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Sam Pollock Labor Collection

In June 1986, the Center for Archival Collections acquired the library and manuscript collection of Ohio labor leader Sam Pollock. His career spanning fifty years included organizing workers during the Toledo Autolite Strike and the Hardin County Onion Pickers Strike, both of which occurred during the 1930s. He attended hundreds of local and state union meetings, as well as national conventions throughout the country, serving as a representative of Ohio for the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of America. He also served as president of Local 880, United Food and Communication Workers Union, Cleveland, Ohio from 1951 until the early 1970s.

Sam Pollock was born and raised in the Toledo area and attended both the University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University. His early career with local labor concerns soon developed into an interest in state and national issues. He organized workers throughout the country and he was extremely active in The Committee to Oppose the Ohio Right to Work Amendment. His participation in activities supporting the rights of workers resulted in many hours on the picket line as well as visits to hospitals and jails throughout the years.

In addition to his trade union work, Pollock was involved in improving health care for senior citizens. His collection of labor literature became respected and well-known in the four decades during which it developed. Ideologically, he was a Socialist, and the collection strongly reflects this philosophy.

The book collection consists of approximately 10,000 volumes focusing on Labor History, Socialism, Communism, and economic and social theory. Many of the works have been signed by the authors and may be classified as rare books. Additionally, Pollock collected many early 20th century labor periodicals, both domestic and foreign. Complementing these publications are hundreds of pamphlets and over twenty cubic feet of manuscripts which reflect the general theme of labor and politics.

The book collection is accessible through Bowling Green State University's [on-line catalog](#). Inventories of the Sam Pollock Labor Collection have been completed, making it available for research use. The inventory of the photographs and audio tapes in the collection is available on the World Wide Web. ([MS 468](#)) It is a unique resource and holds significant potential for anyone interested in researching labor history, socialism, and communism.

--Lee N. McLaird

Other Labor Collections at the CAC

Ohio, in the heart of the industrial midwest, has been the scene of organized labor activity since the latter half of the nineteenth century. Unions and their political and social activities have played an important part in the lives of northwest Ohioans. Consequently, the records of these organizations are vital to the study of this region and can shed light on the larger national picture. The Center for Archival Collections actively seeks to acquire, preserve, and make accessible the records of labor organizations and private businesses. The collections include the complete business records of trade unions, their constitutions, handbooks, by-laws, membership rosters, contracts, and oral histories. Industries represented include glass manufacturing, building trades, textile workers, typographers, postal workers and others. Researchers are encouraged to use these materials to further their studies of life in northwest Ohio. See the [Labor Bibliography](#) for more information about specific collections, as well as to review the labor-related manuscripts held by the Historical Collections of the Great Lakes.

--Lee N. McLaird