

**DISORDER ON THE RAND - 1913/1914**

This chronological exhibit intends to give an overview of two major social incidents in the history of South Africa, the 1913 and 1914 strikes on the Witwatersrand.

**ABSTRACT**

South Africa's mining industry has historically faced racial inequality, with white workers being allowed to hold skilled positions and black and coloured workers in low-skilled, poorly paid jobs. This imbalance has led to skilled workers being overwhelmed by unskilled and underpaid workers, causing a workforce imbalance. The first two decades of the 20th century saw frequent strikes and industrial unrest, aimed at protecting the rights of white labourers. It intends to pressure management to abandon employment of black workers in white positions to cut costs. This disparity created discontent with management among white mine workers. In May 1913 the new Manager at the New Kleinfontein mine changed the working hours at the mine. A dispute arose and Mine Management refused to negotiate. The dispute escalated into a strike that spread to other mines on the Rand. All mining operations were brought to a halt and resulted in violent clashes. In response, the government used brutal force, mobilizing the armed forces to support the police. A mass strike meeting was organised for Friday 4 July on the Johannesburg Market Square. On the same day the meeting was banned, and martial law proclaimed. Illegally, the meeting went ahead and unfolded in hostile actions with the police carrying out pick handle charges. Mayhem arose as crowds rioted, hitting the streets, engaging in destructive behaviour till late in the afternoon. On 5 July bystanders saw sights of indiscriminate shooting, killing more than 20 men, women and children that was described by some as "the scene of cold-blooded brutality ever perpetrated in an industrial conflict". On the same day, the government negotiated a truce with the strikers that brought an end to the strike. When railways went on a national strike in January 1914, the state crackdown was even more brutal. Whilst the strike was looming, some 10 000 troops were mobilized, with martial law declared on the same day as the strike began. The strike spread to the gold mines on the Rand and within days it was suppressed.

**SCOPE**

The exhibit presents a recollection of the course of the strikes through Picture Postcards. The aftermath was the realisation by labour activists of the potential to involve black and coloured workers in labour activities. This awareness played an essential part in the future of Political and Labour history in South Africa.

**MATERIAL**

The basis of the exhibit consists of three different series of cards depicting scenes of the two strikes, marked 1 to 3. The cards of series 1 are normal marked Postcards (six cards). Series 2 cards (six) do not have an indication of the publisher and that of series 3 (four cards) indicated the publisher and "Passed by C.I.D." printed on the picture side. Although the cards of series 2 and 3 have no serial numbers and blank backs, the dozen of SA Postcards, Archie Atkinson, recognized them as Postcards in his book on SA Postcards. A very limited number of these Postcards survived and are not easily found.

**Abbreviations: DB - Divided Back UB - Undivided Back**

A different font is used to distinguish between subject related and delictological information. Selected rare items are indicated with green borders.

**ROAD MAP**

Page 1: Introduction page  
 Page 2: Causes of the 1913 strike  
 Page 3: Deadlock  
 Page 4: "Black Friday" - 4 July 1913  
 Page 5: Saturday - 5 July 1913  
 Page 11: Strikers won the day  
 Page 12: Victims Funeral - Monday 7 July 1913  
 Page 13: Buildup - 1914 strike  
 Page 15: Crushing the strike  
 Page 16: After Effects

**STRIKE ALBUM**

JOHANNESBURG, JULY, 1913.


Scan - reduced some 95%

**Bibliography:**

The South African Labour Movement's Responses to Declarations of Martial Law, 1913-1922, 12 Feb 2014. Weasa Visser, pp 142-50  
 The 1914 Strike and O'Donoghue, pp 77 to 83  
 Strike Album, Johannesburg, July 1913. Central News Agency, Ltd., Johannesburg, pp 1-32  
 Something of a History, Postcard of SA, Archie Atkinson, 2007, pp 101, 104-5  
 A Johannesburg Album, Historical Postcards, Oscar I. Norwich, pp 141-4  
 Du Plessis A. Disorder on the Rand - The South African Philatelist, February 2022 pp 30-3


**CAUSES OF THE 1913 STRIKE**

The discontent of the white workers came to a head in May 1913 at the New Kleinfontein mine in Benoni. Management introduced changes to working hours and five underground mechanics refused to comply. They were dismissed and left the mine on 10 May.



Where it all started - The New Kleinfontein Gold mine, Benoni  
 Real Photo Postcard with manuscript caption towards the left bottom corner and number 16  
 Published by "SAPSICO" - Box 5792, Johannesburg at the back with DB in black

On 26 May most of the white workers at the mine voted to support the five men. A white mineworker strike was declared with a strike committee appointed. Management decided not to reinstate the strikers and opened the mine on 11 June 1913 with the assistance of mostly black strike-breakers.



Black mine workers were used as strike breakers to keep the New Kleinfontein mine open  
 Published by Sello Epstein & Co., Johannesburg with manuscript caption towards the right top corner with number 2072 at the back, DB in green

Confident that the concerned parties would resolve the dispute, the government adopted an impartial attitude, holding the directors of the New Kleinfontein mine responsible for the disturbance.

**DEADLOCK**

The strike spread to mines across the Rand, accompanied by growing violence. Government takes the first steps to intervene. General Jan Smuts, the then Minister of Interior, Defense and Finance also a former minister of mines and acting minister of Justice, met with mine management and strike leaders on 22 June. Unsuccessful in resolving the deadlock between the two parties, Smuts feared that the police would not be able to cope with the situation and mobilized some 5 000 men from the Imperial forces to support them.



THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 Royal Dragons riding up Risik Street during the Strike.  
 Mounted troops patrolling in the streets of Johannesburg  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back - Nr 1 of series 2

Beginning of July, no resolution to the dispute was reached and some 19 000 white mine workers went on strike.




Benoni POST CARD  
 Big strike on here - all mines came out today with 14 KE  
 mines came out today with 14 KE  
 I have been out since 2 weeks and still have no work  
 father's kids.  
 Lenny  
 J. De Vries  
 England

Used Postcard developing the storyline from Benoni to England dated 30 June 1913 with strike related remark "Big strike on here - all mines came out today" with 14 KE VII stamp (late usage) tied with a Benoni double circle cds  
 Published by R.O. Fossien, PO Box 2262, Johannesburg, Number 3214, DB in red

The Witwatersrand mines ceased to operate. The strike committee arranged for a mass demonstration on Friday 4 July at 2 p.m. at the Johannesburg Market Square, what would become known as "Black Friday".

**"BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913**

At a very late stage the government banned all public gatherings, proclaiming martial law at 1:30 p.m. Miners from Benoni and Brakpan, flouting the declaration of martial law and joined by others, were marching on to Johannesburg, determined to hold the meeting. *The wave of anarchy had begun...*



Breeding ground of the anarchy - Johannesburg market square  
 Published by F.S. & Co. Box 2205, Cape Town with issue number 967, in the back, DB in green

From 2 p.m. a jam-packed crowd had gathered on the market square opposite the Post Office. Anarchistic speeches were made by the leaders and the meeting was dispersed by the police. The crowd broke up into smaller groups that roamed Johannesburg. It was eminent that there would be more violence, the only question being where it would start.

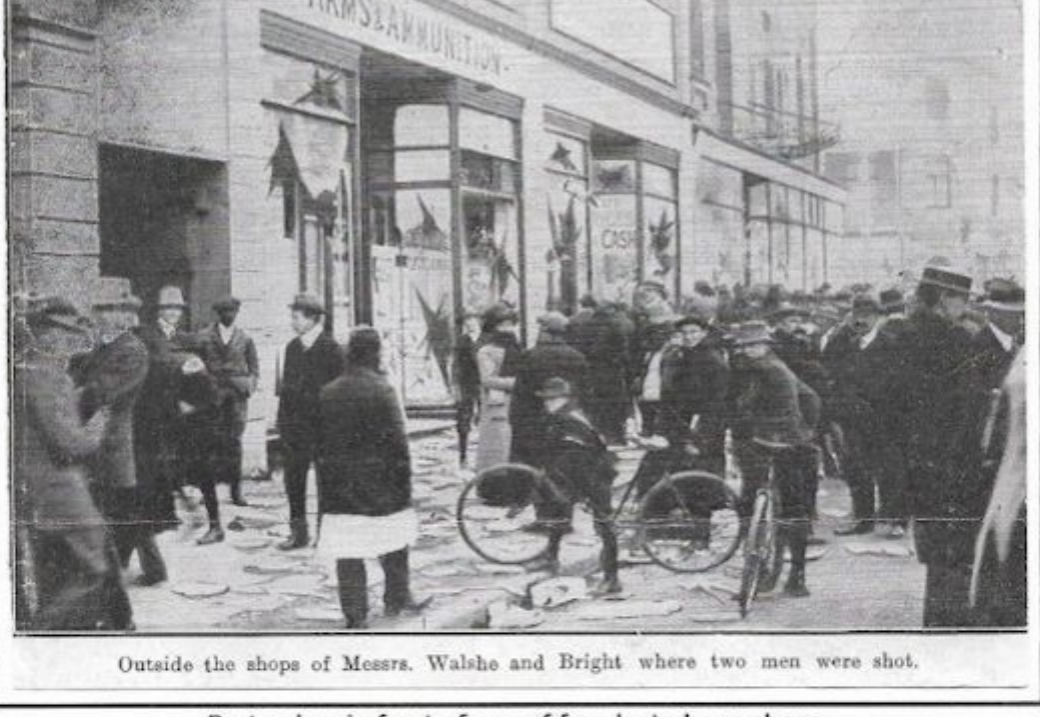


THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The Scotch Fulliers defending the Power Station.  
 Further duties after putting the Power station back to work  
 Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown, Nr 1 of series 1

Around 4 p.m. several strikers held up trams and rode to the Power Station where engines were stopped, and all work ceased. After a short time, they left, believing that the city would be in darkness. The Scotch Fulliers moved in to protect and put the station in working order again.


**"BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913**

The Police and Imperial forces kept patrolling the streets and dispersed several crowds from vandalising property. By 8 p.m. a dense crowd had gathered in President Street next to the Post Office. Several speakers preached an open revolt and incited the crowd to loot gun shops to arm themselves.



Outside the shop of Messrs. White and Wright where the mob were shot.  
 Bystanders in front of one of four looted gun shops  
 Original print image of the strike from "The Illustrated Star: Town and Country Journal" of 19 July 1913

Most of those present were whipped up and prepared not for words but rather for devil's work. A voice from the crowd incited the torching of the railway station - this was the proverbial spark in the powder keg. A looting element took over and the crowd advanced to Park Railway Station in Braamfontein, looting gun shops for arms and ammunition on their way.

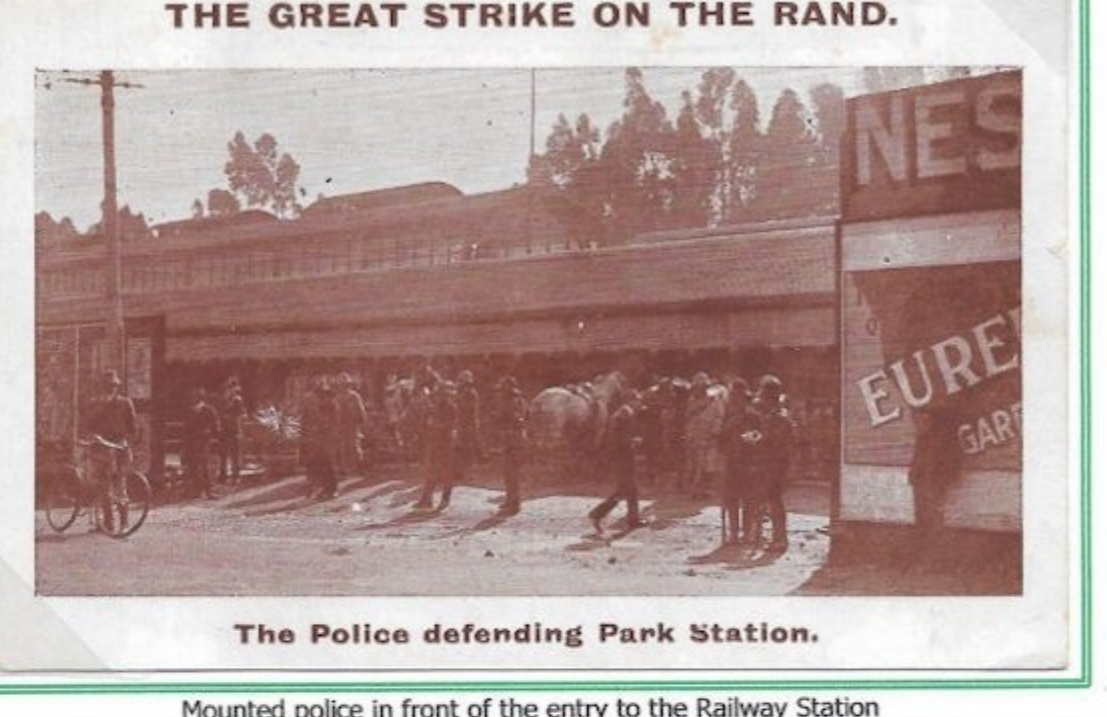


Park Station with the Railway Head Office at the back  
 Real Photo Postcard by R.O. Fossien, Box 2262, Johannesburg with caption in manuscript and serial number 21, DB in black

The emerging violence lead up to the first instance in South Africa's history in which there was a spilling of blood because of industrial disturbance...

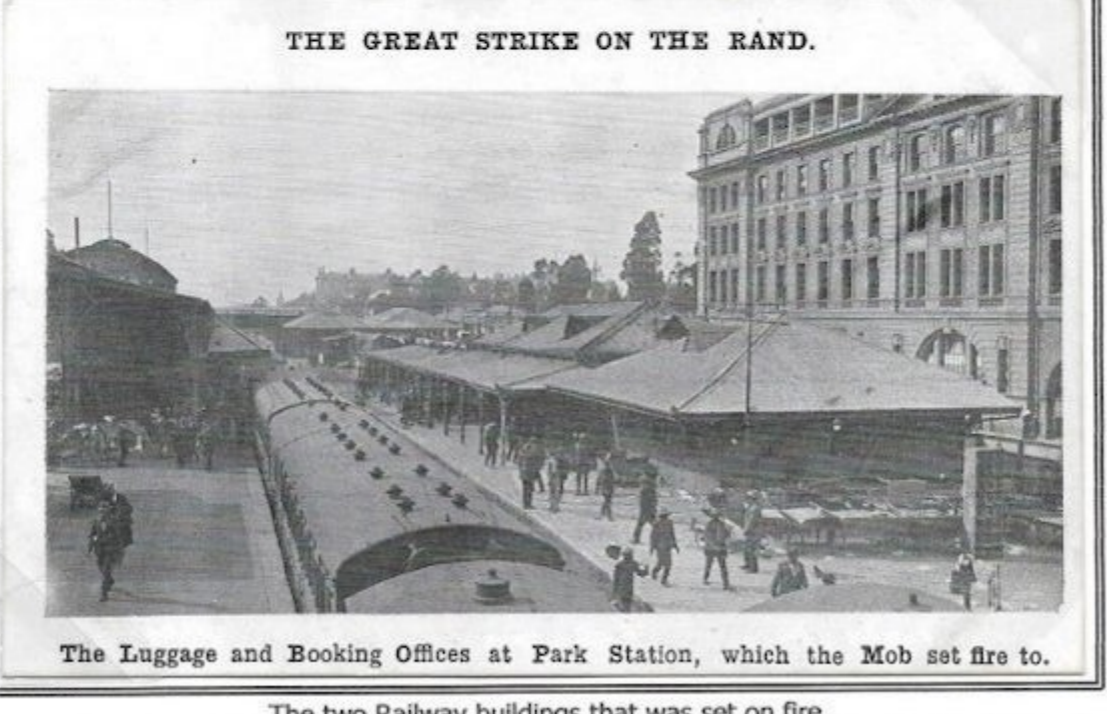
**"BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913**

At Park Station the frontline of the defiant rebels met with the police. The mounted police charged and scattered them in all directions.



THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The Police defending Park Station.  
 Mounted police in front of the entry to the Railway Station  
 Publisher unknown with DB in brown, Nr 2 of series 1

The crowd started to curse and stone the police, driving them back into Klein Street, away from the station. Some of the rioters emptied their revolvers at the police, wounding one. About thirty men managed to take possession of the station, setting the booking office and goods shed on fire.

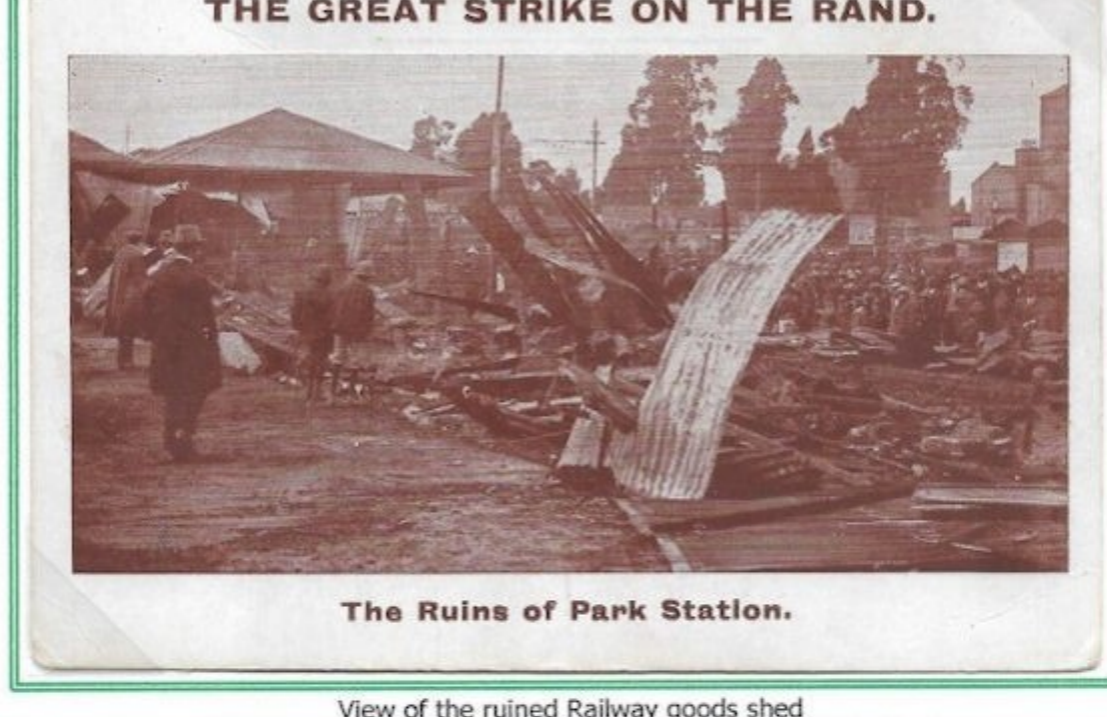


THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The Lounge and Booking Offices at Park Station, which the Mob set fire to.  
 The two Railway buildings that was set on fire  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back, Nr 2 of series 2

The perpetrators, in their vandalism, were not confronted by the police as they were held back by the crowd in Klein Street.


**"BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913**

Law abiding onlookers should have sensed disgust at the spectacle of a score of ruffians, many of them youngsters, destroying property which they were helpless to stop.



THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The Ruins of Park Station.  
 View of the ruined Railway goods shed  
 Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown, Nr 3 of series 1

With the Railway station well ablaze, and in high spirit of their first success, the mob proceeded to the offices of the Star newspaper in President Street. The attack started with a fusillade of stones, truncheons, and revolver shots. Two charges of dynamite exploded on the ground floor and the office was plundered and ruined by fire.

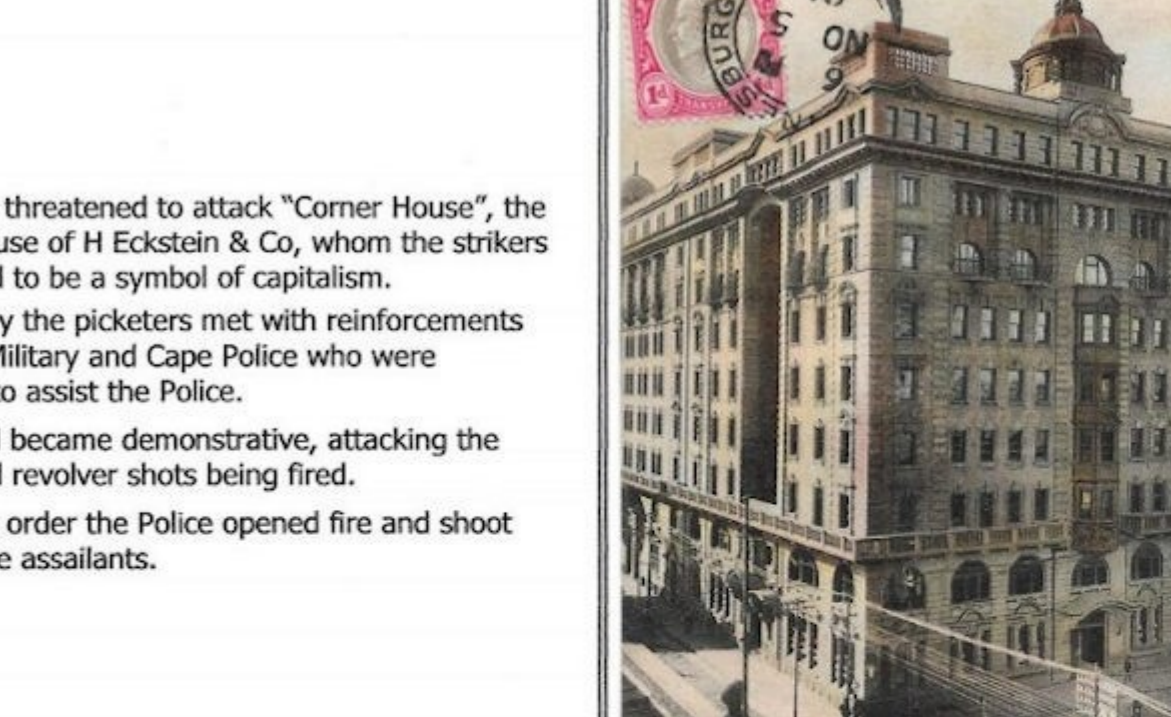


THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The "Star" Office Gutted.  
 Ruins of the Star office  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back, Nr 3 of series 2

The Star was regarded by the strikers as the mouthpiece of the Chamber of Mines and more interested in the well-being of black workers than that of white workers.

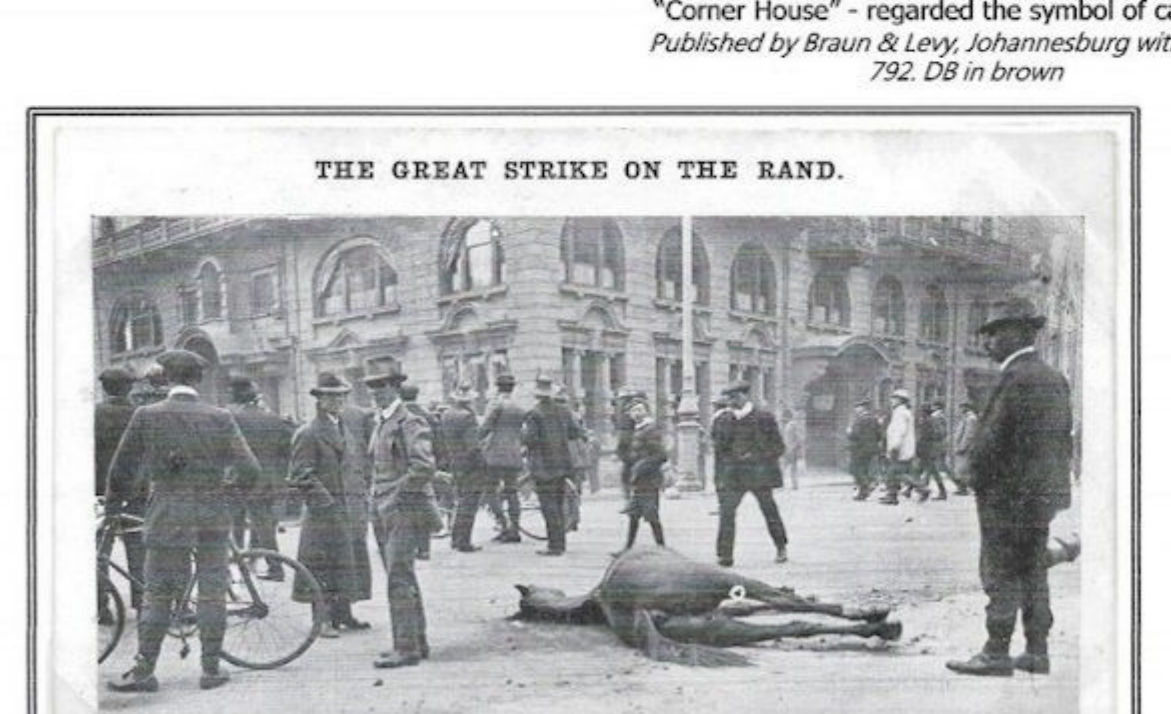
**"BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913**

At some stage it seemed that the offices of another newspaper, The Transvaal Leader, in Harrison Street were singled out for an attack. On their way there the mob was dissuaded by the police.



"Corner House" - regarded the symbol of capitalism  
 Published by Braun & Levy, Johannesburg with number 792, DB in brown

They then threatened to attack "Corner House", the mining house of H Eckstein & Co, whom the strikers considered to be a symbol of capitalism. On the way the picketers met with reinforcements from the Military and Cape Police who were deployed to assist the Police. The crowd became demonstrative, attacking the troops and revolver shots being fired. To restore order the Police opened fire and shot down three assailants.




THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 Dead Horses Outside Corner House.  
 Contrary to the caption only one carcass can be seen  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back, Nr 4 of series 2

After this incident fighting and hostilities by the strikers subsided but was far from over.

**SATURDAY 5 JULY 1913**

On Saturday morning 5 July the lawlessness started again. Reports indicated that the strikers were on their way to burn down the Rand Club, in their view "the haunt of the capitalist classes".



The Rand Club, corner Commissioner and Loveday Streets - "haunt of the capitalists"  
 Real Photo Postcard with manuscript caption towards the right bottom corner and number 364  
 Published by "SAPSICO" - Box 5792, Johannesburg at the back with DB in black

The violence that roamed the city reached its climax during the luncheon hour with an attack on the Rand Club. People gathered outside the club and a small group entered and vandalized the club, trying to set it alight. Revolver shots from the crowd damaged windows.

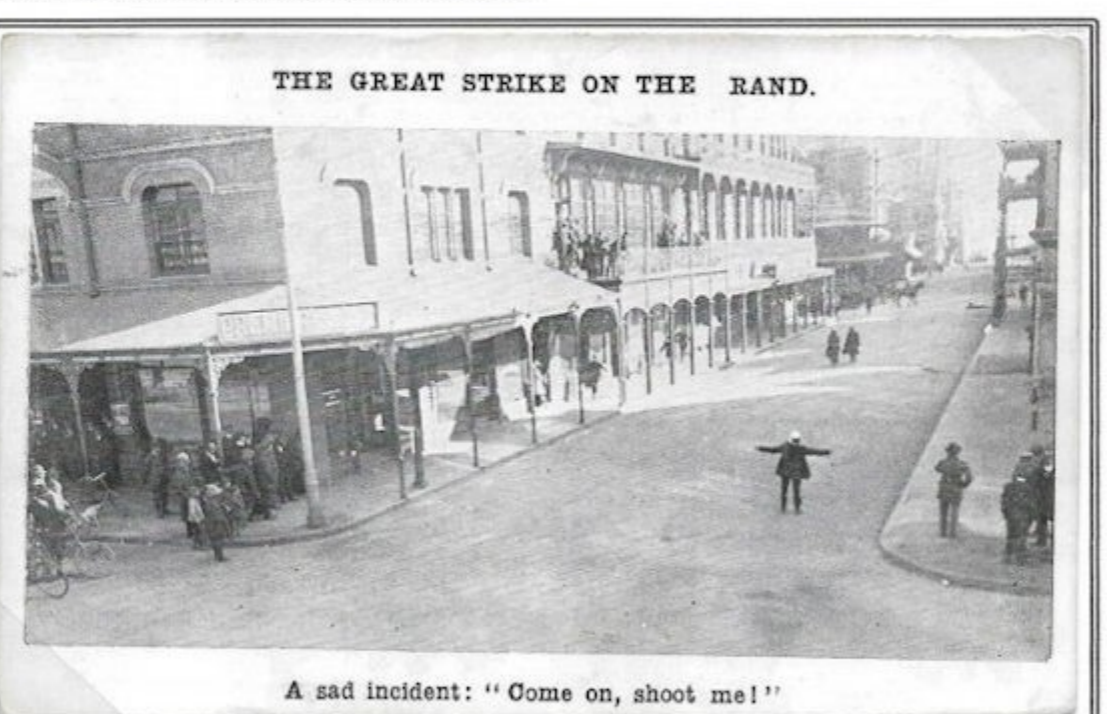


THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 Troops clearing the Crowd from the Rand Club, before firing.  
 The beginning of the end of the 1913 strike  
 Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown, Nr 4 of series 1

The police and military arrived and, what was described by some as "a battle to protect the Rand club and Johannesburg, commenced."

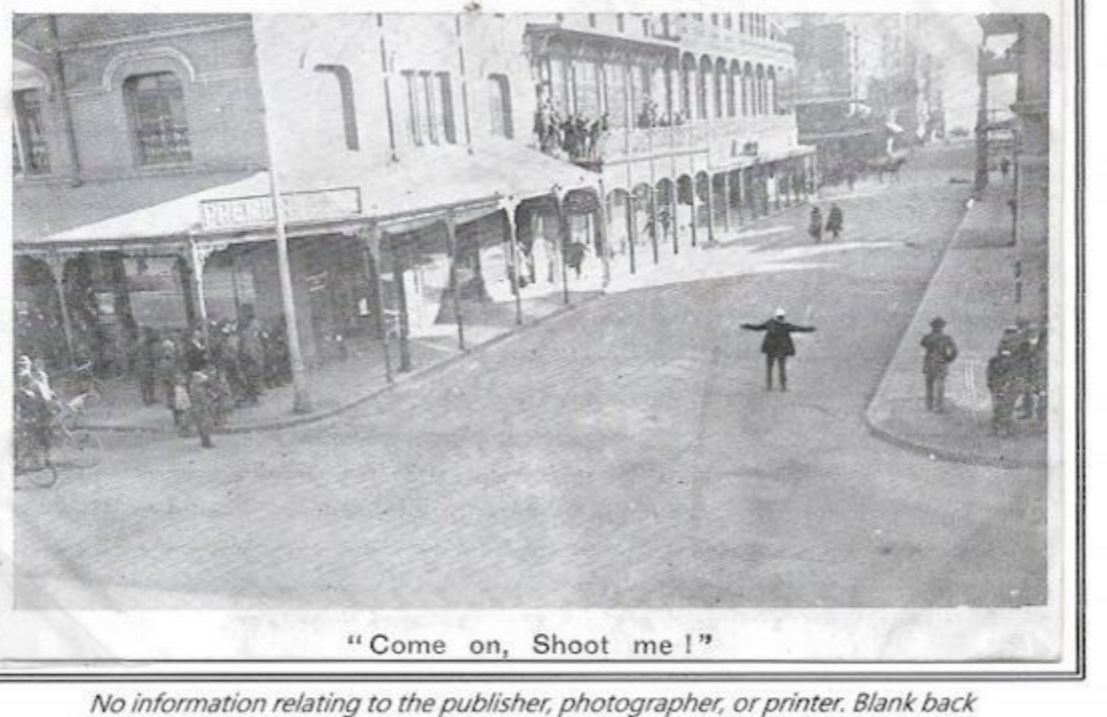
**SATURDAY 5 JULY 1913**

In an unfortunate incident a young miner, Mr. J.L. Labuschagne, appeared in the street and shouted "Come on! Shoot me if you dare!" upon which he bared his chest. A volley of bullets followed, and he was fatally wounded.



THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 A sad incident! "Come on, shoot me!"  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back, Nr 5 of series 2

The incident is portrayed with two postcards with the same photo but with different headings and captions. These differences indicate that it was most probably published by two different publishers, or two printings.

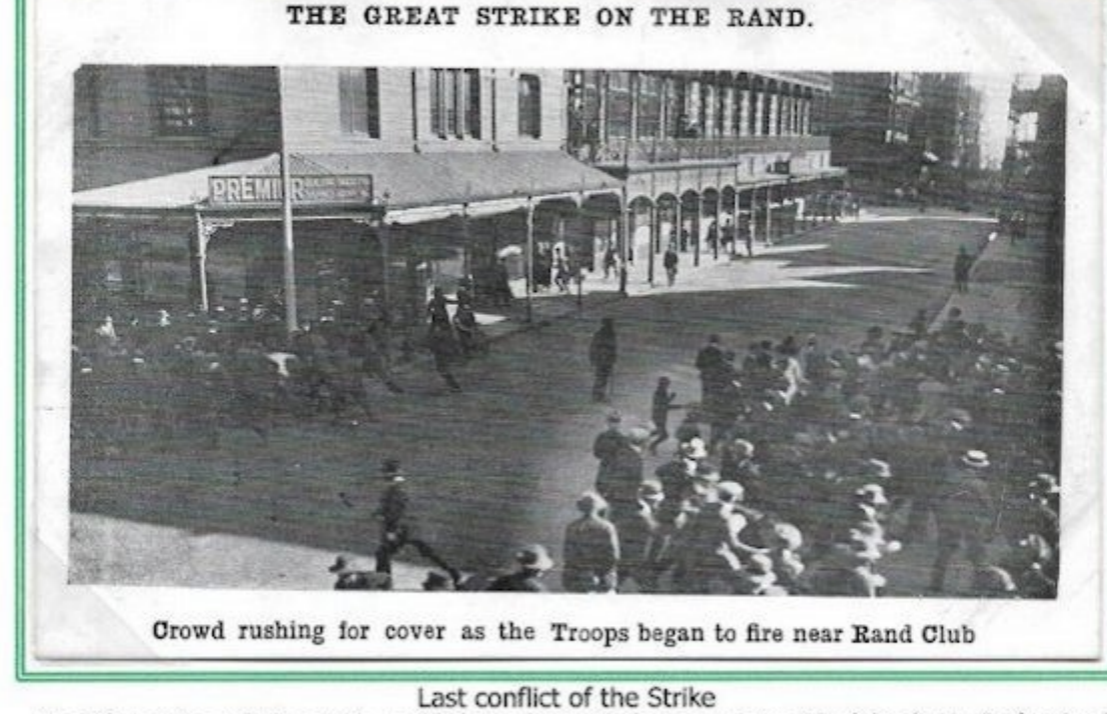


AN INCIDENT OF THE STRIKE.  
 "Come on, Shoot me!"  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back

According to Oscar Norwich the gentleman is standing on the corner of Fox and Risik Streets outside the Hosken Building on the left. The Rand Club is situated on the corner of Loveday and Commissioner Streets. He asserts in view of these differences; it has been suggested by some that the photographer set the scene up after the event. However, the photo is taken from the exact spot from where the photo was taken for Postcard "Crowd rushing for cover as the Troops began to fire near Rand Club" (see page 11).


**STRIKERS WON THE DAY**

Crossfire between the armed forces and strikers followed, killing more people. The strike went beyond control with fear that Johannesburg and its mines would be destroyed.



THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 Crowd rushing for cover as the Troops began to fire near Rand Club  
 Last conflict of the strike  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back, Nr 6 of series 2

Alarmed by these reports of violence and deaths, Generals Botha and Smuts arrived in a violent town Johannesburg on 5 July 1913 to intervene.



Prime Minister, General Louis Botha  
 Published by Halls & Co., Port Elizabeth. Printed in Swazoo, Not numbered with DB in brown

They met with the mining executives and leaders of the demonstrators in the Carlton Hotel to negotiate a truce.

It was inter alia agreed that:

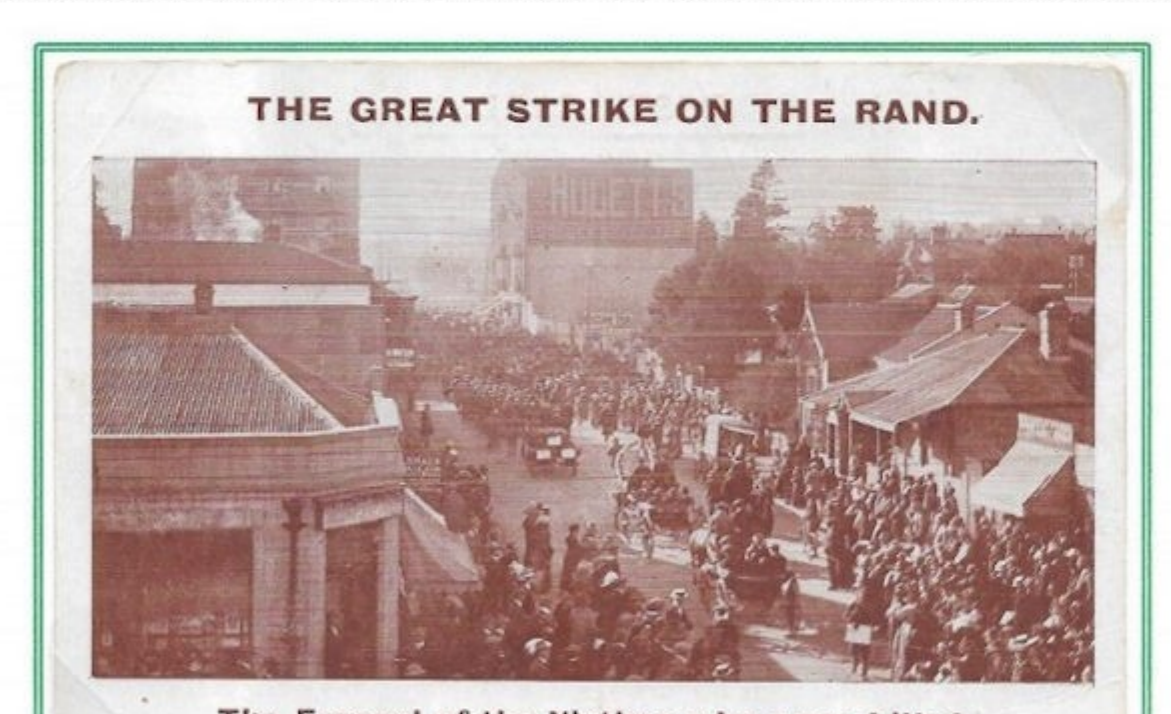
- All strikers would be reinstated.
- Government would appoint a judicial committee to investigate the strikers' grievances.
- Strikebreakers were to be dismissed by the mine owners but were to be paid a year's salary of 300 pounds by the government.

Most of the strikers' demands were met and the strike was called off.

The strikers won the day!

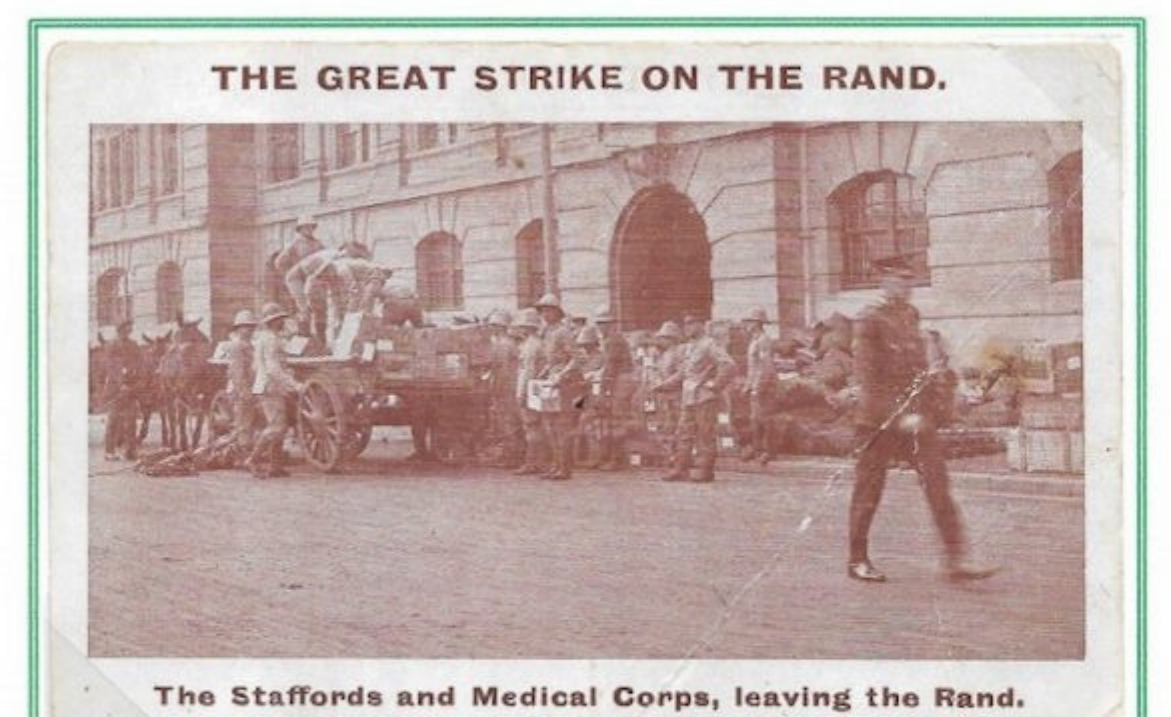
**VICTIMS FUNERAL - MONDAY 7 JULY 1913**

During the strike, twenty-one people were fatally wounded with more than 200 injured, including the police and military. A funeral for most of the victims was held on Monday 7 July 1913, which was attended by about 60 000 people.



THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The Funeral of the Victims who were killed.  
 Anarchy and its cost  
 Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown, Nr 5 of series 1

For days after the settlement, the Police searched offices and houses of the strike leaders, strikers and agitators, making numerous arrests.

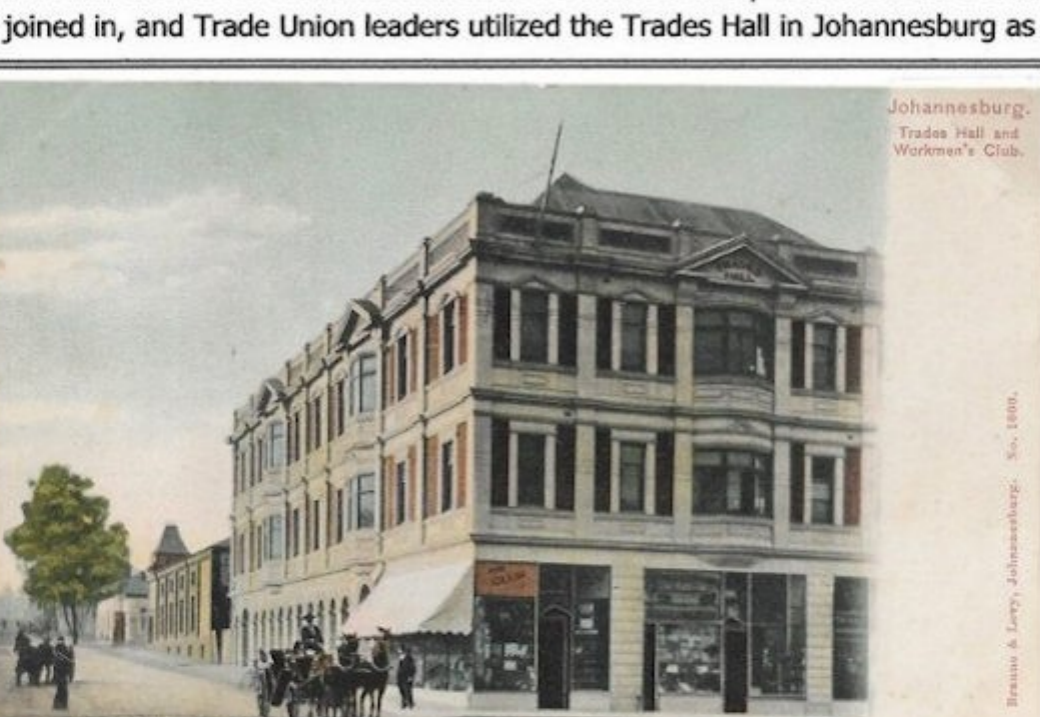


THE GREAT STRIKE ON THE RAND.  
 The Staffords and Medical Corps, leaving the Rand.  
 The order had been restored  
 Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown, Nr 6 of series 1

Noteworthy is the fact that while Johannesburg and the East Rand were in a state of anarchy, the West Rand enjoyed immunity from disorderliness.

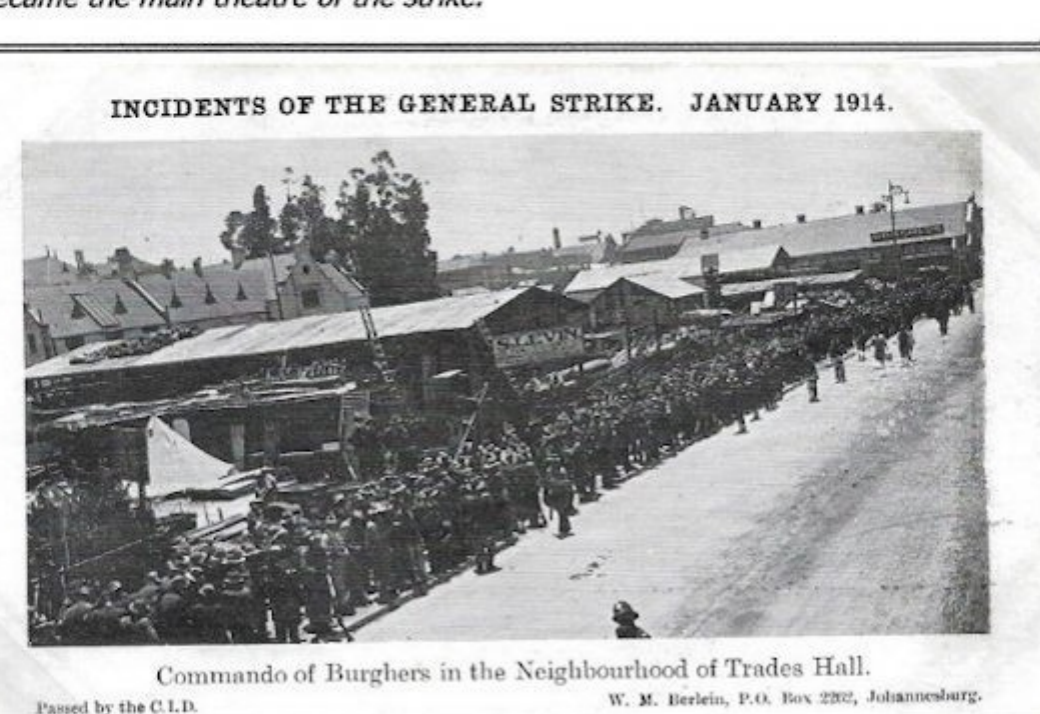
**BUILDUP - 1914 STRIKE**

In the months following the 1913 strike, it became apparent that the strike had been no victory for the white workers. Industrial relations remained tense and Railways became disgruntled with planned restraints. On 6 January 1914 it was decided to call a national strike of white Railway Workers from 8 January. Other Industries joined in, and Trade Union leaders utilized the Trades Hall in Johannesburg as Head Office.



The Trades Hall, Cnr. Commissioner and Small Streets  
 Published by Braune & Levy, Johannesburg with serial number 1000, DB in brown

Units of the Active Citizen Force, police forces, as well as special constables and volunteers - in all 10 000 troops - were mobilized in the lead up to the strike. The strike leaders brought in the white goldminers that resulted in unrest on the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg became the main theatre of the strike.



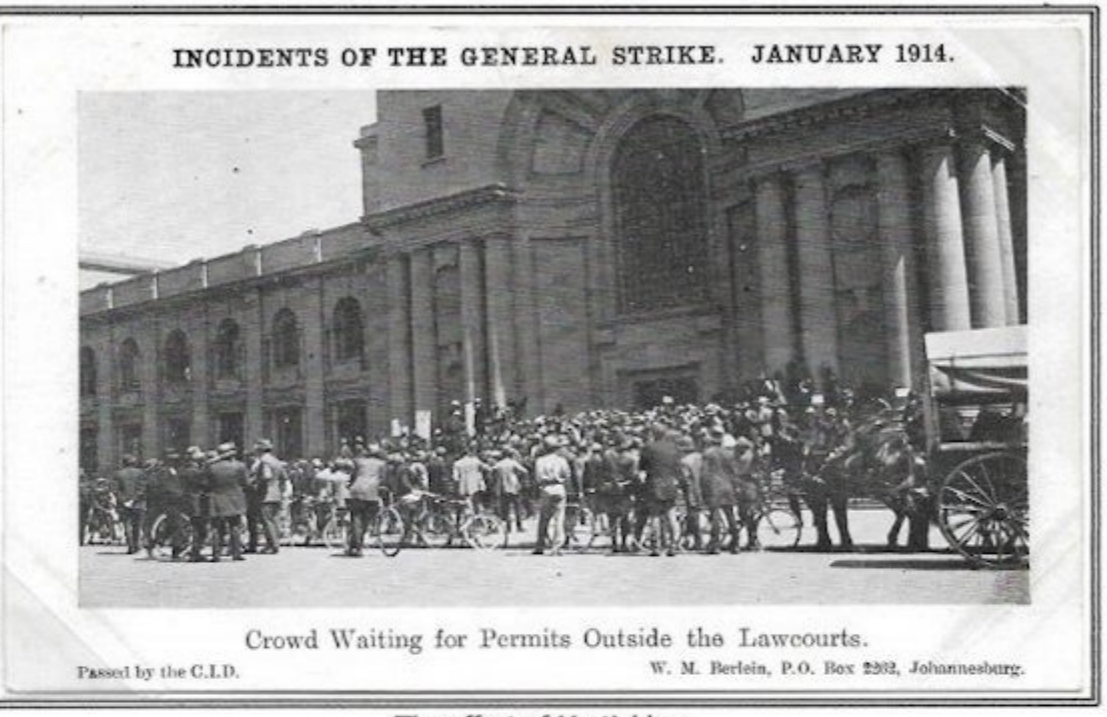
INCIDENTS OF THE GENERAL STRIKE. JANUARY 1914.  
 Citizens of Burgers in the Neighbourhood of Trades Hall.  
 Posted by the C.I.D.  
 W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg

Citizen force members on patrol  
 Published by W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg, Passed by C.I.D. (Criminal Investigations Department). Not numbered. Blank back, Nr 1 of series 2

Trade Union leaders addressed meetings throughout the country and called for support for the strike. On 10 January three trade union leaders were arrested in Pretoria.

**BUILDUP - 1914 STRIKE**

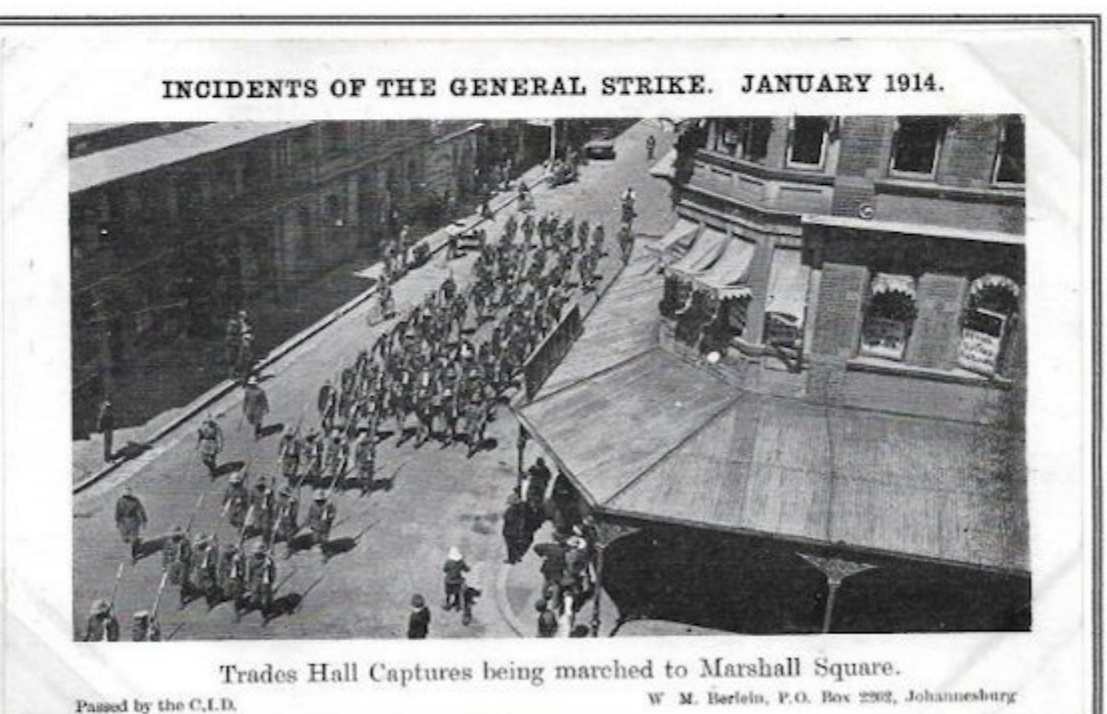
On 13 January, the Transvaal Federation of Trade Unions called for a general strike to start on 14 January. At midnight on 13 January the government proclaimed martial law.



INCIDENTS OF THE GENERAL STRIKE. JANUARY 1914.  
 Crowd Waiting for Permits Outside the Lawcourts.  
 W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg  
 Posted by the C.I.D.

The effect of Martial Law  
 Published by W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg, Passed by C.I.D. Not numbered.  
 Blank back, Nr 2 of series 2

Authorities engaged in extensive arrests of strikers and strike leaders' country wide. On 15 January the strike committees in Pretoria and Johannesburg, as well as many strikers on the Rand were arrested. Some of the main strike leaders had barricaded themselves in at the Trades Hall and threatened not to give up without violence.



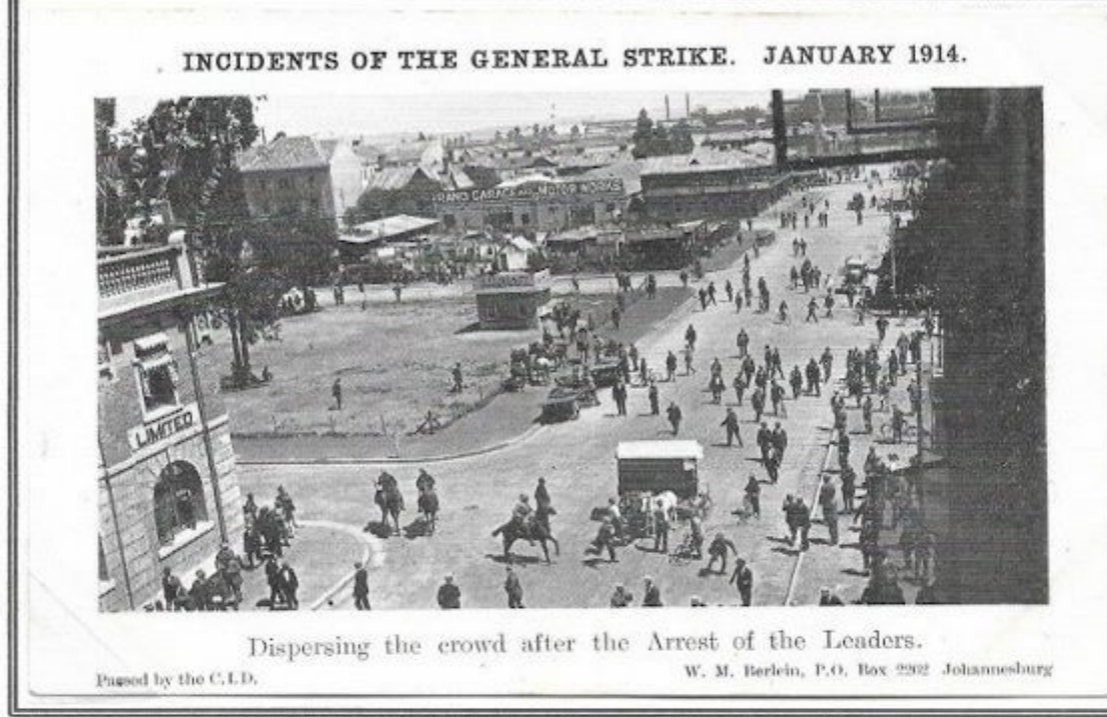
INCIDENTS OF THE GENERAL STRIKE. JANUARY 1914.  
 Trades Hall Captives being marched to Marshall Square.  
 W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg  
 Posted by the C.I.D.

Approaching the end of the strike  
 Published by W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg, Passed by C.I.D. Not numbered.  
 Blank back, Nr 3 of series 2

On 17 January hundreds of strikers were arrested countrywide. Troops surrounded the Trades Hall and trained a field gun on it. An ultimatum was issued to the strike leaders to surrender, which they did and were arrested.

**CRUSHING THE STRIKE**

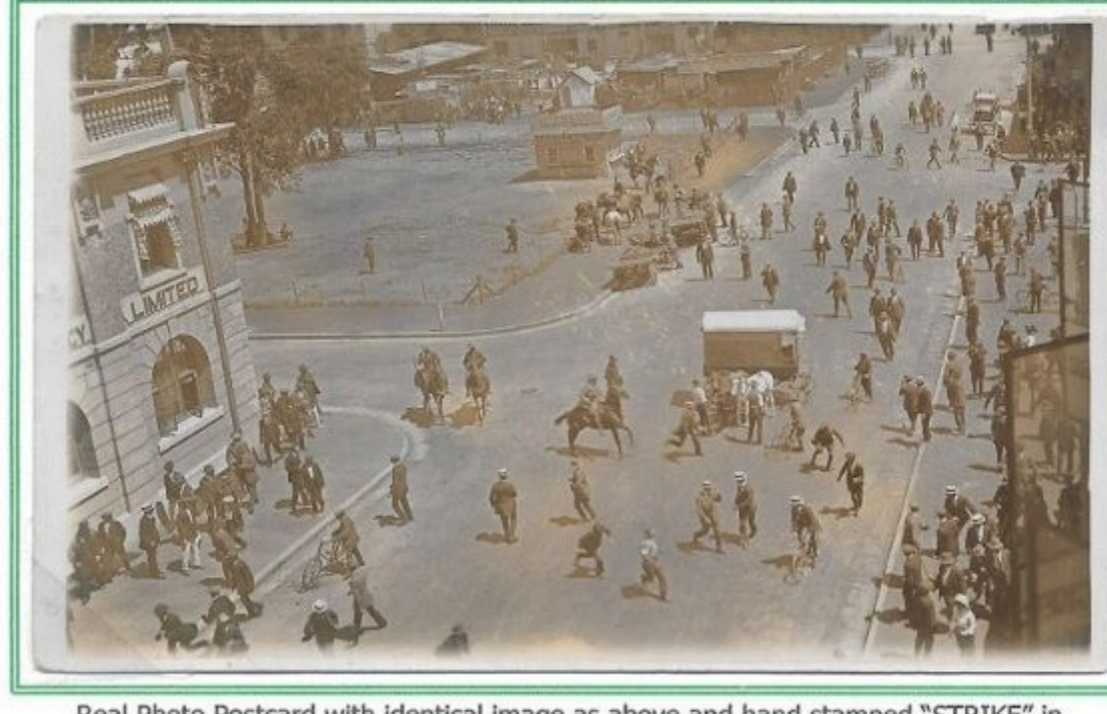
The general strike of 1914 never really got off the ground. The unions involved had not done the preparation and organization necessary for a successful strike. The government, by contrast, was well prepared.



INCIDENTS OF THE GENERAL STRIKE. JANUARY 1914.  
 Dispersing the crowd after the Arrest of the Leaders.  
 W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg  
 Posted by the C.I.D.

Spectators observing the arrest of strike leaders  
 Published by W. M. Berlin, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg, Passed by C.I.D. Not numbered.  
 Blank back, Nr 4 of series 3

Contributing factors were the early imprisonment of leadership. In terms of martial law, picketing and mass meetings were forbidden. Contact and communication between various centres became impossible. It proved to be a total defeat and by 18 January 1914 the strike had been crushed with the loss of two lives.




Real Photo Postcard with identical image as above and hand stamped "STRIKE" in purple at the back  
 Publisher unknown with no serial number and DB in black

Although the government forces gained the upper hand, General Smuts overestimated the limits of his powers under martial law. This resulted in the illegal deportation of nine foreign born strike leaders to England without trial.


**AFTER EFFECTS**

The nine foreign born strike leaders were detained at Marshall Square Police Station in Johannesburg.



Marshall Square Police Station, Johannesburg  
 Published by J. Barnett & Co with serial number 286, Printed in Leipzig, DB in red

They were secretly removed from their cells and taken to Durban where they were forcibly put aboard the steamship Unger, which sailed from Durban to London, on 30 January 1914. This arbitrary action by government caused an outcry in labour circles in South Africa and Britain. Smuts justified the action by claiming that the strike leaders were dangerous men with revolutionary syndicalist ideas, aimed at agitating the overthrow of the government.



Die 9 sudafricanische Arbeiterführer  
 die von General Botha deportiert wurden und deren Ankomst in England an Bord des "Unger" kürzlich erfolgte.  
 Postcard with caption: "The 9 South African labour leaders who were deported by General Botha and whose arrival in England aboard the 'Unger' took place recently" (free translation)  
 Publisher unknown, DB in black with no serial number. "Absender", "Wohnort" and "Straße" printed at the back

After a couple of months, the deportees were returned to South Africa and remained active in labour issues.

## DISORDER ON THE RAND - 1913/1914

### AIM

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### ABSTRACT

South Africa's mining industry has historically faced racial inequality, with white workers being allowed to hold skilled positions and black and coloured workers in low-skilled, poorly paid jobs. This imbalance has led to skilled workers being overwhelmed by unskilled and underpaid workers, causing a workforce imbalance.

The first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw frequent strikes and industrial unrest, aimed at protecting the rights of white labourers. It intends to pressurize management to abandon employment of black workers in white positions to cut costs. This disparity created discontent with management among white mine workers.

In **May 1913** the new Manager at the New Kleinfontein mine changed the working hours at the mine. A dispute arose and Mine Management refused to negotiate. The dispute escalated into a strike that spread to other mines on the Rand. All mining operations were brought to a halt and resulted in violent clashes. In response, the government used brutal force, mobilizing the armed forces to support the police.

A mass strike meeting was organised for Friday 4 July on the Johannesburg Market Square. On the same day the meeting was banned, and martial law proclaimed. Illegally, the meeting went ahead and unfolded in hostile actions with the police carrying out pick handle charges. Mayhem arose as crowds rioted, hitting the streets, engaging in destructive behaviour till late in the afternoon.

On 5 July bystanders saw sights of indiscriminate shooting, killing more than 20 men, women and children that was described by some as *"the scene of cold-blooded brutality ever perpetrated in an industrial conflict"*. On the same day, the government negotiated a truce with the strikers that brought an end to the strike.

When railwaymen went on a national strike in **January 1914**, the state crackdown was even more brutal. Whilst the strike was looming, some 10 000 troops were mobilized, with martial law declared on the same day as the strike began. The strike spread to the gold mines on the Rand and within days it was suppressed.

### SCOPE

The exhibit presents a recollection of the course of the strikes through Picture Postcards. The aftermath was the realisation by labour activists of the potential to involve black and coloured workers in labour activities. This awareness played an essential part in the future of Political and Labour history in South Africa.

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- The 1914 Strike: Ann O'Quigley, pp 77 to 83
- Strike Album, Johannesburg, July 1913: Central News Agency, Ltd., Johannesburg, pp 1 - 32
- Something of a Novelty, Postcards of SA: Archie Atkinson, 2007, pp 101, 104 - 5
- A Johannesburg Album, Historical Postcards: Oscar I Norwich, pp 143 - 4

## CAUSES OF THE 1913 STRIKE

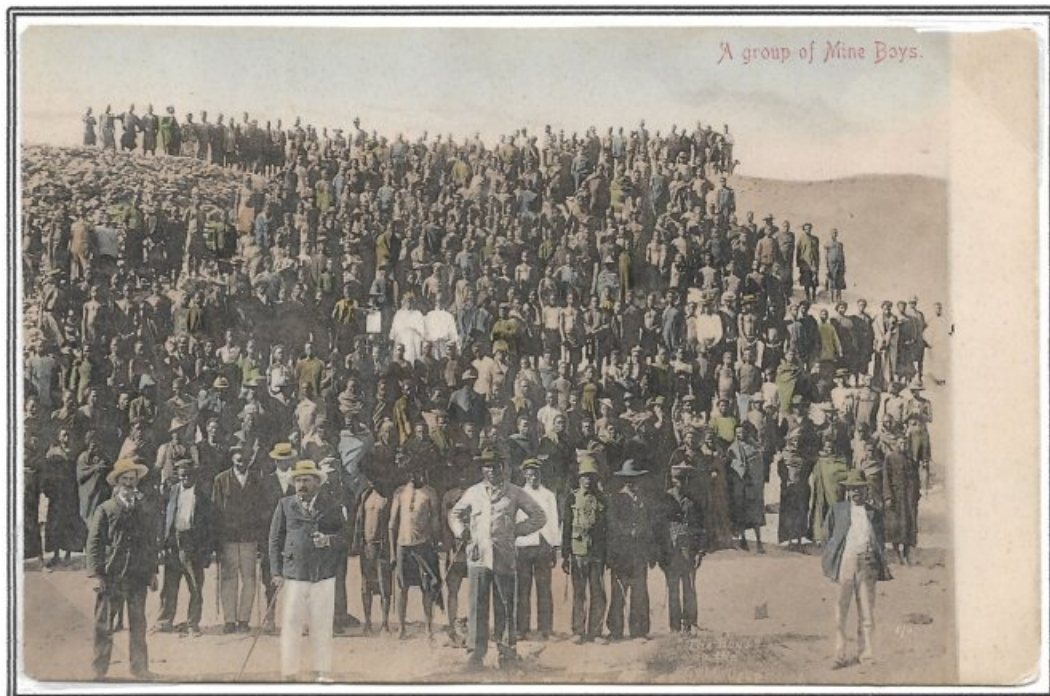
The discontent of the white workers came to a head in May 1913 at the **New Kleinfontein** mine in Benoni. Management introduced changes to working hours and five underground mechanics refused to comply. They were dismissed and left the mine on 10 May.



Where it all started - The New Kleinfontein Gold mine, Benoni  
*Real Photo Postcard with manuscript caption towards the left bottom corner and number 16.  
Published by "SAPSCO" - Box 5792, Johannesburg at the back, with DB in black*

On 26 May most of the white workers at the mine voted to support the five men. A white mineworker strike was declared with a strike committee appointed.

Management decided not to reinstate the strikers and opened the mine on 11 June 1913 with the assistance of mostly black strike-breakers.



Black mine workers were used as strike breakers to keep the New Kleinfontein mine open  
*Published by Sallo Epstein & Co., Johannesburg with manuscript caption towards the right top corner with number 2072 at the back, DB in green*

Confident that the concerned parties would resolve the dispute, the government adopted an impartial attitude, holding the directors of the New Kleinfontein mine responsible for the disturbance.

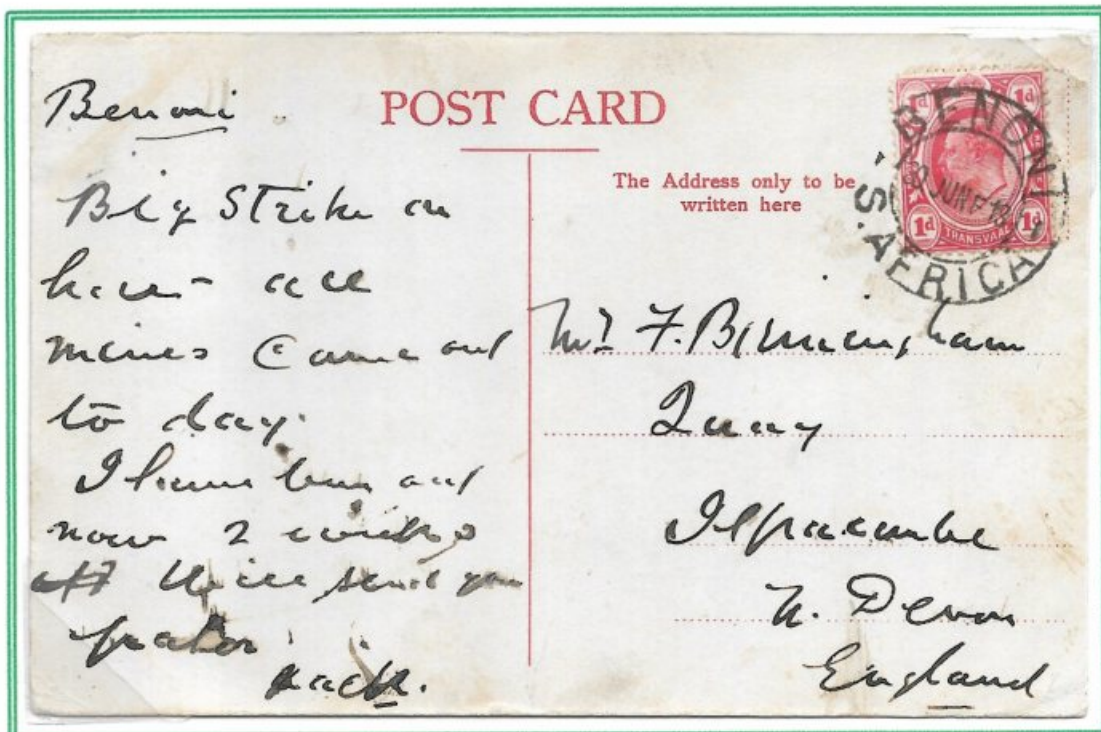
## DEADLOCK

The strike spread to mines across the Rand, accompanied by growing violence. Government takes the first steps to intervene. General Jan Smuts, the then Minister of Interior, Defense and Finance also a former minister of mines and acting minister of Justice, met with mine management and strike leaders on 22 June. Unsuccessful in resolving the deadlock between the two parties, Smuts feared that the police would not be able to cope with the situation and mobilized some 5 000 men from the Imperial forces to support them.



Mounted troops patrolling in the streets of Johannesburg  
 No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back - Nr 1 of series 2

Beginning of July, no resolution to the dispute was reached and some 19 000 white mine workers went on strike.



Used Postcard developing the storyline from Benoni to England dated 30 June 1913 with strike related remark 'Big strike on here - all mines came out today' with 1d KE VII stamp (late usage) tied with a Benoni double circle cds  
 Published by R.O. Füsslein, PO Box 2262, Johannesburg. Number 3214, DB in red

The Witwatersrand mines ceased to operate. The strike committee arranged for a mass demonstration on Friday 4 July at 2 p.m. at the Johannesburg Market Square, what would become known as "**Black Friday**".

## "BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913

At a very late stage the government banned all public gatherings, proclaiming martial law at 1:30 p.m. Miners from Benoni and Brakpan, flouting the declaration of martial law and joined by others, were marching on to Johannesburg, determined to hold the meeting. *The wave of anarchy had begun...*



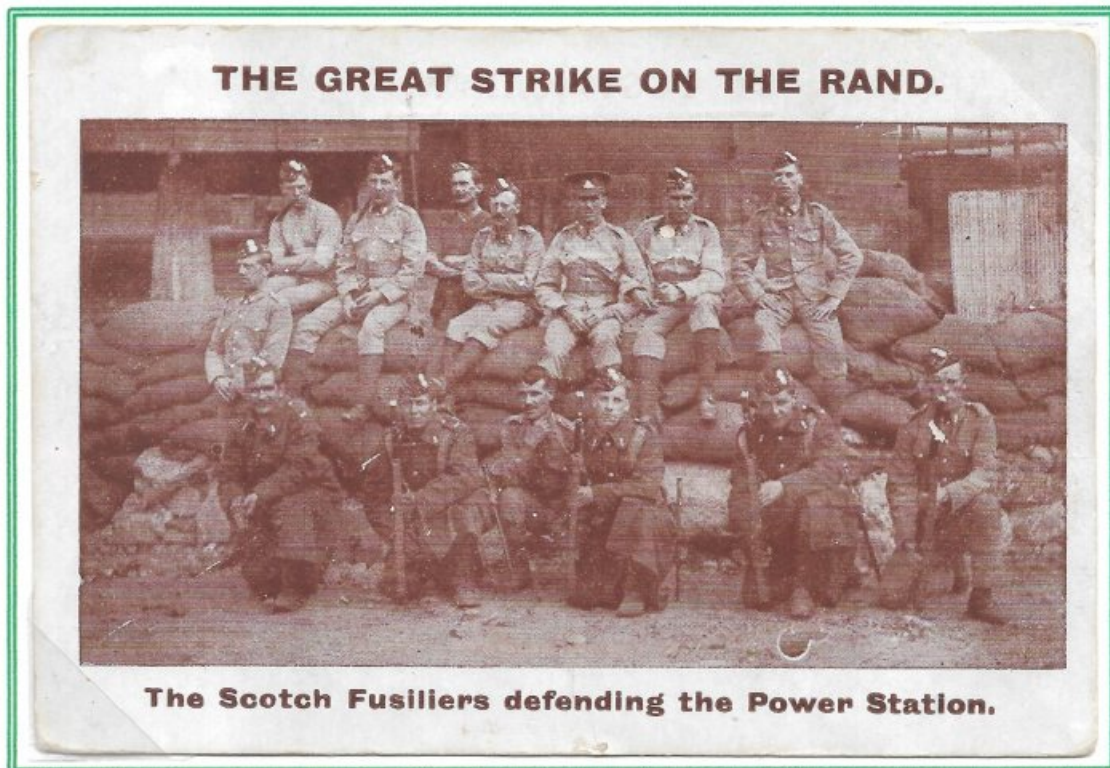
Market Square with General Post Office - Johannesburg

Breeding ground of the anarchy - Johannesburg market square

*Published by P.S. & C, Box 1205, Cape Town with logo and number 982 at the back, DB in green*

From 2 p.m. a jam-packed crowd had gathered on the market square opposite the Post Office. Anarchistic speeches were made by the leaders and the meeting was dispersed by the police.

The crowd broke up into smaller groups that roamed Johannesburg. It was eminent that there would be more violence, the only question be where it would start.



**The Scotch Fusiliers defending the Power Station.**

Further duties after putting the Power station back to work

*Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown. Nr 1 of series 1*

Around 4 p.m. several strikers held up tramcars and rode to the Power Station where engines were stopped, and all work ceased. After a short time, they left, believing that the city would be in darkness.

The Scotch Fusiliers moved in to protect and put the station in working order again.

## "BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913

The Police and Imperial forces kept patrolling the streets and dispersed several crowds from vandalising property. By 8 p.m. a dense crowd had gathered in President Street next to the Post Office. Several speakers preached an open revolt and incited the crowd to loot gun shops to arm themselves.



Bystanders in front of one of four looted gun shops  
Original print image of the strike from "The Illustrated Star: Town and Country Journal"  
of 19 July 1913

Most of those present were whipped up and prepared not for words but rather for devil's work. A voice from the crowd incited the torching of the railway station - *this was the proverbial spark in the powder keg*. A hooligan element took over and the crowd advanced to Park Railway Station in Braamfontein, looting gun shops for arms and ammunition on their way.

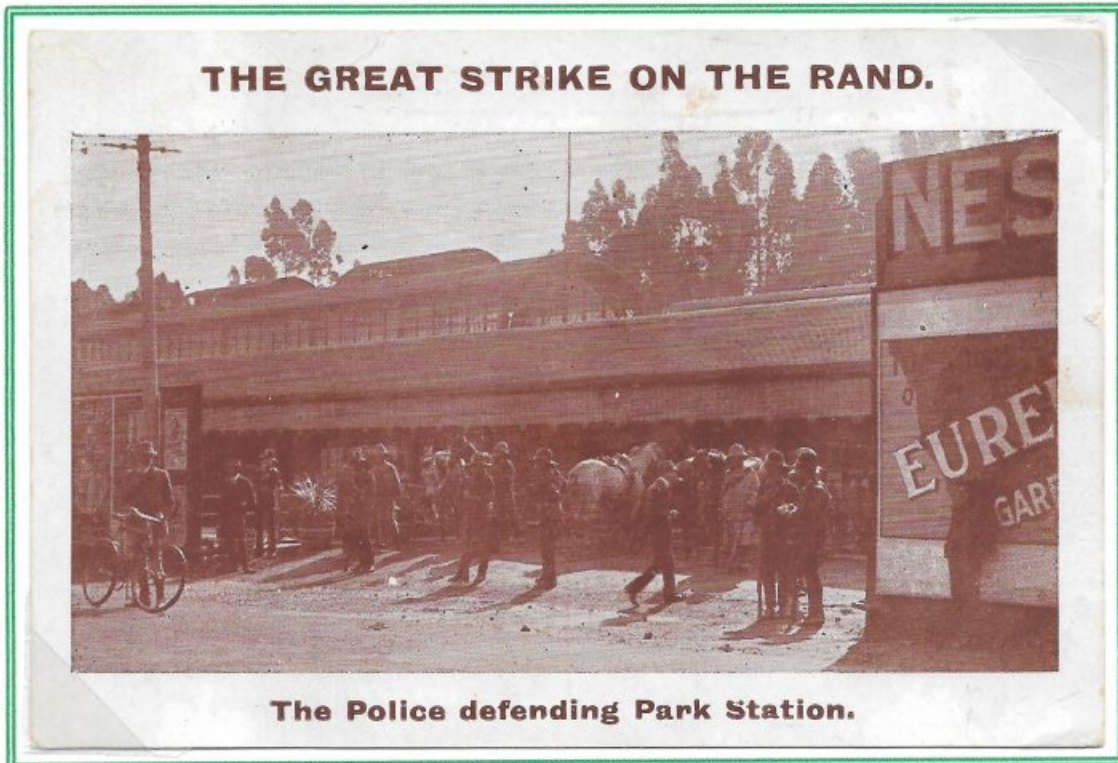


Park Station with the Railway Head Office at the back  
Real Photo Postcard by R O Fusslein, Box 2262, Johannesburg with caption in manuscript and  
serial number 21, DB in black

The emerging violence led up to the first instance in South Africa's history in which there was a spilling of blood because of industrial disturbance...

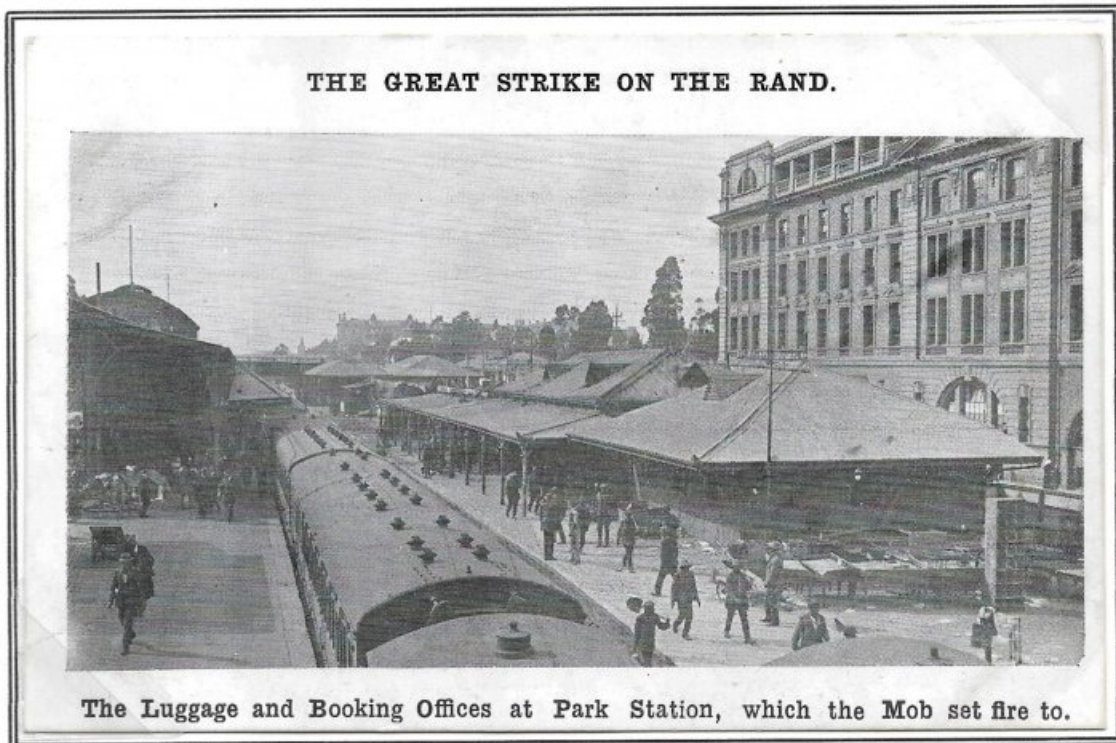
## "BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913

At Park Station the frontline of the defiant rebels met with the police. The mounted police charged and scattered them in all directions.



Mounted police in front of the entry to the Railway Station  
*Publisher unknown with DB in brown. Nr 2 of series 1*

The crowd started to curse and stoned the police, driving them back into Klein Street, away from the station. Some of the rioters emptied their revolvers at the police, wounding one. About thirty men managed to take possession of the station, setting the booking office and goods shed on fire.



The two Railway buildings that was set on fire  
*No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back. Nr 2 of series 2*

The perpetrators, in their vandalism, were not confronted by the police as they were held back by the crowd in Klein Street.

## "BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913

Law abiding onlookers should have sensed disgust at the spectacle of a score of ruffians, many of them youngsters, destroying property which they were helpless to stop.



View of the ruined Railway goods shed  
*Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown. Nr 3 of series 1*

With the Railway station well ablaze, and in high spirit of their first success, the mob proceeded to the offices of The Star newspaper in President Street.

The attack started with a fusillade of stones, truncheons, and revolver shots. Two charges of dynamite exploded on the ground floor and the office was plundered and ruined by fire.



Ruins of the Star office  
*No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back. Nr 3 of series 2*

The Star was regarded by the strikers as the mouthpiece of the Chamber of Mines and more interested in the well-being of black workers than that of white workers.

## "BLACK FRIDAY" 4 JULY 1913

At some stage it seemed that the offices of another newspaper, The Transvaal Leader, in Harrison Street were singled out for an attack.

On their way there the mob was disseminated by the police.

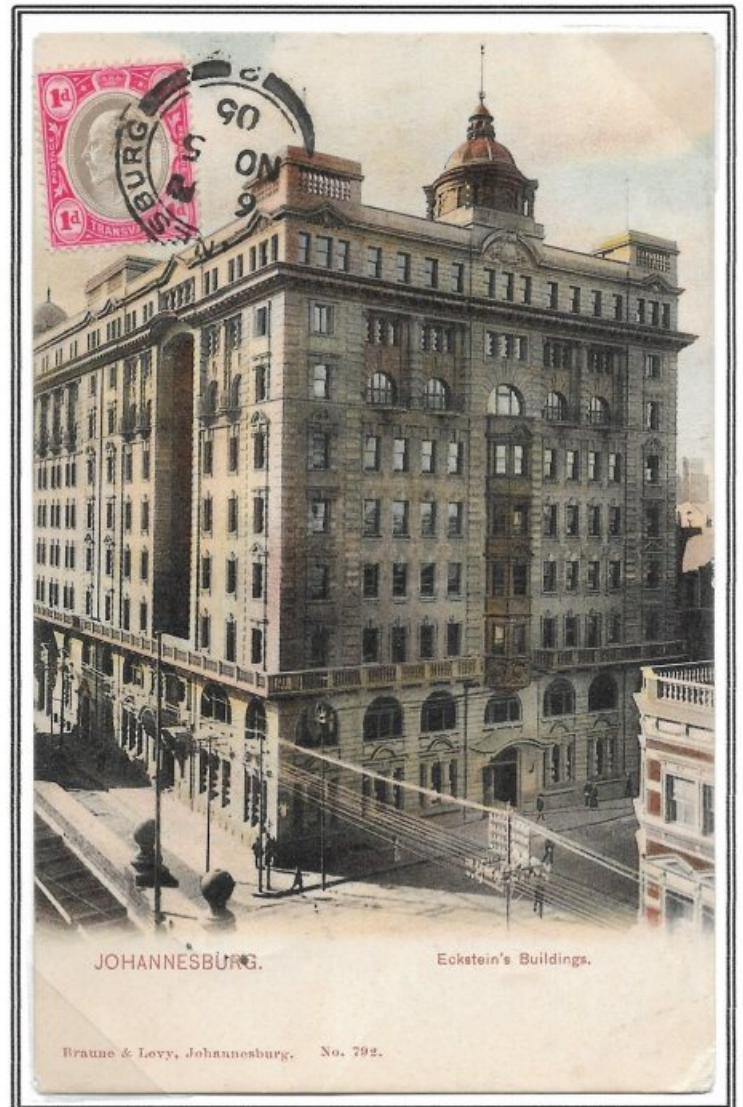
They then threatened to attack "Corner House", the mining house of H Eckstein & Co, whom the strikers considered to be a symbol of capitalism.

On the way the picketers met with reinforcements from the Military and Cape Police who were deployed to assist the Police.

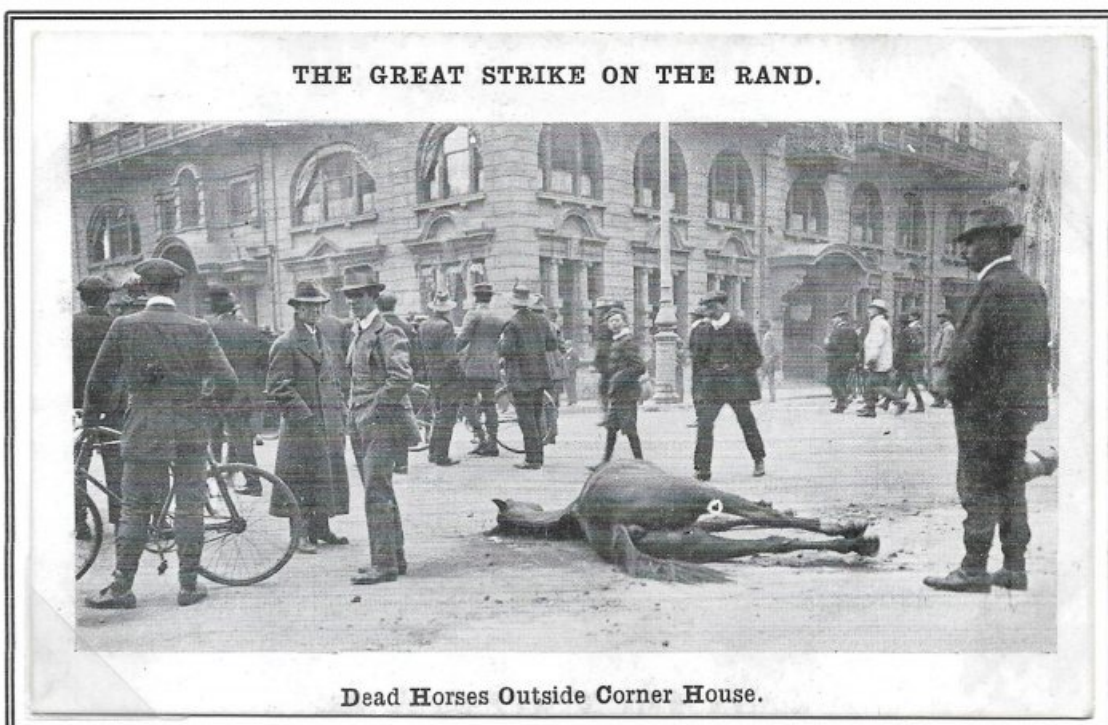
The crowd became demonstrative, attacking the troops and revolver shots being fired.

To restore order the Police opened fire and shoot down three assailants.

After this incident fighting and hostilities by the strikers subsided but was far from over.



"Corner House" - regarded the symbol of capitalism  
Published by Braun & Levy, Johannesburg with number  
792. DB in brown



Contrary to the caption only one carcass can be seen  
No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back. Nr 4 of series 2

## SATURDAY 5 JULY 1913

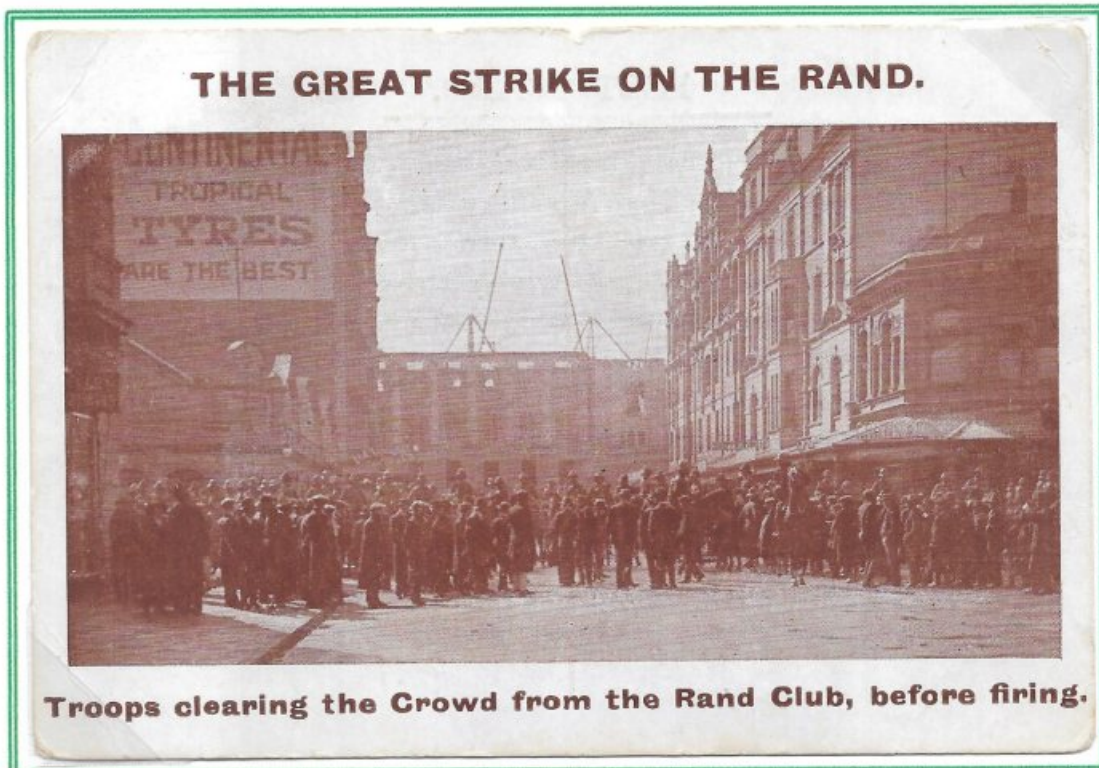
On Saturday morning 5 July the lawlessness started again.

Reports indicated that the strikers were on their way to burn down the Rand Club, in their view "the haunt of the capitalist classes".



The Rand Club, corner Commissioner and Loveday Streets - "hangout of the capitalists"  
Real Photo Postcard with manuscript caption towards the right bottom corner and number 364.  
Published by "SAPSCO" , Box 5792, Johannesburg at back with DB in black

The violence that roamed the city reached its climax during the luncheon hour with an attack on the Rand Club. People gathered outside the club and a small group entered and vandalized the club, trying to set it alight. Revolver shots from the crowd damaged windows.



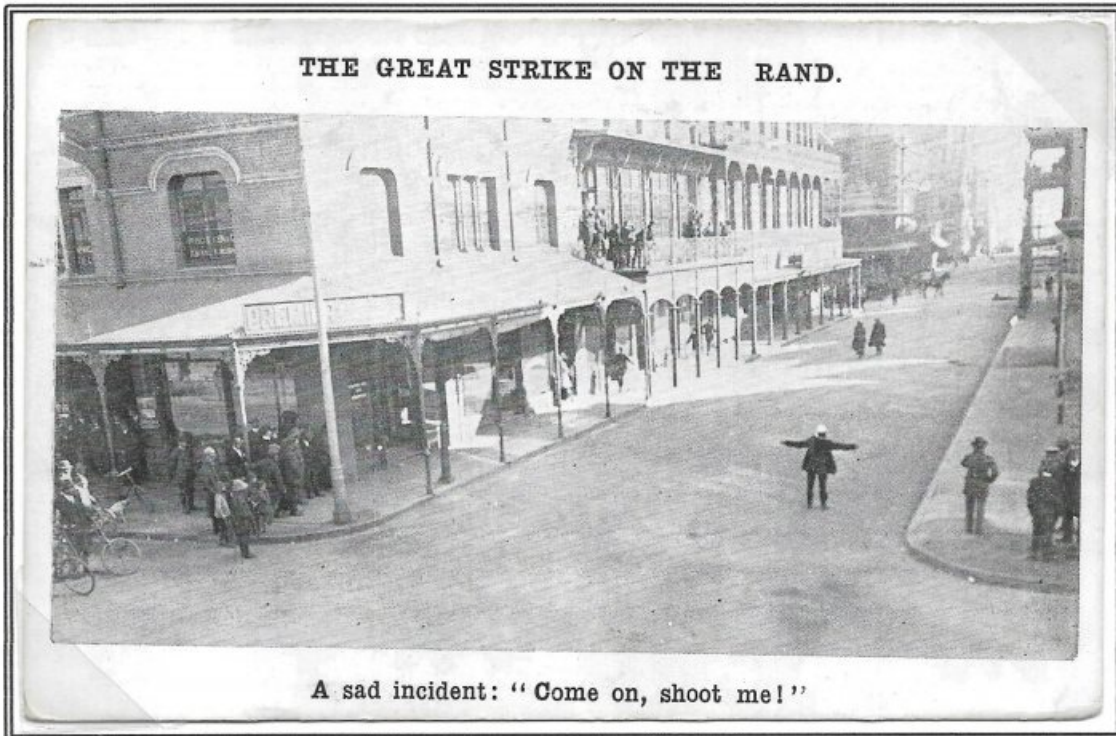
The beginning of the end of the 1913 strike  
Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown. Nr 4 of series 1

The police and military arrived and, what was described by some as "a battle to protect the Rand club and Johannesburg, commenced.

**SATURDAY 5 JULY 1913**

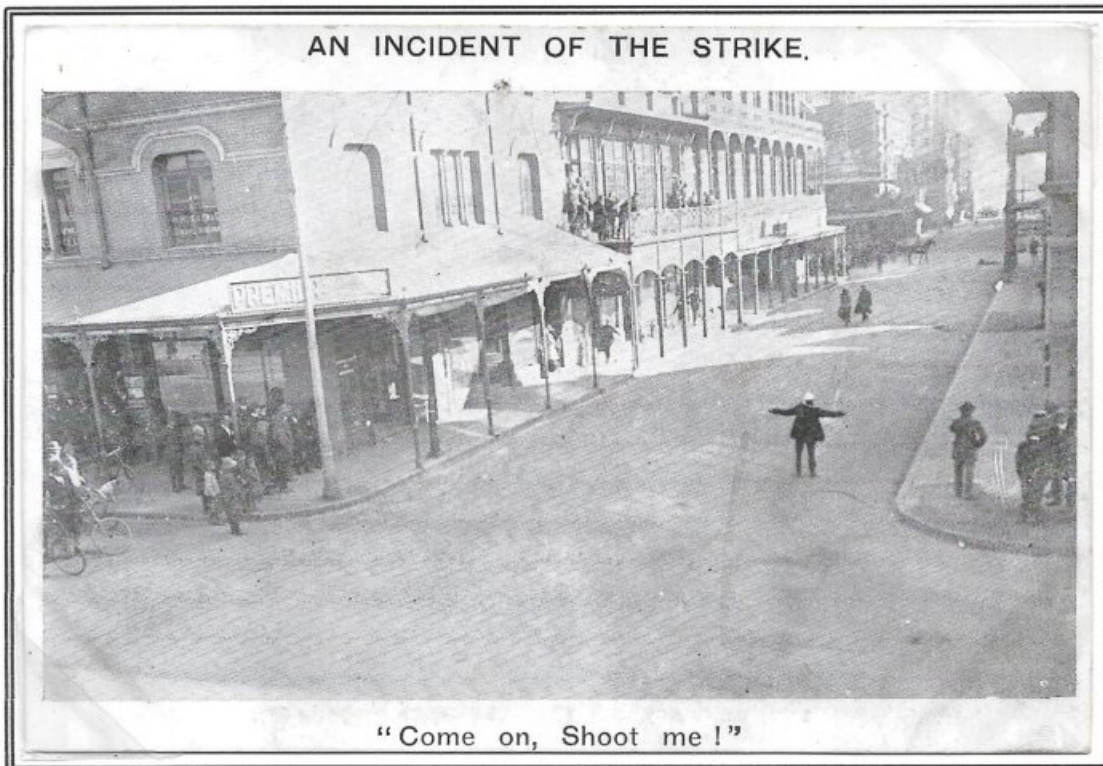
In an unfortunate incident a young miner, Mr. J L Labuschagne, appeared in the street and *shouted "Come on! Shoot me if you dare!"* upon which he bared his chest.

A volley of bullets followed, and he was fatally wounded.



*No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back. Nr 5 of series 2*

The incident is portrayed with two postcards with the same photo but with different headings and captions. These differences indicate that it was most probably published by two different publishers, or two printings.

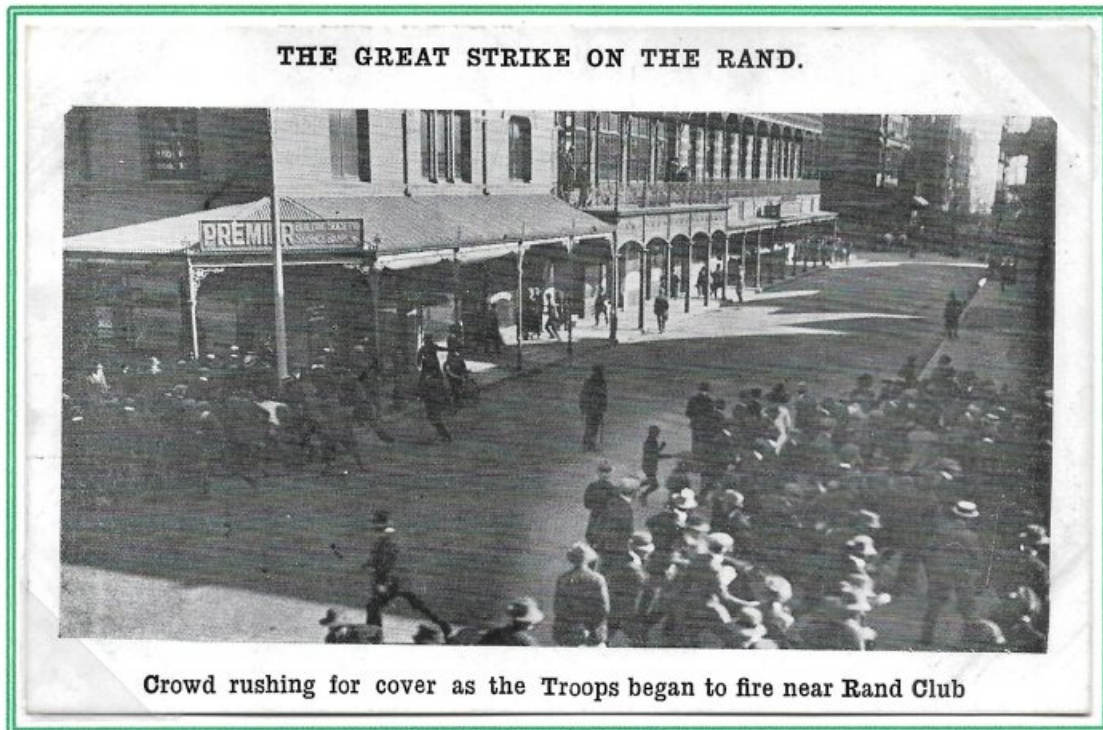


*No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back*

According to Oscar Norwich the gentleman is standing on the corner of Fox and Rissik Streets outside the Hosken Building on the left. The Rand Club is situated on the corner of Loveday and Commissioner Streets. He asserts in view of these differences; it has been suggested by some that the photographer set the scene up after the event. However, the photo is taken from the exact spot from where the photo was taken for Postcard "*Crowd rushing for cover as the Troops began to fire near Rand Club*" (see page 11).

## STRIKERS WON THE DAY

Crossfire between the armed forces and strikers followed, killing more people. The strike went beyond control with fear that Johannesburg and its mines would be destroyed.



Last conflict of the Strike

*No information relating to the publisher, photographer, or printer. Blank back. Nr 6 of series 2*

Alarmed by these reports of violence and deaths, Generals Botha and Smuts arrived in a violence torn Johannesburg on 5 July 1913 to intervene.

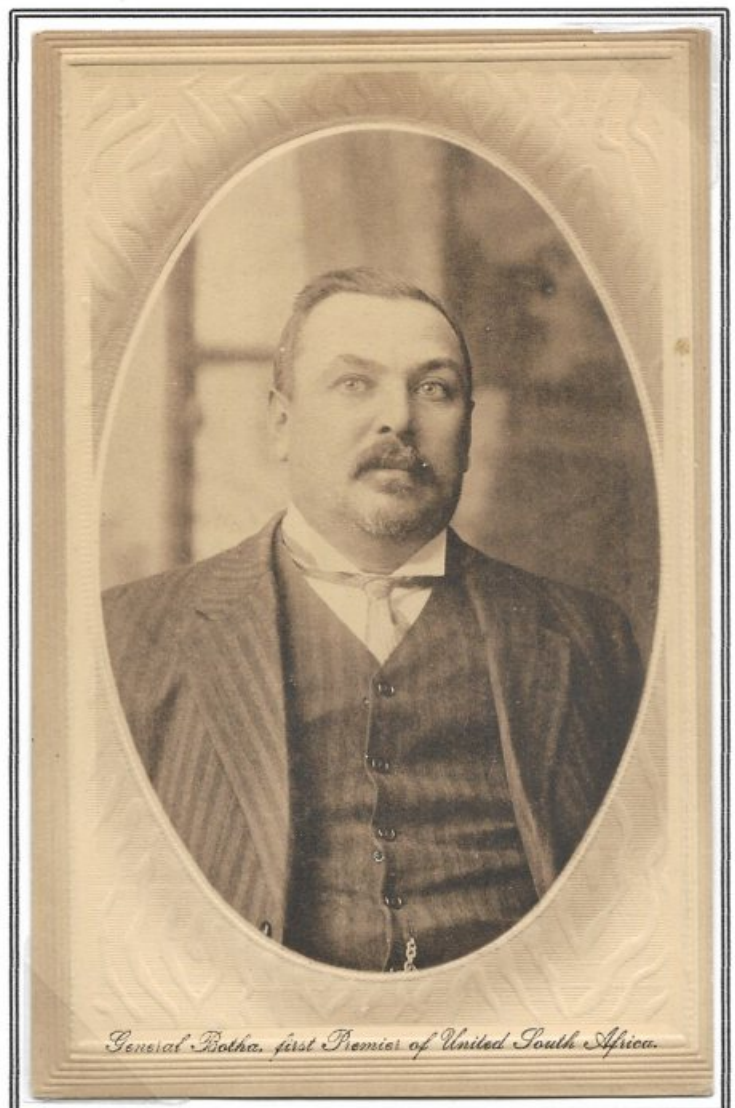
They met with the mining executives and leaders of the demonstrators in the Carlton Hotel to negotiate a truce.

It was inter alia agreed that:

- All strikers would be reinstated.
- Government would appoint a judicial committee to investigate the strikers' grievances.
- Strikebreakers were to be dismissed by the mine owners but were to be paid a year's salary of 300 pounds by the government.

Most of the strikers' demands were met and the strike was called off.

*The strikers won the day!*

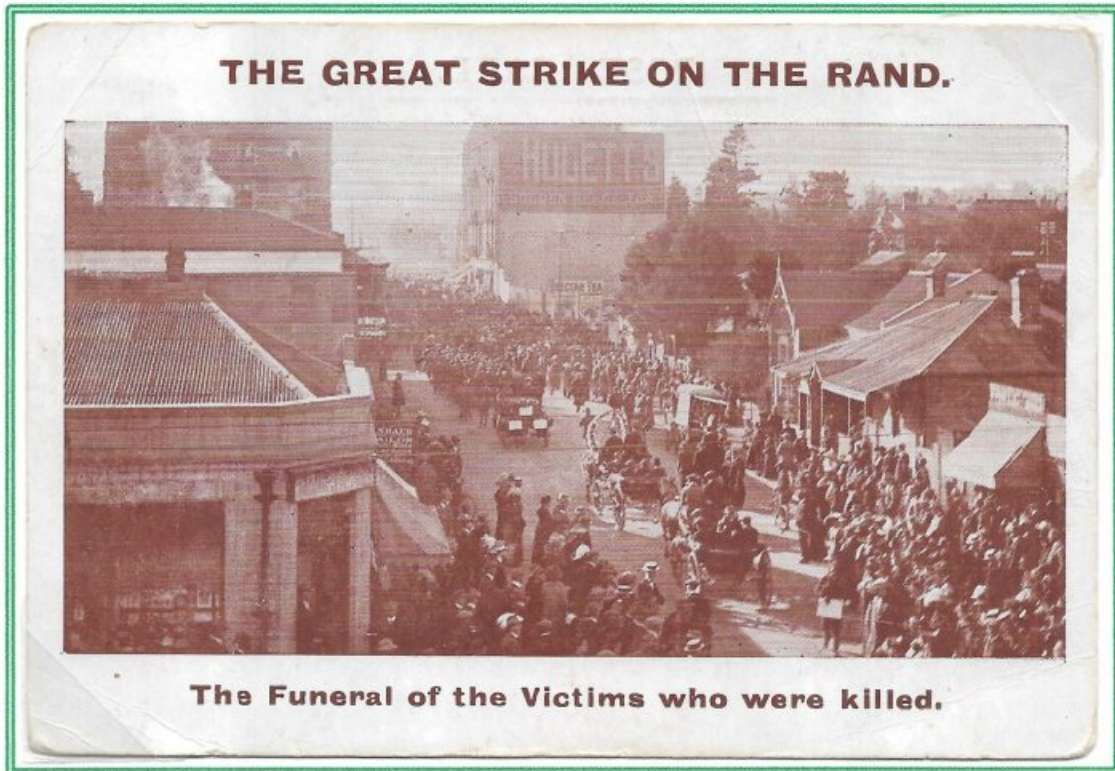


Prime Minister, General Louis Botha  
Published by Hallis & Co., Port Elizabeth. Printed in Saxony.  
Not numbered with DB in brown

### VICTIMS FUNERAL - MONDAY 7 JULY 1913

During the strike, twenty-one people were fatally wounded with more than 200 injured, including the police and military.

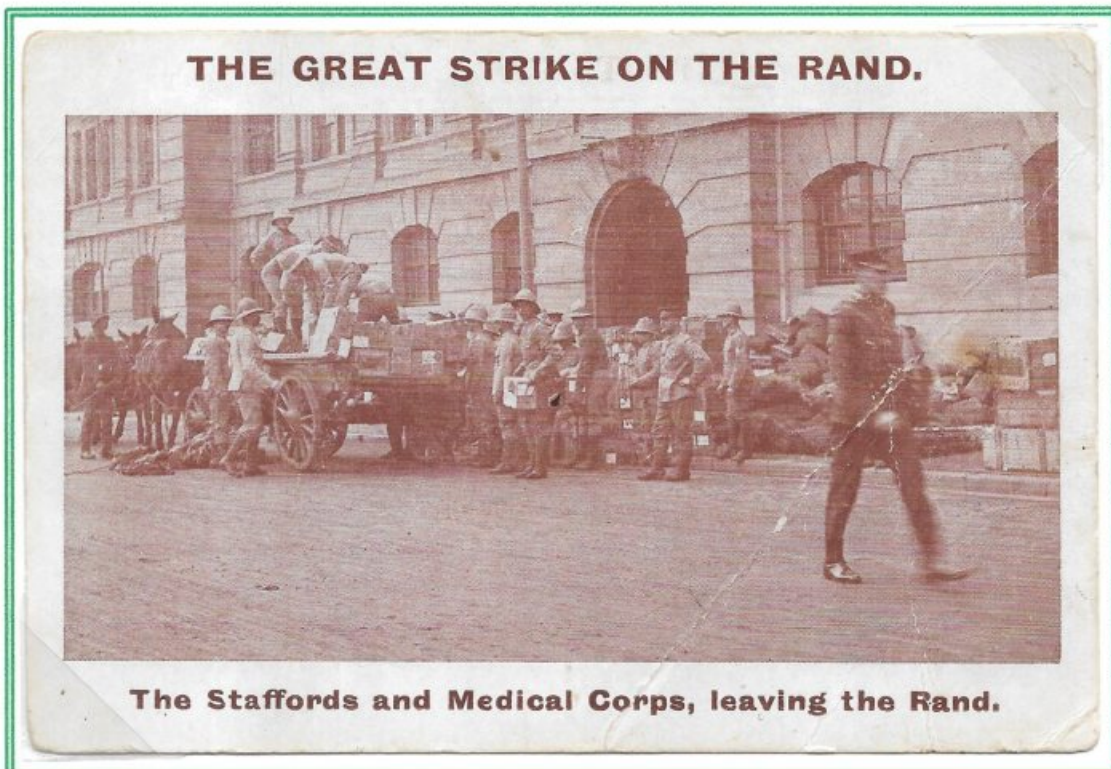
A funeral for most of the victims was held on Monday 7 July 1913, which was attended by about 60 000 people.



Anarchy and its cost

*Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown. Nr 5 of series 1*

For days after the settlement, the Police searched offices and houses of the strike leaders, strikers and agitators, making numerous arrests.



The order had been restored

*Publisher unknown, no serial number and DB in brown. Nr 6 of series 1*

Noteworthy is the fact that while Johannesburg and the East Rand were in a state of anarchy, the West Rand enjoyed immunity from disorderliness.

## BUILDUP - 1914 STRIKE

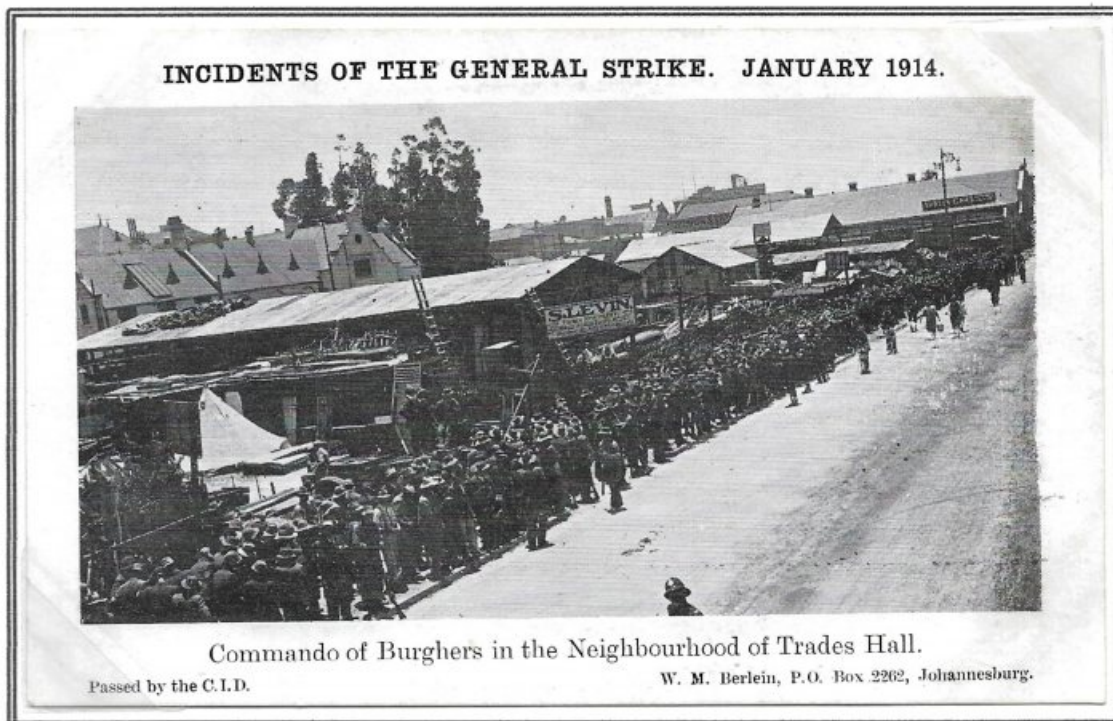
In the months following the 1913 strike, it became apparent that the strike had been no victory for the white workers. Industrial relations remained tense and Railwaymen became disgruntled with planned retrenchments. On 6 January 1914 it was decided to call a national strike of white Railway Workers from 8 January. Other Industries joined in, and Trade Union leaders utilized the Trades Hall in Johannesburg as Head Office.



The Trades Hall, Cnr. Commissioner and Small Streets  
*Published by Braune & Levy, Johannesburg with serial number 1 000. DB in brown.*

Units of the Active Citizen Force, police forces, as well as special constables and volunteers - in all 10 000 troops - were mobilized in the lead up to the strike.

The strike leaders brought in the white goldminers that resulted in unrest on the Witwatersrand and *Johannesburg became the main theatre of the strike.*



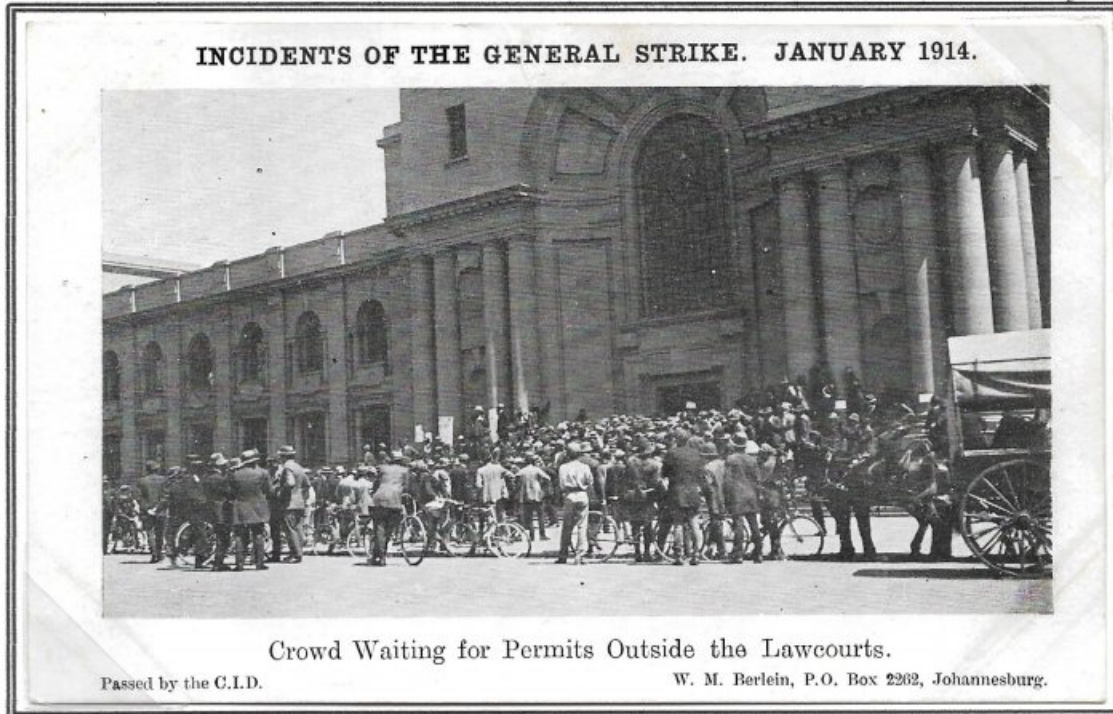
Commando of Burghers in the Neighbourhood of Trades Hall.  
*Passed by the C.I.D. W. M. Berlein, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg.*

**Citizen force members on patrol**  
*Published by W. M. Berlein, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg. Passed by C.I.D. (Criminal Investigations Department). Not numbered, Blank back. Nr 1 of series 3*

Trade Union leaders addressed meetings throughout the country and called for support for the strike. On 10 January three trade union leaders were arrested in Pretoria.

## BUILDUP - 1914 STRIKE

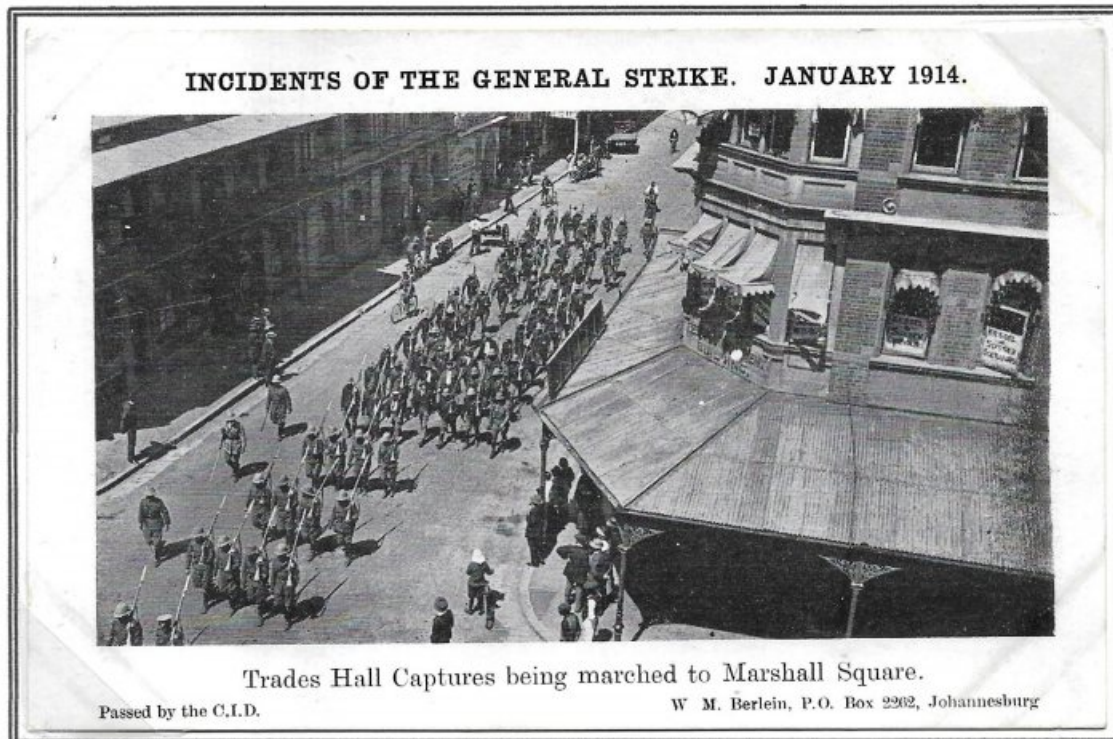
On 13 January, the Transvaal Federation of Trade Unions called for a general strike to start on 14 January. At midnight on 13 January the government proclaimed martial law.



**The effect of Martial law**  
*Published by W. M. Berlein, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg. Passed by C.I.D. Not numbered,  
Blank back. Nr 2 of series 3*

Authorities engaged in extensive arrests of strikers and strike leaders' country wide. On 15 January the strike committees in Pretoria and Johannesburg, as well as many strikers on the Rand were arrested.

Some of the main strike leaders had barricaded themselves in at the Trades Hall and threatened not to give up without violence.

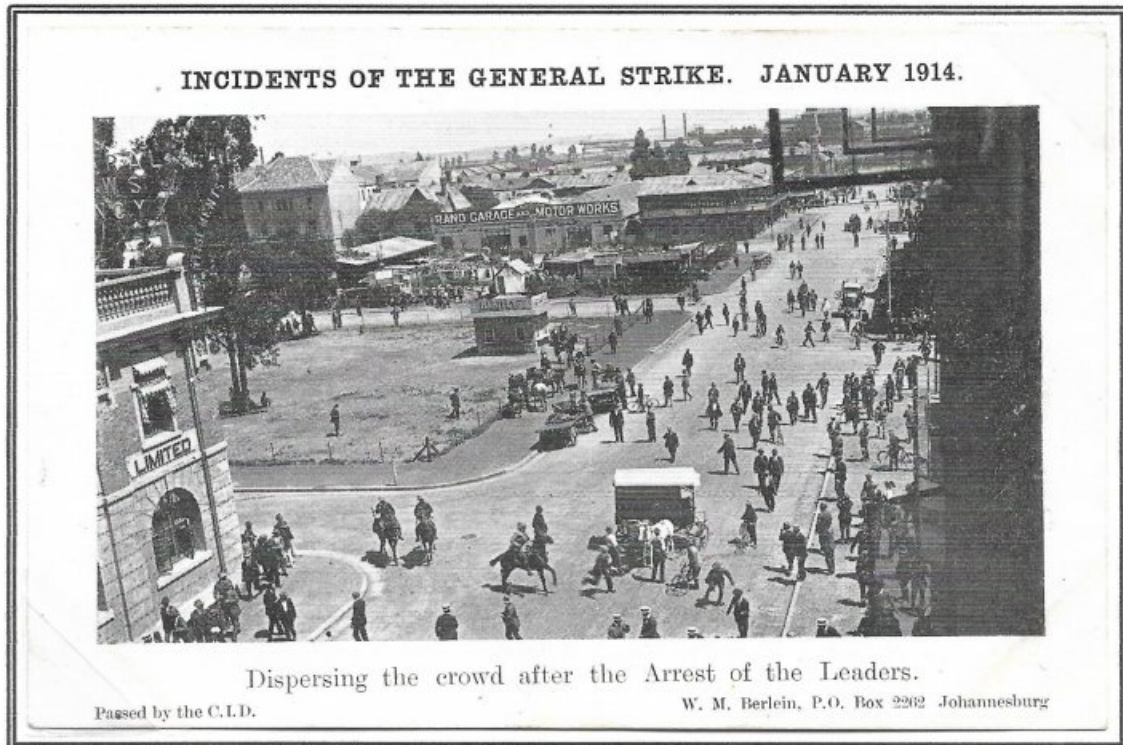


**Approaching the end of the strike**  
*Published by W. M. Berlein, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg. Passed by C.I.D. Not numbered,  
Blank back. Nr 3 of series 3*

On 17 January hundreds of strikers were arrested countrywide. Troops surrounded the Trades Hall and trained a field gun on it. An ultimatum was issued to the strike leaders to surrender, which they did and were arrested.

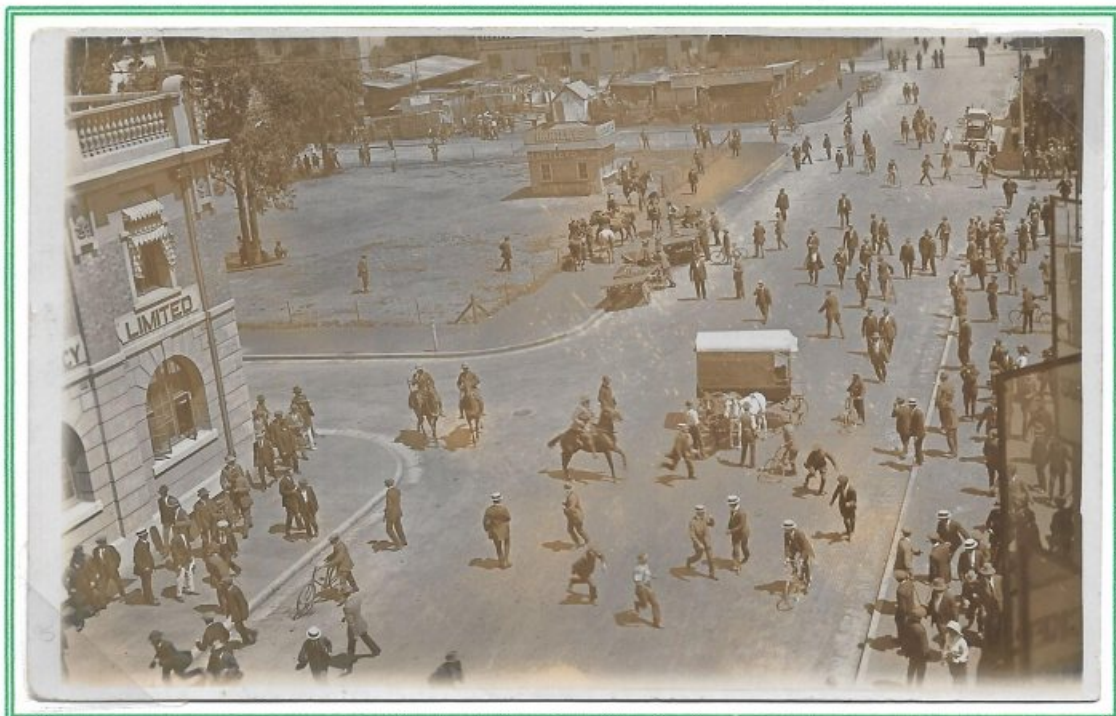
## CRUSHING THE STRIKE

The general strike of 1914 never really got off the ground. The unions involved had not done the preparation and organization necessary for a successful strike. The government, by contrast, was well prepared.



Spectators observing the arrest of strike leaders  
*Published by W. M. Berlein, P.O. Box 2262, Johannesburg. Passed by CID. Not numbered,  
Blank back. Nr 4 of series 3*

Contributing factors were the early imprisonment of leadership. In terms of martial law, picketing and mass meetings were forbidden. Contact and communication between various centres became impossible. It proved to be a total defeat and by 18 January 1914 the strike had been crushed with the loss of two lives.



Real Photo Postcard with identical image as above and hand stamped "STRIKE" in purple at the back  
*Publisher unknown with no serial number and DB in black*

Although the government forces gained the upper hand, General Smuts overestimated the limits of his powers under martial law.

This resulted in the illegal deportation of nine foreign born strike leaders to England without trial.

## AFTER EFFECTS

The nine foreign born strike leaders were detained at Marshall Square Police Station in Johannesburg.



Marshall Square Police Station, Johannesburg

*Published by J. Barnett & Co with serial number 286. Printed in Leipsic. UB in red.*

They were secretly removed from their cells and taken to Durban where they were forcibly put aboard the steamship Umgeni, which sailed from Durban to London, on 30 January 1914.

This arbitrary action by government caused an outcry in labour circles in South Africa and Britain.

Smuts justified the action by claiming that the strike leaders were dangerous men with revolutionary syndicalist ideas, aimed at agitating the overthrow of the government.



Die 9 südafrikanischen Arbeiterführer  
die von General Botha deportiert wurden und deren Ankunft  
in England an Bord des „Umgeni“ kürzlich erfolgte.

Postcard with caption: "The 9 South African labour leaders who were deported by General Botha and whose arrival in England aboard the "Umgeni" took place recently" (Free translation)

*Publisher unknown. DB in black with no serial number. "Absender", "Wohnort" and "Straße" printed at the back*

After a couple of months, the deportees were returned to South Africa and remained active in labour issues.