

order to keep some labour halls open. After spending \$50,000 since May, they now struggled cover expenses.⁷² The Lake Carriers', on the other hand, declared victory in its 1909 *Annual Report* and that the successful drive for the open shop principle had demonstrated its necessity going forward.⁷³ For all intents and purposes, the sailor strike ended at the close of navigation in 1909 existing only as a symbolic effort until it officially ended in 1912.⁷⁴

Defeat and Its Aftermath

At the start of the 1909 strike the International Sailors Union had counted 25,000 members in the US and Canada through its Lake Seamen's Union affiliate. In 1910 it fell to 16,000 with most of the losses coming from the Great Lakes. That number continued to stagnate for decades to come. While a core of members remained, their influence proved limited. The longshoremen, though they managed to avoid the LSU's fate, also found themselves isolated and retreated from any further confrontations even as they lost work to automation and non-union labourers.⁷⁵

The years after the strike brought further changes to the Lakes shipping industry. Within a few years, five large fleets dissolved due to financial misadventure. The Hawgood fleet collapsed in 1913 because of overextension and insolvency. That same year the Gilchrist fleet merged with the United States Transportation Company. The Mitchell, and Wolvin fleets joined the powerful new Interlake Steamship Company of the mining firm Pickands, Mather Company that was managed by Harry Coulby. Though independent fleets such as Hutchinson, Tomlinson, and Wilson Transit survived and prospered, the days of "wild tonnage" ended as the transport system became increasingly structured and rationalized both in cargo and labour. Even during the First World War, when so many industries either nationalized or put aside their interests to serve the war effort, the Lake Carriers' gave only the ground it had to. It would balk the US federal government both during the war and into the 1920s as the newly formed US Coast Guard attempted to have a greater say in Great Lakes navigation.⁷⁶

72 Statement by Edward Stack and Michael Casey, 23 November 1909, Box 2, Folder: Letters About the Strike, 1909-1911, ISU-DPL.

73 *Annual Report of the Lake Carriers' Association*, (Cleveland: Lake Carriers' Association, 1909), 2.

74 Victor A. Olander to D.S. Alexander, 12 June 1910, Box 2, Folder: Letters About the Strike, 1909-1911, ISU-BHC-DPL; "Says Report is not True: Official Denies that Strike of Marine Firemen and Cooks is Ended," *DNT*, 27 April 1911; Michael Casey to Robert Clarke, 29 December 1911, Box 3, Folder: Milwaukee, 1911, ISU-DPL; House Committee on Investigation of United States Steel Corporation, *Hearing on United States Steel Corporation, Part 45*, 62nd Congress, 2nd sess., 1912, 2995-3028.

75 Paul F. Brissenden, *Employment System of the Lakes Carriers' Association* Its Bulletin No. 235 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918) 20-27, 153.

76 "Gilchrist Boats Seized," *SSMEN*, 21 January 1910; "48 Gilchrist Vessels are Sold at Auction," *DNT*, 7 March 1913; "Gilchrist Fleet is Nucleus of Merger forming Interlake Steamship," *Grand Rapids Press*, 26 April 1913; Brissenden, 32-33; Russell, 78.