George Hardy Papers, 1933-1985

Prepared by The Labor Archives and Research Center staff.
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© 1992, revised 2014
Title: George Hardy papers  
Date (inclusive): 1933-1985  
Collection number: larc.ms.0078  
Accession number: 1991/055  
Extent: 0.8 cubic ft. (1 manuscript box, 1 oversized scrapbook)  
Creator: Hardy, George, 1911-1990  
Repository: Labor Archives and Research Center  
J. Paul Leonard Library, Room 460  
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Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English.  
Abstract: Consists of a selection of George Hardy's papers, including personal files, correspondence, clippings, materials relating to the George Scalise case of the 1930s, a biography titled "So Much to be Done: George Hardy's Life in Organized Labor," and an oversized scrapbook from the Theater Janitors Strike in 1951. The bulk of the papers and records from George Hardy's term as President of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) are held by the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.  
Location: Collection is available onsite.  
Access  
Collection is open for research.  
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Preferred Citation  
[Identification of item], George Hardy Papers, larc.ms.0078, Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.  
Acquisition  
This collection was donated to the Labor Archives and Research Center in May and June 1991 by Joan Hardy Twomey, daughter of George Hardy, President-Emeritus of the Service Employees International Union, as accession number 1991/055. This donation also included photographs which have been processed as the George Hardy Photograph Collection 14 (accession numbers 1991/055 and 1992/027).  
Processing Information  
The collection was processed by Carol Cuenod in July 1992.  
Biography  
George Hardy (1911-1990) served as President of the Service Employees International Union from 1971-1980. Born in North Vancouver, British Columbia, Hardy came to San Francisco as a child in the 1920s and grew up in the working-class Hayes Valley neighborhood. He followed in his father Charles "Pop" Hardy's footsteps, working as a janitor and joining the Theater Janitors Local 9 of the Building Service Employees International Union (BSEIU) in 1932. Pop Hardy was elected President of Local 9 and became a Vice President of BSEIU. George Hardy worked with his father on strikes and organizing campaigns, including the San Francisco General Strike of 1934. After serving as a radio operator with the 644th Tank Destroyer Battalion in WWII, Hardy returned to California and organized service workers throughout the state. By 1947, he and his followers had secured contracts for janitors, maintenance workers, hospital staff and public employees in Los Angeles, forming 8 locals which eventually merged to become Local 399, the second-largest local in the BSEIU. Pop Hardy died in 1948 at the age of 56. George Hardy, now President of Local 399, was elected to fill his father's vacancy on the BSEIU International Executive Board. In 1950 he formed the SEIU Western Conference to promote cooperation between locals from San Diego to Seattle, and became increasingly involved in political actions for the Democratic Party. During the 1960s he also turned his efforts to organizing health care workers, who had been largely unprotected by the
National Labor Relations Act until 1962. By the time he was elected President of the International Union in 1971 (the organization became known as the Service Employees International Union in 1968) Hardy had raised SEIU membership in California to over 105,000.

As SEIU President, Hardy continued to grow the membership through organizing efforts and affiliations with smaller unions. He was nominated to a seat on the Democratic National Committee in 1973 and sat on President Nixon's Cost of Living Council. Under his leadership, the SEIU became the largest health care workers' union in North America. Hardy retired in 1980 at the age of 69. He died ten years later on September 13, 1990 in San Francisco.

Sources:

Arrangement
Collection is arranged in 3 series.

Scope and Contents
Consists of a selection of George Hardy's papers, including personal files, correspondence, clippings, materials relating to the George Scalise case of the 1930s, a biography titled "So Much to be Done: George Hardy's Life in Organized Labor," and an oversize scrapbook from the Theater Janitors Strike in 1951.
Series I holds items which were created by or about Hardy. The biography, "So Much to be Done: George Hardy's Life in Organized Labor" was prepared for the dedication of the George Hardy Center in Los Angeles. It offers a comprehensive account of Hardy's life beginning with his family background up to his retirement as SEIU president.
Series II contains material which was generated by the SEIU. Most significant is correspondence in two folders titled "George Scalise Case." Scalise was BSEIU president until 1940 when he was jailed for extortion and income tax evasion. Both George Hardy and his father, "Pop" Hardy, took leading roles in fighting this corruption within the union. There is textual and visual material in an oversize scrapbook which is part of this accession. The inclusive years are 1951-1952 and researchers will find a good collection of handbills, clippings and correspondence from the Theater Janitors' strike in 1951.
Series III contains pages from an oversized scrapbook on the Theater Janitors' strike of 1951.

Separated Material
Visual material from this accession is listed in the George Hardy Photograph Collection (larc.pho.0014).

Related Material
The SEIU Executive Office: George Hardy Records are held by the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.

Indexing Terms
Hardy, George, 1911-1990.
Service Employees International Union.
Building Service Employees International Union.
Labor unions--Organizing--California.
Cleaning personnel--Labor unions.

Series I: Personal Files 1933-1985
Box-folder 1/1
George Hardy: application for membership in BSEIU Local 9 1933
George Hardy: honorable discharge from U. S. Army 1946
George Hardy: outline for job performance by office staff undated
George Hardy: letters by John O'Doyle (GH pseudonym) re San Francisco Labor Council 1969
Box-folder 1/2
"So Much to be Done': George Hardy's Life in Organized Labor" 1980
Congressional Record, "A Tribute to George Hardy" 1980-06-18

Box-folder 1/3
George Hardy: clippings, citation 1947-1985

Series II: SEIU Files 1934-1981
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box-folder 1/4</th>
<th>SEIU: unfinished manuscript on history of BSEIU (1902-1936), Chapters I - IV undated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/5</td>
<td>SEIU: correspondence, general 1939-1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/6</td>
<td>SEIU: leaflets, newsletters, general circa 1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/7</td>
<td>SEIU: George Scalise Case, correspondence 1934-1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/8</td>
<td>SEIU: George Scalise Case, correspondence 1934-1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/9</td>
<td>SEIU: George Scalise Case, clippings 1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/10</td>
<td>SEIU: Theater Janitors' strike, San Francisco 1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/11</td>
<td>SEIU: Charles Hardy's application for union membership, dues record 1937-1948</td>
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</tbody>
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**Series III: Theater Janitors' Strike Scrapbook 1951-1953**

- Page 1-12: Newsletters, clippings, leaflets, correspondence 1951
- Page 13: California State Council of BSE and clippings 1951
- Page 14, 26: Janitors strike in Boise, Idaho, clippings 1952
- Page 15-16: Organizing of hospital workers 1952
- Page 17: General booklets and cards 1952
- Page 18: General leaflets 1951-1952
- Page 19-22: General clippings, booklets, leaflets 1951-1952
- Page 23-24: General union newspapers 1951-1952
- Page 25: BSEIU Western Conference in Eureka 1951
- Page 27: Newspapers, unmounted 1951-1953