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

Historical Note
The Anthracite Coal Strike Commission established the Board of Conciliation under its fourth award on March 18, 1903. The Commission called for a “permanent joint committee, to be called a Board of Conciliation” that would mediate grievances or disputes “arising under this award, either as to its interpretation or application” and which could not be settled at the mine. The joint committee was to include three members representing a majority of mine workers and three members representing the operators from each district in the anthracite industry. In instances where the Board could not reach a decision, then the case would be referred to an umpire appointed by a circuit judge from the third circuit of the United States. Any decision made by either the Umpire or the Board was binding and final. Also, while a grievance was in hearing suspension of work by either lockout or strike was not permitted.  

The decisions rendered by the Board or Umpire were then considered common law for the anthracite industry with past decisions acting as precedent for future settlements.  

As the Honorable Judge George Gray, who served as an Umpire for the Board in the 1910s, suggested “Great respect should be paid for former decisions . . . a departure from views already promulgated in former cases, should not be taken in subsequent cases.”  

The first meeting of the board took place on June 25, 1903 in Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. The structure of the Board was organized by appointing a chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer. It was arranged that the chairman would be an operator representative and the secretary a mine worker representative.  

Two weeks after the initial meeting, the Board met to decide its first grievance in Pottersville, Pennsylvania. With the creation of the Board of Conciliation many hoped years of peaceful labor-management relations would follow. As the Honorable Carroll D. Wright, first Umpire and member of the Coal Strike Commission, remarked in his decision in Grievance number 8 “the spirit of the Award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission is

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2Michael J. Kosik, p 1.
3As quoted in Digest of Decisions: Anthracite Board of Conciliation, compiled by B. Frederick Skinner and William A. Skinner (Scranton, PA: 1928).
4In 1913 the Board appointed its first full-time Umpire, the Honorable Charles P. Neill, and in 1916 the Board appointed a full-time salaried secretary, James Gorman who 1929 would become Umpire. “History of the Anthracite Board of Conciliation,” unpublished manuscript prepared by Michael J. Kosik. Collection 108, Series 1, Box #4, file #2 The Special Collections and Archives of Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
5“Pertinent Facts About The Board of Conciliation,” unpublished manuscript prepared by Michael J. Kosik. Collection 109, Series 1, Box #4, file #2 The Special Collections and Archives of Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
not solely to carry out literally the Award, but to find some means by which peace and harmony shall prevail in the anthracite region.”

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

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

Series 2: Grievance Material
Sub-series A- Card index to grievances
The index to the grievance is greatly detailed with many heading and extensively cross-indexed. Also included in the index are abstract of each grievance that includes what was at issue and the decision of the Board or Umpire.

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

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

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

**Provenance**
Unknown

**Restrictions**
None

**Processor Note**
Collection finding aid was compiled by Joshua Campbell Torrance.

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

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

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

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

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

**Box 3**

*Report of Anthracite Board of Conciliation, Volumes 19-33*

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

**Box 4**
1. Umpires, 1930-1976
2. History of Anthracite Board of Conciliation
3. Material relating history of Anthracite Board of Conciliation
4. Board information- History/Grievances
5. From the Files of Dr. Larkin- New Work, 1923
6. Digest of Decisions (Dr. Larkin) District One, 1951-1956
7. Anthracite Institute
8. Anthracite Board of Conciliation 50th Anniversary Dinner, 1903-1953
9. Rules of Board
10. Resolutions (Resignations and deceased Board members)
11. Audits and Treasurer Reports, 1956-1969
12. Anthracite Board of Conciliation miscellaneous

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files
Box 5 (28 audio tapes)
1-28 Audio Tapes: Testimony, Board Meetings (more recent grievances)

Series 1: Anthracite Board of Conciliation files
Box 6 Photographs (8x10)
1. John Waters: President District 7, member of the Board of Conciliation, March 1909-May 1910
2. S.D. Warriner: President, Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. Member, Board of Conciliation, June 1903-January 1925
3. John T. Dempsey: President, District 1, UMWA. Member, Board of Conciliation, August 1911-November, 1918; August 1919-October 1920
4. William L. Connell: President, Connell Anthracite Mining Company. Member and Chairman, Board of Conciliation, June 1903-December 1923
5. Thomas D. Nicholls: President, District 1, UMWA. Member, Board of Conciliation, June 25, 1903-February 1909
6. Joseph Yannis: President, District 1, UMWA. Member, Board of Conciliation, December 1918-February 1919; June 1919-July 1919
7. W.J. Richards: President, Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member, Board of Conciliation, June 1905- July 1927. Chairman, Board of Conciliation, January 1925-August 1927
9. George B. Hadesty: Vice President: Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, July 1927-February 1929
10. Martin F. Brenan: President: District 7 UMWA; District 9 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, June 1930
11. Michael Hartneady: President: District 7 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, January 1929-January 1935
12. Andrew Mattey: President: District 7 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, April 1926-January 1929
15. James McAndrew: President: District 9 UMWA. Member: Board of Conciliation, April 18, 1929-June 30, 1930
17. Evan Evans: President: Lehigh Navigation Coal Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, July 1951
18. Edward Griffith: President: Glen Alden Coal Company. Member: Board of Conciliation, October 1947-October 1951
19. James M. Pierce: Chairman of the Board: Pierce Management Corp. President: Coaldale Mining Co. Member: Board of Conciliation, December 13, 1957-?
22. William J. Brennan: President: UMWA District 1. Member: Board of Conciliation, September 1921-July 1923

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

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

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

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

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 4 Grievance files, 256-306
Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 5 Grievance files, 307-383

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

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

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

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

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

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 11 Grievance files, 1171-1302

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 12 Grievance files, 1303-1394

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 13 Grievance files, 1395-1494

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

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

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 16 Grievance files, 1709-1796

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 17 Grievance files, 1797-1899

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

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 19 Grievance files, 2001-2092

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 20 Grievance files, 2093-2225

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 21 Grievance files, 2226-2345

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 22 Grievance files, 2346-2486

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 23 Grievance files, 2487-2602

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 24-Box 34: Grievance files, 2603-3802

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 35 Grievance files, 3803-3899

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 36 Grievance files, 3900-3997

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 37 Grievance files, 3998-4096
Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 38 Grievance files, 4097-4187

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 39 Grievance files, 4188-4282

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 40 Grievance files, 4283-4366

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 41 Grievance files, 4367-4493

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 42 Grievance files, 4494-4640

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 43 Grievance files, 4641-4756

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 44 Grievance files, 4757-4879

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 45 Grievance files, 4880-4989

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 46 Grievance files, 4990-5099

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 47 Grievance files, 5100-5224

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 48 Grievance files, 5225-5349
Box 49 Grievance files, 5350-5501

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 50 Grievance files, 5502-5605

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 51 Grievance files, 5606-5719

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 52 Grievance files, 5720-5835

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 53 Grievance files, 5836-5960

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 54 Grievance files, 5961-6067

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 55 Grievance files, 6068-6174

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 56 Grievance files, 6175-6293

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 57 Grievance files, 6294-6413

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 58 Grievance files, 6414-6515

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 59 Grievance files, 6516-6621

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 60 Grievance files, 6622-6715
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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 61 Grievance files, 6716-6815

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 62 Grievance files, 6816-6921

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 63 Grievance files, 6922-7028

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 64 Grievance files, 7029-7103

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 65 Grievance files, 7104-7213

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 66 Grievance files, 7214-7302

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 67 Grievance files, 7303-7406

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Box 68 Grievance files, 7407-7501

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 69 Grievance files, 7502-7586

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 70 Grievance files, 7587-7663

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 71 Grievance files, 7664-7720
Box 72 Grievance files, 7721-7791

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 73 Grievance files, 7792-7849

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 74 Grievance files, 7850-7908

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Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 75 Grievance files, 7909-7970

Series 2: Grievance Material
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Box 76 Grievance files, 7971-8040

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Box 77 Grievance files, 8041-8099

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Box 78 Grievance files, 8100-8147

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Box 79 Grievance files, 8148-8194

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Box 81 Grievance files, 8249-8287

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Box 82 Grievance files, 8288-8338

Series 2: Grievance Material
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Box 83 Grievance files, 8339-8382
Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 84 Grievance files, 8383-8440

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 85 Grievance files, 8441-8458

Series 2: Grievance Material
Subseries B: Grievance files
Box 86 Grievance files, 8375, 8415, 8449, 8434

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

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