

# United We Stand

Industrial action has been making local and national headlines over the last few months. Here's a small selection from our Trade Union archives looking back at union activity in Nottingham.

By the time Trade Unions were officially legalised with the *Trade Union Act 1871*, organised labour groups had been campaigning for workers' rights for about 40 years, with varying degrees of success. Most centred around a trade or skill, such as Amalgamated Society of Operative Lacemakers or National Union of Blastfurnacemen, Ore Miners, Coke Workers and Kindred Trades. They were born out of the Industrial Revolution as the workforce changed from predominantly rural and home-based, or small businesses with master tradesman employing a handful of apprentices and assistants, to large-scale urban businesses with dozens or hundreds of employees. Early unions tended to be more politically radical, but like their modern incarnations, concerned with negotiating for better working conditions, safety, pay and job security.

The Trade Union records held at Manuscripts & Special Collections are generally Nottinghamshire branches of larger unions, or those from industries with a particularly strong presence in the region. They are an excellent complementary resource for the official business records we have, particularly those with staffing and employment records.

These archives include the local heritage of lace, textiles, and mining, and there is an excellent collection of water and drainage related records. To find out more about our business and trade union collections, guides to using historical financial and business records, or to access our collections, please contact us.

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**Rosette made of fine white lace with white ribbons; 1886**

(Ref: Lm X 9)


This beautiful lace rosette was made by the Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers and Auxiliary Workers. It was a demonstration of their skills and may have been worn by officials.

Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers. Levers Section.  
**BALLOT PAPER.**

.....  
1. If you are in favour of the Employers' offer being  
accepted,

Place a X here 

2. If you are in favour of handing in your notice  
to cease work pending a settlement being  
arrived at,

Place a X here 

**Ballot Paper from the Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace  
Makers and Auxiliary Workers; 1905**

(Ref: LM C 23)

Unused ballot paper. The question referred to a new agreement on prices to be paid by employers to workers for various classes of goods in the lace trade. Levers was a type of lacemaking machinery.



## BRANCH RETURNS FOR 4 WEEKS ENDED 27th APRIL, 1963

Branch	Half Members	Full Members	N.C.B. Collections			Branch Contributions			Total			Branch Expenses			Period Branch Returns
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Annesley ... 28		824	294	13	0	21	10	5	316	3	5	16	8	0	Apl.
Babbington ... 56		1394	461	18	2	50	3	2	512	1	4	24	0	0	"
B. Winning ... —		2					4	0		4	0			5	"
Bentinck ... 70		1520	593	8	8	10	1	11	603	10	7	22	3	0	"
Bestwood ... 118		2098	759	6	3	23	18	10	783	5	1	28	15	3	"
Bevercotes ... 5		162	65	7	8				65	7	8	22	7	6	"
Bilsthorpe ... 52		1251	532	17	5	28	4	3	561	1	8	42	17	0	"
Birchwood ... —		1													"
Blidworth ... 22		1648	599	3	6	62	8	2	661	11	8	20	15	10	"
Bolsover ... 45		1063	367	2	1	3	14	2	370	16	3	19	0	6	"
Brookhill ... 40		977	379	6	3	4	12	9	383	19	0	23	5	9	"
Calverton ... 44		1352	552	14	11	8	8	8	561	3	7	29	8	0	"
Clifton ... 17		752	305	12	9	1	16	8	307	9	5	17	6	0	"
Clipstone ... 34		1732	663	13	9	35	7	6	699	1	3	42	14	9	"
Cossall ... —		1													"
Cotes Park ... 14		366	146	15	1		6	7	147	1	8	15	17	0	"
Cotgrave ... 23		362	150	1	1	1	18	8	151	19	9	15	8	0	"
Creswell ... 39		1179	461	19	5	17	14	6	479	13	11	19	13	6	"
Gedling ... 177		2160	866	6	4	21	19	0	888	5	4	17	15	0	"
Harworth ... 50		1618	606	16	7	20	5	7	627	2	2	32	0	0	"
Heanor ... —		1													"
Hucknall 1 ... —		225				1	12	4	1	12	4	8	11	6	"
Hucknall 2 ... 48		1222	488	18	4	3	4	11	492	3	3	32	7	6	"
Kirkby ... 102		1608	594	6	2	17	0	5	611	6	6	32	12	0	"
Langton ... 36		850	313	8	9	4	9	10	317	18	7	21	13	0	"
Linby ... 50		1055	397	12	9	5	12	8	403	5	5	21	4	8	"
Mansfield ... 75		1682	685	4	2	13	5	3	698	9	5	16	18	6	"
Moorgreen ... 80		1676	572	15	6	9	12	0	582	7	6	35	10	0	"
New Hucknall ... 17		557	227	19	11	6	0	10	234	0	9	6	10	6	"
Newstead ... 35		1137	430	7	7	17	19	7	448	7	2	23	19	0	"
Normanton ... —		123	53	19	11				53	19	11				"
Ollerton ... 43		1539	571	0	7	42	9	0	613	9	7	22	8	0	"
Pye Hill/N. Sltm ... 17		767	298	14	10	3	1	0	301	15	10	13	16	0	"
Radford ... 24		347	136	14	11	1	6	7	138	1	6	28	9	6	"
Rufford ... 50		2104	801	6	1	30	3	6	831	9	7	25	15	0	"
Selston ... 17		658	239	4	6	9	8	3	248	12	9	18	16	6	"
Sherwood ... 49		973	384	15	8	10	9	2	395	4	10	32	10	6	"
Shirland ... —		4	1	2	9				1	2	9				"
Silverhill ... 51		1153	437	5	7	18	13	2	455	18	9	24	7	6	"
Sutton ... 37		579	233	2	3	4	10	6	237	12	9	6	11	0	"
Teversal ... 53		931	312	2	8	12	1	5	324	4	1	21	19	4	"
Thoresby ... 58		1763	706	1	7	13	17	6	719	19	1	27	14	6	"
Welbeck ... 52		1478	575	7	1	2	12	0	577	19	1	20	14	6	"
Wollaton ... 57		618	260	18	7	4	13	10	265	12	5	24	9	0	"
No. 5 Area Workshops ... 62		439	180	16	2	1	4	4	182	0	6	8	18	0	"
No. 6 Area Workshops ... —		293	223	9	5	1	4	3	224	13	8	11	0	0	"
	<u>1847</u>	<u>44244</u>	<u>16933</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>547</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>17481</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>896</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	

### Extract showing Branch Returns for Nottinghamshire from the Minutes of the National Union of Mineworkers; 1963

(Ref: Not Periodicals)

Founded in 1945, this trade union for coalminers saw a steep decline in membership numbers as the collieries closed and the numbers of working miners reduced. As this extract from the 1963 minutes shows, there were over 44,000 members in the East Midlands. As of 2013, there were just 1078 members nationally, including 58 in Nottinghamshire and 4 in Derbyshire.





**Photograph of tobacco workers demonstrating; circa early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century**

(Ref: Tw 9/9)

Although this photograph and the others in the series are not labelled, it seems that this was a protest against increasing automation and the threat this posed to workers in the Player's cigarette and tobacco factory in Nottingham. The factory remained in production as Imperial Tobacco until 27 May 2016.



### **Photograph of striking miners from Giltbrook; 1926**

(Ref: MS 565/100)

Group of miners from Lodge Colliery at Gilbrook (commonly called Billy Hall's Pit), probably taken during the General Strike in May 1926. Over 1.5 million workers employed in heavy industry and transport occupations went on strike in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent wage reduction and worsening conditions for miners.



RULES  
of the  
BEESTON BRANCH  
of the  
N.U.R. BENEVOLENT FUND.

1.—That the name of the Fund be the "Benevolent Fund of the Beeston Branch of the N.U.R."

2.—That the whole of the Benevolent Fund business be governed by the Benevolent Fund Committee, which consists of three Members elected annually.

3.—The objects of the Fund shall be to assist Members thereof. Clause

(a) By paying their N.U.R. contributions (excluding Sick Fund) in times of sickness and accident (no less than one month's illness or accident be recognised). Members claiming under this clause to give notice thereof to the Secretary. Cases of illness or accident extending over six months to be reviewed by the Committee.

(b) To assist as far as practicable by grants to Members in distress during long periods of inability to work through sickness or accident. All cases of where a Member has been off work for 12 consecutive weeks shall be placed on the agenda of next Committee Meeting.

(c) In case of death of a Member, a grant of £1 may be made to next-of-kin.

4.—The Benevolent Fund shall derive its income: firstly, by the regular contributions of one halfpenny per week of the Members of the Fund; secondly, by proceeds of any effort the Committee deems necessary.

5.—No Member shall be entitled to any benefit from the above Fund until he has been a Member thereof three months, or if he is three months in arrears of his contributions to the Benevolent Fund or to the N.U.R.

6.—The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Branch, along with a Committee of three Members of the Fund, shall be the Officers of the Fund, and the Secretary shall keep a separate book with the Members names entered, and monies paid by each Member, and he shall render an account of all money paid to each Member every year, and the books of the Fund shall be audited by the Branch auditors each year ending December.

7.—The Treasurer shall keep an account of all monies received by him from the Secretary for this Fund in a book provided for that purpose.

8.—Any Member who from any cause may deem himself entitled to any assistance from the Fund shall give notice thereof to the Chairman or Secretary, stating particulars, such claim to be considered at the next Committee Meeting, and decided as per Rule 3.

Any Member of the Fund may bring to the notice of the Chairman and Secretary the case of a fellow Member.

9.—The Fund shall be banked in the C.W.S. Bank, and bankbook held by the Treasurer of the Branch, except when required by Secretary or Bank for audit purposes.

These Rules came into force. Date: 5th January, 1946.

(Signed) Chairman, F. W. ROYCE.  
Secretary, E. J. MANTLE.

## Rulebook for the Beeston Branch of the National Union of Railwaymen's Benevolent Fund; 1946

(Ref: MS 591/8/1/2)

Benevolent Funds were established to help workers and their families in times of need, and were popular in the era before Sick Pay and other social security benefits. Workers would pay in small contributions, which would entitle them to claim payments if accident or injury left them unable to work for extended periods. Benevolent Funds would also make payment, here a one-off grant of £1, to support widows and orphans if a member of the scheme died.