

**Finding Aid to the  
United Commercial Travelers of America,  
Fargo Council No. 65 (Fargo, N.D.) Records**

**United Commercial Travelers of America. Fargo Council No. 65 (Fargo, N.D.)**

United Commercial Travelers of America, Fargo Council No. 65 Records, 1898-1950

1 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 278

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[History](#)

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**OVERVIEW**

**Access:** The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

**Provenance:** Donated by the Council, 1987 (Acc. 2207).

**Property rights:** The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

**Copyrights:** Copyrights to this collection remain with the Institute for Regional Studies.

**Citation:** [Identification of item]. United Commercial Travelers of America, Fargo Council No 65 (Fargo, N.D.) Records, MS 278, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

**HISTORY**

The Order of United Commercial Travelers of America was founded in 1888 with the purpose of uniting fraternally all commercial travelers and wholesale salesmen. It was a secret society with local lodges called councils, chartered by state lodges called grand councils. The international headquarters was and continues to be headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. Today it is a non-profit fraternal benefit society offering its members various insurance products and other benefits. UCT also pursues community service activities including youth programs, public safety and drug awareness campaigns, cancer education and prevention, and aid to people with mental retardation. With a total membership of nearly 90,000, UCT

currently has 416 local councils and operates in 47 states, the District of Columbia and 10 provinces of Canada.

Fargo Council No. 65 was organized September 24, 1894 by supreme counselor A.J. Dowd of Chicago, Illinois. Meetings were held in the Knights of Pythias hall until 1895 when they moved to the Odd Fellows Hall. In 1910 it moved to the A.O.U.W. The Grand Council for Minnesota and North Dakota was organized September 29, 1894 at Duluth, of which the Fargo council was a member. By 1895 the Fargo council had eighty-one members and increased to 516 by 1924. In 1950 they had 517 members. By 1987 the council was still in existence, although further details are not known regarding membership.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The records of the Fargo Council No. 65 were found in the garage of a south Fargo home by a new owner. He brought them in 1986 to the Cass County Historical Society at Bonanzaville which in turn forwarded the records to the Institute for Regional Studies. In 1987 the council deeded the records to the Institute. Although inquiry was made regarding additional records of the council, none were ever received. The records received are not complete, especially the meeting minutes. There are no records after 1950. The records have been organized into five series: Constitutions and by-laws, Meeting minutes, Membership, Grand Council of Minnesota and North Dakota proceedings, and Subject files. In addition ten photographs were separated and processed as Photograph Collection 443.

The [Constitutions and By-laws Series](#) includes seven booklets spanning from 1934 to 1950 that cover the supreme, grand and local councils, and were published by the international headquarters in Columbus, Ohio. There are no by-laws or constitutions that apply only to the Fargo council.

The [Meeting Minutes Series](#) is very incomplete and covers only from 1898-1902, 1914-1919 and 1940-1946. The first two runs of minutes are recorded in bound volumes, while those from the 1940s are typed on individual sheets of paper. There is also a folder of meeting minutes for the Executive Committee covering the years 1939 to 1947.

The [Membership Series](#) includes an undated ledger of members that also includes their membership number, actions taken such as transferred, suspended, died, etc. The book appears to cover from circa 1900 to 1928, based upon the actions taken. There is also a "Signature Book" dating from 1921 to 1931 that contains signatures of perhaps new members agreeing to abide by the constitution and by-laws. Finally there are several reinstatement slips from 1942.

North Dakota local councils were part of the Minnesota and North Dakota Grand Council which met annually within the region. The [Proceedings Series](#) contains the published annual proceedings for the years 1915 through 1921 and for 1946, 1948 and 1950. Each is a substantial booklet with minutes of the annual meeting, committee reports, membership statistics, financial reports and listing of local councils.

The [Subject Files Series](#) includes a number of interesting items. There are two histories of the local council. One was prepared by L. Thorsell in 1923. The other is a formal published booklet, published in

1924, that includes histories of the supreme, grand and local councils. It also contains numerous photographs, list of deceased members and current membership. The Manuals include one for the funeral ceremony (1921) and two for general meetings (1905 & 1925). The two installation ceremony manuals appear to be made locally. The Resolutions folder includes three resolutions from 1905 related to railroad transportation issues. There are six Ritual booklets issued by the international office that span from 1910 to 1942. They include how to conduct regular meetings and text to be used. The *U.C.T. Song* sheet contains the words for what likely was the official song sung by members. It was to be sung to *Marching Through Georgia*.

## **BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

<b>Box/Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
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1/1	Finding aid
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### **Constitutions and By-laws Series**

1/2	1934, 1937
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1/3	1938, 1939
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1/4	1941, 1949
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1/5	1950
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### **Meeting Minutes Series**

1/6	1898-1902
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1/7	1914-1919
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1/8	1940-1946
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1/9	Executive Committee, 1939-1940
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### **Membership Series**

1/10	Membership log, ca. 1910-1928
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1/11	Signature book, 1921-1931
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1/12	Reinstatement slips, 1941-1942
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### **Grand Council of Minnesota and North Dakota Proceedings Series**

1/13	1915-1921
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1/14	1946-1950
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### **Subject Files Series**

1/15	Histories, 1923-1924
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1/16        Manuals, 1905-1925  
1/17        Resolutions, 1905  
1/18        Ritual books, 1910-1942  
1/19        *U.C.T. Song*