

**Summary of findings from “The Journal”;
a publication of the Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers & Brass
Workers’ Union of North America.**

1904 – 1929

- 1904 No mention of any band instrument companies in the union.
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- 1906 November: Martin signs a union agreement late in the month.
December: Conn and Buescher sign agreements to join the union.
- 1907 January: Martin is selling cornets with the union label. York & Sons and Lyon & Healy are in disputes and off the union.
July: Buescher, Conn, and Martin are on the union list.
- 1908 January: Buescher is recovering from a financial depression in 1907 which shut down the factory almost completely. They have gradually come back to four-day weeks. Buescher has a new #10 model cornet.
York & Sons is still having trouble with the union.
- 1909 August 31: Buescher is willing to sign a new agreement with the union only if Conn does also.
- 1910 February: Conn is not going to use the union label. Buescher is going to continue.
December: Martin is the only strict union shop now. Conn is putting it off due to building a new plant after a fire on May 22. It is almost completed now.
- 1911 February: Buescher is out with the union. York & Son is to settle a dispute soon and a new agreement is signed.
June: York has unionized and will now stamp instruments.
September: York is all union and bears their label. They have recently perfected a French Horn that is the first in the US.
October: Blessing, Conn, Martin, and York are using the union label.
- 1912 Blessing, Conn, Martin, and York are using the union label.
June: The union rep visited Bryant & Newell Band Instrument Co about using the union label. Conn has signed an agreement and may start the label again. Buescher will follow Conn but few of his workers have signed up.
July: Taylor & Horn of Chicago signed an agreement on July 3.

November: Millard signed on November 15 and will start using the union label.
Grand Rapids Band Instrument Co signed on November 16 and will start using the union label.

December: Union band instrument companies are now Blessing, Conn, Grand Rapids, Holton, Harry B. Jay, Martin, Millard, Taylor & Horn, and York & Sons.

1913 February: Union members are Blessing, Buescher, Grand Rapids, Holton, Jay, Martin, Millard, Osgood, Taylor & Horn, and York.

July: Vega is on strike and the shop is tied up. The union tried to get the Boston MICO to sign up but they refused. Martin has been union since 1906. Philip Frederick of Philadelphia signed an agreement on June 7. They were established in 1883, are located at 438 North 9th Street, and manufacture all high-grade band instruments.

They have been trying for two years to get H. N. White into the union, but they have rejected it. They are the largest plant not signed up.

1914 The current union list is Conn, Buescher, Osgood, Holton, Jay, Vega, Martin, Standard Band Inst. Co., Millard, Sistek, Kiefer & Son (Indianapolis), Elkhart Musical Inst. Co., and York.

April: The Elkhart BICO locks out eleven union members and ends the union label. Mr. Gronert is against unions deciding pay increases. Gronert declared Conn an open shop when Conn was away some years ago and Gronert was in charge.

May: The Elkhart BICO is back in the union.

1915 Brua Keefer is a new union factory with 21 workers. Other members are Conn, Buescher, Osgood, Holton, Taylor & Horn, Jay, Vega, Martin, Standard BICO, Millard, Sistek, Kiefer, Elkhart BICO, and Blessing.

October: Owners have formed the National Association of Band Instrument Manufacturers and refuse to sign new agreements.

1916 February: 500 workers are on strike and four months later are still stopped; throwing the musical instrument business into disorder.

August: Carl Greenleaf bought Conn and refuses to renew the union contract. He also took control of the Musical Instrument Manufacturers' Association.

October: On strike are Conn, Buescher, Martin, Elkhart, Blessing, Holton, Taylor & Horn, Jay, York, Grand Rapids, White, and Vega.

Date?: Agreements are with American BI Co, Grand Rapids, Keefer, Osgood, Millard, Seidel, Sistek, and Vega/Standard BI Co.

- 1917 Union labels are American BICo, Keefer, Osgood, Millard, Seidel, Sistek, and Vega.
On strike are Conn, Buescher, Martin, Elkhart, Blessing, Holton, Taylor & Horn, Jay, York, Grand Rapids, and White.
- 1918 Union labels are American BICo (Grand Rapids), Keefer, Millard, Sistek, and Vega.
On strike are Conn, Buescher, Martin, Blessing, Holton, Taylor & Horn, Jay, York, Grand Rapids, and White.
- 1919 Vega is the only maker still with the union. Carl Greenleaf at Conn was the major force behind the strikes.
- 1920 Vega is the only maker with the union.
- 1928 Last year for Vega with the union.
- 1929 No brass instrument makers are with the union.