labor movement itself.”***

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No. 189 and its sub-local, not the International. In addition, he was bedridden in very serious condition at the time of the order. As a result, the A. F. of L. officially suspended the Iron Workers on July 14, 1917.

While the Iron Workers were suspended, the A. F. of L. Building Trades Department, generally recognized at the time as “the most militant part of the labor movement,” took an unprecedented action. It held its annual Convention before, rather than after the A. F. of L. Convention, contrary to the Constitutions of both the A. F. of L. and the Building Trades Department. At that November Convention, the Building Trades Department received and adopted two resolutions by the Lathers and Carpenters requesting annulment of a 1909 decision which granted reinforced concrete construction to the Iron Workers and a 1913 decision which granted the installation of solid steel and metal window frames to Iron Workers.

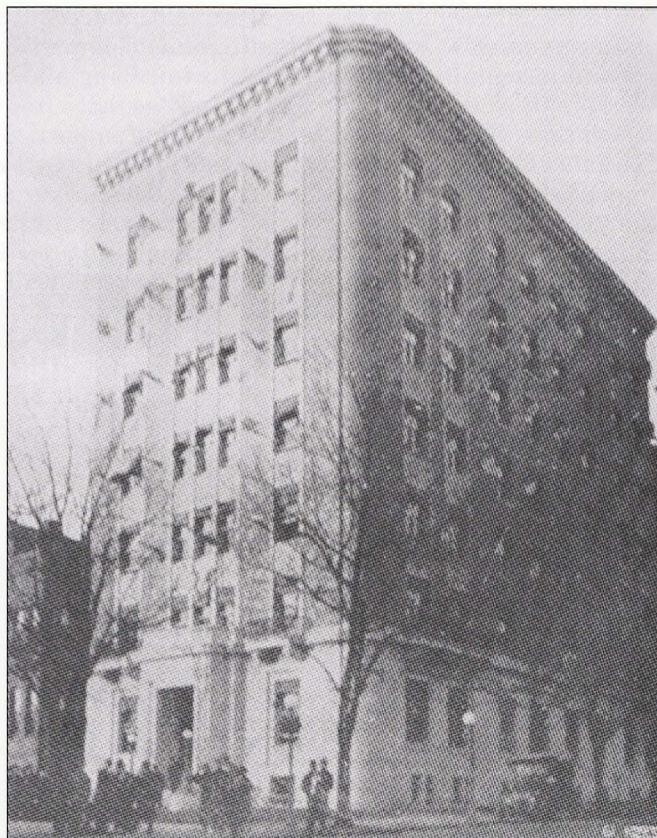
The suspended Iron Workers were astounded and furious at the passage of these resolutions. This clearly

established that their current difficulties were going to be used to divide up the jurisdiction of the Iron Workers. The resolutions adopted by the Building Trades Department were then passed on to the A. F. of L. Convention which was to meet in a few days for action at that Convention which, if passed, would then take that work from the jurisdiction of the Iron Workers.

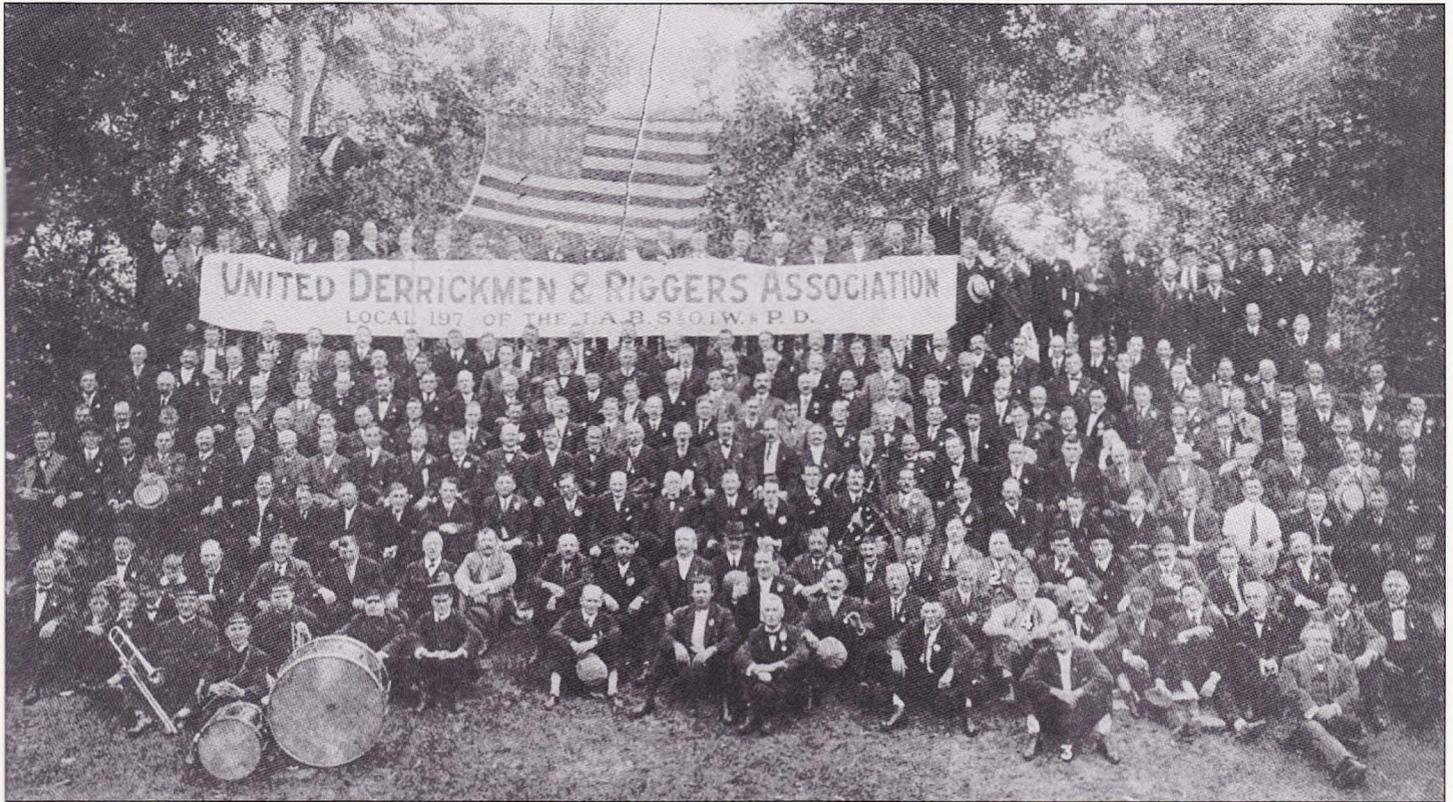
The International immediately sought ways to be quickly re-admitted to the A. F. of L., so they could speak against approval of those resolutions on the floor of the A.

F. of L. Convention. Their predicament was indeed precarious. The International, at that time, was in dire need of the financial and organizational strength of the A. F. of L. which they had intended to seek at the convention.

However, instead of being in a position to seek help from the A. F. of L., they were suspended and without any representation. Not only would they be unable to seek help in the open-shop war with the large steel corporations; they instead were sitting on the outside while decisions were going to be made on whether or not their existing organization was going to be carved up by the



AF of L Headquarters in Washington, D.C. in 1917.



Members of Local No. 197, New York City, at their annual outing and games at Duer's Pavilion, Whitestone, Long Island, New York in 1917.

labor movement itself. Unquestionably, the combination of the existing fight with the employers and a new fight against the other Building Trades Unions and the A. F. of L. for the right to represent workers on reinforcing rods and ornamental ironwork shortly would lead to the demise of the Iron Workers as an effective and meaningful International Union. The Iron Workers indeed were on the brink of destruction.

On November 13, 1917, the second day of the A. F. of L. Convention in Buffalo, the Iron Workers announced that they had revoked the charters of Jersey City Local 189 and its sub-local. They would relinquish all claims to dock building in New York City. The Iron Worker

delegates were immediately seated in the convention and were in a position to request the help of the Federation in the growing open-shop war against the Iron Workers.

President McClory told the delegates that the large steel corporations and the erectors associations were stepping up their efforts to crush the Union. He illustrated the outrageous situation by citing the fact that 75 percent of all men who followed the trade were members of this Union, notwithstanding the steel employers refusing to negotiate with or to enter into any agreements with the International Association or any of its local unions. He pointed to the financial plight brought

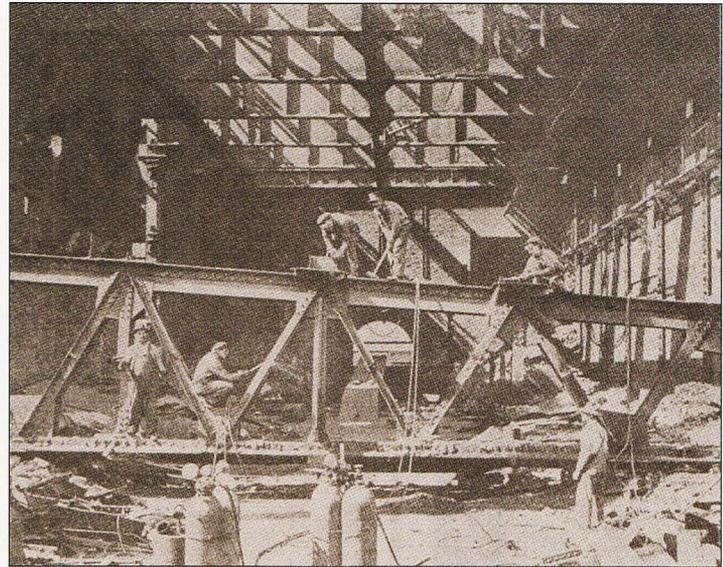


Two hundred and fifty Ironworkers from Locals No. 189 and 189A of New York, New York and Jersey City, New Jersey somewhere in France to build docks and piers for the U.S. Government.

about by the decline in membership resulting from the enlistment in a short period of time of over 6 percent of the members into the armed forces and the loss of 1,200 members in the New York pile-driving dispute.

He stressed that the financial pressure of this loss in membership was magnified by the fact that the Iron Workers Union paid substantial death benefits because of the hazardous nature of the trade. These benefits were paid out of the general fund and in 1917 the benefit level had been doubled. Because of the high rate of accidental deaths, this had almost depleted the general fund. Although they were in the process of leveling the first general assessment since 1910, the treasury would be in dire straits before the effects of the assessment would be felt. The convention supported the appeal and adopted resolutions to urge the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Council of National Defense to put pressure on the steel corporations and the erectors associations who had been refusing to recognize the Iron Workers Union.

In addition, the Iron Worker delegates were successful in having the convention not support the Building Trades resolutions to take **reinforcing and ornamental** ironwork from the Iron Workers. The records of the convention would indicate, although the A. F. of L. Convention did not support the resolutions, the resolutions were not voted down and apparently still a subject for future consideration. The action of President McClory in obtaining quick readmission into the A. F. of



Members of Local No. 1, Chicago, Illinois, burning and wrecking the Commonwealth Edison Power House in Chicago for the Oxweld Acetylene Company.

L. had indeed brought desirable results. The financial and organizational support of the A. F. of L. was obtained and the jurisdictional issue was not finalized.

Notwithstanding the fact that the A. F. of L. Convention refused to support the Building Trades resolutions, the Building Trades, nevertheless, proceeded to support the establishment of reinforcing rod local unions by the Lathers, as well as the efforts of the Carpenters to negotiate agreements with employers covering the erection of steel windows and ornamental metal work. They proceeded under the premise that action had been authorized by the previous Building Trades Convention and not reversed by the A. F. of L. Convention. It was then evident that the only course of action was to bring the question back to the next convention of the A. F. of L.

In December, 1917, McClory dispatched Vice President Ben Osborne to open a Washington office to represent the interests of the International Association during World War I. Osborne had to deal with eight different Government bureaus and boards involving construction, labor policy, wage adjustment, Navy Yard riggers and other matters. He also had jurisdictional disputes with the International Longshoremen's Association, which wanted the Iron Workers' shipyard riggers. McClory had the foresight to see that an office in Washington had to be established to protect the Union, and he had the good sense to send a man of Osborne's caliber.

In the year between conventions, the International received additional moral and physical support. On April 10, 1918 President Wilson, notwithstanding his almost total preoccupation with the affairs of World War I, took the time and interest

DATE	MONTHLY DUES	ASSESSMENTS	DATE	MONTHLY DUES	ASSESSMENTS
JAN. 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	OLD AGE PENSION FUND 25 CENTS		MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT
FEB. 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22		AUG. 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT
MARCH 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22		SEPT. 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT
	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT		MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT
MAY 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT	NOV. 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT
JUNE 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT	DEC. 1917	MONTHLY DUES STAMP 22	25 CENT ASSESSMENT

Note to Members—Every time you are entitled to a dues stamp. See that the Secretary places one in the spaces indicated for that purpose. Continues and stampings necessary to carry the benefits.

Note to Secretaries—Stamps shall be affixed to the spaces in this book and set straight plainly across the face so as to cancel stamps.

Having received requests from some Financial Secretaries for information regarding the way stamps should be affixed for the months where it requires three stamps in the one month, we herewith submit sample page of the 1917 Dues Book, showing how stamps should be placed in the books. MEMBERS SHOULD SEE THAT ALL STAMPS, AS SHOWN IN THE ABOVE CUT, ARE PLACED IN THEIR DUES BOOKS, FOR IF ANY STAMPS ARE OMITTED, THEY WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED IN GOOD STANDING.

*It was a practice for Local No. 10, Kansas City to welcome and give a party to all the Ironworkers being released from Leavenworth. Below is Nipper Anderson, Local No. 17, returning to Cleveland from Leavenworth. He is welcomed by a group of Ironworker members and officers from Local No. 17.*



to commute the sentence of former Iron Worker President Frank M. Ryan. This action indeed boosted the morale of the Iron Workers' leadership. It had the effect of saying, from the highest office in the land, that the Iron Workers in their fight to represent their members were indeed being persecuted.

When former President Ryan returned to Chicago, he was welcomed back by hundreds of local and national labor leaders in one of the most impressive receptions ever witnessed, in view of all of the events which had taken place. It was a reception that heightened the spirits and bolstered the energies of those who were fighting so devotedly in the interests of the working man. President McClory immediately obtained the help of Ryan in his efforts to resolve the pile driving issue and the other jurisdictional questions at the next A. F. of L. Convention.

A few months later, McClory and Ryan presented a brief to the A. F. of L. Convention held in St. Paul, Minnesota. The brief aimed itself at the actions of the convention of the Building Trades Department, which had annulled the 1909 and 1913 decisions. It was scholarly and effective. It pointed out the various violations of the A. F. of L. Constitution, which had taken place in the passage of resolutions aimed at taking established work jurisdiction from the Iron Workers.

The same brief was presented to the Building Trades Convention. The delegates of each convention voted concurrence that the Iron Workers had been dealt with unfairly and had not been given the protection afforded by the Constitutions of both the A. F. of L. and the Building Trades Department. Accordingly, the question was referred to the A. F. of L. Executive Council for action.

In a few months it became clear that the A. F. of L. Executive Council was not going to act on the illegality of the action until the Iron Workers were willing to make certain concessions. McClory was discouraged and disenchanted.

In 1917, George Kelly, Recording Secretary of Local No. 201 (Reinforcing Local), Washington, D.C., reported that Organizer P.J. Morrin organized Local No. 205 (Shopmen) in Washington, D.C. A District Council was formed at the same time, which was comprised of Locals No. 5, 201, and 205.

