

## HISTORICAL WITNESS

★ SOCIAL MESSAGING ★

### TIMELINE

1819

The Adam-Onis Treaty establishes the border between Spain and the United States while Spain's colonial power weakens in the New World. This treaty includes granting Florida to the United States.

1825

Sixteen hundred female members of the United Tailoresses of New York strike for better wages.

1835

Children employed in the silk mills in Paterson, New Jersey, go on strike to reduce their work week to eleven-hour days, six days a week.

A general strike takes place in Philadelphia to reduce the workday to ten hours.

1840

U.S. President Martin Van Buren signs an executive order establishing a ten-hour workday without a decrease in pay.

1842

The *Commonwealth v. Hunt* decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Court states that U.S. unions are legal organizations that have the right to organize and strike.

Riots and strikes take place in industrial areas in England.

1845

Sarah Bagley and other cotton mill workers from the Female Labor Reform Association in Lowell, Massachusetts, fight to reduce the workday and improve conditions in the mills.

1846

The Mexican-American War begins.

1848

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is signed, marking the end of the Mexican-American War. Mexico loses almost half of its territory, which includes modern-day California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas and parts of Colorado, Nevada, and Utah. In exchange, the United States pays Mexico fifteen million dollars.

1850

The Foreign Miners Tax is adopted in California. Mexican miners are among the hardest hit.

1851

Two railroad strikers are shot dead and others injured by the state militia in Portage, New York.

1860–62

Jean-François Millet draws *Man with a Hoe*, probably as a preparatory study for his painting of the same name.

1866

The National Labor Union, the first national labor federation in the United States, is formed.

1868

The first eight-hour day for U.S. federal workers takes effect.

1881

Three thousand black female laundry workers in Atlanta, Georgia, stage one of the largest strikes in the history of the South to improve working conditions.

1883

The Chinese Exclusion Act reduces Chinese labor, and railroad companies increasingly recruit Mexican workers.

1884

French law legalizes workers' strikes and encourages unions to form.



1890

Continued copper mining in Arizona drives Mexican Americans from their lands. Mexicans working in the mining industry are paid less than Anglo-American workers.

1892

Mary Kenney O'Sullivan of the Bindery Workers is appointed the first female national organizer of the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

1894

Eugene V. Debs leads the American Railway Union in a national strike against the Pullman Company. Federal troops and a court injunction break up the strike and union.

1895

The Confédération Générale du Travail (the General Confederation of Labour) is formed in France (and still exists today).

1899

Edwin Markham publishes a poem inspired by Jean-François Millet's painting *Man with a Hoe*.

1902

The first industry-wide strike by miners occurs in France.

1903

The U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor is created.

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones leads a protest march of mill children, many of whom were victims of industrial accidents, from Philadelphia to New York.

The Japanese-Mexican Labor Association sugar beet strike occurs in Oxnard, California. The AFL refuses to let the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association join its membership as long as it accepts Japanese or Chinese members.

1904

The sociologist Lewis Wickes Hine begins to use a camera to document social issues as an instrument of social change.

1905

Labor radicals attend the first convention of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), held in Chicago, led by William D. "Big Bill" Haywood, Eugene V. Debs, and Mary "Mother" Jones.

1908

Hine becomes the staff photographer for the National Child Labor Committee. He photographs *Cotton-Mill Worker, North Carolina*.

1910

*Sadie Pfeiffer, Spinner in Cotton Mill, North Carolina* is photographed by Hine.

1911

A violent railroad strike takes place in Great Britain.

1912

Massachusetts becomes the first state to adopt a minimum wage requirement.

1913

The U.S. Department of Labor (separate from the Department of Commerce) is established by law.

The IWW strikes in Wheatland, California. The militia is called in, leaving four men dead.

California passes a law restricting "alien land purchases" to keep immigrants including Japanese, from owning property.

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1914

World War I begins.

The "Ludlow Massacre" during the fourteen-month Southern Colorado Coal Miners Strike claims the lives of dozens of children, women, and men.

1919

Race riots spread across the United States.

Government-sanctioned persecutions of immigrants, anarchists, and communists begin during the Red Scare.

1919–20

The U.S. Attorney General orders raids by the Department of Justice in thirty cities across the United States to arrest and deport immigrants suspected of being political radicals. J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Bureau of Investigation's newly formed General Intelligence Division, deports hundreds of people labeled as foreign agitators, anarchists, and communists.

The Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, granting women the right to vote.

1924

The Immigration Act of 1924 limits the number of immigrants allowed to enter the United States and completely excludes those from Asia (except for the Philippines, a U.S. territory).

1928

Mexican farmworkers strike in the Imperial Valley of California as part of the Cantalope Strike. The strike is swiftly broken.

1929

Herbert Hoover becomes the thirty-first president of the United States.

The stock market crashes, and the Great Depression begins.

1933

The National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) allows workers to legally unionize.

Mid-1930s

Thousands of Great Plains farmers, known as "Okies," move west to California in search of work.

1935

The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) is formed.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt establishes the Works Progress Administration (WPA), known popularly as the "New Deal" for America, softening the worst effects of the Depression.

Part of the WPA, the Resettlement Administration (RA), later renamed the Farm Security Administration (FSA), is established to bring relief to farmworkers.

The U.S. Congress establishes a Social Security fund for the nation's workers.

The National Labor Relations Act is passed, excluding farmworkers from protections enjoyed by other workers.

1937

Sit-down strikes by auto makers lead to a contract at General Motors in Detroit.

1938

*Farm Workers, South of Tracy, California* is photographed by Dorothea Lange.

1939

John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is published. The novel tells the story of a family displaced by the Dust Bowl who travels to California to find employment as migrant agricultural workers.



1940

Woodie Guthrie records the album *Dust Bowl Ballads*.

1942

The U.S. and Mexican governments institute the Bracero program in response to an increased demand in the United States for manual labor after World War II. Through this program, over four and a half million farm laborers were imported from rural Mexican communities to work temporarily in U.S. agriculture.

1954

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) implements Operation Wetback and deports nearly four million immigrants from the southwestern United States, especially Mexican nationals.

1962

The National Farm Workers Association (later, the United Farm Workers) holds its first convention.