

1913-1914 Strike In The Michigan Copper Mining District

Turner, Arthur W. Rebels on the Range: The Michigan Copper Miner's Strike of 1913-1914. Lake Linden, Mich.: J.H. Forster Press, 1984. 314 pages, maps, photographs, bibliography and footnotes

Comprehensive treatment of the district's most significant labor dispute. Meticulously researched, drawing on newspaper accounts, union records, government documents and other manuscript material. Extensive analysis of the strike, providing detailed timeline of pre-strike organizing, events during strike period, and aftermath from the union failure. Also examines the relationships existing between workers and Michigan mining companies, as well as the often tenuous links between the local union with the Western Federation's Denver executive.

Lankton, Larry D. Cradle to Grave: Life, and Work and Death at the Lake Superior Copper Mines . New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. 319 pages, photographs, bibliography and footnotes.

Scholarly social and economic study of the development of copper mining in Upper Michigan, considered by many to be the "standard" history of the area. Includes valuable sections on social conditions and paternalistic practices of Lake copper companies which precluded large-scale labor organization in the district. Chapter on the 1913-1914 strike is concise and well-researched. Preceding chapter includes valuable analysis of labor organization in the district pre-dating the arrival of the Western Federation of Miners.

United States Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Michigan Copper District Strike. Bulletin No. 139. Washington, 1914. Originally published as Senate Document 381, Washington, 1914. 183 pages.

Investigative report published by the then newly-created Department of Labor on the conditions of work and causes of the strike. Detailed statistics gathered by special investigator Walter B. Palmer through questionnaires submitted to operating mines in the Michigan copper district in August/September 1913. Very valuable statistics on wages, hours, working conditions, corporate benefits to employees, as well as detailed narrative of events leading up to the strike and violence encountered in the early months of the labor struggle.

Committee of the Copper Country Commercial Club. Strike Investigation.

Copper Country Commercial Club (printed in Chicago), 1913. 85 pages, photographs.

Investigative report presented to Michigan Governor Woodbridge Ferris in support of company position during strike. Written by pro-company businessman's club and obviously slanted toward supporting their platform. Borrows statistical details gathered for DOL report (above) on the many housing, work and community benefits provided to workers by companies in the district ? benefits the companies claimed offset union claims of lower wages and harsher working conditions. Photographs of company housing and community buildings. Includes photographs of company housing and other company-provided benefits.

Dyer, Francis John. "The Truth About the Copper Strike" National Magazine Vol. 40, no.2, May 1914.

Contemporary article, written in support of the company position, which appeared just before the strike ended. A little sensational at points, Dyer does manage to provide an outsiders' perspective on the strike, the role of outside labor organizers, and the working conditions of miners in Michigan.

United State Congress, House of Representatives. Committee on Mines and Mining. Conditions in Copper Mines of Michigan; hearings before subcommittee pursuant to House Resolution 387. 63rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1914. Seven volumes.

Testimony given in special sessions before House subcommittee investigating events of the strike. Sessions were conducted in February 1914 at Hancock City Hall. Voluminous and detailed testimony of more than one hundred individuals - including miners and their families - with direct involvement in the strike.

Stanley, Jerry. Big Annie of Calumet: A True Story of the Industrial Revolution.

New York: Crown Publishers, 1996. 102 pages, photographs, bibliographic note.

Recent rehash of the strike era, focusing on Michigan's Anne Clemenc, housewife turned labor union agitator. Designed to bring the story of mine working conditions and labor unrest to a level understandable to younger readers, Stanley's book manages to provide a concise, readable overview of the salient points of the strike era. Places the strike against a background of the American industrial revolution and technological developments like the one-man drill that threatened traditional working methods.

Written with a sympathetic pro-union voice, but the broad brush strokes obscure more complex analysis. Many photographs enhance the book's value as a general introduction to the topic.