# ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
# WITH
# WILLIAM HALL

Interviewers: Alice M. Hoffman
Greg Geibel
Date: August 4, 1974

# INTRODUCTION

Born in Chicago in 1910, Bill Hall left school after the eighth grade and in 1925 became an apprentice to the photoengraving trade in a non-union shop, John and Ollier Engraving Company, which required him to sign a yellow dog contract.

Having become a journeyman in 1930, Hall became active in efforts to organize Chicago Local 5 of the International Photoengravers Union. Organizing activity, impeded by the adverse conditions of the depression, resumed in earnest in 1937. Hall, the leader of the in-shop committee in charge of organizing his plant, was aided by union organizer, Larry Gruber. Hall was fired for this activity but rehired as a result of an NLRB decision.

Hall describes some of the issues that led other workers to gain interest in joining the local, job discrimination and security being of major concern. After considerable effort and disappointment, a representation election was won by the union in 1943, but a satisfactory agreement could not be reached because of the company's non-union stance. As a result, throughout the whole summer of 1943, against the directives of Matthew Woll and the War Labor Board and of the Council of the IPEU, Hall and his fellow workers engaged in an in-plant strike, slowing up production to the point that the company was compelled to negotiate a contract. After his participation in the successful organizing campaign of

non-union shops in Chicago, Bill Hall began to become involved in the union political picture. He was elected as a delegate to the 1946 convention and served on his local's executive board until 1949 when he began his movement onto the International stage.

INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM HALL

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INTERVIEWERS: ALICE HOFFMAN AND GREG GIEBEL

HOFFMAN: Place and date of birth. . . .

HALL: My name is William Joseph Hall. I was born in Chicago, Illinois on Mary 15, 1910.

HOFFMAN: Okay, Mr. Hall, why don't you say whatever you think is relevant about your family background.

HALL: I've lived in Chicago all my life. In the earliest years, I began school at Our Lady of Angels Catholic School in Chicago. I attended a number of schools in the Chicago area during my childhood. However, my formal education was limited to the eigth grade, in view of the fact that my father became very ill and died when I was fourteen years old. So at that time, I began my working career. I became an apprentice to the photoengraving trade in 1925 at the John and Ollier Engraving Company.

HOFFMAN: The what?

HALL: The John and Ollier Engraving Company in Chicago.

HOFFMAN: Were you the eldest son, Mr. Hall?

HALL: No. I was the fourth of eight children. I had five brothers and two sisters.

HOFFMAN: Did you live in one of the so-called ethnic sections of Chicago? What was the neighborhood in which you grew up like?

HALL: Well, as I recall, the neighborhoods we lived in, I wouldn't say they were ethnic. In just about every area we did live in there was a cross-section of nationalities in the neighborhoods we lived in.

HOFFMAN: Well, now, were Catholic children in the minority or were you. . . . In other words, did you feel that being a Catholic. . . ?

HALL: In my recollection, just about everywhere we lived the Catholic children were in the majority.

HOFFMAN: So in other words, they were working-class neighborhoods.

HALL: They were working-class neighborhoods, yes. My father was a native Irishman that came to this country about 1895, married my mother in 1903. . .

HOFFMAN: Now, was she native born?

HALL: Yes, my mother was born in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. My father worked at a number of jobs, following his arrival in the United States, and particularly in Chicago, Illinois. His whole family had come over from Ireland at the same time. He worked in a number of jobs on the Chicago streetcars at that time and later then became an engineer for the Chicago Tunnel Company. The Chicago Tunnel Company was an underground railroad in the downtown area of Chicago that transported freight and merchandise from the different railroad stations around the Chicago area at that time. He operated a locomotive, towing these freight cars. Then, following that, became a superintendent of one of the freight stations of the Chicago Tunnel Company. Since then that company has gone out of business, but at that time, it was a very busy enterprise for the moving of freight because at that time most of the transportation was horse-drawn, you known, with the exception of the electric streetcar.

HOFFMAN: Now, was he a staunch union man or not?

HALL: There were no unions involved with the Chicago Tunnel Company, but he was union oriented, yes. He did represent. . . . You know, he did respect the feelings of working people even though he did, later in his career, move up to represent management as a supervisor of one of the stations of the Chicago Tunnel Company.

Following my graduation from school, he became ill again. With the finances of the family at that time there was no question as far as going on to high school. It was out of the question. However, during my first couple of years as an apprentice photoengraver, I did attend St. Ignatius High School at night for two years and then lost interest and then concentrated on the photoengraving trade.

HOFFMAN: Now, how did you come to apprentice as a photoengraver?

HALL: Would it be interesting to say some of the other jobs I had? One of my first jobs before I became a photoengraver apprentice, I worked for Montgomery Ward and Company at the Chicago mail-order house in Chicago. I was doing all right, and I liked the work, and I thought that this would be my career. However, my mother had other ideas. She was very well acquainted with the Ollier

family who were part of the partnership of John and Ollier and insisted that I become a photoengraver apprentice. Because of my feelings for my mother, her word was law. She said, "You become an apprentice photoengraver." So I had to quit the jo at Montgomery Ward. I often think, when I look back at some of the executives there, I'd probably been the president of the company if I'd stayed with Montgomery Ward; but I have no regrets at becoming a photoengraver despite some unhappy experiences during my apprenticeship.

I was indentured to the John and Ollier Photoengraving Company on or about December 1, 1925. At that time, John and Ollier was a non-union shop. The interesting thing about John and Ollier being a non-union shop was that at that time there was such an organization known as the Employing Photoengravers Association, which was an association of non-union employers. When you became an apprentice, you had to sign a contract, agreeing that during your apprenticeship you would respect all of the rules and regulations, the policy of the association that was agreed to by the company that you were going to work for and so forth.

HOFFMAN: In other words, a yellow-dog contract.

HALL: Right. You took the words out of my mouth. It was a yellow-dog contract. Now, during the course of my apprenticeship, I could recognize that the journeymen responsible for educating the apprentices knew that they had no security, and you had difficulty in getting any information from the journeymen at that time to enhance yourself as a craftsman. The apprentice indenture period was five years at that time. During that period of time, the knowledge that you were gaining was limited because of the attitude of the journeymen.

So I became a journeyman in 1930. I knew at that time, if I was going anywhere as a photoengraving craftsman, it would not be in a union shop. So I began joining with some of the other unhappy workers to organize into the local union, which was the Chicago Local Union Number Five, affiliated with the International Photoengravers Union of North America at that time.

HOFFMAN: What kind of a shop was John and Ollier?

HALL: It was one of the major photoengraving shops in the United States at that time. At that time photoengraving was the outstanding process in servicing the letterpress printing trades. While offset lithography was available to anyone, it was sort of floundering around within the graphic arts industry at that time. Letterpress was the thing, and as a result photoengraving was a really prospering industry.

John and Ollier at that time, as I say, was one of the big non-union shops, not only in Chicago but in the United States. At the time, they had approximately 110 production workers. This was apart from the office staff, sales, etcetera. They had 110 people actually in the production of photoengravings on three shifts. The big share of their business was the production of college annuals. That volume of work came in about the early part of January, and they practically worked around the clock into almost the middle of May in order to produce all these cuts to be printed in the college annuals for the various colleges and universities around the country. They did have a tremendous sales staff in this particular field.

They did have quite a volume in servicing the commercial field with ads for magazine, newspapers, and so forth. As I say, it was quite a shop, and the conditions were not the worst. They were maybe just a bit below the wages paid in the union shops. The union shops in the Chicago area at that time were limited because of the anti-union attitude during that particular period from what I experienced from 1925 to 1930 when we came into the depression. It was the depression that terminated our activity as far as attempting to organize the shop. The volume of work was drastically reduced. While there weren't so many layoffs in the John and Ollier Engraving Company, hours of work were cut; as a result, so were our wages. So everyone was experiencing the adverse impact of the depression, and it hit about 1930.

This continued until about 1934, following the election of Roosevelt when he was successful, through legislation, in creating the NLRA that provided the forty-hour week and a minimum of a dollar an hour and so forth. That had a very, how would you describe it?, beneficial effect on all of the working people, not only we that were still employed at John and Ollier Engraving. I considered myself to be one of the fortunate ones because I worked all through the depression. There were times we only worked twenty hours a week, twenty-five hours a week, or maybe thirty hours a week; but nevertheless, I worked all during that time.

Following the NLRA, then came the NLRB and other labor legislation. Beginning with 1937, then, because we weren't being given the consideration, any further consideration despite what we'd experienced during the period from 1932 to about 1936, we felt again that our best interests lie with organizing the union. We were well aware of the fact that, as a result of the enactment of the NLRA, we had greater protection now in proceeding to organize the shop than we did prior to, say, 1930.

So we did approach Chicago Local Number Five of the International Photoengravers Union, and at that time there was a very aggressive organizer for that local, a fellow by the name of Larry Gruber. We contacted him to tell him what our desires were, and he began setting all the procedures in motion to make the necessary contacts and so forth.

We proceeded, and we were successful in getting almost fifty percent of the workers in all departments in the production end of the company to sign authorization cards to affiliate with the local union. In 1938, when I think we had close to fifty percent, we called a meeting of the shop to hear addresses from the local union organizers. By that time, I was the leader of the group, and the in-shop committee moving toward organizing the John and Ollier Engraving Company. We called a special meeting on a Saturday at the German Turners' Hall on Diversy Avenue in Chicago just adjacent to Lincoln Park.

HOFFMAN: What's the German Turners?

HALL: That's an athletic group of Germans.

HOFFMAN: Oh.

HALL: There's another name for it. That was a German neighborhood up in that area of Chicago, and they had various halls around there. So we chose this one, and we did have better than fifty percent of the workers of the John and Ollier Engraving Company at this meeting on Saturday afternoon.

On Monday it became very apparent we had a stool pigeon at the meeting because the company was fully aware of what transpired at the meeting, who was there, and so forth, and who was the leader, with the result that the next day I was fired for my organizing activity. Well, the local union immediately, through Larry Gruber, who was the organizer of the local, filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, charging that I was discriminated against for. . . . Well, the Labor Board at that time really responded very quickly; and at the end of ten days, they had the hearing, and the Board found the company guilty, ordered them to reinstate me with back pay and all other conditions prior to my discharge.

I went back to work. It was very interesting. In dealing with the human element, we had, at the time of my discharge, 50 of the 110 working at the John and Ollier Company on union cards. They were at that time described as Class A cards. It's kind of a secondary card. Once you became a full-fledged member of the union, you got your regular journeyman's card, but 50 of them had that. The

reason for the Class A card was that, while it recognized the status of the individual as a journeyman, it limited his obligation to the dues structure of the local until such time as the shop had a contract. We had 50 of the people on cards at that time, and this was about August of 1938. When I came back into the shop, being forced back as a result of the decision of the NLRB, you can imagine the company was very unhappy and were going to make things as miserable as they could to get me to quit. So you can imagine what my position was. In addition to that I should say, with the exception of one or two, those 50 guys didn't want to have anything to do with me! (laughing)

HOFFMAN: They had disappeared!

HALL: They had disappeared into the woodwork, you know. So I suffered through at first. Then gradually the interest began to develop when they began to recognize the order of the NLRB stuck and they couldn't touch Bill Hall any longer without being again charged with discriminating. Because I had been employed. . . . Remember I told you, I went to work in 1925, and here it was 1938, and they were finally saying that I was incompetent. Well, the Board wouldn't accept that at all. "It took you thirteen years to find out he was incompetent? And you say it wasn't the union activity?" So that's what they based their finding on and ordered the company to reinstate me. Then subsequent to that, as I say, the interest, renewed interest, was generated, and we again accelerated the organizing activity.

HOFFMAN: What was your specific job at the time that you were fired?

HALL: I was a journeyman cameraman, a photoengraver cameraman in the camera department.

HOFFMAN: When they reinstated you, did you return to the camera department?

HALL: Yes, I went back in as a cameraman.

GIEBEL: Can you describe some of the issues or interests at the time that led to other workers gradually returning to their interest in joining the local?

HALL: Number one, there was flagrant discrimination within the plant. Up until the NLRA was enacted, there were key people that got the best jobs, earned the most money. They were key people. The majority were always below. For example, when I became a journeyman, I was making thirty dollars a week. Some of the key people as journeymen were making as high as fifty, fifty-five, and sixty dollars. Those below them were around

forty dollars and less, plus the fact they'd get favored treatment and so forth. There was no question. And that was characteristic of a non-union shop operation at that time and still is today, that the companies picked certain key people and they'd keep the lower echelon within the production area under control, see?, until they'd get enough leadership and develop enough strength and then have to do something. That's exactly what happened here. It was the wages being paid, the hours of work, and so forth, among other things. The lack of security was the major thing. You were always under the threat of being discharged if you didn't respond immediately to whatever directives the company handed down, whether you liked them or not, you know.

HOFFMAN: Now, was this unionization directed solely at the journeymen? Where apprentices involved at all?

HALL: Yes, apprentices were involved. Yes, they were included. And that's another thing. We knew at that time because of our contacts with the local union that there were certain provisions set down in the contract that had controls over how the craftsman provided his services. We knew then at that early date that the contract was a voice, not only as to how we were going to provide our services, but how apprentices would be indentured, to have some control over the influx of men that provided more security for the journeyman that, once he began as journeyman, his job was going to be assured to the extent there was work for him to perform.

HOFFMAN: So that there was a freer atmosphere, more willingness to train the journeymen or the apprentices that were in fact there?

HALL: Under a union-shop contract, more so than here would be in working under non-union conditions. So as I say, the organizing effort was then accelerated, beginning with the early part of 1939. As we came into 1941, we were well on our way to having a substantial majority. In 1942--this was even following the declaration of war on December 7, 1941--if my memory serves me right, it was, yes, in the spring of 1942 we proceeded to a representation election. At that time we had. . . . I couldn't recall the number, but it was an overwhelming majority of authorization cards demonstrating the desire to become affiliated with the union. As a result, we proceeded to a representation election.

The election was held, and we lost the election because naturally the company, after the petition was filed, naturally engaged in activity to counter a favorable vote in favor of the union. As a result, when the election was held, if my memory serves me right, we lost the election by a vote

of about sixty-three against to about fifty-some in favor, you know, whatever the division was between the 110 workers that voted.

Well, we were shocked more than just being disappointed. Those of us who were leading this thing and were the observers at the election were very downhearted coming away, that through all that effort we were unsuccessful, despite the fact that all these people had been on our authorization cards, and then when it came to vote by secret ballot, they turned against us. Well, as time went on, we learned that the company was even more shocked than we were that there were that many workers--almost better than forty-five percent of them--in favor of affiliating with the union. There again, after we recovered from our early disappointment, we again began to approach the people in order to get them to change their minds and so forth. Some admitted that they had changed their mind because of certain things that happened, etcetera.

Well, about 1943, the early part of 1943, the President at that time asked for the cooperation of American industry, union and management, that there be a moratorium on strikes within the industry in order to see to it that we made the major thrust in the war effort. Well, when that came down, our International president at that time, Eddie Volz, at the suggestion of the oficers of the local union, contacted the president of the John and Ollier Engraving Company, who was a Mr. Boothby, saying that we were willing to enter into a pact, that we would not proceed with organizing the John and Ollier Engraving Company during the duration of the war. Well, Mr. Boothby ignored, didn't even respond, to it. Then followed (whatever you would describe it as) a proclamation from the president's office at that time. The company really did a complete about-face to their key people, you know, letting them know this is the way! Oh, really came down! "This is the way this plant is going to be operated. We want every one of you to know this or else!" And they were saying this to the key people who were opposed to the union!

Well, within a matter of days, I had these fellows out to a meeting and so forth, and I said, "Well, do you need anyone to tell you anything further?" Immediately, then, we again proceeded to put the wheels in motion to proceed to another representation election. This is about. . . . yes, it had to be in the winter of 1943. The election took place in about the early part of February. We won the election 101 to 9 the second time we went in, see? Then immediately the company had the obligation to proceed to bargain, and they got one of the most notoriously anti-union legal firms in Chicago--I think part of the firm name is Kirkland, Fleming, in Chicago--to assist them with negotiation.

We went into negotiation, and we negotiated all through the latter part of February into the middle of March, almost a month, and with absolutely no consideration for any progress within the company.

HOFFMAN: So in other words, what you're saying is that the company took this no-strike pledge statement of the Administration as being carte blanche for them to operate the company however they saw fit.

HALL: Right. They didn't have to be concerned about the union engaging in. . . .

HOFFMAN: And that in itself organized. . . .

HALL: Right, the company organized the union in the plant at that time because of their action. It was a real flagrant disregard for the people who were really on their side and were preventing the union from coming in there. With the result, then, we were in negotiations until about the middle of March with no progress. We engaged in strike action, and we were successful; and just about every one of those who had voted in favor to strike joined the picket line. Only ten people stayed in the production end. They weren't able to get anybody. The plant practically had to shut down.

Another interesting thing, Matt Woll was on the War Labor Board and was involved in labor relations, and Matt was instrumental in getting the local officers to have the strike halted because it was not only against the desires of the War Labor Board, it was embarrassing to the International Photo-engravers Union with him sitting on the Board. He prevailed upon them to go back to work, get them to go back to work. We were out three weeks, and we were to go back to work the early part of April, and we would continue to negotiate. Well, this we did.

Nothing happened as far as negotiations were concerned. Again we were just going to meetings and spinning wheels and so forth and were getting nowhere with the War Labor Board at that time, who we expected to offer some assistance to consummate a satisfactory agreement, with the result that we did something here that I doubt would be possible today. We struck in the plant! We called the people together and said, "We've been forced back to work. As long as we continue to produce the same volume. . . ." (telephone interruption) Because of the volume of work that was there to be produced, the fellows after they got back were just going right along; the company would have nothing to be concerned about.

So led by myself and some of the others who were the leaders of the in-shop committee, we called a group of our people together and said, "As long as the production continues at the same rate, the company hasn't got any problem. We've got to slow down and aggravate the situation in the plant." Well, to make a long story short, this went on for about three weeks. I shouldn't say that; it went on for more than three weeks. It went on through the whole summer. It went on for about three months, where gradually the production just kept getting less and less. They had Labor Board examiners in to observe the people at work, and the guys were running around. You'd think they were really trying to break records, like the cameramen.

At that time, we were using wet plate. We'd bring the camera box out, set it on the camera, turn the lights on, and there was nothing in it. We'd run it back in, and nothing was coming out. If somebody did just go through the motion of making a negative or something, they'd put it in a tray and one of the supervisors would come back to finish it. But somebody else would go by and you could run your finger through it, you see? We were utilizing the process then; since that time, it's been revolutionized. We'll get into that later. For example, in the etching departent we put a solution. . . . we would add,(I don't recall now what the chemical was) to the solution that the printer would put on the plate to sensitize it. When we would put the solution on, he would put it under heat in order to dry and harden it. But then when it would come out, when the etcher would get it and he'd put it in the acid bath, the whole thing would come off and the whole thing would etch, you know. And when the fellows were doing this, the guy in the printing room never knew what was wrong (laughs) with his solution.

Another thing, in the line etching department where they made the photoengraving for the newspapers, they'd use dragon's blood. It's a dry, chemical powder. Red. The etcher, after he'd give this the initial etch, he would brush that red powder against the lettering, or whatever the subject was on there, and then put that up against so he could etch it deeper without cutting into the subject, which at that point was in relief. So we would put powdered sugar. .

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HALL: . . . . etching powder would just shoo away. That went on and nobody in the etching department, or anybody. . . Because the way the guys were organized to do this, and one of the reasons for it, was if the management came around or the supervisor to find out what was wrong, the guy didn't know, and he didn't know what to do. So that went on for three months. Finally, and

this was on a three-shift operation with 110 men in the plant, it got down to where on one night only two cuts went out of that plant. The company was powerless to do anything about it. Finally they threw in the sponge, and in September of 1943, we sat down and negotiated a contract.

HOFFMAN: Without these anti-union attorneys?

HALL: That's right. We sat down and we got the same kind of a contract that was in existence in the city at that time, with certain provisions for stepping up and reaching full parity after a certain period of time, in a matter of months recognizing apprentice quotas, etcetera. We had an excellent contract.

Well, then during the course of all this activity, the company would have given anything to see Bill Hall going out the front door and never seeing him return. After we signed the contract and I became the chairman, like the shop steward at that time, then everybody's problem was mine, even the company. I finally went down to the union headquarters, and I said, "Look, I can't take this. I've got my own problems and so forth." And I said, "I want out. I want another job." So they found another job. When I gave management notice--this was the latter part of October now--I gave management notice that I was leaving on December 31. [I said] I'd stay just to keep things in order. It was about October of 1943, and on January 1 of 1944, I went to work for the Ad-Plate Engraving Company.

HOFFMAN: The which?

HALL: The Ad-Plate Engraving Company. And of course my reputation had become known around Chicago. Union shops at that time knew that most of the craftsmen, despite the unsatisfactory conditions, were well trained. So it was known that I was out of John and Ollier. So I only worked at Ad-Plate. . . . I think when I left John and Ollier I was making fifty dollars a week. You know, I'd just been moved up to that. When I went to Ad-Plate, they were paying me sixty-five. I was there about a month and I got a call from somebody else saying this job would pay eighty-five, so I moved.

The result was from 1944 to 1952 I think I had about nine jobs, moving around, and every one moving up. In the meantime following 1944 and the successful organizing of the John and Ollier Company, I began to become involved in the union political picture.

HOFFMAN: Before we get into that, let me ask you just one thing. What happened to the anti-union employers'

association in the meantime of which John and Ollier was a staunch member?

HALL: Well what happened was, due to the accelerated organizing activities in every area of the International Union's jurisdiction and the success, it just deteriorated, went out of existence, because there was no longer that many members. For example, in addition to organizing John and Ollier, which was the biggest shop in Chicago at the time, the local union was successful in organizing about, oh, I'd say fifteen non-union [shops]. The only ones that remained non-union were three shops: Northwestern Engraving, R.R. Donnelly Company, and the Superior Engraving Company. The rest were all union. There were a couple of what we considered bedroom shops that we weren't even interested in--two three-man, four-man shops that weren't of any concern from a competitive standpoint to the industry in Chicago. At one time, the total number of shops under jurisdiction, under contract to the Chicago local, were about thirty-five.

HOFFMAN: I would like to ask you one other question. That is, it seems to me that one might say that Matt Woll had to some extent undercut your organizing effort in his role as a member of the War Labor Board. Did you see it that way as a young worker in the shop or not?

HALL: Yes, at that time. And his image was not the best with the local even at that time. In light of the comment you made, I suppose I should add something very interesting. During the course of our effort to negotiate a contract at the time that we were involved in all of this activity to cut the volume of production down to the minimum, Matt was still functioning on the War Labor Board and was very critical of the activity that was going on in the shop. [It] was again embarrassing--his position on the War Labor Board and also the International Union. Well, the local officers at that time certainly didn't agree with the position that Matt was taking. We'd gone back to work, you know, and weren't getting anywhere, and the local union was taking the position that the conduct of our people within the plant was certainly warranted under the circumstances.

An action was taking place at a convention of the International Photoengravers Union that was in session at the Statler Hilton Hotel in Buffalo, New York. This was in the latter part of August while all of this was going on at the John and Ollier Engraving Company. I'm getting ahead of myself. The fellow that I described as the aggressive organizer of the John and Ollier Engraving Company, [Larry Gruber] during the the course of our organizing campaign became the president of the local, beginning January of 1942.

And at this time that Matt Woll was expressing his dissatisfaction about what was taking place, Larry Gruber received a communication from the International president, Ed Volz, who was acting for the International Council of the Photoengravers, requesting Larry to have the people at the John and Ollier Company to cease and desist in the activity within the plant. He became incensed! We even had an attorney, a prominent labor attorney, Joe Jacobs, who was acting for the local at that time and was sitting with us in some of the litigation we were involved in at the time, supporting the position that Matt Woll was taking at this time, with the result that Gruber fired him as the attorney and said, "You'll never do any business for this organization!"

Joe was a very able guy, but Gruber was very disturbed at what was emanating from the International Photoengravers convention in Buffalo with the result that when he got this request from Volz, he advised Volz that he wasn't going to respond to it. He would bring a delegation of the John and Ollier people to Buffalo and bring them before the council and let the council tell the workers in the plant what they wanted them to do. Gruber then invited me and another fellow, Frank Gruehner,who was one of the active fellows on the organizing committee at the plant. . . .

HOFFMAN: Any relation to Larry?

HALL: No.

HOFFMAN: No.

HALL: Did I say. . . . ? Frank Gruehner.

HOFFMAN: Gruehner.

HALL: Gruehner. See, we appeared before the council, and there was Matt Woll. Well, it's a matter of record. When Matt expressed why he thought the workers in the plant should respect the directive from the War Labor Board, I took Matt apart. You know, after all we'd been through for a matter of five years, 1938 to then, and all of a sudden we just cut it off and just wait for management to make up its mind? The answer was an emphatic, "No!"

So Matt then turned around and said, "Well, okay, have it your way. Do it your [way]." We said, "That's exactly what we're going to do." So back we went. As a result of that, a matter of a week or so later the company capitulated, called Gruber in and said they were prepared to negotiate a contract. They lost thousands upon thousands of dollars. We learned later that they had gone into one of the banks and had to borrow money because of the loss of reve-

nues, you know. So as a result, we were successful in getting that contract. And then I moved out.

In 1944 I was elected a delegate to the 1946 convention. Subsequent to that, in the fall of that year I was elected to the executive board of the local union, and I served on the executive board until 1949. At that time, I was working at the Chicago Tribune in their rotogravure division. That was located on Ontario Street right adjacent to Lake Michigan. It was a separate operation they had at that time. They since have discontinued it; they buy that service outside.

But I liked my job. I was getting tired of all the activity that I had been involved in as an officer and the organizing committee and so forth, because subsequent to organizing the R.R. Donnelly Company, I really became a part of the organizing committee and was working with the group and organized a number of shops following that. I just got tired of the whole deal. There was an election coming up for secretary-treasurer, and I decided, well, I'll make up my mind. I'll either be a full-time officer or I'll get off the Board. Well, I became a candidate along with several others, and I didn't make it, so I was off the Board.

The following year I was prevailed upon to again run for the Executive Board, and I was elected. In the interim period, I was always elected delegate to the convention because my reputation within the local at that time was fairly broad. It was a large local at that time; I think by 1950 we had over 2,000 members in the local.

GIEBEL: About thirty-five shops, you say?

HALL: Thirty-five shops and four newspapers. Thirty-five commercial photoengraving shops and four newspapers.

HOFFMAN: Well, I think, Bill, maybe we ought to bring it to a conclusion because that's the beginning of your movement onto the International stage.

HALL: Yes, right, right.

HOFFMAN: We'll take it up there next time.

WILLIAM HALL

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