NPS Form 10-900
(7-81)

EXP. [illegible]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Pietro Botto House

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 83 Norwood Street ___ not for publication

city, town Haledon ___ vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state New Jersey **code** 34 **county** Passaic **code** 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	_X_ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
_X_ building(s)	_X_ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	_X_ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Richard and Bunny Kukien

street & number 83 Norwood Street

city, town Haledon ___ vicinity of **state** New Jersey

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Paterson **state** New Jersey

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title New Jersey Historic Sites Survey **has this property been determined eligible?** ___ yes ___ no

date 1973, 1974 _X_ federal X_ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Historic Sites Section, Department of Environmental Protection

city, town Trenton **state** New Jersey

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	___ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The following description of the Pietro Botto House is taken from the National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form for the property.

The Botto House is a two-story rectangular shape block stone building with an unusual facade tacked to the front. This facade, originally clapboard, but currently aluminum siding, has two projecting gables over two-story bay windows flanking the center balcony and porch. This balcony was from where the leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) spoke during the weekly Sunday meetings in Haledon during the 1913 Paterson Silk Strike.

Exterior alterations to the house since its construction in 1908 are the front facade aluminum siding, wrought-iron balcony banister and porch supports, and the rear porch which has been closed in to provide additional living space. Originally, the portico over the first floor was wooden, but the wooden circular columns were replaced with wrought-iron supports. The balcony above was also wooden, but the railing is now wrought-iron.

The Pietro Botto House has a center hall and a large room to either side in the front and smaller rooms to the rear. The basic floor plan has been little altered since it was built. The fireplaces, however, have been removed and the bathroom facilities on the first floor enlarged to accomodate modern toilet facilities. The kitchen, in the rear, has been modernized.

It is the intention of the American Labor Museum to restore the house to its 1913 historic appearance.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music		
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater	
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation	
		___ invention		___ other (specify)	

Specific dates **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

INTRODUCTION

It started on January 27, 1913, at the Henry Doherty plant, one of the largest silk mills in Paterson, New Jersey, the silk manufacturing capital of the United States. On a cold morning 800 silk loom weavers walked off the job. Their grievance centered on Doherty's extension of the four-loom system in broad silk throughout the mill. Before and around 1911 each weaver was responsible for tending two looms. By 1913 technological improvements in silk looms made it possible for one weaver to attend to three or four looms. When asked in 1914 what Doherty's introduction of the four-loom system meant to the weavers, Thomas F. Morgan, a union leader, replied, "Well, it meant this to the workers; if one weaver ran four looms where he formerly ran two, every other weaver would be thrown out of work. That was the principal objection we had to it."[1] Job security was not the only issue. The workers were also upset over low wages, long hours, and poor working conditions. The protest of the weavers provided a spark. Soon all the men, women, and children who worked in the mills also rebelled and the Paterson Silk Strike of 1913, that would become a legend in American labor history, was underway.

History

The labor troubles that descended on Paterson in the winter of 1913 were nothing new for the residents of the "Lyons of America." Between 1880 and 1910 the city recorded at least 140 strikes or work stoppages. In resorting to the strike as their chief weapon against their capitalist employers, the Paterson proletariat joined millions of their fellow class brothers and sisters in almost all segments of American industry. According to one American history textbook, there were 447 recorded work stoppages in 1881, nearly 2,000 a decade later, at least 1,800 a year at the turn of the century, and as many as 2,000 a year as of 1910.[2] Some of the strikes became famous. In 1892 steel workers struck Andrew Carnegie's giant Homestead mill. In 1893 Eugene V. Debs' railroad workers boycotted railroad cars built by the Pullman company. United States troops broke the boycott. Debs was jailed and emerged to become America's best known socialist. Although the vast majority of the strikes during this period have been forgotten, it was a time of wide spread worker unrest. From the textile mills of the Northeast to the steel mills and factories of the Midwest to the mines and lumber camps of the Rocky Mountain West and the Pacific Northwest to the fields of California and the South, workers at one time or another walked the picket line.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name _____ **Quadrangle scale** _____

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	568300	4153120
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mr. James Sheire, Historian

organization National Park Service Division of History **date** June 18, 1982

street & number 1100 L Street, NW **telephone** 523-0089

city or town Washington **state** DC

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title **date**

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: **date**

Chief of Registration

The Paterson silk strike began as a local affair similar to the many strikes of previous years. Since 1911 the weavers at the Doherty mill had been worried about the four-loom system. Representatives of the various crafts, especially the better paid weavers, fixers, twisters, and warpers had met numerous times with Doherty to express their grievances. Claiming that competition from low wage silk mills in Pennsylvania and the South threatened industrial flight, Doherty said he had turned to the four-loom system to increase productivity and thus save jobs. He refused to discontinue the system in which he had made a considerable capital investment in new plant and equipment. Nor would he consent to lower the 55-hour work week or grant wage increases, although in real terms they were below those he paid in 1894. When the weavers refused to accept Doherty's reasoning and walked out, the silk manufacturer was justified in thinking that this strike like the others would peter out as soon as the workers exhausted their meager savings.

Doherty was wrong. It is unclear how the Paterson strike was transformed from a walkout at a single mill into a general strike that shut down all of the more than 300 mills and dye houses in Paterson. Apparently soon after the Doherty strike started, sympathy actions took place at other mills. Coincidentally, the local Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) representative sent out a call to national headquarters requesting that the IWW send organizers and agitators to Paterson to help organize the strike. He had good reason to call for outside help. The previous year the IWW organizers had moved in on a similar spontaneous strike in the textile mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts. After a bitter nine-week struggle that received nationwide publicity, and that exposed the wretched working conditions of the immigrant workers in Lawrence, the mill owners gave in. They granted wage increases and reduced hours. They also agreed to comply with Massachusetts women and child labor laws. Viewing the IWW's success in Lawrence, the Paterson IWW local hoped that the national leaders could apply similar tactics in Paterson and achieve a similar victory.

About mid-February 1913, IWW organizers William "Big Bill" Haywood, Elizabeth Curley Flynn, Carlo Tresca, and Patrick Quinlan arrived in Paterson. They quickly brought their organizing skills to bear. An executive or central strike committee was formed. The committee united the various crafts and ethnic groups. Numerous other committees or departments were established to handle communications with the various crafts, to manage a strike relief fund, to arrange for social activities, to inform other silk workers outside Paterson about the strike, to arrange for legal help for arrested strikers, to, in short, manage the affairs of 25,000 striking workers. On February 23, the executive committee issued the call for a general strike. The mills and dye houses in Paterson, as the IWW liked to say, died.

When the general strike began at the end of February, it immediately divided the Paterson community. On one side were the mill owners and managers, the mayor, the chief-of-police, the judiciary, the clergy, the local press, and most of Paterson's middle class professionals and merchants. On the other side were the workers led by both members from their own ranks and the outside IWW militants. This division was a new development in Paterson's industrial relations. In previous strikes the workers had enjoyed support throughout the community. It was the workers who elected the city officials and who were friends or relatives of the police, customers of the merchants, and members of the churches.

In the 1913 strike two new factors were present. First, by 1913 newly arrived immigrants, especially Italians and eastern European Jews, constituted the majority of the unskilled work force. The English speaking members of the Paterson community, most of whom were not recent immigrants, mistrusted these new immigrants on nativist grounds. They thought these new Americans dragged down wages. They were repelled by the immigrants' spontaneous walkouts and thought they were undisciplined and unorganized. They blamed the immigrants for local crime and they generally disliked their manners and customs. Second, the Paterson middle and upper classes were shocked by the arrival of the IWW outsiders. They perceived the IWW organizers as a group of fire-breathing socialists and anarchists whose goal was not the improvement of the workers' lives, but rather the destruction of American capitalism and the overthrow of American values and beliefs.

This polarization made it difficult for either side to reach out for compromise and it was a major factor in the extraordinary length of the strike. As of March 1, 1913, the battle lines were drawn.

Labor-- The Mill Workers

The Paterson silk strike lasted from the end of February until around the middle of July. In the beginning, the workers formulated a list of demands that added to the original grievance against the four-loom system. Their demands were:

1. the eight-hour day for all mill workers (a 55-hour work week was the existing norm);

2. abolition of the three-and four-loom system in broad silk;

3. abolition of the two-loom system in ribbon;

4. restoration of the 1894 price list on ribbon (piece work wages, those in 1894 were higher than the 1913 price list);

5. twenty-five percent wage increase for all winders, quillers, pickers, bockers, etc; and,

6. a minumum wage of $12 per week for dyers helpers (prevailing wage was $6 to $7 a week).

These demands that went far beyond those made in Lawrence would have greatly increased the income and significantly improved the working conditions of all those employed in the Paterson silk industry. By today's standards the eight-hour day or wage increases seem mild labor demands. Viewed in relation to the conditions, standards, and norms of the period, especially in Paterson, the package indeed contained radical demands.

To achieve these demands the workers employed a host of tactics. Foremost was the imposition on the manufacturers of the general strike. Not only was the general strike on an industry-wide basis a pillar in the ideology of the IWW, it was also a pragmatic instrument of class warfare that had worked in Lawrence. Strike all the mills and wait for the owners of the smaller mills to face bankruptcy. They would then settle and in the process force the larger mills to follow suit. (The United Auto Workers until recently followed a similiar tactic in their dealings with the "big three." They select one of the three for a strike and get a settlement that sets the pattern.)

A second tactic was the traditional picket line. The purpose of the picket line was to prevent workers from entering the mills, i.e., to keep out strike breaking "scabs." Throughout the duration of the strike the workers manned the lines. Although there are apparently no reliable statistics on the number of workers who crossed, it was not until around the end of May that the lines were breached in any significant manner. Closely related to the picket line was worker intimidation of anyone who talked about returning to work. Psychological pressure was used against wavering workers and it was effective. The Paterson strike was remarkably free of violence against "scabs." The IWW fully aware of charges that the union promoted violence against strike breakers and also condoned industrial sabotage, constantly admonished the workers to shun violence of any sort. "Your power is in your folded arms," Haywood said time and again. "You have killed the mills you have stopped production; you have broken off the profits. Any other violence you may commit is less than this, and it will only react upon yourselves."[3]

Another tactic was the IWW's attempts to spread the strike beyond Paterson to other silk manufacturing plants in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut. It is unknown how successful these efforts were. An IWW spokesman

claimed that mills had been shut down in Pennsylvania and the New York area. Ten thousand workers in those mills were out in sympathy with their brothers in Paterson. At one point Haywood claimed that 50,000 were out throughout the northeast.[4] Although there were sympathy strikes outside Paterson, these work stoppages were probably short lived. There is no indication that they had any influence on developments in Paterson.

Still another tactic was the holding of constant meetings. During the week, meetings were held in Paterson halls, especially the Helvitia and Turn Halls, and at IWW headquarters in a large house on Water Street. The purpose of the meetings was to inform the workers of strike developments such as arrests or wavering mill owners. They also served the function of boosting morale. On Sundays mass meetings of strikers and their families were held in Haledon, a nearby community outside the jurisdiction of Paterson authorities. (These meetings are discussed in greater detail below.)

One of the most effective tactics the IWW employed in the Lawrencce strike was to send children out of the city to live in foster homes until the strike ended. Scenes of innocent, poorly dressed, and undernourished children leaving the arms of crying mothers prompted shouts of outrage in the press and demands in Congress for an investigation that would curb the excesses of mean spirited and heartless mill owners. The IWW also sent children away from Paterson, but the tactic did not arouse the same sympathetic outpouring of public support as had happened in Lawrence.

Yet another tactic centered on flooding the local jail with strikers. The IWW developed this tactic during its so-called "free speech" fights in the West. A rally was held at which the speakers called on the workers to resist brutal capitalism. When the local police arrived and arrested the speakers on charges such as inciting to riot, other speakers quickly took the place of those arrested. Soon the local jail was full. Feeding and otherwise caring for a jail full of workers quickly depleted the local treasury and the authorities were forced to allow the IWW to continue its organizing activities. In Paterson the mayor and chief-of-police were determined to preserve law and order and also contribute to ending the strike by arresting law breaking strikers and their leaders. Citing violations such as "inciting to riot," "preaching anarchy", "disorderly conduct," and "unlawful assemblage," the police kept the Paterson jail full. Over the course of the strike they arrested more than 2,000 workers and their sympathizers. John Reed, the author of an excellent account of the October Bolshevik revolution, and the romantic hero of a 1981 prize winning movie called "Reds," was among the arrested. Reporting on the experience in Max Eastman's magazine The Masses, Reed

wrote, "It was the English-speaking group that held back during the Lawrence strike. It is the English-speaking contingent that remains passive at Paterson, while the wops, the kikes, the hunkies--the degraded and ignorant races from Southern Europe--go out and get clubbed on the picket line and gaily take their medicine in Paterson jail.'[5]

Another favorite IWW tactic was to dramatize events that occurred during the strike that illustrated the justice of the workers' cause or the brutality of the mill owners. When in May, Valentino Modestino was killed by a bullet fired by one of the O'Brien guards hired by the mill owners to protect their property, the IWW organized an immense funeral. Modestino was an innocent bystander. He was not even a mill worker. When the so called "detective" shot him down, he was holding one of his children in his arms. What made the tragedy even more poignant, his wife was eight months pregnant. On the day of his funeral thousands of workers followed the body through the streets of Paterson. At the gravesite, as a local band played the "Dead March of Saul", the workers filed past and covered the coffin with a blanket of red carnations and red ribbons. Carlo Tresca made an impassioned speech, for which he was later indicited, blaming the murder on profit hungry capitalists.

Everytime an IWW official was arrested, and they all were at one time or another, skilled agitators used their release or the dismissal of the indictment as an opportunity to rail against the evil machinations of the local police and the capitalist class in whose name they acted. There is little doubt that this dramatizing of prominent events contributed to maintaining the psychological spirit and atmosphere that supported the solidarity of the strike.

Without question the most famous event associated with the strike occurred on June 7, with the enactment of the Pageant of the Paterson Strike in New York's Madison Square Garden. The Paterson Pageant, as it is called, did not originate with the IWW. It was conceived by New York leftist or socialist intellectuals of Greenwich Village fame. The idea was to hold a pageant or a play in which the plot would be the events of the Paterson silk strike. The strikers would play themselves. Mabel Dodge, wealthy patronness of leftist causes, put up some of the money as did textile workers from New York's garment district. Staging was by Ernest Poole, Mabel Dodge, Edward Hunt, and John Reed. Reed wrote the script and directed. John Sloan, the famous painter of the so called "Ashcan School" of social realism, and Edward Jones, a professional set designer, designed the massive sets. Serving on the press committee were, among others, Upton Sinclair, the novelist of the dispossessed, and Lincoln Steffens, the raker of the political muck of the cities. These intellectuals and artists hoped to forge an alliance between revolutionary art and revolutionary politics. The pageant was the form. The events of the Paterson strike and the exploitation of the workers was the content. The pageant was intended as a type of participatory proletarian art or social realism that would educate liberals, progressives, and reformers about the proletariat's cause and the evils of capitalism (it would make revolutionary socialists out of Walter Lippman and Eugene O'Neill).

On the morning of June 7, approximately 1,000 Paterson men, women, and children gathered at Turn Hall. The men wore suits and the women black skirts and white blouses. John Reed, who had come over from New York, explained the scenes and rehearsed the participants. Around 11:00 a.m. the workers paraded to the railroad station and boarded special trains for the city. Arriving in the city they formed ranks and, led by "Big Bill" Haywood and Hannah Silverman, a 17-year-old girl who was active in the strike, they marched to Washington Square, where they were met by among others, Patrick Quinlan and Margaret Sanger. After a short rally, the procession, gustily singing the "Marseillaise," "the Internationale", and Paterson strike songs, proceeded up 5th Avenue to Madison Square Garden. Most of the women and girls wore red banners and ribbons and some carried banners with slogans such as "IWW Means I Will Win" and "An Injury to One is An Injury to All." At Madison Square Garden, Reed once again rehearsed his 1,000 actors. The rehearsal had moments of chaos and comedy, but by late in the afternoon the show was ready to go on. After lunch of sandwiches provided by workers from the garment district, the 1,000 Paterson silk mill workers rested and waited for the curtain to rise.

The Paterson Pageant was scheduled to begin at 8:30 p.m., but because of the size of the crowd, the biggest in Madison Square Garden history said the manager, the 15,000 first nighters were not seated until after 9:00 p.m. According to the press, "high" brows and "low" brows, workers and employers, gentlemen and low life made up the audience. Singing the "Internationale" a delegation of the local socialist party marched in just before curtain time. The audience applauded wildly. An anarchist tried to cut in on the happening by hanging from a rafter a white banner with green letters that read, "No God, No Master." Patrick Quinlan quickly cut it down. In the front row sat New York Sheriff Julius Harburger. He had come, he told reporters, to make sure that the Wobblies did not desecrate the flag. (The pageant apparently moved the sheriff. When the strike fund hat was passed at the end, he put in a dollar.)

Sloan and Jones had done their work well. The block long stage was the largest ever built in New York. At its rear and on the wings they placed silhouettes of the Paterson silk mills. The large stage was bare of props to make room for the 1,000 reenactors. An orchestra tuned up.

The pageant was divided into six "episodes" each of which was a reenactment of an event associated with the strike. (See appendix for the program.). Throughout the pageant, from the first episode, that depicted the strikers "killing" the mills, until the last, as they defiantly proclaimed their solidarity, the audience became one with the actors. They booed and hissed when policemen clubbed peaceful strikers and they cheered loudly at the speeches of Haywood, Flynn, Tresca, and Quinlan. When the "Marseillaise" or "Internationale", those stirring calls to action, were sung, the audience and strikers became one massed choir. The event's high point came in episode three, the funeral of Modestino. The audience was so moved that men and

women cried and Mrs. Modestino, who sat in Mabel Dodge's box, is reported to have swooned.[6] The pageant lasted until midnight. When it was over, producers, participants, and onlookers left the hall exhausted but exuberant. Mabel Dodge went home to her fashionable apartment. John Reed was so worn out that he decided to take a European vacation. The strikers, their one night as stars over, returned to the hunger of the picket lines.

The pageant failed to fulfill its sponsors hopes. There was no upsurge in the revolutionary consciousness of artists and intellectuals. The strikers were also disappointed. Although the immigrants from Italy and eastern Europe had enjoyed an exhilarating day, the pageant raised a grand total of $125 for their relief fund.

A few weeks later they began to return to the mills. Although it failed to meet its objectives, the Pageant of the Paterson Strike became a unique and much celebrated event in American cultural history. Pageants that reenacted events such as a state's history or Columbus landing in the new world were popular forms of entertainment at the time. But the Paterson Pageant was singular in its attempt to forge revolutionary art and politics into a single force. The pageant added a unique dimension of significance to the Paterson strike. The turbulance and tragedy of a strike as the stuff of theater,--Bertolt Brecht would have loved it.

Capital--The Mill Owners

When the weavers walked out of his mill in January 1913, Henry Doherty had good reason to think that as in the past they would soon be back. Like his fellow mill owners Doherty knew that worker discontent was endemic to the industry. Strikes disrupted production and reduced profits, but they were all a part of "being in silk." When in February the strike became general, Doherty and his capitalist allies probably realized something new was taking place. First, the general strike was a new development in the industry. For the first time the mill owners faced a united front. They could not deal with a single craft or threaten mass blacklisting. Second, they could not fire the entire work force and depend on a steady stream of new immigrants eager to work at any wage to fill the unskilled jobs. This time the strikers were the new immigrants. Thirdly, in 1913 the leadership was different. In past strikes the mill owner negotiated with long time employees he knew well and with whom he concluded gentlemen's agreements to settle the dispute. Unions, in so far as they existed at all, were not recognized.[7] In this strike the mill owners were confronted by the IWW, the most radical union in the United States. Their goal, or so their propaganda and ideology proclaimed, was nothing less than worker ownership of the means of production, the mills themselves. When thousands of workers hastened to pick up their IWW membership cards, the owners knew they faced a fundamentally new situation.

If "Solidarity, unconquered, unconquerable" was the IWW's battle cry, the same idea became the mill owners' primary tactic to fight the strike. They formed a manufacturer's association. The association had no constitution and it did not issue press releases, but its purpose was clear: the mill owners would stand united against the IWW. The best way to break the strike, the owners decided, was to hold out until the uncompromising reality of empty stomachs and crying children forced the workers to answer the mill whistle.

Another management tactic was an attempt to split the workers' ranks. In using this tactic they enjoyed the support of the Paterson authorities, the press, the clergy, and the middle class. In May at the urging of Paterson community leaders, the United Textile Workers (UTW) of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) sent its president, John Golden, and one of its top organizers, Sarah Conboy, to Paterson. Their purpose was to form a UTW local and settle the strike. The mill owners hoped that the UTW would settle on a craft by craft or shop by shop basis. The union rented an office and called for a mass meeting in Paterson's 18,000-seat Armory Hall. The IWW, not exactly on friendly terms with the rival union, quickly labeled the UTW venture an attempt to break the strike. On the evening of the meeting the Wobblies flooded the hall with their members.

When Golden and Conboy tried to speak, the Wobblies booed them down. An IWW functionary rose and claimed that the IWW had been forbidden to speak. He urged everybody to go home. At this point Ms. Conboy grabbed the American flag and started waving it aloft. The IWW supporters turned their boos into cheers and waved their red IWW membership cards. The chief-of-police, fearing a riot, ordered the hall emptied. The UTW hopes of taking over the Paterson strike collapsed and its representatives left town. A spokesman for the IWW gleefully reported, "They had little when they went to the city. They left the city with nothing except disgrace."[8] The Paterson establishment was chagrined. Their hopes of breaking the IWW's hold on the workers had been dashed.

The End of the Strike

By the end of May 1913 both the workers and owners were cemented in their respective positions. Neither side had presented the other with even a list of the minimum terms it would accept. Attempts by local leaders to settle the strike had failed and it dragged into the summer. The June Paterson Pageant produced an upsurge in worker morale, but it was short lived. Toward the end of May the workers' solidarity had began to crack. The English speaking and better paid weavers, twisters, fixers, and warpers were the first to break. They instructed their representatives on the central

strike committee to vote for a shop by shop settlement. At the same time individual workers started to cross the picket lines. The IWW agitators pleaded with the workers to hold out. Victory was almost theirs, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn told 5,000 strikers who attended the June 22 Haledon rally. She said they would soon achieve the eight-hour day and in so doing benefit every worker in the country.[9] The IWW's pleas were to no avail. In July the central strike committee voted to endorse the shop by shop settlement. The Paterson silk strike was over. The mill owners had conceded nothing.

Significance

"Lawrence and Paterson were epic struggles," wrote historian Patrick Renshaw. "They rank beside Haymarket, Homestead, and Pullman boycott in the legends of the American labor movement."[10] The Paterson silk strike of 1913 is a legend in labor history for a variety of reasons. First, the strike demonstrated that unskilled, non-English speaking immigrant labor constituted a majority of the labor force in the textile industries of the Northeast. The composition of the labor force had changed dramatically between 1890 and 1910 primarily because of the large influx of new arrivals from southern and eastern Europe.

Secondly, the Paterson strike documented the plight of the immigrant worker. In Paterson wages averaged from $6 to $7 a week for unskilled workers such as dye houses helpers to an average of $12 a week for the more skilled positions. These were average wages. Thousands of unskilled women and children earned below the average. At a period when $14 a week was viewed as a bare survival wage for a family the Paterson workers found themselves on a level bordering on destitution. Coupled with very low wages were unhealthful and unsafe work environments and the 55-hour week. Low wages, poor working conditions, and long hours were in fact conditions of exploitation. Unlike other segments of the American economy, the textile workers did not participate in the general prosperity between 1900 and 1914. As their representatives pointed out, they were better off in 1894. Their strikes in Lawrence and Paterson, both of which received nationwide publicity, stirred the American social conscience and helped lay the groundwork that eventually led to such reforms as minimum wages, the 40-hour week, and child labor laws.

The 1913 Paterson silk strike's third area of historical significance is its association with the IWW. The IWW grew out of unions formed in the 1890s in the mining towns of the West. United in the Western Federation of Miners these unions conducted numerous, long, and very often violent strikes against mine owners. As a result of experience gained in the strikes, the Western Federation of Miners

believed in unionization on an industry-wide basis. The union employed the general strike and solidarity as its major weapons and was willing to resort to militant direct action and even industrial sabotage to gain its objectives. When in 1905, in Chicago, William "Big Bill" Haywood, the leader of the Western Federation of Miners, and socialists Eugene V. Debs and Daniel DeLeon formed the IWW, the Western Federation of Miners constituted the core of the new union.

The IWW's ideology consisted of an amalgamation of the revolutionary ideas of the period. From Karl Marx and socialism the union adopted the idea that capital exploited the worker by not paying the true value for the product of his labor and the idea that when the working class became conscious of its alienation from its work, (from the products it created), it would rise up and overthrow the ruling class. From Mikhail Bakunin and the anarchists the IWW took over the tactic of militant direct action and "propaganda of the deed." The IWW also drew on George Sorel and French syndicalism in contending that the revolution would be brought about by extending the industry-wide strike into a universal strike that would result in the workers taking over the means of production, throwing out the capitalist owners, and establishing a new economic, social, and political order based on worker collectives. Most students of the IWW agree that the union was, in the words of one scholar, "the foremost expression of revolutionary trade unionism in American hsitory."[11]

From its beginning in 1905, the IWW concentrated on organizing unskilled workers in industries where no union organization was present. When a spontaneous strike broke out, the IWW would move in and attempt to assume leadership. There is no good record of all its activities. Among the disputes for which the union is best remembered were the free speech fights in the West between 1909 and 1912 and the Lawrence and Paterson strikes in 1912 and 1913.

Lawrence was the IWW's greatest success. It marked the crest of the union's power. This success was not repeated in Paterson. One student of the strike claims that Paterson was not an IWW strike at all. Pointing to its spontaneous beginning as well as Paterson's long history of labor unrest, he claims that the press made it appear that the IWW was in command.[12] All others who have studied the strike and the IWW regard Paterson as an IWW strike. Although the IWW did not call the strike, and although it ended against the union's advice and will, there is little doubt that the IWW was the single most important actor. Of the 23,000 to 25,000 workers involved about 15,000 took out an IWW membership card. When it was over, they left as fast as they joined. The union's leaders, Haywood, Flynn, Tresca, Quinlan, and Lessig spoke at the meetings, devised tactics, organized the departments, and advised on, if they did not actually formulate, the demands.

If Paterson was one of the IWW's greatest strikes, it was also one of its grandest failures. The primary reason for the strike's failure was management solidarity. As the International Socialist Review editorialized after the strike was over, "The capitalists stood together as one man."[13] The mill owners broke the strike. But a second reason for the failure can be attributed to the IWW. Because the union's ultimate goal was the revolution, "bread and butter" concerns such as better wages and working conditions became secondary objectives. The IWW did not know how or when to compromise. The union seemed to be incapable of formulating minimum demands. Only the maximum would satisfy a Haywood or a Flynn. The IWW was also incapable of building an organizational structure that would negotiate with management on a day-by-day basis. "IWW commitment to larger revolutionary principles and goals, this desire to inculcate marxist ideology among immigrant workers," wrote Melvin Dubofsky, a well versed student of the union, "made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Wobblies to maintain permanent organization among workers whose needs were short run and whose ideological commitment was minimal."[14] Philip Taft, another historian of the American labor movement, agrees. "The ability of the IWW leaders to mobilize large unskilled masses to display their poverty and suffering was of a high order, but they failed in the elementary ability needed to build a permanent organization."[15] The Paterson silk strike was a document in the IWW's inability to deliver improvements in the condition of those whom it championed.

The strike is historically significant for a fourth reason. The strike was a dramatic documentation of the divisions within the American labor movement at the turn of the century and until World War I. When John Golden and Sarah Conboy came to Paterson to organize the strikers, they came bearing the flag of Samuel Gomper's American Federation of Labor. Inscribed on the flag was the slogan, "unionism pure and simple."

"Pure and simple" meant, among other things, the acceptance of the American capitalist system, no union participation in political matters, worker organization on craft lines as opposed to industrial unionism, and settlement of disputes on a plant by plant or company by company basis through negotiation and compromise. For Gompers the revolution was for idlers and dreamers of unreachable utopias. Serious union leaders he maintained, wanted a just "share of the pie." The AFL was anathema to the IWW and the socialists. Their view of the AFL's acceptance of the capitalist system was nothing less than collusion with and support for the class enemy and, thus, a betrayal of the just cause of the working class. The socialists, for their part, supported the Paterson strike enthusiastically, but at the same time they condemned the Wobblies for not engaging in political action that would, through the democratic process lead to the triumph of the working class and the nationalization of the means of production. The socialists preached the "long march through the institutions," a tactic the IWW rejected as naive. The strike, thus also, documented the divisions among Marx's American followers.

Lastly, the strike impacted on the IWW itself. Members of the IWW questioned the union's failure at Paterson and elsewhere. They recognized that one of the union's basic weaknesses was its inability to retain an organized, disciplined, and militant membership. When the Espionage Act of 1917, the Sedition Act of 1918, and the "Red Scare" in general wiped out the IWW, some of its members decided to solve the problems of organizational structure and never ending factionalism by leaving the union and forming a Marxist-Leninist political party. Among this group was Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. "Big Bill" Haywood and John Reed are buried in the Kremlin wall. The party, the vanguard of the proletariat, was the consciousness of the working class. It would lead the way to the revolution. The IWW's failure in the Paterson silk strike contributed directly to the demise of the IWW and indirectly to the formation of the American Communist Party.

The Pietro Botto House

Of all the various extant properties, such as the mills, in the Paterson area associated with the 1913 strike none is as directly or as strongly associated with the workers as is the Botto House.

Every Sunday from the beginning of March until July 20 this house, the home of an Italian immigrant named Pietro Botto, himself a weaver, became the focal point for mass meetings of the strikers, their leaders, and sympathetic visitors.

"Enclosed almost semi-circularly by the fringe of a wood, with many men and boys perched in bare trees, between 15,000 and 20,000 persons attended the Haledon meeting yesterday," reported the Paterson Evening News on April 7, 1913. "The crowd gathered in front of the residence of Peter [sic] Botto, on Norwood Street, and for several hours listened to speeches delivered form the upper balcony."[16] Reporting on the strike in the International Socialist Review "Big Bill" Haywood, one of the speakers on the balcony of Botto's home, wrote,

> "On Sundays, when the socialist city of Haledon is visited, at the invitation of Socialist Mayor William Brueckmann, for open air meetings, it has seemed as if the whole population of the northern part of New Jersey was present. To speak at such meetings is worth a whole lifetime of agitation."[17]

The Sunday metings were among the most important events of the strike. The rallies were held in Haledon, because there the workers could gather without fearing police interference, harassment, or arrest. The meetings served several purposes. First, they presented the workers and the families with the opportunity to relieve the

tensions and worries of the strike. The meetings had the atmosphere of a picnic. IWW and visiting socialists delivered speeches that could be cheered. Choral groups from the various ethnic groups sang their country's traditional songs as well as songs that grew out of the strike.

The men could gossip and talk, the women could talk and gossip, and the children could play. Second, the Haledon meetings boosted morale. Singing the "Internationale" or the "Marseillaise" together, as well as cheering the speakers psychologically reinforced the strikers dedication to solidarity. The agitators, all experienced veterans of crowd psychology, constantly reminded any who wavered, of the justice and rightness of the cause. In Haledon the workers were one voice and one will. As Melvyn Dubofsky points out, the Haledon meetings at the Pietro Botto House "stimulated the strikers for the coming week of industrial warfare."[18]

The size of the Haledon crowds ranged from 5,000 to 6,000 up to 15,000 to 20,000. The meeting held on May 18 was one of the biggest and provides a good example of the flavor, atmosphere, and events at these gatherings. A German quartet sang songs, among them, "Mit uns das Volk." Carlo Tresca led off the speech making. Speaking in Italian he urged the workers not to go back as individuals. Fred S. Mowell, a socialist from New York, spoke, saying the New York socialists and all New York workers were behind their Paterson comrades. He was followed by Upton Sinclair. Sinclair said that he had never spoken to so large an audience. He wished the strikers well and claimed that, if he had never come to Paterson, he would never have been satisfied. Frederick S. Boyd, a leading socialist, urged the strikers to contact personally any worker who wanted to go back and Ewald Koettgen, of the Paterson IWW, said the strike would be over in a couple of weeks.

Patrick Quinlan was the day's man of the hour. He had just been convicted of inciting a riot because of his speech at Modestino's funeral. The strikers cheered for fifteen minutes when he took his place on the Botto balcony. Quinlan lambasted the Paterson authorities and said the city was "run by a lot of bankrupt bartenders." The workers sang an Italian song, one of the most popular among the strikers. The song leader sang out, "Do you like Miss Flynn?" In one voice the 20,000 responded, "Yes, Yes, Yes." "Do you like Carlo Tresca?" was the next cry. "Yes, Yes, Yes," came rolling back. "Do you like the boss?" "No, No, No," the crowd roared. "Do you like Mayor McBride [the Paterson Mayor]?" The answer was a thundering "NO, NO, NO!" "Hurray for the IWW" shouted the speakers and audience.

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn came next. She said that the eight-hour day would sweep the nation and the strike was about over. "Big Bill" Haywood concluded the day's speechmaking with a strong denouncement of bankers, politicians, the AFL, and

capitalists in general. Flynn and Quinlan passed the relief fund as 20,000 voices sang the "Internationale." Looking back many years later on the Haledon meetings at the Pietro Botto House, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn remembered them vividly:

> Meetings were held in the afternoon on Sundays in the little town of Haledon, just over the city line from Paterson. The mayor was a socialist who welcomed us. A striker's family lived there in a two-story house. There was a balcony on the second floor, facing the street, opposite a large green field. It was a natural platform and amphitheater. Sunday after Sunday, as the days became pleasanter, we spoke to enormous crowds of thousands of people--the strikers and their families, workers from other Paterson industries, people from New Jersey cities, delegations from New York, trade unionists, students and others. Visitors came from all over America and from foreign countries. People who saw those Haledon meetings never forgot them. [19]

Today the Pietro Botto house is a mark on the land that commemorates and illustrates a chapter in the long and hard struggle of the American worker, and especially the immigrant worker, to participate in the material fruits of the industrial revolution.

FOOTNOTES

1. U.S. Congress, Senate, Industrial Relations, Final Report and Testimony to Congress by the Commission on Industrial Relations, S. Doc. 415, 64th Congress. 1st session, 1916, Senate Documents, Vol. 21, p. 2417 (hereafter cited as Final Report, Commission on Industrial Relations).

2. John L. Thomas, "Nationalizing the Republic, 1877-1920," in The Great Republic, (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1981), p. 611.

3. Frederick S. Boyd, "The General Strike in the Silk Industry," in The Pageant of the Paterson Strike, (New York: The Success Press, 1913), p. 5.

4. Ibid., p. 8.

5. John Reed, "War in Paterson," The Masses, June, 1913, p. 16.

6. Journalistic accounts of the Paterson Pageant are found in: "New York Times," June 8, 1913; "New York Herald," June 8, 1913; "New York Call," June 9, 1913; "Paterson Evening News," June 9, 1913; "Newark Evening News," June 9, 1913; and "International Socialist Review," July, 1913

7. Thomas F. Morgan, Final Report, Commission on Industrial Relations, p. 2423.

8. Boyd, "The General Strike in the Silk Industry," p. 8.

9. "Paterson Evening News," June 23, 1913.

10. Patrick Renshaw, The Wobblies, The Story of Syndicalism in the United States, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967), p. 155.

11. Sidney Lens, Left, Right, and Center, (Hinsdale: Regnery Company, 1949), p. 153.

12. John D. Osborn, "Paterson: Immigrant Strikes and the War of 1913," in At the Point of Production, Joseph R. Conlin, ed., (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981).

13. "International Socialist Review," September, 1913, p. 178.

14. Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall be All, A History of the Industrial Workers of the World, (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), p. 285.

15. Philip Taft, Organized Labor in American History, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 296.

16. "Paterson Evening News," April 7, 1913.

17. William D. Haywood, "The Rip in the Silk Industry," International Socialist Review, May, 1913, p. 788.

18. Dubofsky, We Shall Be All, p. 273.

19. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, The Rebel Girl, My First Life (1906-1926), (New York: International Publishers, 1973), p. 165. The original title of Flynn's autobiography is I Speak My Own Piece.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

U. S. Government Publications

U. S. Congress, Senate, Industrial Relations, Final Report and Testimony to Congress by the Commission on Industrial Relations, S. Doc, 415, 64th Congress, 1st session, 1916, Senate Documents, Vol. 21.

Newspapers

1. "Newark Evening News"
2. "New York Call"
3. "New York Times"
4. "Paterson Evening News"

Periodicals

"International Socialist Review"
"The Masses"

Books

Bailyn, Bernard, et. al., The Great Republic, (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1981).

Conlin, Joseph R. ed., At the Point of Production, (Westport" Greenwood Press, 1981).

------, Bread and Roses Too: Studies of the Wooblies (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1969).

Dubofsky, Melvyn, We Shall be All, A History of the Industrial Workers of the World, (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1969).

Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley, The Rebel Girl, My First Life (1906-1926), (New York: International Publishers, 1973).

Hoxie, Robert F., Trade Unionism in the United States, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966). original 1923.

Lens, Sidney, Left, Right and Center, (Hinsdale: Regnery Company, 1949).

The Pageant of the Paterson Strike, (New York: The Success Press, 1913).

Renshaw, Patrick, The Wobblies, The Story of Syndicalism in the United States, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967).

Schenbach, Morris, Radicals and Visionaries, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

Taft, Philip, Organized Labor in American History, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).