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RUFUS ODILL, sworn, testified:

EXAMINATION BY MR. DALY,

Q Where do you reside, Mr. Odell?

A At the textile Camps, East Park and Gibson Sts.

Q How long have you been there?

A Been there ever since about the first of the strike.

Q Were you one of the original strikers at this mill?

A No Sir.

Q What position do you hold out at the textile Camp?

A I am special officer in the camp.

Q By whom are you appointed?

A I am sworn in by the city. The textile people had me appointed through the city and sworn in.

Q You are really an officer for the city?

A Yes Sir, special officer.

Q Are you a member of the Local?

A Yes Sir.

Q What is the number of that Local?

A 886.

Q How many members has that local?

A I suppose about 1400 or 1500 on the book.

A Are you a native of Georgia?

A No Sir, I am a native of South Carolina.

Q How long have you lived in Georgia?

A I first came to Georgia in 1897.

Q Have you been here ever since?

A No Sir, I was here continuously until about 1907.

Q Then where did you go?

A I went to Carolina, Ware Shoals, S. C.

Q What is your real business?

A Weaver.

Q A mill weaver by profession?

A Yes sir.

Q In how many mills have you worked in the South just name some of the mills.

A The Fulton, Ware Shoals Manufacturing Company, Ware Shoals, S. C., Grindle Mills, Anderson Manufacturing Company, Anderson, S. C., and also Dublin Manufacturing Company, Dublin, Georgia, and the Swift Manufacturing Company, Elberton, Georgia.

Q How long did you work in the Fulton Bag Mills?

A I went to work in 1897. I worked there, I say, continuously - there was two or three times I was out four or five months at a time - up until 1907. I left the employment of the Fulton mill and went to Ware Shoals, S. C., and stayed there up until 1911, I believe, maybe 1912.

Q And then came back to the Fulton Mills did you?

A Well I went to Anderson, S. C. , but did not stay there but two or three months until I came back.

Q Then in all you have worked in the Fulton Mills five or six years?

A Yes Sir, more than that.

Q Seven years?

A Yes Sir.

Q Do you know Mr. Oscar Elias of the mills?

A Yes Sir.

Q Personally?

A Well, I never had any personal business particularly with him.

Q Do you know his father, Jacob Elias?

A Yes Sir.

Q Have you ever had any business with him?

A Not particularly.

Q Do you know Mr. Florence the paymaster?

A Yes Sir.

Q You have had business with him haven't you?

A Yes Sir.

Q Do you know Mr. Johnstone, superintendent?

A He is the agent; yes Sir I know him.

Q What position did you hold in the mill?

A At the Fulton I was second hand. You can call

it assistant overseer.

Q In what department?

A The weaving department, Mill No. 1.

Q How long were you in that department as assistant?

A A little over two years.

Q Were you there as assistant in October, 1913?

A Yes Sir.

Q That was when the strike first broke out wasn't it?

A Yes Sir, that was the first strike?

Q Did you go out with the strikers at that time?

A No Sir.

Q Were you a member of the Union at that time?

A No Sir, not this Local here.

Q Were you a member of any other Union?

A I have been a member of some organization.

Q Where was that?

A Here in Atlanta, Local No. 59, I believe was the number of it.

Q In October 1913 after the strike was settled do you know whether or not Union men worked in the mills or not?

A Yes Sir.

Q Were there many in the mills then?

A Well, they were kind of organized about that time.

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Q You knew about that did you?

A Yes Sir.

Q Did the men tell you about it?

A Yes Sir, some of them did.

Q Do you know anything about the discharges that occurred after that in your department?

A Yes Sir.

Q What do you know about that?

A The orders I got, you know, was from the overseer in charge of the whole weaving department at No. 2 Mill. He told me the company wanted to get rid of the Union help, but they wanted to get rid of them in a way that would not implicate the company so that they would not say they were discharged on account of the Union; wanted the overseer and secondhands to find some excuse. They wanted some excuse, that was all.

Q Your orders were then to pay particular attention to the finding of excuses?

A Yes Sir.

Q So that members of the Union could be discharged?

A Yes Sir.

Q Did you proceed to find these excuses?

A No Sir.

Q Did the overseer?

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A Not at that time.

Q When did he begin to find excuses at all?

A Well, that began later on from the office sending them names of certain ones they wanted discharged, you know.

Q Sending names in to whom?

A To the overseer.

Q Were those names headed to you?

A The overseer would send for me and tell me to let so-and-so go up to the office and get a settlement; or the overseer would tell him it was because he was a member of the Union?

A Well then if a Union member was summoned he would, he said they were taking too active a part.

Q How many people do you think were discharged say from October, the time of the first strike until May, the time of the second strike because they were members of the Union in your department? Can you give a rough estimate of that?

A I suppose there were some two dozen or more maybe, I would say two dozen.

Q Of your particular department?

A Yes Sir.

Q How many worked in your department?

A Some where right around 530 as well as I remember.

Q Out of 530 that number were discharged because of their affiliation?

A Yes Sir, from the time the Local was organized up to the 20th of May.

Q Of the big strike?

A Yes Sir.

Q Did you ever talk with any official about that situation except the overseer?

A Mr. Johnstone, the agent of the mill, we had some trouble down there about a member of the Local that had been discharged in a department I was working in. Lewis at that time was President of the organization and as I remember it they discharged him and the help in the room got kind of raw from it and they stopped off in the mill, just in that department I was in, the whole department.

Q When was that? After October?

A Yes Sir, it was some time about Christmas probably before Christmas?

Q What happened then?

A Of course the agent and the superintendent both came down in the room and they said all of the hands

could go ahead back to work and whatever grievances they had they would take it up and adjust it satisfactorily, I believe, was about the way they put it.

Q Were the grievances adjusted?

A That was as far as it went in the way of grievances. When they got started up the agent, Mr. Johnstone, in the presence of the overseer and superintendent, Mr. Lyons at that time, said in the presence of us they must "get rid of the Union help down there now and stop that foolishness and stopping off and wrangling down there if they had to shut the room down."

Q That was about Christmas?

A Yes Sir, about Christmas and after this there would be some of them -- before that they wanted you to pick up an excuse -- would discharge them without any kind of excuse. Right on top of that there was three of them probably in a week discharged because of this strike, - Mr. A. K. Wilson, Mrs. McAbee and Joe Conkle. There was three let out, and the company, after making investigation, decided they were the instigators of the strike.

Q You know that of your own knowledge do you?

A Yes Sir, I was told that by the overseer.

Q All this came through the overseer?

A Yes Sir.

Q How long then did you work in the mills after that?

A I worked on up until about the first of May.

Q Did you quit voluntarily or were you discharged?

A I suppose they would have discharged me if I had stayed in the company while longer. I think they were making it pretty hard on me by the complaint. I had taken down a good deal of complaint.

Q Did you tell the overseer or anyone else in there you did not approve of this way of discharging men?

A Yes Sir, I told the overseer and he talked to me back pretty well the way I was talking at that time.

Q He agreed with you they were wrong did he?

A He told me the first time we were talking about this thing, the very first time, he did not mind discharging the help but he did not want to have the responsibility on himself. I told him I did not, and I told him if the company wanted to discharge their help for any other reason than belonging to the Union and for that reason I did not mind discharging them and telling them that when I discharged them but I did not believe in singling out a man and discharging him without some previous excuse.

Q You quit there along in May?

A Yes Sir.

Q About the first of May just before the strike occurred?

A Yes Sir, and worked a notice.

Q Did you work out your notice?

A No Sir, I lacked two days I believe.

Q Did you get these two days pay?

A No Sir.

Q Was that time forfeited on you?

A They paid me up to the time I went out of the mills for the time I had worked. I did not get paid for the weeks notice, but I got paid for the actual time I worked.

Q Then they did not forfeit any money on you?

A No Sir, there was not any forfeit, they held back, at the time I left their employment, \$1.25 I believe and about a 15¢ fine, ten or fifteen cents fine came out of that and I got the rest.

Q Were you a member of the Union when you quit?

A No Sir.

Q When did you join the Union?

A It was abng in June I reckon somewhere, sometime about the 1st of June, 1914 I think.

Q That was after the strike of May 20th?

A Yes Sir.

Q You were not at the mill, the, on May 20th when the strike took place?

A I was not in the mill, I was down near the mill.

Q You saw the strikers come out?

A Yes Sir.

Q How many strikers do you think came out that day?

A Just giving a rough estimate I suppose some 200 or 300 came out that first morning; probably 400.

Q Men, women and children?

A Yes Sir.

Q You think as high as 400, do you?

A Probably might be I would not estimate them higher than between 300 and 400.

Q You would think 89 would be too little, wouldn't you?

A Oh, yes, yes.

Q Mr. Elsas stated there were 89. Do you think you saw more than 89?

A Oh, yes, yes.

Q Did you apply for work in any other mills after that?

A Yes Sir, I applied for work about the time the strike came up over at the Exposition Cotton Mills.

Q Where are the Exposition Cotton Mills?

A In Atlanta over here at the far end of Marietta Street.

Q Do you know whome is President of that mill?

A No Sir, I do not.

Q Mr. A. F. Johnson is President?

A I don't know him.

Q What experience did you have over there when you applied for work?

A They sent for the overseer of the weaving department and he came to the office.

Q Do you know the name of the overseer?

A Mr. Hull.

Q You applied to him for work?

A Yes Sir.

Q What did he say to you?

A He says, "Mr. Odell, I have not got anything that would interest you right now. I have not got anything to offer but fixing, and you would not want that." I says, "I am not doing anything, I am out of a job, I might do that." Then he went on to ask me, he says, "It has been reported to us over here that you took an active part with the organization of the Union over at the Fulton Mills. What about it?" I told him I had not taken any active part more than I felt kind of in sympathy with them. He says, "I don't think the company would employ you", or something like that, and that was the

last of it.

Q You could not get work?

A No Sir.

Q The reason being, according to your best knowledge --

A -- that I had taken too active a part in it.

Q That you had been friendly towards the strikers?

A Yes Sir.

Q You know of several mills around through the Carolinas and Georgia?

A Yes Sir, six or seven.

Q Did you sign contracts in all the mills?

A No Sir, this is the only mill I ever signed a contract in.

Q Was the contract read to you, or did you read it when you signed it? You are an intelligent man, I presume you read it, did you?

A I read the contract, but it has been years back. The last time I signed it down there I never read it.

Q What do you think about that contract? Is there much complaint down there about signing that contract?

A Oh yes, a great deal. In fact you've got to catch a man - a man has got to be pretty hard up when he goes in there and in pretty bad circumstances to sign it.

Q There are no such conditions exactly, then, in the other mills?

A No Sir.

Q And you claim that whenever a man signs that he has got to be in actual need for work?

A Yes Sir, that is the idea.

Q He would sign most anything to get a little work for his family's support, I suppose?

A Yes Sir.

Q How about the talk of the people generally in the mill that worked there while you were over there? Did they generally conduct themselves pretty well?

A You mean the officers of the mill?

Q No, I mean the people generally.

A At the time I was in that department I was in I thought I had the best class of help that I had seen since I had been in the mill; ever had any dealings with. That is, for a time I did not.

Q Any disorderly conduct?

A No Sir.

Q Since the beginning of the strike, you have been in touch with it more or less, how have the strikers conducted themselves, generally speaking?

A Generally speaking, I consider their conduct has been good.

Q Do you know anything about the picketing process they have carried on?

A Yes Sir.

Q How have they conducted this picket?

A Fine, peaceably.

Q Do you know anything about the mill village that you lived in?

A I lived in it here years back.

Q Are you a married man?

A Yes Sir.

Q You lived in it years back?

A Yes Sir.

Q What were the sanitary conditions around these houses when you lived there?

A They were pretty rough.

Q How about the toilet system?

A They had their own toilet system. They have made some improvement since the strike has been in progress but the old toilet system had a trough you know.

Q How many toilets to the house?

A One toilet for each house, they had at the time I speak of, with a great long row of troughs right behind the houses you know. In fact you never had a private toilet. It was just public there.

Q Men, women and children going in the same toilets?

A Yes Sir.

Q How many rooms would there be in these double houses?

A In one of these eight room houses I have known as many as four families living in the house, sometimes more. Some of these twelve room tenement houses had six families.

Q All, living together in a house?

A Yes Sir, of course there were partitions between the houses but I have known when they would have to go right through one another's room every time to go to the toilet, but all of the same family of people.

Q You stated you have seen as high as six families in the double houses, is that correct?

A Six in the twelve room houses.

Q The rooms are not large are they?

A No Sir, not as big as this one here (indicating the notary's office at the Court House, about 16 x 20.)

Q Where do they get the water supply from that they drink?

A You know I was telling you about the closets being built behind the houses. They had one sink at that time on each line of closets.

Q Would the drinking water be taken from the city water supply?

A Yes Sir, the city water.

Q In houses in which there were six families how many toilets would there be?

A There would just be one. The trough out there is probably three or four toilets in that, you understand what I mean, a great long building probably twenty or twenty-five feet long connecting little toilets along in there.

Q Several toilets in one building with a partition?

A Yes Sir.

Q For each house there would be several toilets?

A No Sir, no special toilet for every house, they all went back to that one toilet place back there, whatever you call it, whenever they wanted to.

Q Who flushed out the toilets?

A They had a negro that went around and flushed out the toilets.

Q The mill paid the negro?

A Yes Sir.

Q How many people do you think are at the camp now, just offhand? Are there 29 out there now?

A Oh yes Sir, there are something over 100, I don't

know exactly, but something over 100.

Q How many men do you think are there?

A I think somewhere about 60; probably some more.

Q Have you been out of work, Mr. Odell?

A Yes Sir.

Q How about the health of the camp during the winter?

A It has been fairly good.

Q Have they suffered much from colds?

A Not a great deal.

Q Have they suffered much from rain?

A They have had a great deal of rain. I don't think they have suffered.

Q Their health has been fairly good?

A It has.

Q Better than if they had been in the house do you think?

A Yes Sir.

Q You have been fed well at the camp?

A Yes Sir, no kick coming to me at all.

Q Were you discharged by the Fulton Mills eight years ago?

A Yes Sir, at that time they were using, and had put in here what they thought was an improvement on the

ordinary lug strop on a loom; it was a wire and lug strop on the loom I was working on, a 64-inch loom and we had a great deal of trouble with it. Since that time they have thrown them out altogether. At that time they thought it was an improvement. It went on that way and at that time I was Sunday watchman at the mill. So they ordered six dozen long and six dozen short canvas lug strops. I think they had ordered them for a kind of test between the two. At that time I was running a section in No. 1 Mill. Me and the other watchman at the gate one Sunday afternoon went into the storeroom where there is a door leading from the storeroom. You must have an order written by the overseer or second hand in charge of that department. Seeing these canvas lug strops and knowing the trouble we were having with them we decided to take them over to the workbench and use them. We carried them over, me and the other boy and worked at it but we could not use them, and Monday morning, after taking them over there on Sunday, that supplyroom man came over there for them and explained to us what they were for and we gave them back to him. Mr. Klean, so I was informed by the superintendent, got hold of it and gave the overseer, Mr. E. A. Whitley in charge of the weaving at that time, orders to let me and the other man, Smith was his name, go.

as quick as they could fill our places. Mr. Whitley told me about it and the other man. This was on Thursday he told me about it. On Friday I went to him and asked him, I says, "It is nearly Christmas and I am expecting to be out of a job; how would it do to let me go ahead now and see if I can get located by Christmas somewhere?" He says, "I guess, that will be alright. I have not got a man to give the job to, but I think I can get up a man in a few days and let you go ahead." So I got a settlement. He told me he would settle and he being anew man the rule is now you have got to draw your pay yourself. That was the rule then. He gave my wife my ticket. It was due on Saturday after I left on Friday, leaving me from Monday to Friday about 9 o'clock, the day I left the company and the mill. I got a statement giving my time out there and the overseer signed it and the superintendent O. Kid it.

Q Where did you go?

A To Ware Shoals.

Q Did she go with you?

A Not at that time. She went later.

Q Did she make application for your money?

A Yes Sir.

Q What did they tell her?

A That she had to have a written order from me to get it.

Q Did she notify you to that effect?

A Yes Sir.

Q Did you send her an order?

A I did not send that order I sent another in my name.

Q Did she get the money on the order?

A No Sir.

Q What did they say?

A Said I could get it myself.

Q Did you make application yourself?

A Yes Sir, I made application myself on Firday, the next morning, the last of June or first of July.

Q Did they pay you then?

A Yes sir, after a heated argument they paid it. I think I had taken up a day anda half time visiting the office, besides the trip here from Ware Shoals and back.

Q Did you have any other experience on your time except what you have stated?

A Well, no, not personally.

Q Did you have any other experiences of that kind in other mills in Georgia?

A No Sir.

Q Anywhere else you have worked?

A No Sir.

Q Comparing this mill with the other mills in which you have worked as to working conditions, how would class this Fulton Mill?

A Well, it is about the worst that I have had any dealings with, or anything like that, the rules and system and so forth.

Q Did you ever hear tell of a written contract being required in any other mill?

A Never did.

Q You gave out the checks in your department, didn't you, check for employees to draw the money?

A I assisted the overseer.

Q When a man was out one day when they had the sixty hour rule, or two days under the fifty hour rule, you would have to hold up the checks?

A Yes Sir, that was the rule of the company.

Q Regardless of who it was?

A Yes Sir, and if they were sick we had to take them up to the office.

Q Did they give them the money if they were sick?
there was a sick family.

A I know focases where they have not. Some of them have, I suppose, they a doctor to investigate. It all depends on how they stand in with him more than anything else.

Q Dr. Hawkins?

A Yes Sir.

Q How long has he been there?

A About two years.

Q He visited the families?

A Yes Sir.

Q And reports back to someone?

A Yes Sir.

Q Explain the dockings in your room? The weaver, the loomfixer, and also what you were docked yourself.

A They have a rule down there when the cloth is laid out in seconds that the overseer takes the second hand, the loom fixer and the weaver up to the cloth room and they charge the weaver the price of the product that he receives from it for the amount of bad cloth thrown in, the loom fixer is fined 20% of the weaver's fine and the second hand in charge of the room 4%. That is the system of dockage.

Q Without any fault they fine the weaver?

A Fine the loom fixer and the second hand.

Q The whole three?

A Yes Sir, the whole three on that one piece of cloth.

Q Do they take them in and show them the cloth?

A Yes Sir; take them in and say, "Here is your piece of cloth", so he can in this way make the fine.

Q On Saturday night what is deducted from the pay envelopes? That is would the pay envelope say why you were fined?

A No Sir, "fined so much".

Q And "balance due so much"?

A Yes Sir.
