



## **Bakers' Union, Local No. 4 Collection (S0117)**

**Collection Number:** S0117

**Collection Title:** Bakers' Union, Local No. 4 Collection

**Dates:** 1911, 1916

**Creator:** Bakers' Union, Local No. 4 (St. Louis, Missouri)

**Abstract:** This collection includes a photograph circa 1911 of unidentified bakers, a photocopy of the Silver Jubilee edition of *The Bakers' Journal* from 1911, and a photocopy of the 1916 30th-anniversary souvenir program for Bakers' Union, Local No. 4.

**Collection Size:** 0.01 cubic foot  
(1 folder)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English and German.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Bakers' Union, Local No. 4 Collection* (S0117); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

**Donor Information:** The papers were loaned for copying to the Western Historic Manuscript Collection by John Romo on November 29, 1983 (Accession No. SA2576).

**Related Materials:** Additional materials related to the Bakers' Union, Local No. 4 Collection can be found in the following collections:

*St. Louis Labor Council AFL-CIO Minute Books*, (S0061)  
*Bakers' Union, Local 4 Records*, (S0182)

**Processed by:** Processed by Rachael Heriford, April 2023

**Historical Note:**

On November 21, 1885, a group of journeymen St. Louis bakers met to discuss improving worker conditions in the St. Louis area. The group decided to send delegates to the first convention of the Bakery Workers' National Union of the United States in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on February 6, 1886. This meeting resulted in the chartering of the Bakers' Union, Local No. 15 for bakery workers throughout St. Louis. The first actions of Local No. 15 included participating in the 8-hour workday movement and electing delegates to the Central Trades and Labor Union. In 1888, Local No. 15 went on strike for an eight-hour workday, but the strike failed due to a lack of leadership and uncertain loyalties of union members. After their failure, Local No. 15 sought to reorganize. The national secretary of the Bakery Workers' National Union, August Delabar, came to St. Louis to oversee the reorganization leaving the group with only 18 members.

The St. Louis streetcar strike of 1900 inspired members to strike against Welle-Bottlers and McKinney bakeries in St. Louis. By 1902, union members achieved nine-hour workdays and increased wages. Another union chapter, Local No. 238, was chartered in August of 1902 because the English-speaking members of Local No. 238 did not want to attend the meetings of Local No. 15 which were held in German. The two chapters were rivals until the November 1906 merger that resulted in the creation of Local No. 4. Local No. 4 led successful efforts throughout the early 20th century to shorten working hours, established the six-day work week, improved sanitary conditions of the bakeries, and the creation of a sick and death fund for union members.

As of April 2023, Local No. 4 is still active under Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers, and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM). Mergers between the Bakery and Confectionery Workers International Union of America (previously known as Bakery Workers' National Union) and Tobacco Workers International Union in 1978, and the further addition of the American Federation of Grain Millers on January 1, 1999, resulted in the formation of BCTGM. Currently, Local No. 4 serves members in four cities in Missouri and Illinois: Alton, Chester, Columbia, and St. Louis.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged chronologically into one folder.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The Bakers' Union, Local No. 4 Collection contains three items: a photograph, 1911 edition of *The Bakers' Journal*, and a souvenir program. The photograph features an unidentified group of bakers circa 1911. The 1911 edition of *The Bakers' Journal* celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Bakers' Union. Topics of interest in the journal include the history of the Bakers' Union from 1885 to 1911, summaries of the yearly conventions, and histories of chapters in the Bakers' Union such as Local No. 85, No. 107, and No. 118. Finally, the souvenir program is from the 30th anniversary of Bakers' Union Local No. 4 and features a German and English history of

Local No. 4 from its founding in 1885 to 1916. The materials in this collection date from 1911 and 1916 and are arranged chronologically into one folder.

**Container List:**

f. 1                      Bakers Union, Local No 4. collection, 1911, 1916

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