

Labor Unions- Part 1: Introduction ^[1]

Share it now!



Labor Unions

by Brent D. Glass and Wiley J. Williams, 2006

See also: [Child Labor](#) ^[2]; [Flying Squadrons](#) ^[3]; [Gastonia Strike](#) ^[4]; [Harriet-Henderson Cotton Mills Strike](#) ^[5]; [Right-to-Work Law](#) ^[6].

[Labor Unions- Part 1: Introduction](#)

[Labor Unions- Part 2: Early Labor Movements and Conflicts in the Textile Industry](#)^[7]

[Labor Unions- Part 3: The General Strike of 1934 and the Battle for Union Leadership](#)^[8]

[Labor Unions- Part 4: Civil Rights Unionism, "Operation Dixie," and the Birth of the ACTWU](#)^[9]

[Labor Unions- Part 5: North Carolina Organized Labor: The Modern Era](#)^[10]

Part 1: Introduction

The first labor organizations in North Carolina were formed by skilled workers in the larger towns. One of the earliest was the [Raleigh Typographical Union](#) ^[11], organized in 1854. By the mid-1880s printers in [Wilmington](#) ^[12] and [Charlotte](#) ^[13] also were working under trade union agreements with their employers. A second and broader labor movement came to the state in 1884, when the first North Carolina assembly of the [Knights of Labor](#) ^[14] (originally organized by Philadelphia garment workers in 1869) met in [Raleigh](#) ^[15]. Three years later the Knights claimed assemblies in most counties and a membership that included whites, blacks, men, and women from diverse skilled occupations (no employees of furniture, textile, or tobacco factories participated). Although by 1887 the Knights of Labor began to decline in importance, it had acquainted blue-collar workers with the advantages that might be gained through organization.

Keep reading >> [Labor Unions- Part 2: Early Labor Movements and Conflicts in the Textile Industry](#)^[7]  ^[7]

References:

Daniel J. Clark, *Like Night and Day: Unionization in a Southern Mill Town*(1997).

Leon Fink, *The Maya of Morganton: Work and Community in the Nuevo New South*(2003).

David Firestone, "Victory for Union at Plant in South Is Labor Milestone,"*New York Times*, 25 June 1999.

Brent D. Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina: A History*(1992).

Jacquelyn Dowd Hall and others, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*(1987).

Harley E. Jolley, "The Labor Movement in North Carolina, 1880-1922,"*NCHR* 30 (July 1953).

Robert R. Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth-Century South* (2003).

Robert H. Zieger, ed., *Organized Labor in the Twentieth-Century South*(1991).

Subjects:

[Societies, clubs, and organizations](#) ^[16]

[UNC Press](#) ^[17]

Authors:

[Glass, Brent D.](#) ^[18]

[Williams, Wiley J.](#) ^[19]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#)^[20]

1 January 2006 | Glass, Brent D.; Williams, Wiley J.

Source URL: <https://www.ncpedia.org/labor-unions>

Links

- [1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/labor-unions>
- [2] <https://www.ncpedia.org/child-labor>
- [3] <https://www.ncpedia.org/flying-squadrons>
- [4] <https://www.ncpedia.org/gastonia-strike>
- [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/harriet-henderson-cotton-mills-stri>
- [6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/right-work-law>
- [7] <https://www.ncpedia.org/labor-unions-part-2-early-labor>
- [8] <https://www.ncpedia.org/labor-unions-part-3-general-strike>
- [9] <https://www.ncpedia.org/labor-unions-part-4-civil-rights>
- [10] <https://www.ncpedia.org/labor-unions-part-5-north-carolina>
- [11] <https://www.worldcat.org/identities/nc-raleigh%20typographical%20union%20no%2054%20n%20c>
- [12] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/wilmington>
- [13] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/charlotte>
- [14] <http://www.knightsoflabor.com/>
- [15] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/raleigh>
- [16] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/societies-clubs-a>
- [17] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/unc-press>
- [18] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/glass-brent-d>
- [19] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/williams-wiley-j>
- [20] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->