

Special Collections and
University Archives

UMass Amherst Libraries 

Carroll H. Bush Papers

1929-1938

1 box (0.25 linear foot)

Call no.: MS 1055



[About SCUA](#)

[SCUA home](#)

[Credo digital](#)

[Scope](#)

[Inventory](#)

[Admin info](#)

[Download](#)

[xml version](#)

[print version \(pdf\)](#)



[Read collection overview](#)

A knitter in a Northampton silk factory during the years of the Great Depression, Carroll Bush was a Socialist and officer with the American Federation of Hosiery Workers.

The Bush papers offer a small but fascinating glimpse into political radicalism and union organizing among Northampton silk workers during the Great Depression. An active Socialist and union member in the Textile Workers Union of America, Bush corresponded with other textile workers and union organizers in Massachusetts and entertained an interest in union agitation more generally. The collection consists entirely of letters received by Bush.

See similar SCUA collections:

Communism & Socialism

Labor

Manufacturing

Massachusetts (West)

Background on Carroll H. Bush

A silk textile worker and union activist, Carroll Herman Bush was born in Northampton, Mass., on Mar. 5, 1901, the son of a native of Vermont, Charles W. Bush, and Marie (Lemieux), a French Canadian immigrant. At eighteen, still living in his parents' home at 4 Hampton St., Bush was recorded as working as a knitter at a silk hosiery company, probably at the nearby Belding Silk Co., however during the five years following, he was listed in the Northampton city directories as an auto mechanic.

After what appears to have been a short stint working in Chicago in 1926 and 1927, Bush returned to Northampton, married a woman named Florence (1928), and settled at 19 Edwards Square of King Street, between the Armory and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. The couple had two sons, Carroll, Jr. (b. ca.1929), and Charles (born ca.1934), and for a while, at least, took care of Bush's mother.

A political radical, Bush was Secretary of the Northampton Socialist local during the Depression years and was suspected of distributing Communist literature. A strong member of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, an AFL affiliate, he was evidently part of the faction that bristled at the conservatism of the AFL and likely supported the split with the UTWA in 1936 and formation of the CIO affiliate, the Textile Workers Organizing Committee.

Although Bush's post-Depression career is less well known, he moved to New Jersey in about 1939, and he was listed in the federal census for 1940s as a textile worker at a hosiery factory in Linden, N.J. Bush is recorded as dying in Citrus, Fla., on Mar. 17, 1985.

Scope of collection

The Bush papers offer a small but fascinating glimpse into political radicalism and union organizing among Northampton silk workers during the Great Depression. An active Socialist and member of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, Bush corresponded with other textile workers and union organizers in Massachusetts and entertained an interest in union agitation more generally. The collection consists entirely of letters received by Bush, although there are two handwritten reports of a textile strike at United Elastics Company in Easthampton and on union membership that may have been written by Bush for the Daily Worker. Also of note is a fascinating letter from a Socialist and former Communist colleague, Theodore Bozyan (of Newport, R.I.), on his hopes for a working class revolution, and some interesting correspondence regarding the Burlington.

Inventory

American Guardian

1934

Folder 1

Blumberg, Hyman

1937

Folder 2

Bozyan, Theodore

1934

Folder 3

Discussion of two members of the Socialist Party who resigned to become Communists and of Bozyan's experiences "in the working class movement" and his efforts to bring about "the emancipation of the working classes, to study the correct tactics necessary to bring about the Cooperative Commonwealth, to prevent the revolutionary movement adopting false tactics, which like was done in Italy and Germany, bring about reaction." Bozyan was a rabid Communist as a young man, but left the party in 1933, recently joining the Socialists.

Burlington Defense Committee

1935

Folder 4

Includes a letter on union suppression in North Carolina from John L. Anderson, who was convicted for his alleged role in dynamiting the Holt Plaid Mill in Burlington, N.C., during a strike in 1934.

Claus, Charles F.

1934

Folder 5

Daily Worker

1934-1938

Folder 6

Includes report on resolution of the strike at the Easthampton United Elastic Plant; report on workers' frustration with the AFL-affiliated United Textile Workers of America and workers' fears of being branded Communists.

Dodge, Alice L.

1937

Folder 7

Dunn, Robert L. (Tremont Silk Co.)

1935

Folder 8

Gordon, B.

1936

Folder 9

Hapgood, Powers

1937

Folder 10

Holyoke (Mass.)

1934

Folder 11

Kirkpatrick, George R.

1929

Folder 12

Wicks, Paul C.

1934

Folder 13

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Bruce Rubenstein by way of Eugene Povirk, Oct. 2018.

Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, Oct. 2018.

Language:

English

Copyright and Use (More information)

Cite as: Carroll H. Bush Papers (MS 1055). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

American Federation of Hosiery Workers
Communists--Massachusetts--Northampton
Hosiery workers--Labor unions--Massachusetts--Northampton
Northampton (Mass.)--History--20th century
Silk industry--Massachusetts--Northampton
Strikes and lockouts--Massachusetts--Easthampton
Textile workers--Labor unions--Massachusetts--Northampton
Tremont Silk Company
United Elastic Corporation
United Textile Workers of America

Contributors

Bush, Carroll H. [main entry]

Genres and formats

Fliers

Link to similar SCUA collections

Communism & Socialism

Labor

Manufacturing

Massachusetts (West)



Special Collections & University Archives
University Libraries : UMass Amherst
154 Hicks Way : Amherst, Mass. 01003-9275
Ph. 413-545-7282 (545-SCUA)

