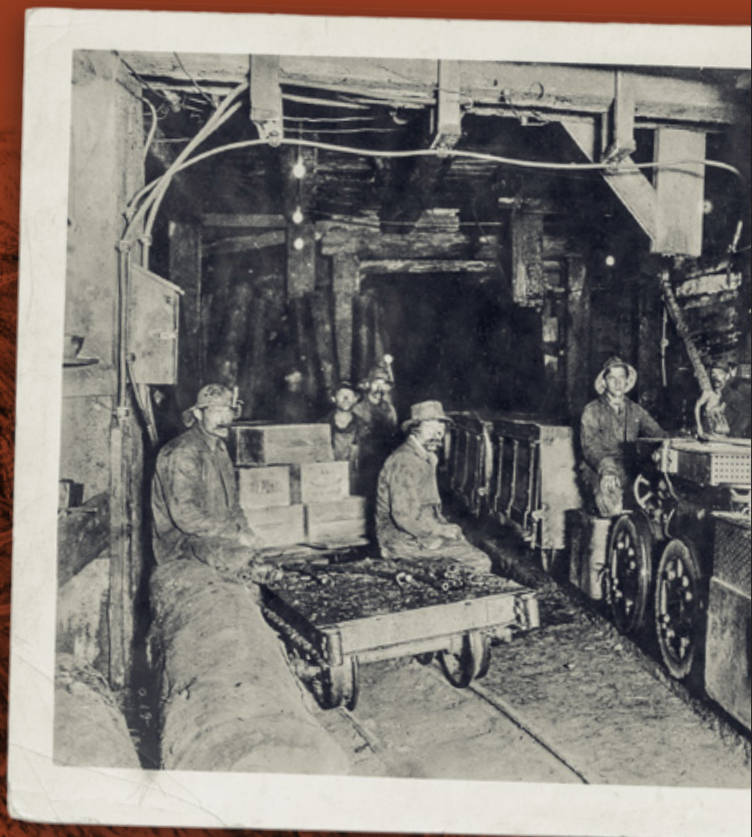


2016 MARKS THE CENTENNIAL OF THE MESABI IRON RANGE STRIKE OF 1916,

one of the largest and most violent labor conflicts in Minnesota history. The mostly immigrant iron ore miners organized for higher wages, an eight-hour workday, and workplace reform under the banner of the Industrial Workers of the World, a radical union that advocated for the overthrow of capitalism. Although a negotiated settlement between the mining companies and the workers was not achieved, pay and working conditions did improve after the three-month-plus strike was called off in early September.



One hundred years on, *Minnesota History* offers two new perspectives on the Mesabi Iron Range strike: “Rebel Girls,” contributions made by working class women to the strike, from grand public spectacles to simple, everyday acts and “A War of Words,” coverage of the strike by a small but feisty newspaper, the *Mesaba Ore and Hibbing News*. Rounding out this issue’s look at the 1916 strike and its legacy is a book review of *Taconite Dreams: The Struggle to Sustain Mining on Minnesota’s Iron Range, 1915–2000*.

1916 MESABI IRON RANGE STRIKE CHRONOLOGY



1905

The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) is founded in Chicago.

JUNE 2, 1916

Joe Greeni, an Italian immigrant miner, inspires workers at the St. James Mine in Aurora to walk off the job.

JUNE 15, 1916

IWW organizers and 1,500 striking miners draw up a strike strategy and list of demands at a meeting at the Finnish Socialist Hall in Virginia.

JUNE 22, 1916

Miner John Alar is shot and killed during a clash with mining company guards in Virginia.

JULY 3, 1916

Deputy Sheriff James Myron and soda pop distributor Tomi Ladvalla are shot and killed during a clash between strikers and mining company guards in Biwabik.

JULY 4, 1916

The lead IWW organizers on the Mesabi Range are jailed for "inciting murder."

JULY 11, 1916

IWW organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn arrives in Minnesota to raise money and support for the Mesabi Range strike.

Source: MNopedia, www.mnopedia.org, Minnesota Historical Society. "Mesabi Iron Range Strike, 1916."

JULY 26, 1916

Two representatives from the U.S. Department of Labor, Hywel Davies and W.R. Fairley, arrive on the Mesabi Range with the purpose of mediating the strike; they do not conclude their investigation until after the strike has ended.

AUGUST 7, 1916

Iron ore miners on the Cuyuna Range begin a sympathy strike in support of the Mesabi Range miners.

AUGUST 25, 1916

Iron ore miners at the Section 30 mine on the Vermilion Range go on strike with the assistance of the IWW.

SEPTEMBER 17, 1916

The Central Strike Committee calls off the strike.

DECEMBER 15, 1916

An agreement is reached that releases the IWW organizers jailed for the killing of Deputy Sheriff Myron; as part of the agreement, three immigrant miners accept prison sentences.



More on the Mesabi Range Strike of 1916 from *Minnesota History*

- Neil Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression in the Iron Range Strike of 1916," 41/2 Summer 1968
- Robert M. Eleff, "The 1916 Minnesota Miners' Strike Against U.S. Steel," 51/2 Summer 1988

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