Monday, 1st September, Brighton

Handfuls arrived outside Trades Union Congress at 8am to find we were allocated only 20 seats in the gallery. By 9am 3-500 outside hall as delegates start arriving. In all several hundred printers plus Silentnight strikers and others picketed and asked for support. Kept separate from delegates by a wall of crash barriers. While they are queuing to get in arc not with a wall of sound from the pickets. The song which seemed to make most impact on the delegates in the morning was "Rupert Murdoch - Stick your money up your arse". Also favourite was "Eric Hamond - He's hiding behind the TUC." Usual songs but seeming a lot louder when sung in the confined space of the covered entrance. The weather is cold. Few delegates approached us. Some pickets allowed to approach the delegate queue. An SEPTU delegate who went in about 9.30 was met not only with a volley verbally but also with eggs and handfuls of spoof Murdoch money. He literally ran in with police shielding him. Brenda Deen was jeered but managed to say a few words. Print Union fringe meeting hall only seated 250 so few pickets could get in. As Hamond had not appeared by 10.30 most of the pickets went to find somewhere for a breakfast, and it was at this time that the TNT truck came along the front and was shouted at, and then went around the corner where it had things thrown at it. The driver swerving about all over the place. Pickets who were able to get inside the building pursued Hamond whenever he appeared. The memorable sight was one picket pursuing Hamond with a rolled-up newspaper. During the day pickets went round town handing out leaflets, dispersing spoof money and putting up stickers. During the previous night hundreds had glued shut shopkeepers locks. Back at lunchtime to lobby delegates as they came out. As were told that there were not many people in gallery some of us tried to get in but were refused entrance even with Union cards. Back later at end of session to receive delegates as they exit.

Wednesday, 3rd September

In the afternoon, a few hundred pickets rallied at Gray's Inn Road. This was the 224th day of the strike. An excellent picket was held for hours. Hooted and yelled at scabs, "thieves, Judas, low life" and "scab" in unison which can be heard for quite a distance. As the temperature dipped pickets worked out their inventory of winter clothing.

In the evening seven hundred made the regular march to Wapping. Police strikers blocked all exit roads from The Highway, including St. Katherine's Way. On the march the fog horn was very good. Later police cleared the road under the orders to "gently move them off the road". When the boss says kill they do that, "gently" they have trouble with. Whatever the reasons for this sudden change (probably to do with the secret talks) the hostility of strikers to the police strikers remains. As one said, "If I saw one of you lot dying in the gutter, I wouldn't lift a finger."

Saturday night, 6th September

2000 in march to Wapping. Not enough police in Mansell St to stop march if had moved there. Groups of pickets gathered out along The Highway.

One arrest. Picketing has been undercut. Five arrests later when police cleared road at Wellclose. Five lorries bricked in the area. Several vans done too.

Guess who was carrying the national NUJ banner? Andrew Drummond who went in to Wapping took his £2000 blood money and continued scabbing while his girl friend was a loyal Socat striker. Later sacked anyways.
Selections from "A Year of Our Lives" near Doncaster, about Hattfield Main Colliery, Duns-croft.

A Bridge Too Far.

When it became obvious to all that the British Steel Corporation was still producing steel and not simply safeguarding their furnaces and coke ovens, as they had agreed to return to a few towns and villages, and the steelworks began to close, the workers were faced with the task of saving their jobs. The steelworkers who had been loyal to the corporation were forced to find new work, but many were left without any prospects.

The workers, with all their pressure, stood firm on the basic Trade Union principles: You Don't Cross Picket Lines.

The Way I Saw It.

Not being a man of words I find it hard to do it justice, but I feel nevertheless that it shall be said. To put it in my own way, point of view and feelings, so others may see.

We had been on strike for a good two weeks and I had no idea anything to the strike. I had done the papers, done the posters, and done the printing. So I decided, with a phone call from my wife: "Up off your feet and get out, do your bit."

The TV and the papers were telling one thing, and the next they were talking to us in a different way.

The staff, with all its pressure, stood firm on the basic Trade Union principles: You Don't Cross Picket Lines.

The August Invasions.

In August the Coal Board, in joint organisation with the police, decided to take the offensive. They had successfully (more or less) blocked the pocket advance into Nottingham and the southern coalfields. The daily skirmishes were costly in money and manpower, so someone decided to counterattack. This was to take the form of a sea of coal opera...
Scabs:

Chris Babcock, 5 Bosville Rd, Bosville Rd, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Brian Forbes, 50 Potters Lane, New Barnet, Herts, 01-449-5205, journalist.
Rick Harkins, Youth worker, 3023-4294, Times newspaper, journalist.
Mike Rowbottom, Herts, 0279-503927, Times newspaper, journalist.
Pat Ashton, 4 Coleen Ct, Marden Ave, Bromley, Kent, S. Vyty, 59a Matilda St, London NL.
Chris Bampling, 25 Greenhaye Ave, Reinstead, Surrey, 0247-1794.
Martin Barber, 47 Douglas Dr, Stevenage, Herts, 6117.
Frank Barrow, 220a Croydon Rd, Priory Clae, Berkenhead, Kent, 658-167.
Lisa Bartlett, 20 Neepole Ct, Main Sideup, Kent.
Chris Bedford, 26 Nissim Rd, New Malden, Surrey.
Peter Bourhill, 26 Roberts Ct, Maple Rd, Penge Selo, 659-8067.
Leila Brace, 20 Walside, Sandwich, Kent.
Alan Butcher, 12 Beech Hse, Manor Rd, Sidcup, Kent, 302-9140.
D Carr, 59 Banneux Rd, London SE9, 859, 3580.
Scab of the week: the Spartacist League (publishers Workers Hamer) for printing a picture from the Sunday Times with credit — and you can be sure they didn't steal the paper. Article claims that what we have at Wapping are not picket lines making a slandering allusion to "real" pickets, the miners. Print pickets are second to none. The reason this lot doesn't know it is they have scarcely been out to Wapping and NEVER on the front lines. Famous scabs: Ian Botham, Alex Higgins, Eric Hirston and Jim Gallagher.

With numbers so barely balanced, the situation was already over, it was obvious it would be a very bloody confrontation. The hotel was almost deserted. Even the young man who was trying to sell a book at the door, and who might well have been a law-abiding citizen, now realized the grave position in which he was. There was a storm raging outside, and he was determined to make the best of it. He stood in the doorway, looking out at the gathering crowd, and was absolutely convinced that he had made a mistake in coming here. He wished he were back at home, where at least he could feel safe. But now he was here, and he must make the best of it. He turned to go inside, but was suddenly seized by a young man who was calling to him from the street. The man told him that the situation was serious, and that he must go and help. The young man hesitated for a moment, but then decided to go. He went out into the street, and found that the situation was indeed very serious. The hotel was under attack, and the crowd was trying to get inside. The young man immediately went to help, and was soon surrounded by a large group of people. He tried to push his way through, but was blocked by a heavy crowd. He was almost crushed, but managed to get through and enter the hotel. Once inside, he found that the situation was even more serious. A large group of people was already inside, and they were trying to get away. The young man joined them, and they managed to escape.

ACCOUNT OF INVASION:

As the village fell amongst them, hundred of workers from the support groups led in the singing of solidarity songs, an old woman walked unsteadily around the crowd, addressing the men and women around her, "Please go all out. We can do this."

In the end, they had to walk, their legs giving out as they struggled to keep up with the pace.

The leader secretary, Peter Martin, was among those leading the people to the mainland. He was old, with a kindly face and a voice that carried well. As they approached the beach, he turned to the crowd and said, "We are going to the mainland, where we can continue our fight."

There was a mix of emotions in the crowd. Some were excited, others were nervous. But they all knew that this was the beginning of a new chapter for them.

The day of the invasion was April 15, 1920. The weather was sunny and clear, ideal conditions for the invasion. The Ruxton people, led by their leaders, marched from the village to the mainland, where they continued their struggle for freedom and justice.

The invasion was a huge success, and it marked a turning point in the history of the Ruxton people. They had proven that they could stand up for themselves and fight for their rights. And they did it together, as a united and powerful force. The invasion was a testament to the power of solidarity and the importance of unity.

There was a sense of joy and relief among the people as they looked out over the sea, knowing that they had accomplished something great. They knew that their struggle was not over, but they had taken an important step forward. They were proud of what they had accomplished, and they were confident that they could continue their fight for freedom and justice. They were united, they were strong, and they were ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.
Notes:

* Came into the strike with peacetime generals. You won't go wrong if you follow the ordinary pickets who always know what is to be done.
* Mass picket of Syston TNT, Leicestershire, Saturday, 20th September.
* Oxford regular picket, meet 10pm, Saturdays, Gloucester Green Bus Station, pick-up point for the TNT depot.
* Wapping scab in charge of machines, Wally Edmunds.
* Catering manager scab, John Stew.

Wapping 481-4109,

- Rupert Murdoch ext 5310
- Bruce Matthews ext 5309
- Andrew Nall ext 5640
- Tudor Hopkins ext 5640 (Personal)
- Bernie Clifford ext 5026 (Personal)
- Frank Barrow ext 4284 (AAD Group Head, Display)
- Paul Clatworthy ext 4287 (AAD Display Ads)
- Terry Hobart ext 4288 (AAD Co-ordinator)
- Yvonne Kingdom ext 4274/5 (AAD Co-ordinator)
- Ron Pike ext 5953 (Court/Social)
- Les Tanner ext 4282 (Asst Manager Display)
- Shirley Margolis ext 5345 (Ads Manager)

From a Kent newspaper

HAME mail, threats and thefts have forced Kent Hill newspapermen to keep early morning vigil on deliveries of The Sun and The Times.

The newspapermen are suffering from a backlash of local feeling provoked by the News International dispute at Rupert Murdoch's controversial Wapping plant.

6am to 7am approximately every morning there are about 8 scab vans in a car park beside rail bridge in Wandle Road, vans left unattended.

TNT lorries have been seen unloading and transferring newspapers to "white sites" in Alexandra Park, M22 at 5am. Haringey council own park.

Bad apple department: A picket relates the story of one copper new to Wapping who had not realised his job was to get the lorries out.

Rupert Murdoch's daughter lives in Fentiman Rd, London SW9 and can be seen in the butchers shop at the Oval opposite St Marks Church in SW8.

Greetings from Rotterdam. The south coast is recovering after the visit of printworkers kids who were in the rest home for a holiday. Rotterdam and the surrounding areas are now fully aware of what's going on down at Wapping. Stickers, posters and leaflets adorn the area. A few incidents occurred as when a lorry driver who kept flashing the sun to the kids had rubbish tipped in his cab. Also local newsmen had other tabloid dailies placed on top of the Sun. Also the row in the local swimming baths between local kids and parents and printers kids and their parents with which printers were called Eastend scum. The spirit of the children was an inspiration to us all and if this was as strong in us adults it would be welcomed. The children would also like to say a thank you to all who organised, co-ordinated and put up with them for their two weeks stay at Rotterdam Home.

Letter: The Picket is always read. The ones that are accounts are better than those with boring political generalisations.

Incomes: £23.52 New Publishing chapel collection; £7.40 Southampton; £8 NGA strikers; £2 Editorial; £4 Mirror warehous; £2 cop's son; £1 Sogat member; £1 half-wit; £4.67 bookshop sales; 50p a body; £2 working member; £3 NGA bender.

Part 3 of the book available, send £1 in stamps to address below

Picket

c/o Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd., Ldn N1

Publ. by picketing print union members