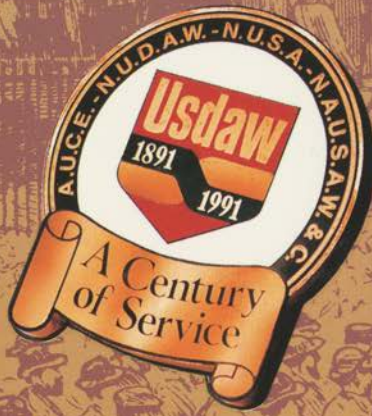


1891


Usdaw - A Century of Service

1991



1891-1991

A Century of Service

ne hundred years ago this year, representatives of workers met in Manchester and Birmingham to establish trade unions which grew during the latter part of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century, to form, in 1947, what is now the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers. This year, Usdaw is celebrating a 'Century of Service' to those workers in the areas of industry such as shops, factories, offices, warehouses and other areas where the Union has representative and negotiating responsibilities.

We can take pride in the knowledge that our Union is undoubtedly a credit to the pioneers who have sacrificed so much in the past to contribute to our development.

Throughout the last 100 years, there have been many struggles and the Union can claim success in ending the 'living-in' system, the establishment of Wages Councils, successfully resisting constant attack on shops legislation, as well as securing substantial improvements for our members in what have been some very difficult times.

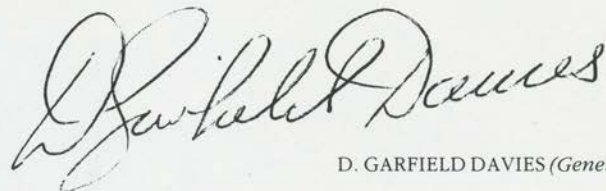
Although a great deal has been achieved, more still needs to be done, particularly in the field of equality, and the Union is well placed to move forward into the 21st century in order to continue our work relentlessly in further progressing the visions held by the early pioneers of our organisation.

In addition to the direct service the Union provides to its membership, Usdaw's record in the wider Trade Union and Labour Movement is well recorded, with many of those who have gone before us making both Parliamentary and TUC history.

Much of Usdaw's strength has stemmed from the combined activity of its full-time staff and active rank and file members who have devoted their time and energy to the benefit of others.

One hundred years of active Usdaw history obviously cannot be recorded fully in this brochure. However, we have attempted to highlight some of the historical periods throughout our 'Century of Service', which will, as accurately as possible, convey the struggles and achievements of those who have contributed to this Union's history.

Very best wishes,
Yours sincerely,



D. GARFIELD DAVIES (*General Secretary*)



IMPERIAL FEDERATION—MAP OF THE WORLD SHOWING THE EXTENT OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1886.
 STATISTICAL INFORMATION FURNISHED BY CAPTAIN J. C. R. COLOMBE, R.F. FORMERLY R.M.A. — BRITISH TERRITORIES COLOURED RED.

Setting the Scene



In 1887 the British Empire reigned supreme and Britain basked in the euphoria of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. But all the euphoria could not conceal the poverty and insecurity of the working classes.

This series of events towards the end of the 19th century highlight the age in which the Union's pioneers lived.

- 1885** — General Gordon killed taking Khartoum.
 - First inoculation against rabies.
- 1886** — Statue of Liberty unveiled.
- 1888** — Jack the Ripper murdered six women in London.
- 1889** — Eiffel Tower completed.
 - Great London Dock Strike.
- 1890** — Van Gogh shot himself dead.
 - Rubber gloves first used in surgery.
 - Opening of the first underground railway in London.
 - Moving picture films shown in New York.
- 1891** — Conan Doyle published 'Adventures of Sherlock Holmes'.
 - Factory Act forbade children under 11 to work in factories.
- 1893** — Henry Ford designed his first gasoline buggy.
- 1894** — Blackpool Tower opened.
- 1896** — First Olympic Games.
 - Locomotives Act brought the repeal of 'Red Flag Restriction' — maximum speed limit raised to 14 mph.
- 1897** — Trained nurses only to be employed in hospitals.
 - Employers Liability Act: Responsibility for injuries to and compensation of employees injured at work.

The 1880s and 1890s were a period of rapid economic and social change in Great Britain. Among these changes, the world-wide spread of steamships and railways brought a flood of cheap imports to Britain. Also the output of all types of mass produced consumer goods increased rapidly and found a ready market, particularly among the affluent middle classes.

These developments were to transform the retailing trades. Big department stores and multiple chain stores began to replace the traditional family draper or grocer.

The wages, hours and working conditions of those employed in these establishments were among the worst experienced by the employed population. Unemployment, sickness and old age, not yet regularly provided for by the State, still held terror for the worker.

A Century of Service

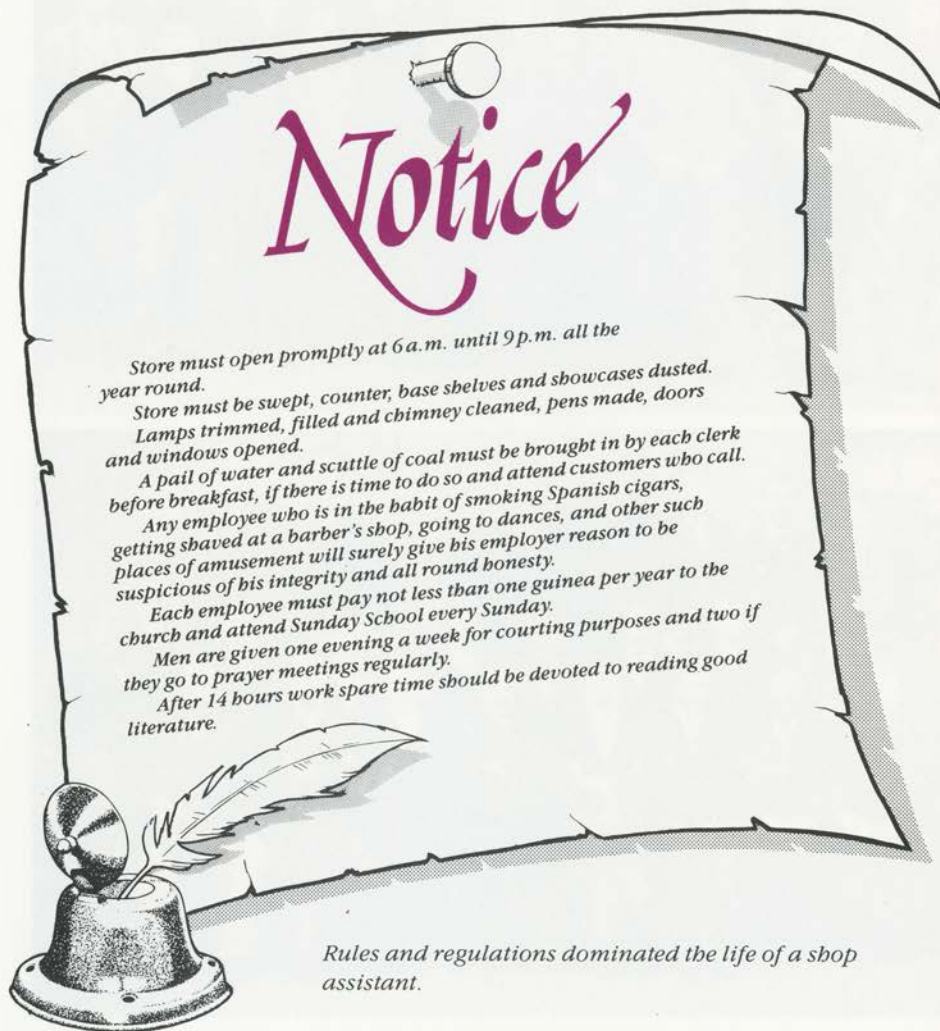


The shops and high streets in the 1890s bear little resemblance to those of today.



The representatives of 11 shop assistants' organisations met in 1891 to form the National Union of Shop Assistants. The Union's first General Secretary, William Johnson, is pictured on the front row, second from the left.

The Birth of a Union



Notice

Store must open promptly at 6 a.m. until 9 p.m. all the year round.

Store must be swept, counter, base shelves and showcases dusted. Lamps trimmed, filled and chimney cleaned, pens made, doors and windows opened.

A pail of water and scuttle of coal must be brought in by each clerk before breakfast, if there is time to do so and attend customers who call.

Any employee who is in the habit of smoking Spanish cigars, getting shaved at a barber's shop, going to dances, and other such places of amusement will surely give his employer reason to be suspicious of his integrity and all round honesty.

Each employee must pay not less than one guinea per year to the church and attend Sunday School every Sunday.

Men are given one evening a week for courting purposes and two if they go to prayer meetings regularly.

After 14 hours work spare time should be devoted to reading good literature.

Rules and regulations dominated the life of a shop assistant.

In 1891 retailing employed 750,000 workers, many of them ruthlessly exploited. Brutally long working hours for very low pay was the norm with two thirds of the workforce also subjected to the 'living-in' system.

In the 'better class' department stores a 70-hour week was standard and 80 to 90 hours a week was common in suburban shops.

In 1891 a Bill was proposed in Parliament to limit the working hours of women and children in shops to 74 hours per week and for shop assistants to have one 'half-day' per week after 4 pm. The Bill was defeated!

Against this background Union activity in shops began, and rapidly spread. Shop assistants' meetings had to be held after closing time, often commencing at 10 pm and finishing at midnight — in time for last drinks.

On 18th March 1891 the Manchester and District Co-operative Employees Association (MDCEA) was formed. Eleven days later but quite independently, the representatives of 11 shop assistants' organisations from cities around the country met to form the National Union of Shop Assistants.

The Union had arrived.

A Century of Service

The 1890s: Usdaw in the Making

*The joint committee of the MDCEA
and the Bolton Co-operative
Employees meet to discuss the
merger of their organisations to
form the AUCE.*

*The first General Secretary Augustus
Hewitt and first President John
Dyson are pictured on the front
row, third and fourth from the left.*



*NUSAW&C delegates at the 1895
Annual Delegate Meeting total
27 in number — so few compared
with the hundreds that assemble
today. General Secretary James
Macpherson is pictured on the
front row, third from the left.*



The reasons given by shopkeepers for the dismissal of their assistants, or by assistants for giving notice, were often curious; sometimes ludicrous or grimly humorous. Generally, they throw a light on the conditions of employment in shops almost a century ago.

The following "reasons" for dismissal have been taken from cases that passed through the NAUSAW&C central office all those years ago.

1. Woman (27 years of age) engaged as assistant — afterwards ordered to do housework in addition.
Hours, 7 am to 11 pm. Gave notice.
2. Dismissed. Told he had no right to look for another job while he had one.
3. Dismissed, man, 23 years of age, for having candle in bedroom.
4. Dismissed for carrying matches in pocket.
5. "Dismissed because my customer would not stay to be served after closing time."
6. Dismissed for charging a pennyworth of gum tablets to wrong department.
7. Man (grocer, age 20), wages 7s. Parents left town and was obliged to go with them.
8. Dismissed for being ill one day.
9. Man (30 years of age) dismissed for getting married.
10. Woman (23 years of age). "I had to give notice on account of the food being so bad, and young ladies who had not very good characters. I did not wish to lose my good character."
11. Man — "living-in" — dismissed.
Complained of condition of sleeping apartment, where water dripped on to bed from ceiling.
12. Dismissed for refusing to sleep in bedroom with unclean person.
13. Dismissed for asking for advance on 22s. per week for managing butcher's shop doing £135 per week.
14. Dismissed for going through wrong door to dinner.
15. "Guv'nor objected to me as a prospective son-in-law."
16. Asked for two days' leave to return home to arrange for and attend funeral and was dismissed.
17. Dismissed for bringing a sandwich to work.
18. Ate a plum.
19. Caught in the act of serving a customer.
20. "New employers regretted to find they had engaged me without having a vacancy."
21. Suffering from "guitar" of the stomach.
22. Employer got a relative to work for less wages.
23. Temporary "birth"
24. "Held responsible for shortage of stock while I was on holiday."
25. Because customer would not conform to rule of establishment and wait for receipt from the cash desk.
26. Alleged defiance — singing in bedroom.
27. Refused to sleep any longer on the pledge counter.
28. "Dismissed because I would not shout in the street."
29. "For refusing to sign an agreement that would prevent me from earning my livelihood at my own trade in my native place."
30. For eating a scone at teatime. The preference for this rather than bread and butter was regarded as a personal insult.
31. For becoming engaged to a young lady employed by the same firm.
32. Stock short £2 4s. Previous stock was £2 4s. over.
33. Dismissed. Employer doesn't quite know why.
34. For doing too much work. Grocery trade.

Shop assistants were in every way bound to their employers, often dismissed for misdemeanors committed outside working hours. There was much work to do. In order to be effective the Unions realised they needed to increase their numbers.

In 1893 the National Union of Shop Assistants changed its name to the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks (NUSAW&C) and five years later joined forces with the United Shop Assistants Union to form the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks (NAUSAW&C).

Meanwhile, in 1895, the Manchester and District Co-operative Employees Association (MDCEA) merged with the Bolton Co-operative Employees to form the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees (AUCE).

On formation, the AUCE had 2,151 members and had net assets of £98.2s.2d.

The formation of the NAUSAW&C and the AUCE ensured that trade unionism in retailing was here to stay!

A Century of Service

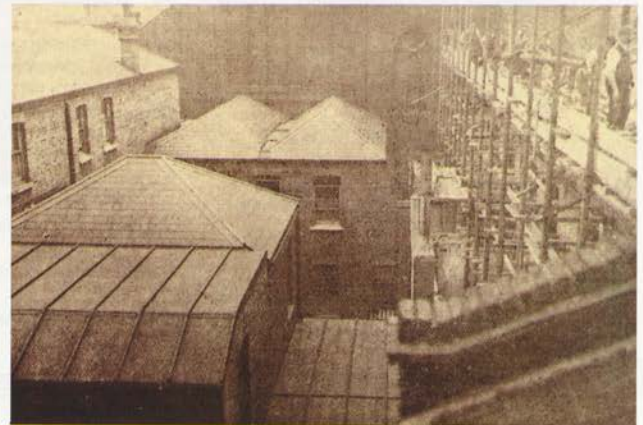
The Grim Reality of 'Living-In'



Shop assistants who 'lived-in' were subjected to deductions from wages for so-called misdemeanours and luxuries.



The squalid, unwelcoming dormitories shop assistants were forced to live in but could never look upon as home.





Shop assistants leapt from the top floor of this dormitory when fire broke out.

One assistant died when she fell onto the signboard.



The Free Englishman

"He has no freedom and no responsibility. He is politically and socially a child with rations instead of rights. Treated like a child, punished like a child, washed and combed like a child... forbidden to marry like a child..."

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Originating from a time when the apprentice lived with the employer's family, the 'living-in' system in the retail trade became a condition of employment. In 1891, 450,000 shop assistants 'lived-in' and the employer paid them partly in cash and partly by providing board and lodging.

Premises were taken in cheap neighbourhoods or buildings were erected specially to house workers. Six to 20 young men or women often had to share a room where lives were frequently endangered in cramped and appalling conditions.

In 1912 fire destroyed Barkers department store in Kensington, London and five shop girls who lived on the premises were burnt to death.

Those who 'lived-in' were subject to all manner of abuse. Food was dreadful — bread rock hard and at least a week old, meat nearly 'walked off' the plate, rats ran across the room minutes after lights out, rooms were infested with lice, money was deducted from wages for book keeping errors and charges were made for reading matter, etc. Baths and hot water were considered a luxury and in some houses only one pint of hot water was allowed per person per week. Yet you were still expected to turn up for work spic and span.

A Century of Service

The Lighter Side of 'Living-In'

WASHING DAY!



At William Whiteley's drapery store a 'late list' of shop assistants was displayed each day giving the name of the offender, his department and his excuse. To this Whiteley added his own scrawled comments in red ink.

Name of Katecomer	Excuse	Remarks
Jones (Cabinets)	Unwell	No, he is not - lazy fellow.
Smith (Silks)	Illness at home.	Clear him out.
Robinson (Drapery)	Relation ill	Fine excuse.
Williams (Hosiery)	Lost the train	Yes, and will lose head, too, if not careful.

RAT-HUNTING EXPEDITIONS.



It was no laughing matter to be 'living-in'. But the words of some employers might raise a wry smile.

A shop owner sued by the local sanitary inspector for having a carcass on his premises unfit for human consumption appealed, and got off, on the grounds that the meat was not for sale — it was for the staff!

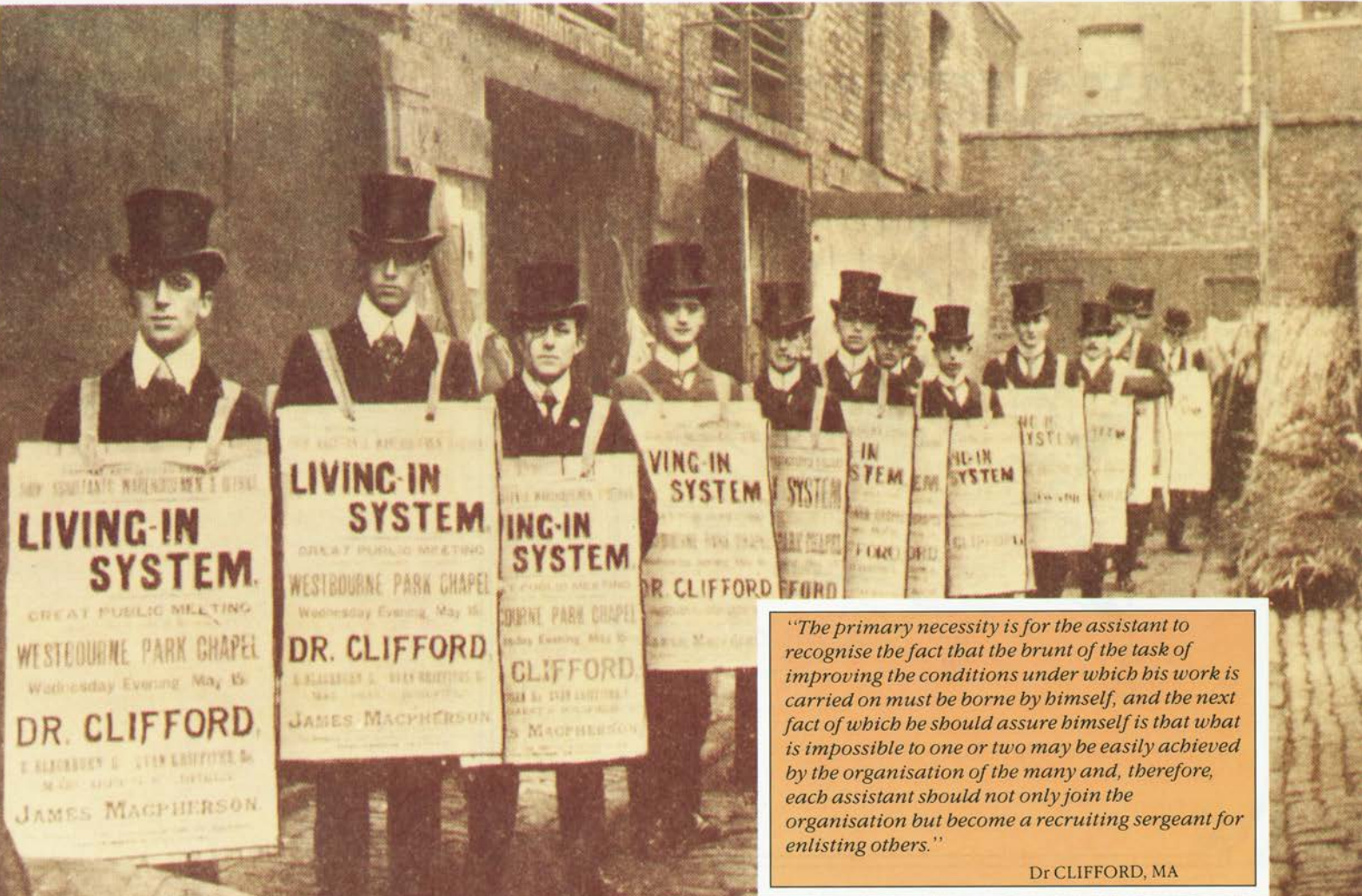
Another owner when asked: 'Can you defend a system of boarding 30 young women from weekend to weekend with no bathroom?' answered: 'We have never been asked for a bathroom'.

An employer said that while he had no objection to employees getting married ... '... I would rather they go elsewhere and get married; we do not want people in our employ like that ... it tends to make them — well certainly not honest'.

Another admitted keeping two cows, two horses, poultry, a cat and a dog in the yard of his 'living-in' quarters. When asked if any disagreeable smell arose, the employer said: 'No, not unless the wind happens to come that way'.

The Fight Against 'Living-In'

Hundreds had to be turned away from Dr Clifford's meeting against the 'living-in' system. The fight had begun in earnest.



"The primary necessity is for the assistant to recognise the fact that the brunt of the task of improving the conditions under which his work is carried on must be borne by himself, and the next fact of which he should assure himself is that what is impossible to one or two may be easily achieved by the organisation of the many and, therefore, each assistant should not only join the organisation but become a recruiting sergeant for enlisting others."

Dr CLIFFORD, MA

ANTI-LIVING-IN CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH WALES



WALES ATTACKS ITS MODERN DRAGON



Kentish Town: The men working at Messrs Daniels who 'lived-out' were dismissed one by one and replaced with young men from out-of-town who would agree to 'live-in'. The Union took action and the men went on strike. The Company rescinded and yet another blow was recorded against the 'living-in' system.



une 1901 saw a demonstration against 'living-in' which caused a major sensation.

Thirteen shop assistants from William Whiteley's department store paraded with sandwich boards along Oxford Street to the West End of London. Their boards advertised a mass meeting against 'living-in' to be addressed by the great preacher Dr Clifford.

A wave of actions against 'living-in' followed. Some successfully secured the immediate ending of 'living-in' while others won improvements in conditions.

Men working at Messrs Daniels of Kentish Town were granted the right to 'live-out' in 1907. But the firm, discovering the changeover was costing them hundreds of pounds, reacted by dismissing workers who 'lived-out' one by one. The firm refused to negotiate the matter with the Union and the men went on strike. The struggle lasted for 16 weeks until Messrs Daniels signed an agreement to make the firm a 'living-out' establishment.

In 1914, 400,000 workers still 'lived-in'. One of the main arguments put forward was that 'living-in' protected women and discouraged immorality.

'Living-in' lingered on into the 1920s when, after a long campaign, most workers had won the right to choose between taking board and being paid a full wage.

A Century of Service

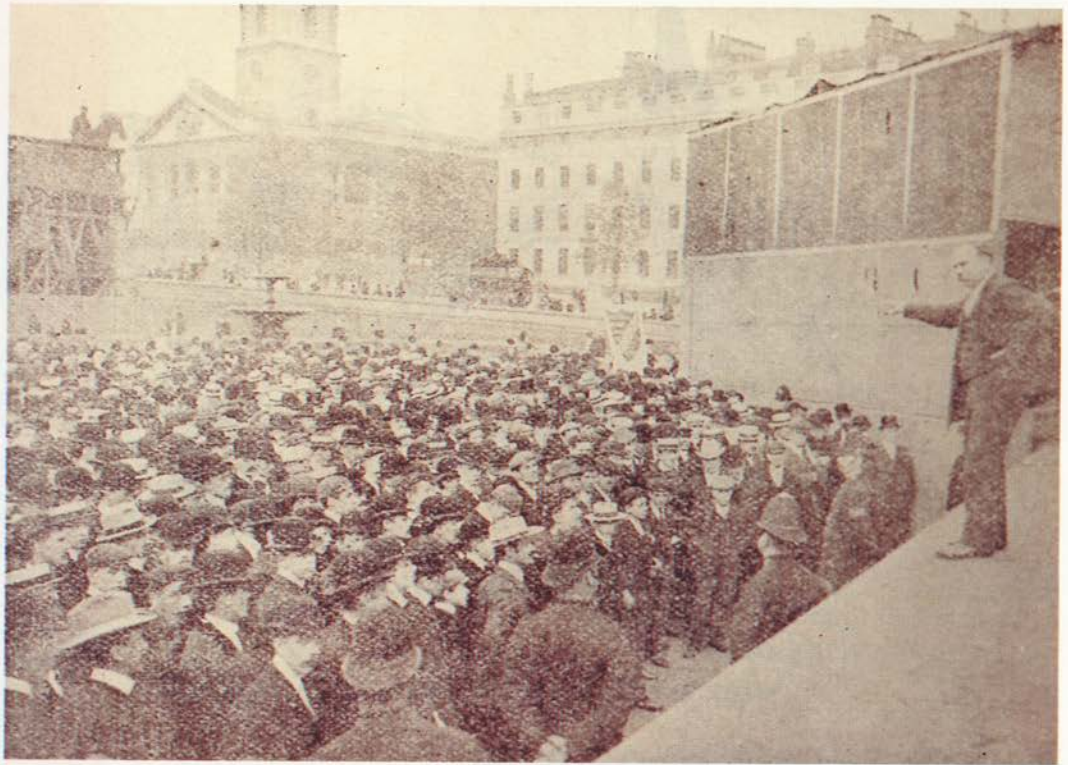
The Battle for Early Closing

This demonstration took place in Trafalgar Square in 1902 to demand a 60 hour week. The attendance was estimated at between 500 - 1,000 and it was a great success.

The theme for all the speeches that day were taken from the inscription on the Union banner: 'He who would be free, himself must strike the blow.' The meeting was addressed by John Turner, Margaret Bondfield and P.C. Hoffman amongst others.

Miss Bondfield remarked that: 'Ten years ago shop assistants would have been afraid to gather in any number at a public demonstration. We are certainly getting bolder...'

The fight for early closing gathered momentum and, in 1903, the great Liberal MP, Sir Charles Dilke, with the full support of the shop unions, introduced a Bill of Shop Law to reform working conditions. The Bill proposed compulsory 8pm closing with one half-day holiday per week starting no later than 12 noon. Also and, most contentious, the Bill proposed a maximum 60 hour working week for shop assistants.



The Bill was bitterly opposed and every obstacle placed in its path in both the House of Lords and House of Commons.

The Liberal Government of the day had Winston Churchill as Home Secretary and it was he who personally moved deletion of the 60 hour working week clause. Also removed was compulsory 8pm closing.

Labour MPs were so incensed that they prepared to vote against the entire Bill but were urged not to by the shop unions as it still contained compulsory one half-day closing per week. The mangled Bill was subsequently passed but compulsory half-day closing was not introduced until 1912.

This poem appeared in the Daily Express following evidence given to a House of Lords Committee examining Early Closing.

The Cry of the Shopman

The shutters are down at eight,
And till midnight is drawing nigh
I am here at the counter to serve and wait
On those who may come to buy.
And plodding from day to day
Too heavy of heart to rebel,
I feel I have given my soul away
And my life — 'tis a shoddy sell!

When the summer eves are sweet,
And the country ways are fair
It would take the weariness out of my feet
To be going a-roaming there.
But at eve, when others are free
I am doomed at my post to stop,
And the country is only a dream to me
A dream in the flare of the shop!

At the close of each long day's rounds
No time to live can I take,
And my children's voices have alien sounds
So seldom do I see them awake.
In slumbers my Sundays pass —
For I am thankful at rest to be —
Too tired to go wandering over the grass
That will some day cover me.

My duty I do not shirk
But so easily I were blest!
Or is it that some have no leisure for work
As I have none for rest?
'Tis little for them to give
And yet it were much to deny —
For all I ask is the time to live,
As well as the time to die.



FRIEND "WHY DON'T YOU COME AND HAVE
A LITTLE RECREATION OLD MAN?"
ASSISTANT "THIS (CIGAR) IS THE ONLY RECREATION
I GET"

"For two years — the most miserable years of my life — I was behind the counter of a draper's shop. I am in favour of compulsory early closing because it is, I am convinced, absolutely impossible to make the shopping class understand what a serious matter late shopping is."

H.G. WELLS (1902)

"I can assure you of my warm sympathy with the grocers' assistants. It seems to me that the only improvement in the conditions of their work must come from co-operation with a view to reduction of hours."

Dr CONAN DOYLE (1902)

In addition to low pay and 'living-in', the issue of greatest concern to shop assistants was that of shop opening hours.

Unregulated competition drove traders to open their shops for as many hours as possible. It was quite common for shops to open from 8 am to 10 pm on Monday to Thursday, from 8 am to 11 pm on Friday and from 8 am to midnight on Saturday. Early closing meant at 5 pm on one of the days from Monday to Thursday.

Shop assistants had long understood that the only real solution for their excessive working hours lay in the reduction of shop opening times.

For many years they had supported various campaigns led by MPs, Church leaders and the Early Closing Association, largely aimed at securing the voluntary agreement of traders to restrict opening hours.

Along with the development of trade union organisation among shop assistants, grew an understanding that traders should be compelled, by law, to limit opening hours and that this would only be achieved through their own collective action.

In the early 1900s demonstrations organised by the NAUSAW&C for shop assistants, fed up with their long hours and exploitation, took place in London.

A Century of Service

A Period of Unrest

The J. & A. Ferguson store was picketed, men paraded the streets with posters and hand-bills distributed in their thousands. Public sympathy was on the side of the strikers and trade dropped dramatically.

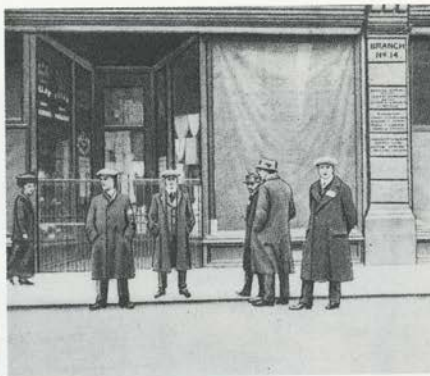
After five weeks the firm agreed to the Union's demands and the employees were granted three nights' closing at 6pm and other improvements.



One of the most lengthy strikes against a Co-op Society was at Coalburn, Lanarkshire in 1914. Called after two employees were sacked, 60 members came out on strike.

A bitter and sometimes violent dispute ensued after the society advertised for new staff and brought in black-leg labour.





In Lincoln feelings ran high and notice of a strike was given. Despite intimidation more than 200 members withdrew their labour and the Society's shops and bakery were picketed. Because of strong local support the strike only lasted three days and ended with Lincoln Co-op agreeing to pay the full rate from the following January.

The period running up to the First World War was one of unparalleled industrial unrest in Britain.

Over these years actions by the NAUSAW&C secured Union agreements with hundreds of companies throughout the country.

In 1908, staff at grocers J. & A. Ferguson in Glasgow objected to working 79 hours a week — and sometimes over 100 hours during busy periods. This meant men could be working without food from midday until 9pm or later.

The employers refused to listen and, after learning that four of their number were to be dismissed, 14 of the 17 staff went on strike.

Not all disputes were with private employers, however. The first-ever strike of Co-op employees took place in 1912 at the CWS flour mill in Avonmouth while, 12 months later at Lincoln, retail Co-op workers struck for the first time.

The Society's workers were demanding the minimum Union rate of pay, but met with strong resistance from Lincoln Co-op's management committee. Because of AUCE agitation they had increased wages — but only by about half of the required amount.

The outbreak of World War I effectively ended the upsurge of unrest and the growth of trade unionism was temporarily checked.

A Century of Service

World War I



Men go to war in 1914.



Women take over in the shops.

The First World War had a profound effect on the retail industry and its workers.

Distribution was deemed a non-essential occupation and, by 1915, 430,000 young men had volunteered to join the armed forces, many never to return. Sixty per cent of AUCE members — 25,297 — joined up and 2,103 are recorded as having lost their lives.

Unlike today, it was considered that women were incapable of replacing the men and there were fears that the civilian food supply would break down if stripped of its experienced workers. This was soon proved to be untrue.

Women entered the retail industry in their thousands. Ellen Wilkinson — who later became MP for Jarrow — was appointed the AUCE's first woman organiser to look after their interests and, by the end of the war, female membership of the AUCE had risen from about 7,000 to over 36,000.

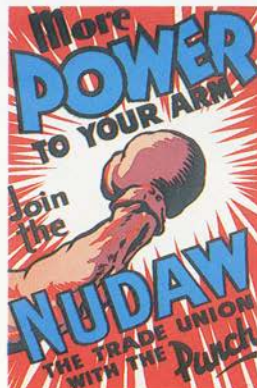
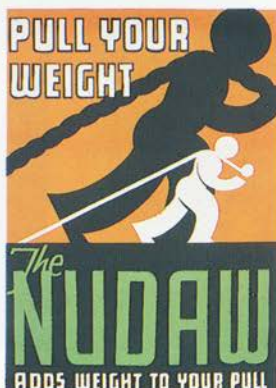
The Union fought for equal pay for women who replaced men, and won it in a large number of Co-operative Societies.

In 1918 women did get a reward of sorts for their efforts. The vote if over 30 — and the sack from their jobs when the men returned from the front!

A Century of Service

The Post War Boom

The formation of NUDAW following the merger of the AUCE and the Warehouse Workers Union led to a boom in membership as the new Union recruited actively throughout the distributive trades.



Homeward bound and grim faced, Mr John Lewis, head of the famous London drapery firm of the same name, was determined not to give way to the 400 shop assistants who went on strike in 1920.

The restricted 'living-in' conditions, the insecure employment, the poor wages, and Mr Lewis's refusal to recognise the Union or relax his rod of iron control on his 600 employees, forced the shop assistants to take matters into their own hands.

Miss Hilda Canbam, who led the girl strikers said: 'We are living in a different age than that of five years ago ... not only must we be paid more but we must be allowed to do

what we like with our leisure time. Wage earners are not slaves now, they are human beings who have some rights and a claim to consideration. The Union is our protection. Mr Lewis has his solicitors — we must have our Union.'



After the war the Trade Union Movement grew rapidly. In 1915 the NAUSAW&C had agreements with 472 companies. By 1920 they had 1,250. The membership more than doubled during that period to 86,009.

In London, major strikes took place at John Lewis and the Army and Navy Stores and in February 1920 following a mass meeting, 'house committees' were elected for every large store in the West End of London.

Attempts to amalgamate with the AUCE foundered on differences over which groups of workers they should organise.

The NAUSAW&C wanted only distributive workers to be members, whereas the AUCE organised both distributive workers in the Co-operative Societies and the production workers employed by the CWS. The latter were employed in a wide variety of industries, including flour milling, jam and confectionery production and boot and shoe manufacturing.

After the failure of amalgamation talks with the NAUSAW&C over this issue, the AUCE decided to go one stage further and recruit workers employed outside the Co-operative Movement. In 1920, this decision was confirmed with the amalgamation of the AUCE with the National Warehouse and General Workers' Union to form NUDAW — the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers.

A Century of Service

Troops take over the distribution of goods during the General Strike.



The Collapse of the Post War Boom



Mass unemployment brought devastating poverty in its wake, forcing thousands of hungry people onto the streets.

The recession of 1921 brought mass unemployment and unleashed a shop owners' counter attack.

They denounced the minimum wage levels set by the Industrial Court 'for pricing workers out of jobs' and refused to pay the rates. Wage cuts were imposed everywhere by both private employers and the Co-operative Movement. Many were met by strike action.

Under the pressure of poor trading conditions the voluntary 6pm closing agreement broke down and working hours increased in many shops.

Mass unemployment caused a sharp drop in Union membership which, together with the payment of unemployment benefit to so many members, almost caused NUDAW to go bankrupt.

During the General Strike of 1926 both the NAUSAW&C and NUDAW supported the miners. NUDAW was part of the 'Triple Alliance' of mining, steel and transport unions, playing a very active role.

About 10,000 of the Union's members were out during the strike — two thirds of them transport workers. Thousands were subsequently victimised because of their participation.

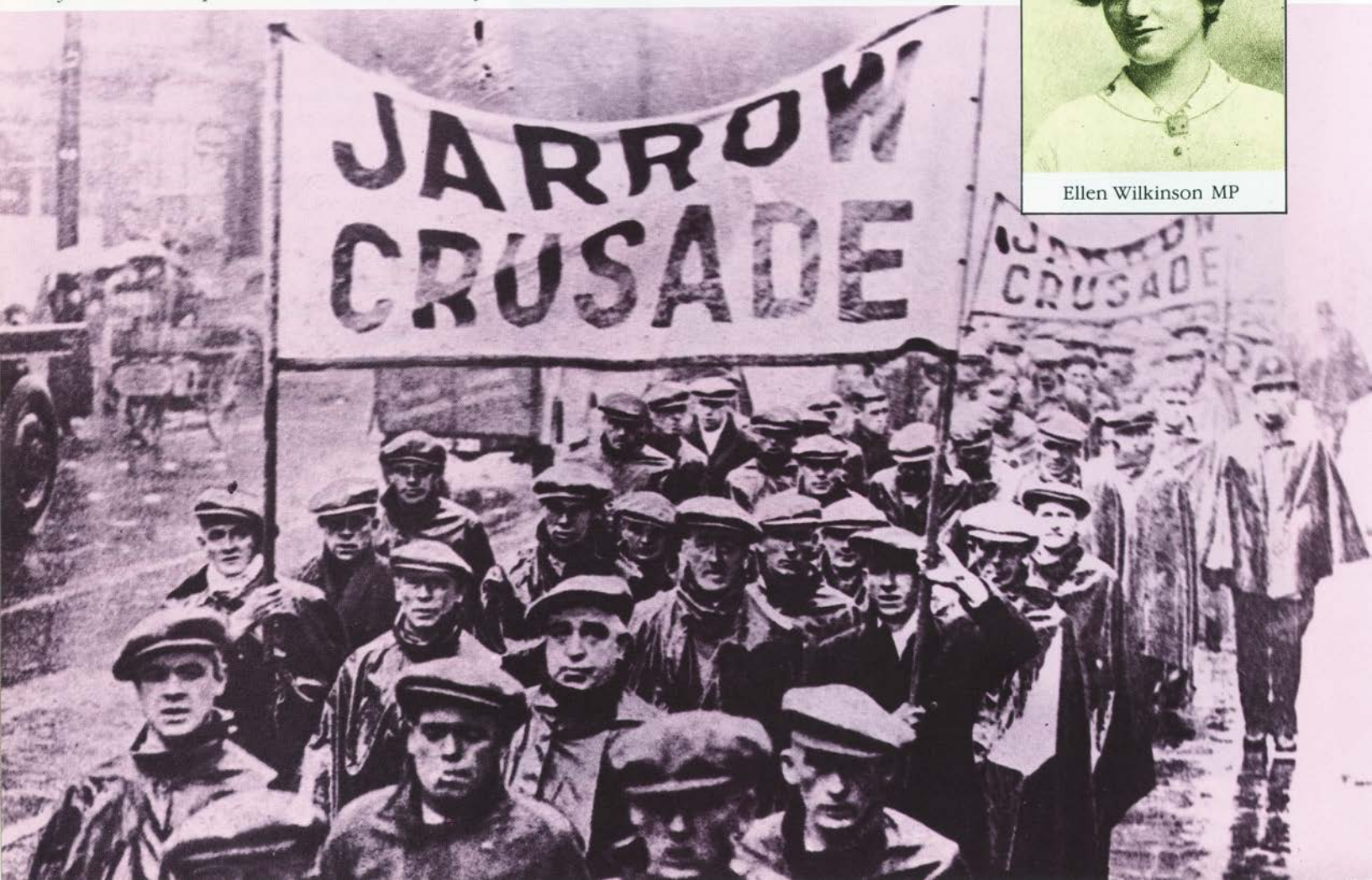
A Century of Service

The Decade of Depression

As the Jarrow marchers passed through Leicester, NUDAW members from the Co-op's shoe repairing plant worked through the night, without pay, to mend 112 pairs of boots. The cost of the materials was paid for by the Union and put the marchers back on their feet.



Ellen Wilkinson MP





Both NUDAW and NAUSAW&C strongly opposed the rise of Fascism. This cartoon appeared in the journal of NUDAW in 1933.

The onset in 1930 of the severest recession the world had ever known made 20 per cent of Britain's workers unemployed. The town of Jarrow epitomised the human misery of unemployment in the hungry thirties. Virtually a single-industry town, its life blood came from Palmer's shipyard. When the shipyard closed down the consequences were catastrophic. Nearly 80 per cent of the workforce was out of work. Malnutrition was claiming lives and the death rate from tuberculosis was double the national average.

In 1936, with NUDAW-sponsored MP Ellen Wilkinson at their head, the men of Jarrow set off to march to London. Throughout the journey the march was fed and sheltered largely by the efforts of NUDAW members and Co-operative Societies.

Ellen spoke nightly at public meetings en route and finally led the weary yet triumphant marchers into London's Parliament Square. The march roused the whole nation and pricked the conscience of the Tory Government.

Apart from the recession, another great shadow lay over the political scene of the thirties — the increasing power of Fascism across Europe and the threat of a second World War.

A Century of Service

World War II

*Troops embark for an 'unknown' destination in a foreign land.
More than 100,000 came from the ranks of NAUSAW&C and NUDAW.*





On the home front women keep the wheels of industry turning. Others make sure everyone gets their daily 'pinta'.



Food was scarce but ration books meant there was a fair share out of basic foods. It also caused extra work for Union members working in shops. Suprisingly, the nation was bealthier during this period.



During the Second World War the Union threw its weight behind Churchill's Coalition Government, co-operating to secure efficient distribution of supplies and grappling with the problems of rationing.

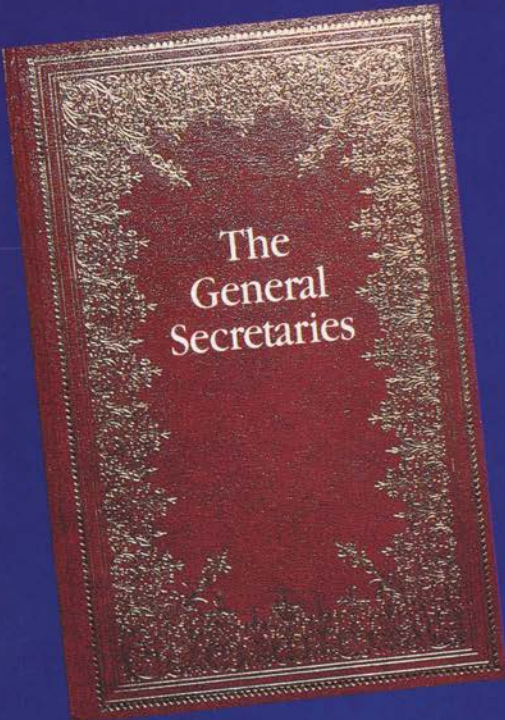
In 1940 when food rationing was introduced it became a headache not only for the housewife but also for the thousands of Union members serving in the shops.

As war continued, call-up hit NUDAW and the NAUSAW&C more heavily than any other union and, at one time, 100,000 retail workers were serving in the forces. Women were once again being employed in large numbers in the industry and made up some 50 per cent of the workforce. But for women to qualify for the full male rate they had to be carrying out the full range of male duties.

Shipbuilding and other industries, vital to the war effort, became classified as 'Essential Work' and workers engaged in essential work were covered by rules laying down minimum requirements for wages, conditions and welfare; and though they could not leave their jobs without Ministry of Labour permission, they could not be dismissed from them, either.

With the onset of the Battle of Britain, fire watching became part of the working routine and the Union negotiated agreements on pay and conditions for this extra duty.

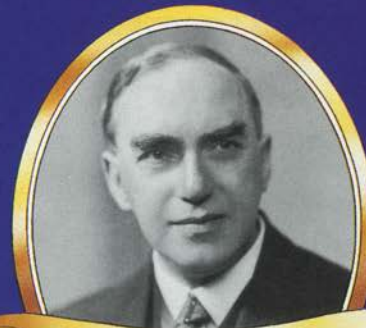
A Century of Service



The General Secretaries



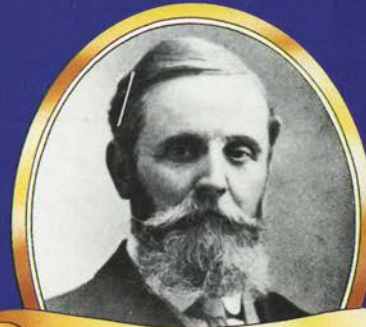
Augustus Hewitt 1895-1916. Born in Leamington Spa, he moved to Manchester and was a proof reader at the Co-operative Newspaper Society. He became General Secretary of the AUCE in 1895 — a part-time post that changed to full-time in 1899. Patient and diligent, many considered him to be the 'father' of the AUCE. He was also Editor of *Gleanings for Members* and *The Co-operative Employee*.



Sir Joseph Hallsworth, MA, 1916-1949. Born in Manchester, he became confidential clerk to Augustus Hewitt in 1902. An excellent administrator and negotiator he took up an appointment with the National Coal Board in 1947. A.W. Burrows deputised for him until 1949. A recognised authority on economics and commercial and industrial law, Joseph Hallsworth received an MA honorary degree in 1942 and was knighted in 1946.



William Johnson 1891-1894. A Yorkshireman by birth, he spent a few years in America before entering the drapery trade. Elected at the 1891 Birmingham Conference that founded NUSA, he was the first General Secretary, resigned in 1894 and was elected General Treasurer and later President. He was the first shop assistant to attend the TUC as a delegate.

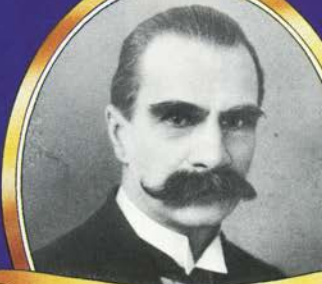


James Macpherson 1894-1912. Served his apprenticeship as a draper in Glasgow before moving to London. There he helped form the East London Shop Assistants' Union and took a prominent part in the 1891 Birmingham conference. From 1892 he held every office in the Union, including President and Treasurer. Under his leadership membership grew to 80,000 and the Union's influence became widely acknowledged.

Over the years, the Union has been well served by its General Secretaries whose dedication, skill and quality of leadership have built Usdaw into the strong, influential Union of today.



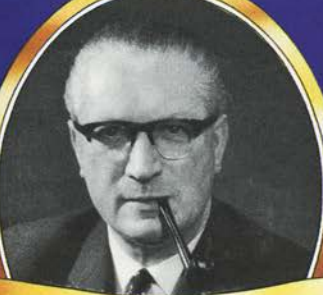
John Turner 1912-1924. Born in Essex he was apprenticed to a grocer at 14. The business failed, but he demanded, and won, a rise from the new owner. A founder member and President of the United Shop Assistants' Union he became a full-time organiser when that Union merged to form the NAUSAW&C. His crusading qualities brought him to prominence in early battles of the London shop assistants.



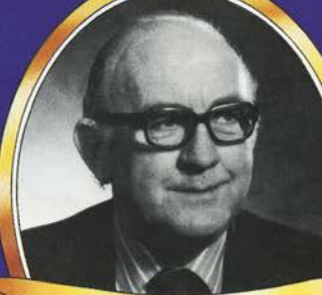
John R. Leslie 1924-1936. A native of Lerwick, he moved to Edinburgh to become a grocery manager and joined the NAUSAW&C after hearing a speech by John Turner. In 1903, he became Scottish Organiser and later Editor of *The Shop Assistant*. Appointed as National Organising Secretary in 1918, was a pioneer in fighting for a national minimum wage. Both resolute and determined he was elected Labour MP for Sedgefield in 1935.



G. Maurice Hann 1936-1946. A Bristol man, he joined the NAUSAW&C in 1903, serving three terms on the Executive before he was 28. A member of the Union's Clerical Staff in 1913, he became an Organiser, before being appointed National Organising Officer in 1935. Maurice Hann retired to become a member of the Industrial Court. Enthusiastic and inspirational, he combined a sound grasp of economics with notable negotiating skills.



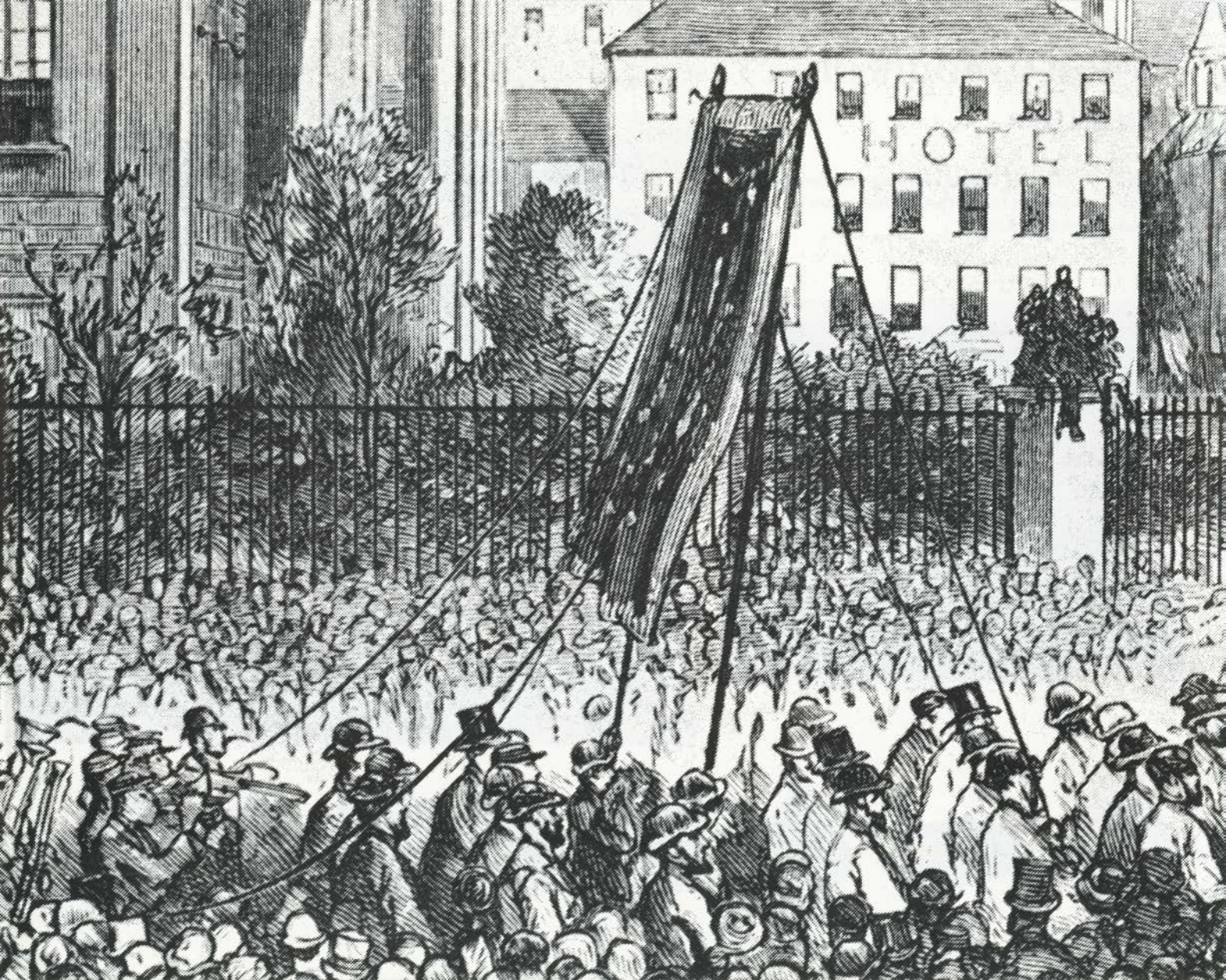
Sir Alan Birch 1949-1961. Sir Alan was born in Lancashire, his first job being a clerk with Warrington Co-op. In 1936 he was appointed Organiser before becoming National Officer. At the TUC he became Chairman of the Economic Committee where his outstanding ability as an economist and knowledge of industrial matters had full rein. Knighted in 1961, he sadly died later that year at the peak of his career.

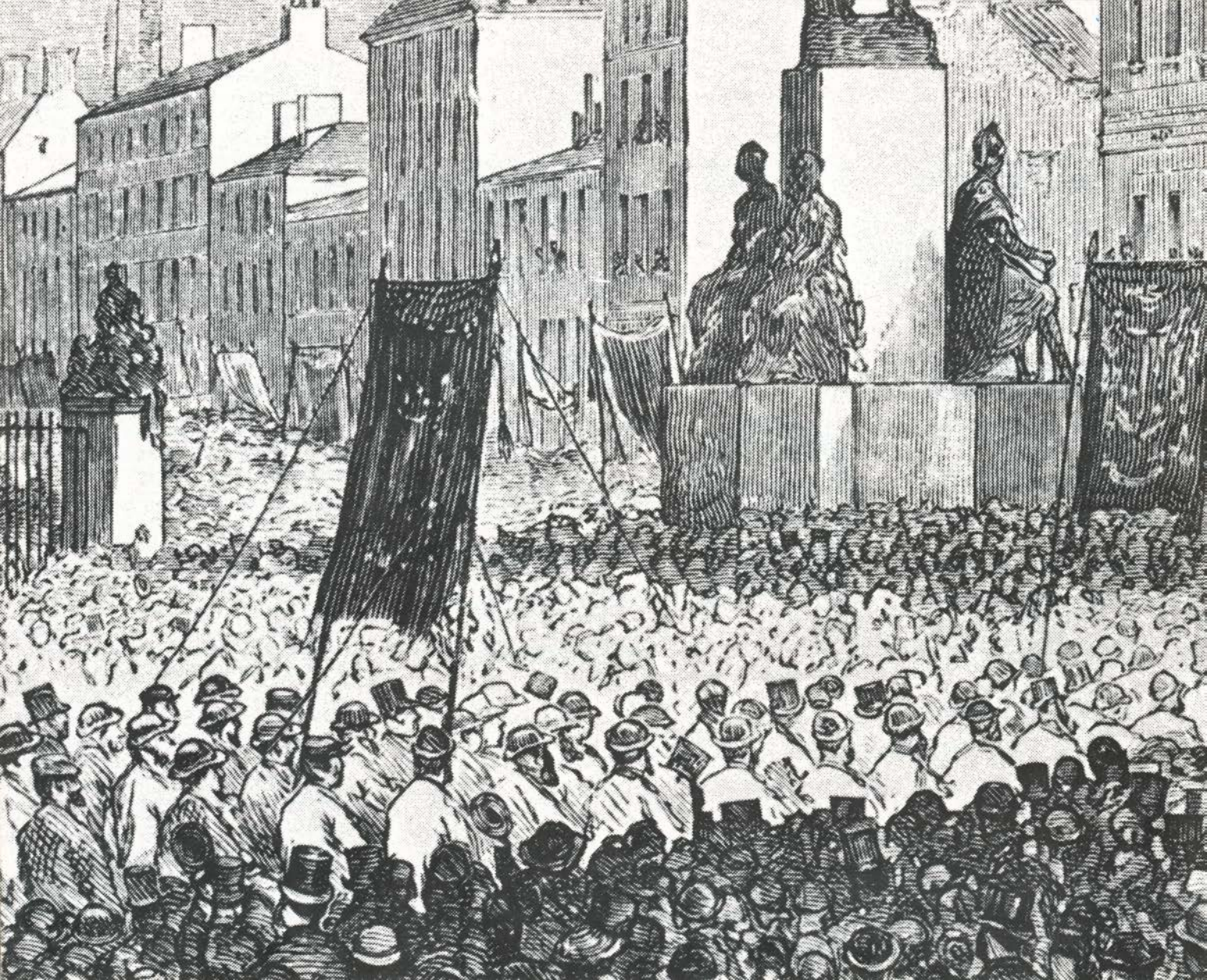


Lord Allen 1962-1979. Born in Bristol, he began work at the Co-op, becoming a Union Official in 1946. Under his leadership membership almost reached 500,000. Chairman of the TUC in 1973, his reputation spread worldwide through his Presidency of FIET. Awarded the CBE in 1967 and made a Life Peer in 1974, becoming Lord Allen of Fallowfield after the Manchester district where the Union's Central Office is located.



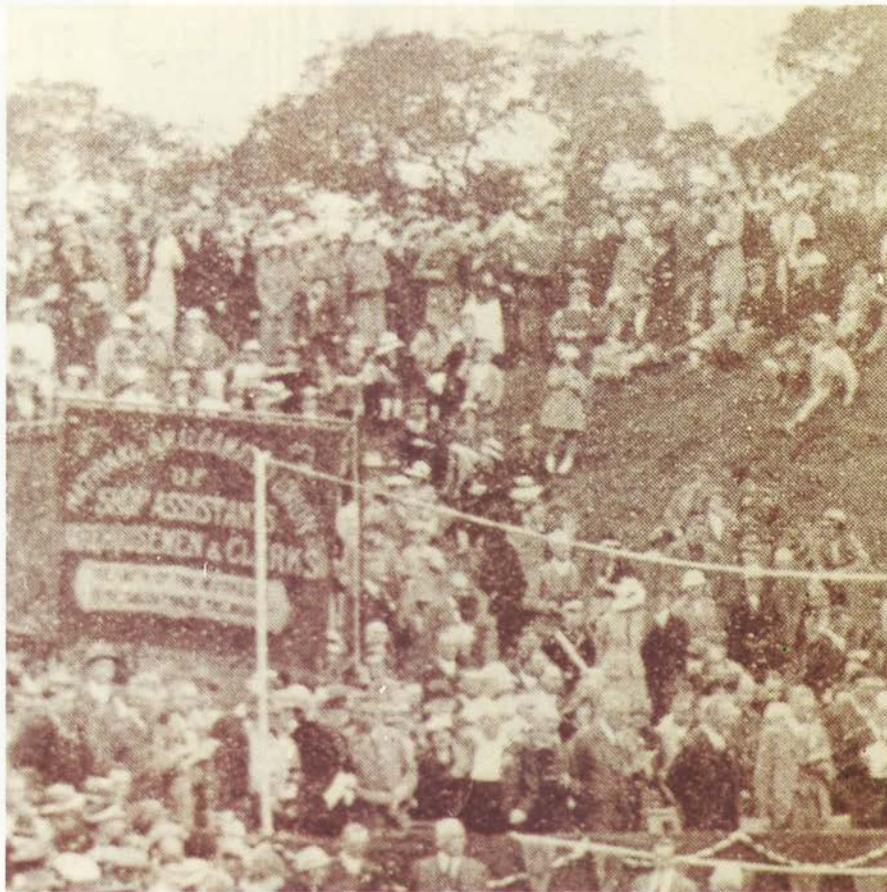
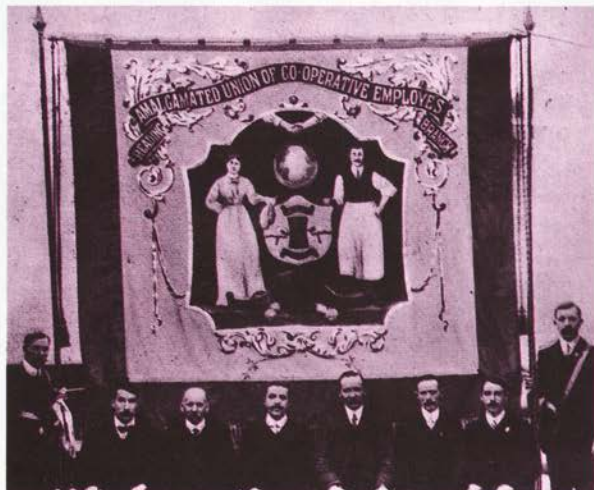
William H.P. Whatley 1979-1986. A native of Tyneside he moved to Manchester on becoming a National Officer in 1966. As General Secretary he was in the forefront of Usdaw's 'Save the Doorstep Pintia' campaign. He served on the TUC General Council, TUC/Labour Party Liaison Committee and became President of EURO-FIET. Recognition of his Union service came in 1986 when he was awarded an OBE.

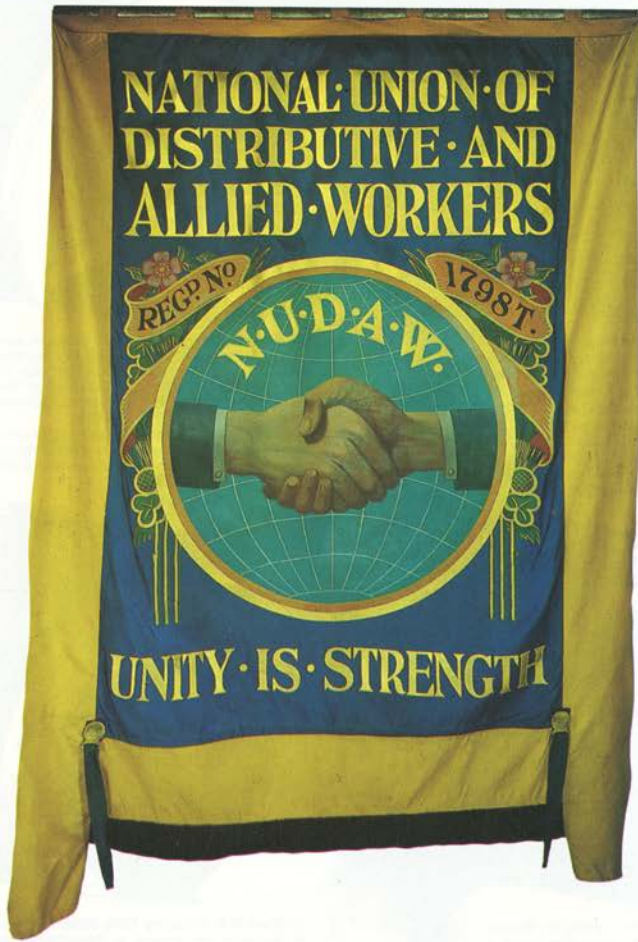


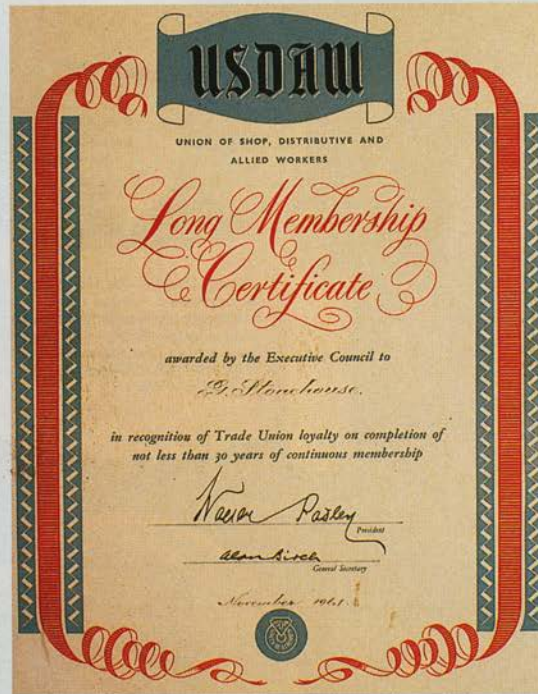


Union Colours on Display

A selection of banners, badges and long-membership awards spanning the Union's proud history are reproduced on these pages.







The Usdaw Family Tree...

18th March, 1891:
Manchester & District Co-operative Employees' Association

(1895) Merged with Bolton Co-operative Employees' Association to become
AMALGAMATED UNION OF CO-OPERATIVE EMPLOYEES (A.U.C.E.)

(1905) Took in National Millers' Union (Yorkshire based)

in 1917 becomes Amalgamated Union of Co-operative and Commercial Employees and Allied Workers (but retains A.U.C.E.)

(1920) A.U.C.E. merger with National Warehouse & General Workers' Union to become
NATIONAL UNION OF DISTRIBUTIVE AND ALLIED WORKERS (N.U.D.A.W.)

(1923) Took in Scottish Slaughtermen and Allied Workers' Union

(1923) Took in National Union of Fur Workers

(1925) Took in Barbers & Hairdressers Assistants' Union

(1926) Took in Belfast Linen Lappers and Warehouse Workers' Union

(1946) Took in Journeymen Butchers' Federation

October 1889, London:
 United Shop Assistants' Union

29/30th March, 1891:
National Union of Shop Assistants
 (formed from Shop Assistants organisations in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham and Cardiff)

in 1893 becomes
 National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks

(1898) Merger to become
NATIONAL AMALGAMATED UNION OF SHOP ASSISTANTS, WAREHOUSEMEN AND CLERKS (N.A.U.S.A.W. & C.)

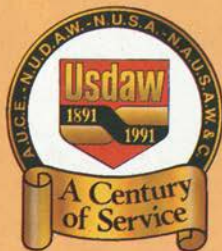
(1919) Took in the Chemists Assistants Associations of Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick

(1919) Took in Manchester Fishmongers and Poultryers Assistants Association

(1919) Took in National Association of Grocery Assistants

(1919) Took in Dublin Tobacconists Assistants Association

(1921) Took in Dental Assistants' Union



(N.U.D.A.W.)

(N.A.U.S.A.W. & C.)

(1947) AMALGAMATION TO BECOME USDAW — UNION OF SHOP, DISTRIBUTIVE & ALLIED WORKERS

- (1947) Took in Glasgow Slaughterman's Association
- (1947) Took in Manchester Abattoir Workers' Association
- (1955) Took in Amalgamated Society of Shoemakers and Repairers
- (1955) Took in Manchester and Salford Umbrella Makers Trade Society
- (1977) Took in Scottish Union of Bakers & Allied Workers

Strenuous efforts were made in the 1880s to form a trade union organisation for shop assistants. Local associations sprang up in towns and cities throughout Britain yet most only survived a few months.

The survivors formed the NUSA in 1891. However, one organisation, the United Shop Assistants' Union (USAU), that was founded in 1889, did remain independent.

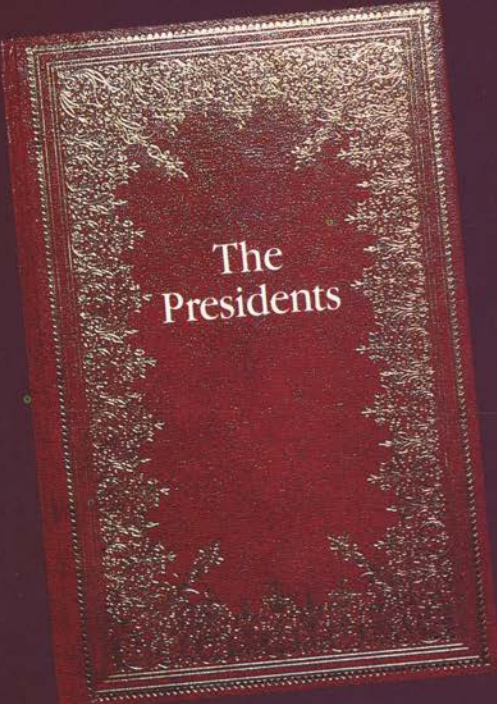
In 1893 the NUSA added 'Warehousemen and Clerks' to its title in order to organise those workers. It remained the NUSAW&C until 1898 when it merged with the USAU and became the NAUSAW&C.

Coincidentally in 1891, just a few days before the NUSA was formed, MDCEA came into being. This organisation merged in 1895 with Bolton Co-operative Employees' Association to become the AUCE.

In 1917 the AUCE changed its full title to the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative and Commercial Employees and Allied Workers to recruit workers employed outside the Co-operative Movement for the first time. This was re-inforced in 1920 when the AUCE merged with the National Warehouse and General Workers' Union to become NUDAW on the 1st January, 1921.

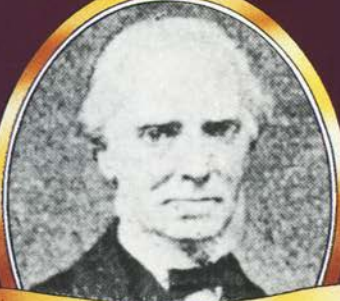
Several attempts were made to amalgamate with the NAUSAW&C between the wars but all came to nothing. It was not until 1946 that agreement was finally reached and the ballot was successful. On the 1st January 1947 Usdaw came into existence.

The same year that NUDAW and the NAUSAW&C agreed to amalgamate the Journeymen Butchers' Federation joined NUDAW. This merger brought into a single Union specialist workers in one of the most important distributive trades.



The Presidents

Presidents of the highest calibre have always played a major role in shaping the Union — chairing ADMs and Executive meetings with fairness and a firm hand, never losing sight of the democratic principles on which the Union was built.



James Dyson was first President of the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees and was for many years manager of a productive society — the Working Hatters' Co-operative Association. He was President from 1895 until 1897 when he was succeeded by Thomas Howe.



Thomas Howe, General President from 1897, died in office in 1915. The son of a Durham miner, he was apprenticed to a firm of tailors at the age of 12, eventually becoming a manager at the Pelaw CWS clothing factory. He learned the art of public speaking as a Methodist lay preacher and possessed a genuine sympathy for the lower-paid, coupled with a great faith in the Co-operative Movement.



Robert Bell Padley, a native of Lincolnshire, acted as General President in 1915 on the death of Thomas Howe and was elected to the post officially later that year. He remained in office until 1919. Between 1901 and 1915 he held the offices of Treasurer, President and Secretary of the Yorkshire District Council but, when the job of District Secretary became full-time, John Jagger took his place.



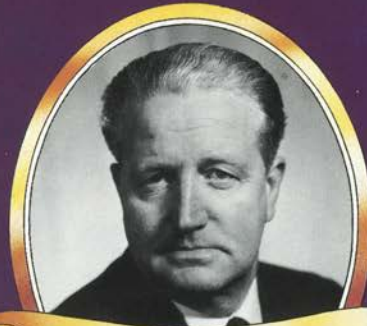
John Jagger, General President from 1919 to 1942 held office longer than any other incumbent. He was an outstanding figure at Annual Delegate Meetings, both as a delegate and as General President. He died in a road accident while carrying out his duties as Parliamentary Private Secretary to Herbert Morrison. A 'Jagger Memorial Fund' of £1,000 was set up by the Union to develop Trade Unionism in the Colonies.



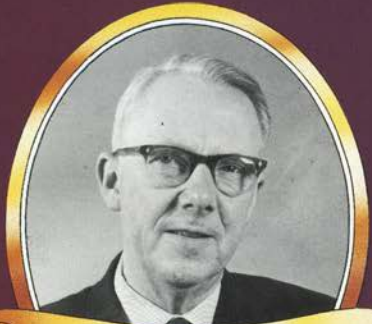
Percy Cottrell became President of Usdaw at its inception in 1947, holding office for just over 12 months until his death in 1948. He had previously taken over as NUDAW's President in 1942. His working life, from the age of ten, was spent with Delph Co-operative Society. A dedicated Socialist, he gained a diploma in economics and political science at Ruskin College through a TUC scholarship.



Walter Padley, Usdaw's President for 16 years, took office in 1948 at the age of 31. A former AUCE member he worked for Chipping Norton Co-op before becoming the Usdaw-sponsored MP for Ogmore in 1950 — a seat he held for almost 30 years. He gave up the Presidency in 1964 when he was appointed Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. His special interests were world peace and international affairs.



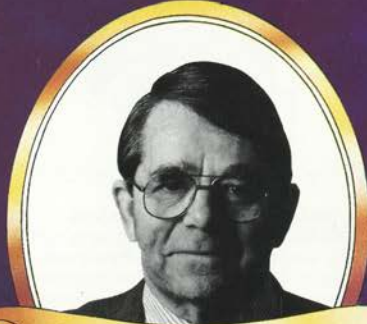
Dick Seabrook was elected President in February 1965 to fill the remainder of Walter Padley's term of office. Although defeated in April 1965 he was re-elected in 1967 and held office for six years. A former boot and shoe repairer with Chelmsford Co-op, he became a NUDAW Area Organiser in 1937, moving to Norwich ten years later on Usdaw's formation. The city honoured him in 1971 when they elected him Lord Mayor.



Rodney Hanes was President of Usdaw from 1965 to 1967. Born and brought up in Lancashire, he worked for the Eccles Co-op before becoming an Area Organiser in London. In 1960 he married Edna Falkingham who, for many years, was the only woman on the Executive. As Area Organiser responsible for Royal Arsenal Co-op and as President, he was known and respected as a tireless worker on behalf of others.



Jim D. Hughes was the Union's Chief Organising Officer at the time he defeated Dick Seabrook in the 1973 election for the Presidency. He held office until 1977 — a short while after he retired from Union service. Joining Usdaw as an Organiser in 1949 he rose through the ranks to become a National Officer in 1962 and the Union's Chief Organising Officer in 1970. The membership was 400,000 strong when he retired.



Syd Tierney's Presidency started in 1977 and ends at the 1991 ADM. A former milkman, he gained a scholarship to Plater College, went on to become an Usdaw Organiser and, when elected President, was the Union-sponsored Labour MP for Birmingham Yardley. On losing his seat in 1979, he resumed employment with the Union, becoming the National Officer responsible for the Insurance Section. He is a member of the Labour Party NEC.

The Women's Movement



Annie Tynan was appointed the NAUSAW&C's first woman organiser in 1911.

Surprisingly she didn't come from a retail background but had received a firm grounding in trade unionism with the Amalgamated Society of Telephone Employees. Working as a telephone operator in Manchester she had, at a very early age, become a branch secretary and then Executive Councillor.

She learned about the NAUSAW&C when she heard John Turner speak at the TUC and followed the Union's work through the pages of *The Shop Assistant*.

Her buoyant temperament and great sense of humour attracted many other women to the movement.



Mabel Talbot became the NAUSAW&C's President in 1920, the first woman to hold the position in the Union's history.

A London dressmaker, she advocated the appointment of a woman organiser in her first conference speech in 1910. Three months later she organised a conference of 100 women which led to the formation of the London Women's Council. She represented the Union at the TUC and at the Congress of Commercial Employees at the Hague and was elected to the Executive in 1914.

A tireless worker with a clear and lucid mind, she helped consolidate the position of women in the movement.



Mary Macarthur rebelled against the stifling boredom of her middle-class upbringing.

In 1901 she attended a meeting of the NAUSAW&C in order to write a scathing article for the Tory Press, but instead was overwhelmed by the plight of shop assistants and was immediately converted.

She became Chair of Ayr branch that same year and in 1903 was elected onto the NAUSAW&C National Executive.

She left to form the National Federation of Women Workers, becoming its General Secretary.

Her early death in 1921 was a great loss. No other woman in the history of women's trade unionism has made such a significant contribution.



Margaret Bondfield, who became assistant secretary of the NAUSA&C around the turn of the century, brought the plight of shop assistants and the 'living-in' system to the public eye.

A series of articles in the *Daily Chronicle* in 1898 exposed their atrocious working and living conditions.

Posing as a drapery assistant and moving from store to store, Margaret Bondfield worked 'under cover' to supply the information first-hand. She later became Labour MP for Northampton and the country's first woman Cabinet Minister.



Ellen Wilkinson — or 'Red Ellen' as she was best known — became the AUCE's first woman organiser in 1915, setting up a special women's department to encourage them to play a more active role.

She went on to become Labour MP for Middlesbrough East in 1924, sadly losing the seat in 1931.

Victorious again at Jarrow in 1935, she went on to lead the men of that town on their unforgettable hunger march to London.

In 1945 she became Minister of Education after Labour's landslide victory.

A diminutive figure with fiery red hair, her title of 'Red Ellen' was as much for her brand of politics as it was her colouring.

Women currently make up two thirds of Usdaw's membership. But this has not always been the case. The first known statistic of female membership was in 1898 when the AUCE recorded 127 female members. By the end of the First World War, when women had taken over 'men's jobs', that figure had risen to 36,422.

Female membership declined during the depression years of the twenties and thirties but, with the advent of the Second World War, membership again took an upward trend — a trend which has continued to the present day.

Usdaw has a proud record of supporting women's issues. It established a women's department in 1985 although this was not the first in the Union's history. Women pioneers have made their mark from the earliest days.

The Union's fight for equal pay goes back to the First World War and is an issue which has appeared more frequently than any other on the Annual Delegate Meeting agenda.

This was resolved to some degree by the introduction of the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts of 1975.

But women have only won the battle, not the war. Today, as always, Usdaw is campaigning for equal pay for work of equal value and equality of opportunity for women.

A Century of Service

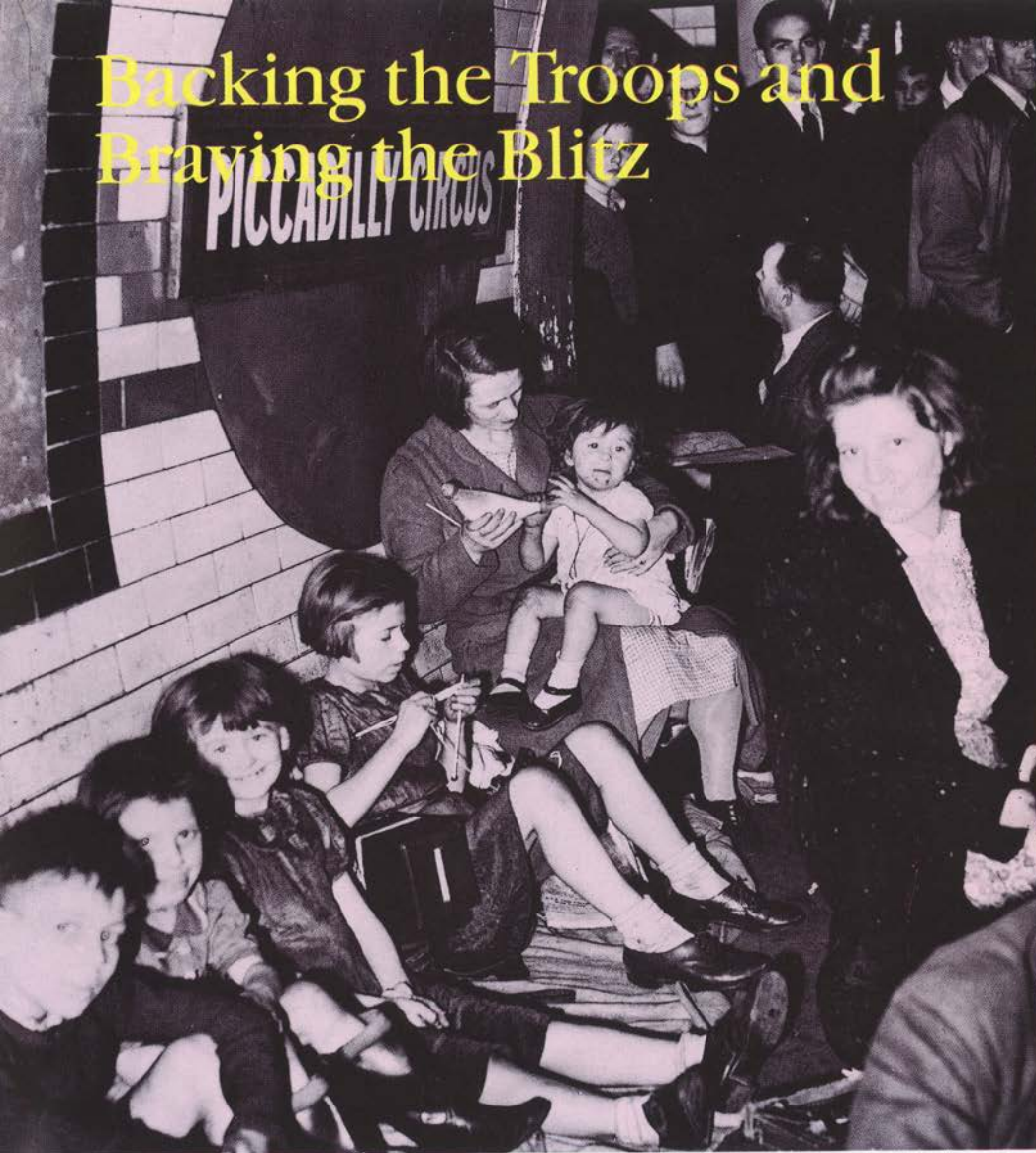


NUDAW Industrial General Secretary Joseph Hallsworth and General President John Jagger MP, in front of one of the Union's canteens on the occasion of the inspection of the canteens by His Majesty King George VI.

NUDAW donated four mobile canteens, maintained by the Y.M.C.A, serving in Warwick, Oxford, Ripon and Glasgow. An additional canteen bearing the Union's name was donated solely for the use of overseas forces.



Backing the Troops and Braving the Blitz



Nightly bombings forced Londoners to take shelter in the underground stations.

Cities were being bombed on a far greater scale than in the First World War — many shops were destroyed and many lives were lost. Living under the threat of nightly bombings, it was not unusual to turn up for work and, before the day's work could begin, a bomb-damaged shop had to be cleared up.

If anyone were injured while working through an air raid 'alert' then, for eight weeks, payments due under the Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme were made up to normal wages.

Members of the Union, male and female, were often compulsorily transferred into essential industries. A former grocer could find himself in a shipyard, or a milliner find herself in a tank factory.

During the war 2,047 NUDAW members lost their lives in the forces. In addition, 140 members were killed in aerial attacks on Britain.

In a blitzed area people often had to queue for water from a fire hydrant and when supplies of water, food and fuel were disrupted, local committees helped in the distribution of essential supplies.

But life went on and cafes, cinemas and theatres all opened their doors unless the air raid sirens sounded.

Victory in 1945 marked the end of World War II and the same year Labour won its greatest-ever victory.

A Century of Service

One Union for the Distributive Trades

Harold Fielding

presents on behalf of

U.S.D.A.W
A CONCERT
celebrating the
formation of the

UNION OF
SHOP,
DISTRIBUTIVE AND
ALLIED WORKERS

The One Union for all
Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

ROYAL ALBERT

— HALL —

Manager: C. S. Taylor

Friday April 11th
1947 at 7.30p.m

To mark the formation of Usdaw, and to publicise the Union's campaign for a £5 minimum wage for a 40-hour week — a series of 'campaign concerts' were held.

At London's Royal Albert Hall famous *artistes* of the day — including Jack Train, Carroll Gibbons, Webster Booth and Anne Ziegler — entertained the vast audience. Later, to enthusiastic applause, Sir Joseph Hallsworth promised that shopworkers would never go back to 'the days of servitude and the evils of the past'.

Manchester and Birmingham hosted similar events. At Manchester's Belle Vue, an audience of 5,600 attended while 2,000 more braved wintry conditions to attend Birmingham's town hall.



Discussion on amalgamation began as far back as 1904. In both 1926 and 1937 ballots had taken place for amalgamation but had failed in recording the necessary number of votes. In addition to these two ballots, many discussions had ground to a halt over the years for one reason or another.

For more than 50 years the two Unions had lived uneasily together, often competing for the same members. NUDAW had much the greater number of Co-operative members and the NAUSA&C were stronger in the private distributive trades and, in particular, had a wide range of agreements with the multiple firms.

In 1945 the two Unions finally reached agreement on amalgamation but the ballot was delayed as NUDAW had over 80,000 members in the forces and the NAUSA&C had 30,000 scattered around the world on land and at sea. Many of these members were still abroad in 1946 when the ballot took place and strenuous efforts were made to contact them in order to secure a large and favourable vote.

The ballot was successful and on 1st January 1947 the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers was launched.

A Century of Service

The Self-Service Revolution



The Co-operative Societies pioneered self-service in Britain, changing the face of shopping for ever.



The introduction of self-service was a new innovation for customers as well as for shopworkers. An Usdaw survey in 1954 found that shopworkers generally welcomed the change.

The self-service revolution reached Britain in the forties. This latest 'import' from America subsequently led to the growth of the large supermarket chains we know today. The number and variety of products available to an increasingly affluent public grew enormously.

The Co-operative Societies pioneered the way and, because the shops were staffed by Usdaw members, the Union had the opportunity to monitor developments. Each converted shop was visited, facts and figures checked with managers and discussions held with the staff.

There were initial fears that self-service would lead to a loss of jobs. However, in 1950, Usdaw's Executive Council declared that with appropriate safeguards it was able to advise members to 'welcome and co-operate in the development of self-service'.

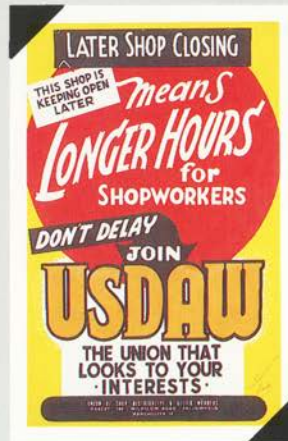
An Usdaw survey, in 1954, concluded that those who worked in self-service stores generally preferred it to traditional shop work.

Self-service spread rapidly into the private sector — though initially it was not always well received. Lord Sainsbury is said to have had a wire basket thrown at him by one irate customer, while another swore at him for expecting customers to do assistants' work! The growth of large supermarkets had a great advantage for Usdaw — they were easier to organise than small shops.

A Century of Service



Shopping Hours in Focus



These five posters were produced in support of campaigns in the 1950s. Usdaw has campaigned successfully for almost 40 years against any changes to the 1950 Shops Act that would have a detrimental effect on the Union's members.

The six posters below were produced in support of a national campaign for Saturday half-day closing in 1948.

That year's Annual Report announced that almost half of the retail Co-operative's food shops closed on Saturday afternoons with many others working various rotas.

Many private trade shops also closed. The initial success of the campaign resulted from the scarcity of goods in those post-war days. Things soon changed with the return to a free market and Saturday became a normal shopping day.



Usdaw and its predecessors have campaigned hard and long to cut the hours of shop assistants and prevent their exploitation.

In 1946 the then Labour Government established a Committee of Inquiry to examine shop opening hours and conditions and make recommendations for change. Included in Usdaw's submission was compulsory 6pm closing with one late night at 7pm. The committee recommended 7pm closing and 8pm for the late night.

When the 1950 Shops Act was introduced neither recommendation was included. Compulsory closing remained at 8pm with 9pm as the one late night, with local authorities given the power to vary the orders. The Act also forbade Sunday trading in general, though there were certain exemptions.

The increasing domination of the retailing industry by supermarkets and hypermarkets has been accompanied by a relentless drive to increase shop opening hours.

Since the mid sixties there have been more than 20 attempts to introduce various reforms of the 1950 Shops Act, in particular to legalise Sunday trading.

Usdaw's campaigns and public opinion ensured their demise.

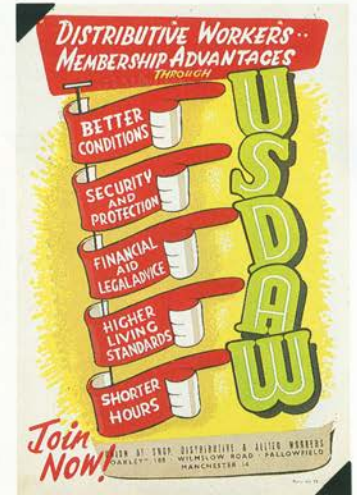
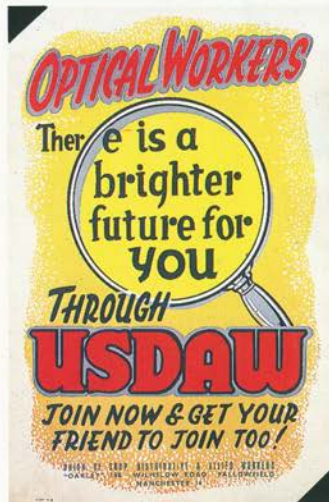
A Century of Service

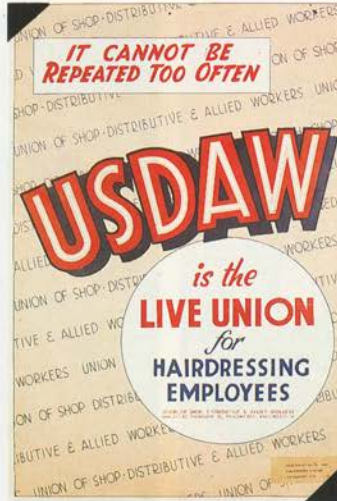
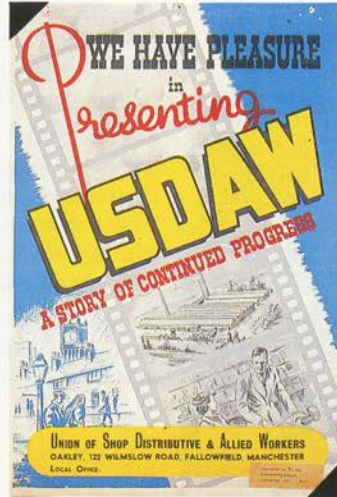
The 1950s and '60s

The collection of contributions was never easy and up until the 1950s had always been undertaken voluntarily. For a variety of reasons the system began to fall down and the Union responded to this challenge by embarking on a policy of persuading employers to deduct contributions directly from wages. This became known as the 'check-off' system. With the system in operation the Union was well placed to boost recruitment in both factories and the high street.



The 1950s and '60s saw an increase in consumer demand for all types of goods and services, which led to new areas of potential growth for Usdaw. Membership grew not only in the distributive trades but also in food processing and milk industries, as well as in parts of the pharmaceutical and related chemical industries.





In the early 1960s Usdaw's objectives were to press for an adequate wage, a five-day 40-hour working week and equal pay for men and women.

The Union won its first individual agreement with the Lewis's group. It provided six days trading, with staff on a five-day rota. Agreement was also reached on five-day working for the multiple grocery trade in England and Wales in 1963, to be followed by a further victory in Co-op retail shops.

In 1961, Woolworth stores in South Wales and Monmouthshire refused to negotiate with the Union for wage improvements, or grant facilities for collecting Union dues. The women marched out of the stores in protest and the company almost immediately announced the introduction of a revised wage scale in their 1,060 stores. Collecting facilities were also agreed.

The Union's most ambitious campaign was targeted at House of Fraser, who refused to negotiate with the Union but nevertheless revised basic wage rates and provided substantial increases.

The end of the decade saw the restructuring of the Union's Divisions and marked the beginning of SATA — a section of Usdaw established to attract supervisory and managerial staff.

A Century of Service

The 1970s



The '70s was a decade of incomes policy with successive Conservative and Labour Governments attempting to control collective bargaining, ultimately to their cost. It was also a period of growing unemployment and spiralling inflation.

Edward Heath's state of emergency, the miners' strike, the three-day week and power cuts led the country to reject the Conservative Government at the 1974 General Election.

With Labour back in power the hated Industrial Relations Act was repealed and replaced by the Employment Protection Act which heralded a massive extension of individual workers' rights.

Since 1979, and the return of a Conservative Government, there has been a steady stream of legislation attacking trade unions and their members.



Usdaw has been to the fore in encouraging mass screening to detect cancer in its early stages. In 1977 the Union's Eastern Division raised money to buy a mobile clinic for the Women's National Cancer Control Campaign.



Usdaw members demonstrate for Equal Rights for men and women at a TUC/Labour Party rally.



The 1970s was a period of rapid advance in both recruitment and the establishment of stronger negotiating and bargaining relationships with a number of major employers.

Usdaw's membership soared from 316,000 to 470,000 by the end of the decade. National campaigns at Woolworths, Boots, major tailoring firms, mail order and supermarkets saw membership reach an all-time high.

Another source of building membership was to come through amalgamation — such a merger took place in 1977 with the Scottish Bakers Union — SUBAW.

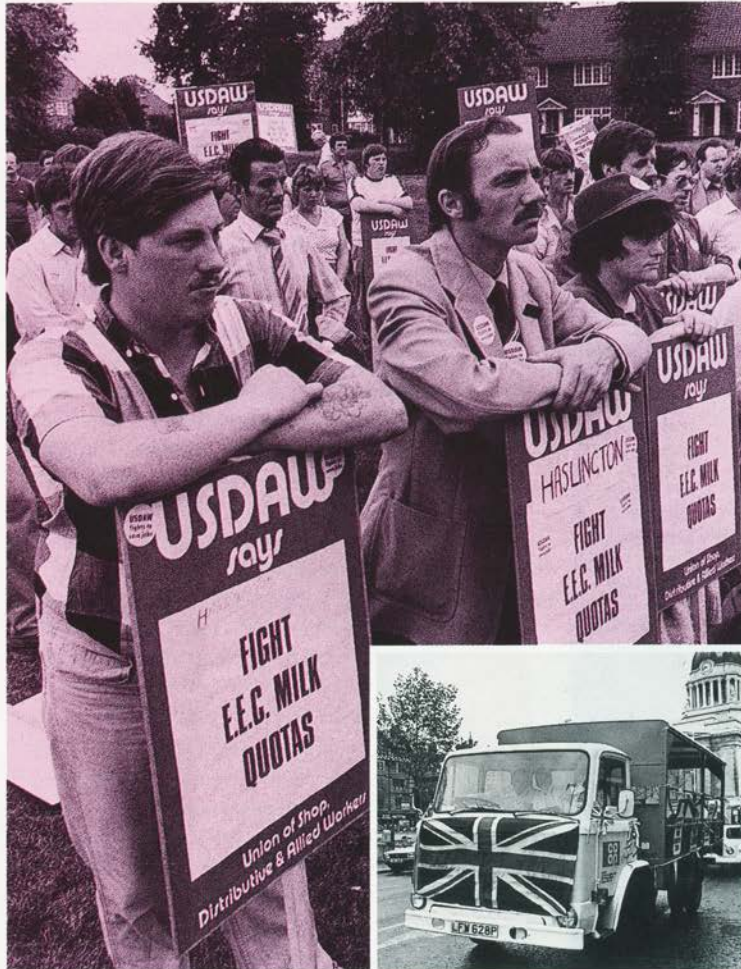
One of the biggest disputes in the Union's history occurred in 1970 when 8,000 CIS Agents went on strike over a claim for a general expense allowance. TUC General Secretary Vic Feather was eventually called in to break the eight-week deadlock. The case was settled by arbitration.

In 1972 the Union faced a major crisis when it was suspended briefly from the TUC. The Tories' Industrial Relations Act had become law and, although Usdaw had fought vigorously against its implementation the ADM failed to support the Executive Council's proposition to deregister.

The decision was contrary to TUC policy and Usdaw was suspended. But a special delegate meeting gave the Executive the authority to comply with the TUC's policy of non-registration. Usdaw was once again a member of the TUC.

A Century of Service

The Early '80s



The successful campaign to save the doorstep pinta gained massive public support throughout the country.



Usdaw banners were well to the fore as trade unionists marched through the streets of Cheltenham to demonstrate their solidarity with civil servants at GCHQ, who were denied the right to belong to a union.



Thousands of Usdaw members took to the streets to demonstrate against cuts to the National Health Service.



During the miners strike Usdaw members generously contributed to the food convoy, which travelled from London to Barnsley to help the Yorkshire miners and their families.

In the 1980s we witnessed a Government hell-bent on destroying Usdaw and the rest of the Trade Union Movement.

Usdaw's emergence as a campaigning union saw members demonstrating on a wider range of issues than ever before.

Sunday trading was again in the spotlight. Usdaw gave detailed evidence to the Auld Committee of Inquiry and mounted a massive campaign to stop a Sunday free-for-all.

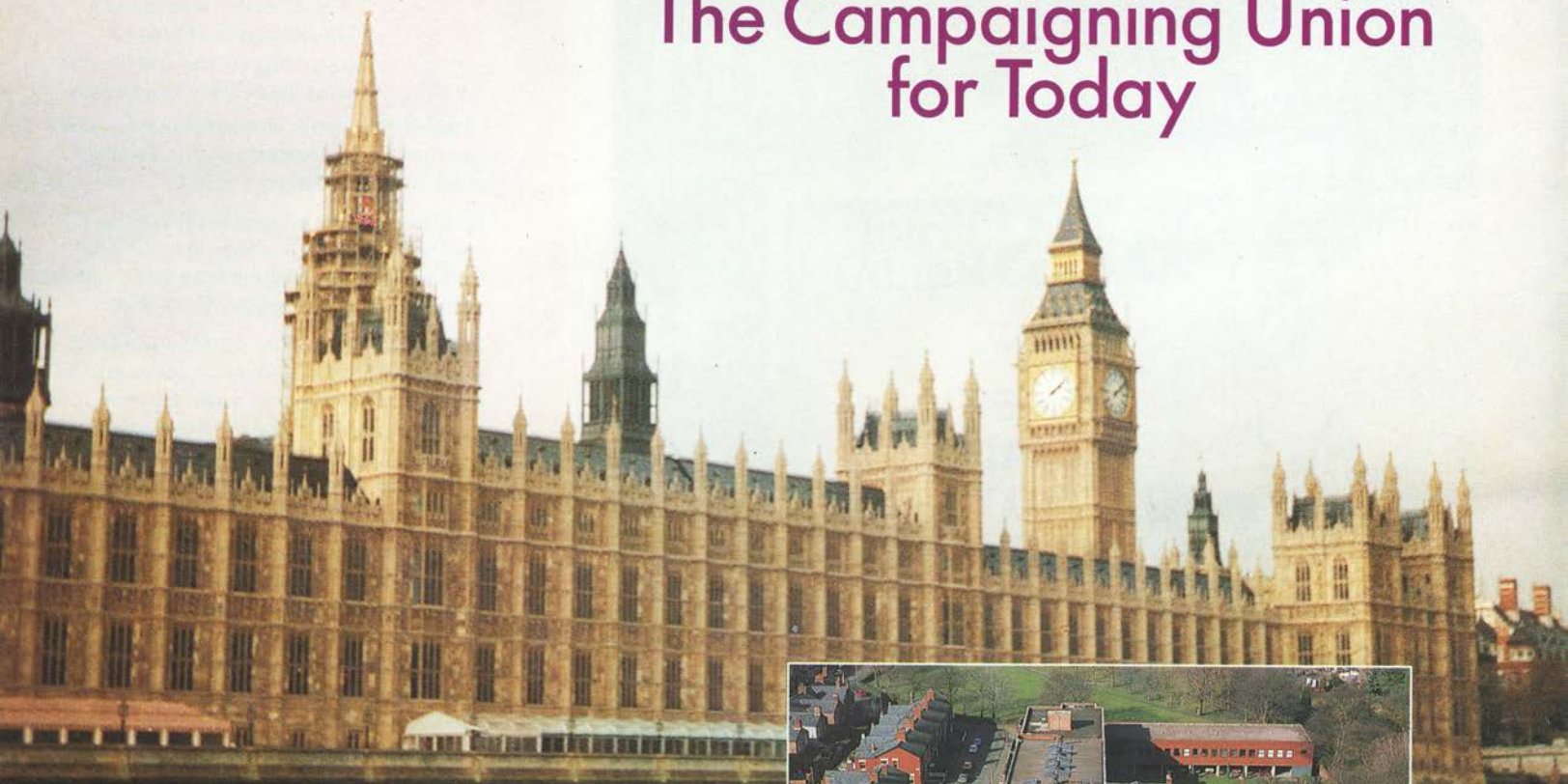
Another highly publicised and successful campaign to save the doorstep pinta gained massive public support whilst Government moves to dilute the power of the wages councils, and threats to axe them altogether, saw Usdaw members united in action once more.

Usdaw members joined fellow trade unionists to demonstrate their total opposition to the Government's Employment and Trade Union Acts. They campaigned on behalf of the unemployed, GCHQ workers, nurses, etc., while their generosity in providing food for striking miners' families was second to none.

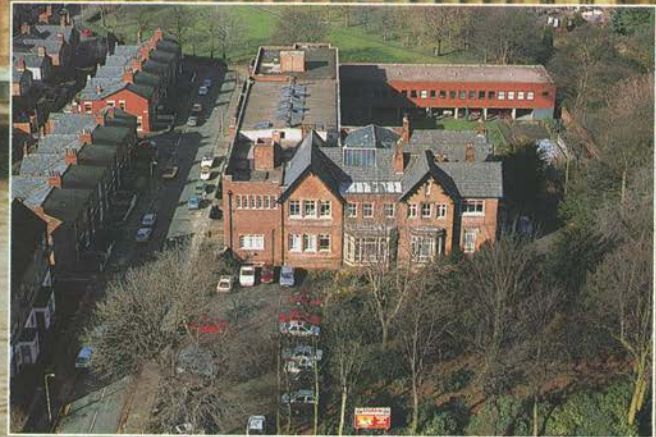
The participation of women in the Union took on a new prominence. A working party to examine their role was formed and its recommendation to set up a network of women's committees was put into operation.

A Century of Service

The Campaigning Union for Today



'Many campaigns need to use political means to achieve industrial ends ... the Union needs a voice in Parliament as well as a seat at the negotiating table.'



D. Garfield Davies, General Secretary from 1986 to the present day, was born in South Wales the son of a Welsh miner.

Before joining Usdaw as a full-time Organiser in 1969 he worked in the Steel Industry, quickly rising through Usdaw's ranks and becoming Deputy Divisional Officer in the Eastern Division in 1972, National Officer based in Manchester in 1978 and General Secretary eight years later.

As a member of the TUC General Council and participating on six other committees, plus his involvement on an international scale as Chairman of the commercial section of Euro-FIET and his lasting concern for black South African trade unionists struggling against apartheid, Garfield Davies shows a deep commitment to the Trade Union and Labour Movement, channelling his energy to further its aims and ideals.



From its earliest days this Union has always been involved in campaigning, but as we begin the second hundred years of our existence the methods we use and the image we project have become more advanced — turning Usdaw into 'The Campaigning Union'.

Our recent past is a solid record of involving more and more members in pressing for specific improvements to our working lives — from raising health and safety standards to opposing seven-day/24-hour shopping, from promoting a legal minimum wage to demanding equal pay for work of equal value.

Our campaigns are also projected into the international arena with our stand against Apartheid and our work within FIET (International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees).

Many of our campaigns need to use political means to achieve industrial ends. We have had to re-learn the lesson of the 1890s that the Union needs a voice in Parliament as well as a seat at the negotiating table ... and that both can be achieved by working together in a modern dynamic Union.

A Century of Service

Action at the Highest Level

These members wore costumes to illustrate the Union's rejection of Victorian values when Usdaw's 300,000-signature petition to Save the Family Sunday was presented to the Queen in 1986.





Shops opening illegally in London's West End on a Sunday brought Usdaw's members out in force.



Young members joined Usdaw Officials in a wreath-laying ceremony outside 10 Downing Street to mark the burial of wage protection for young workers before the launch of Usdaw's Poverty Pay Campaign in 1986.



Usdaw played a key role in defeating the Conservative Government's 1985 Shops Bill, which would have legalised unlimited shopping hours seven days a week. It was the only Commons defeat the Government suffered during the 1980s.

After the Bill was defeated, DIY chains began to flout the 1950 Shops Act on a bigger scale. Usdaw has launched a fresh campaign with Shop Watch teams throughout the country, reporting offenders to local authorities and requesting that they enforce the Act. The Union's action has resulted in many local authorities taking out injunctions against the worst offenders in towns and cities throughout England and Wales.

Another ongoing campaign features the Union's fight to save Wages Councils from abolition. In 1986 their scope and powers were greatly reduced by the Government. The Wages Council system is vital for low-paid workers to stop unscrupulous employers cutting wages and exerting competitive pressure on other employers to follow suit.

The Union has been instrumental in committing a future Labour Government to introduce a National Legal Minimum Wage and an extension of the Wages Council system.

A Century of Service

Political Voice

TUC Anti Poll Tax Demonstration, 1989, Manchester.
Usdaw members led the campaign against the injustices of the Poll Tax.



Result of Political Fund Ballot announcement.
Usdaw members voted 7 to 1 in favour.



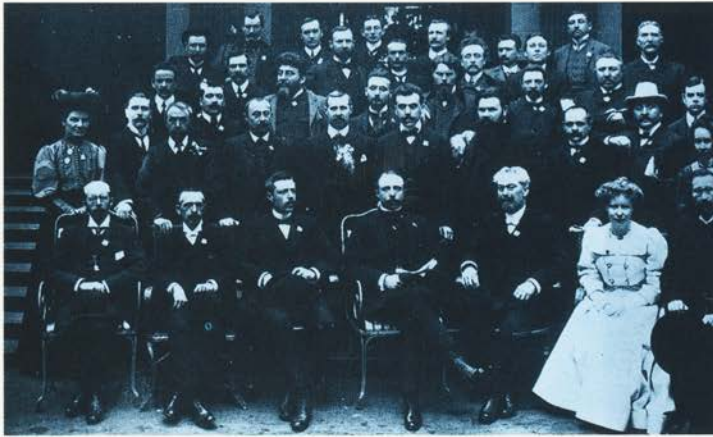
There can be no doubt that Usdaw must retain a voice in Parliament in order to achieve its industrial objectives.

When the law was changed and an affirmative vote of the entire membership was required to retain the Union's Political Fund and continue to be affiliated to the Labour Party or sponsor MPs, Usdaw organised a ballot in 1985 which secured 88 per cent of members voting to retain the fund.

The Union currently sponsors ten MPs to fight for the interests of Usdaw members and their industries. They argue the Union's case during debates in the House of Commons and in the detailed examination of a Bill in various House of Commons' committees. Our MPs ensure that Ministers have to account publicly for actions that affect Usdaw members. They have led the fight in Parliament to block numerous attempts to extend Sunday trading. They also fought to resist milk imports and quotas to save the doorstep delivery service and thousands of jobs in the milk industry. They speak up for the low-paid and argue the need to keep Wages Councils.

More recently Usdaw members played a major role in the TUC and Labour Party's campaigns against the Poll Tax. The Union demanded a fairer system for financing the vital services provided by local Government based on people's ability to pay. It was an historic stand against a monumental injustice to working people on low incomes.

A Century of Service



The Union has always realised the importance of international links. In 1899 the NAUSAW&C was instrumental in the formation of the International Federation of Employees. Pictured here are delegates to the Third Congress of this organisation that met in London in 1906.



Issues affecting Usdaw members can also affect their European counterparts and vice-versa. That is why the Union needs strong representation in the Community.



The Union's interests have never been confined to these shores. It has been affiliated to FIET, the International Federation of Commercial Employees for many years and has provided a President on several occasions.

Also in the vanguard of the anti-apartheid movement Usdaw has campaigned against the repugnant doctrine of apartheid and has never flinched from supporting its sister unions in South Africa.

The Union has encouraged the boycott of South African goods, bringing pressure to bear on the British Government to support International sanctions.

Usdaw's role in campaigning for the adoption of the European Social Charter has so far been successful in reaching the first agreement of its kind, in Europe, on training for shopworkers.

The Union will continue to play its part in Britain and internationally, just as it has done over the many years of its existence.

A Century of Service



The principle of equal pay for work of equal value was pursued and Sainsbury checkout operator, Geraldine O'Sullivan, was backed by Usdaw in taking her employer to an industrial tribunal to gain parity with men in the warehouse. The result: A job evaluation exercise which raised the women's pay and forced other employers to follow suit.



A priority for the new network of Women's Committees was to promote women's health issues. A series of Usdaw booklets on cancer screening and maternity rights attracted wide attention and brought these issues to the top of the bargaining agenda.

Recruitment and the Role of Women



Because of the massive staff turnover in the retail industry Usdaw has to recruit new members week in week out to maintain and build its strength.



Over two-thirds of Usdaw members are women. In 1985 Usdaw appointed a Women's Officer and set up a network of Women's Committees to encourage the greater involvement of women in the Union.

The last 12 months has been a significant period in Usdaw's history. The Union has made great progress in the struggle for women's equality in the workplace. Women are now better represented on the Union's Executive and Divisional Councils — a trend which looks set to continue.

The recruitment of new members is the key to Usdaw's success. Every year the Union has to recruit in excess of 100,000 new members just to keep its membership figure static!

There are tens of thousands of workers who do not enjoy the benefits of Usdaw membership and fresh initiatives are constantly made to bring them into the Union's ranks. Recruitment drives have recently been made emphasising the role of lay members, aided by new publications and videos launched at recent Annual Delegate Meetings.

A Century of Service

The following Co-operative Societies, Companies and Organisations with which the Union has had long association send their good wishes and record their congratulations to Usdaw in the celebration of the Union's Centenary.

AAH Pharmaceuticals Limited
 Allied Maples Group Ltd
 Anglia Regional Co-operative Society Ltd
 Argos plc
 Bluebird Toys (UK) Ltd
 Booker Cash & Carry
 Boots Company PLC
 Border Regional Co-operative Society Limited
 Bowyers (Wiltshire) Limited
 Brighton Co-operative Society Ltd
 British Bakeries Ltd
 British Cocoa Mills (Hull) Ltd
 Brooke Bond Foods Ltd
 Cavaghan & Gray Ltd
 Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society Ltd
 Chesterfield and District Co-operative Society Ltd
 Christian Salvesen PLC
 Clydebank Co-operative Society Ltd
 Colchester & East Essex Co-operative Society Limited
 Co-operative Bank plc
 Co-operative Insurance Society (CIS)
 Co-operative Press Limited
 Co-operative Retail Services Ltd
 Co-operative Union Ltd — Co-operative Employers Association
 Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd
 CWS Ltd — Scottish Retail Group
 Dairy Crest Limited
 J.H. Dewhurst Limited
 Dollond & Aitchison Group PLC
 Dumbarton Equitable Co-operative Society Limited
 East Angus Co-operative Society Limited
 East Lothian Co-operative Society Limited
 East Mercia Co-operative Society Limited
 Elida Gibbs Limited
 Empire Stores Limited
 Enfield & St Albans Co-operative Society Ltd
 Federal Express Europe Inc.
 FIET — International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees
 Fine Art Developments p.l.c.
 Granada Motorway Services Ltd
 Greater Nottingham Co-operative Society Ltd
 GUS Catalogue Order Limited

David A. Hall Ltd
 Walter Holland & Sons
 IKEA Ltd
 Invicta Co-operative Society Limited
 Ipswich Co-operative Society Ltd
 Jus-rol Ltd
 Kellogg Company of Great Britain Limited
 Kent Co-operative Society Ltd
 Kilsyth Co-operative Society Ltd
 Kraft General Foods Ltd
 Kwik Save Group Plc
 Leicestershire Co-operative Society Ltd
 Lewis Woolf Griptight Limited
 Lincoln Co-operative Society Ltd
 The Littlewoods Organisation PLC
 Littlewoods Pools Ltd
 L'Oréal Golden Ltd
 Wm Low & Company Plc
 Macfish Ltd
 Makro Self Service Wholesalers Limited
 Mattessons Wall's Limited
 Milk Marketing Board
 Milton Keynes Co-operative Society Ltd
 Wm Morrison Supermarkets Plc
 Moy Park Ltd
 Musselburgh and Fisherrow Co-operative Society Ltd
 National Co-operative Chemists Limited
 Nestlé Company Ltd
 Nith Valley Co-operative Society Ltd
 North Eastern Co-operative
 North Tayside & Strathaven Co-operative Society Ltd
 North Yorkshire Co-operative Society Limited
 Northern Co-operative Society Limited
 Norwest Co-operative Society Ltd
 Norwich Co-operative Society Ltd
 OP Chocolate Limited
 Oxford & Swindon Co-operative Society Ltd
 Parke-Davis & Co Limited
 Pilkington Studios
 Plymouth & South Devon Co-operative Society Ltd
 Portsea Island Mutual Co-operative Society Ltd
 Radstock Co-operative Society Ltd
 John Rannoch Ltd

Rounds Co-operative Society Ltd
 RHM Foods Limited
 RHM Retail Ltd
 Roche Products Limited
 Rockware Glass Limited
 Rowntree Mackintosh
 Scottish Midland Co-operative Society Limited
 Sears Menswear Plc
 Sheffield Co-operative Society Ltd
 Shoefayre Limited
 Smith & Nephew plc
 South Midlands Co-operative Society Limited
 St Ivel Ltd
 Stewarts Supermarkets Limited
 Stocks Lovell Limited
 Sutcliffe Catering Group Limited
 Tees-side Wholesale Meat Co Ltd
 Tesco
 Thomson Directories Ltd
 Trades Union Congress
 Tuckfeed Limited
 Unigate PLC
 United Biscuits (Holdings) Plc
 United Co-operative Dairies Limited
 United Co-operatives Limited
 United Glass Limited
 Unity Trust Bank plc
 Weetabix Limited
 West Midlands Co-operative Society Limited
 J.D. Williams Group Ltd
 Woolworths p.l.c.

On behalf of the TUC General Council, I wish to convey congratulations to Usdaw on commemorating its 'Century of Service' as a trade union.

For very nearly the whole of this hundred years, Usdaw and its forerunner unions have been affiliated to the TUC. Three leaders of your Union have been Congress Presidents and a number of active lay members have been the recipients of TUC Gold Badges. Your Union has a proud history in campaigning on behalf of all workers.

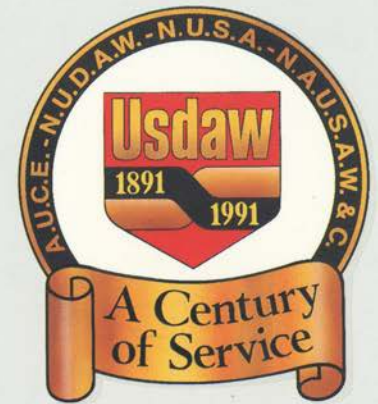
Good luck and best wishes for the next hundred years.

Yours sincerely,
 Norman Willis, TUC General Secretary

Credits: Dave Hawkins; John Smethurst (Badges); Frank Whitelaw.

Photography: Co-operative Union Ltd; Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd; Profile; Andrew Wiard; Beamish Museum; London History Workshop Centre.

World Map: Cartographia Ltd (Tel: 071-404 4050)



Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers



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