

BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

MISCELLANEOUS UNOFFICIAL COLLECTIONS

D/EX 2017

Records of Reading branch of the GMB Trade Union and its predecessors,
1911-1988.
(7 vols)

Deposited in January 2007 (acc. 7963)

Cat: LS 4/2008

GMB TRADE UNION: READING BRANCH

Introduction

The National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers was formed in London in 1889. Its national records, 1889-1892, are held at the Working Class Movement Library, Salford, and 1896-1916, are held at the Modern Records Centre, Warwick University (collection reference MSS.192/GL). In 1916 the union changed its name to the National Union of General Workers. It merged with the National Federation of Women Workers in 1921. In 1924 the union amalgamated with the National Amalgamated Union of Labour and the Municipal Employees Association to form the National Union of General and Municipal Workers.

The early history of the Reading branch is obscure, but it reopened after a hiatus in September 1911. During the First World War members on active service were excused paying contributions, but retained their membership. At this date members were employed in biscuit making, brewing, powder mills, hospitals, sewage, tin box making, water, electricity, engineering and other industries.

In 1924 the union amalgamated with the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers, the National Amalgamated Union of Labour, and the Municipal Employees Association to form the National Union of General and Municipal Workers. In 1982 it merged with the Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers to form the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union (later the General and Municipal Workers' Union). It then merged with the Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers to form The General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union in 1982. In 1987 it adopted the abbreviated title GMB.

The main archives of the union are held at its national college. Some records, 1982-1986, have been transferred to the Modern Records Centre, Warwick University (reference MSS.192/GMB), and others to the Working Class Movement Library, Salford (*see Working Class Movement Library, Bulletin, no. 2 (1992), pp. 67-92, for a description of these records*).

Members' employers included Reading Borough Council, Huntley and Palmer's biscuit factory, the Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals, and Thames Water Authority.

GMB TRADE UNION: READING BRANCH

1 **Minutes**

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-------|-----------|
| 1/1 | Branch meeting minutes, March 1963-December 1967. | 1 vol | 1963-1967 |
| 1/2 | Branch meeting minutes, January 1968-September 1970. | 1 vol | 1968-1970 |
| 1/3 | Branch meeting minutes, September 1970-January 1973. | 1 vol | 1970-1973 |
| 1/4 | [Number not used; minutes, 1973-1975, not deposited.] | | |
| 1/5 | Branch meeting minutes, January 1976-October 1981. | 1 vol | 1976-1981 |
| 1/6 | Branch meeting minutes, November 1982-December 1988. | 1 vol | 1982-1988 |

2 **Accounts**

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|-----|---|--|-----------|
| 2/1 | Contributions book, September 1911-June 1915. | | 1911-1915 |
|-----|---|--|-----------|

3 **Miscellaneous**

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|-----|--|--|-----------|
| 3/1 | Accident book (record of industrial and other accidents suffered by members).
(Includes name, address, age, occupation, and National Insurance numbers of member, details of accident and injury caused, and dates unable to work.) | | 1976-1980 |
|-----|--|--|-----------|