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WIS.

Lake
MICHIGAN

IOWA

ILL.

NEB.

Coal Valley

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Peoria

Macon County

KANS.

St. Louis County

Belleville

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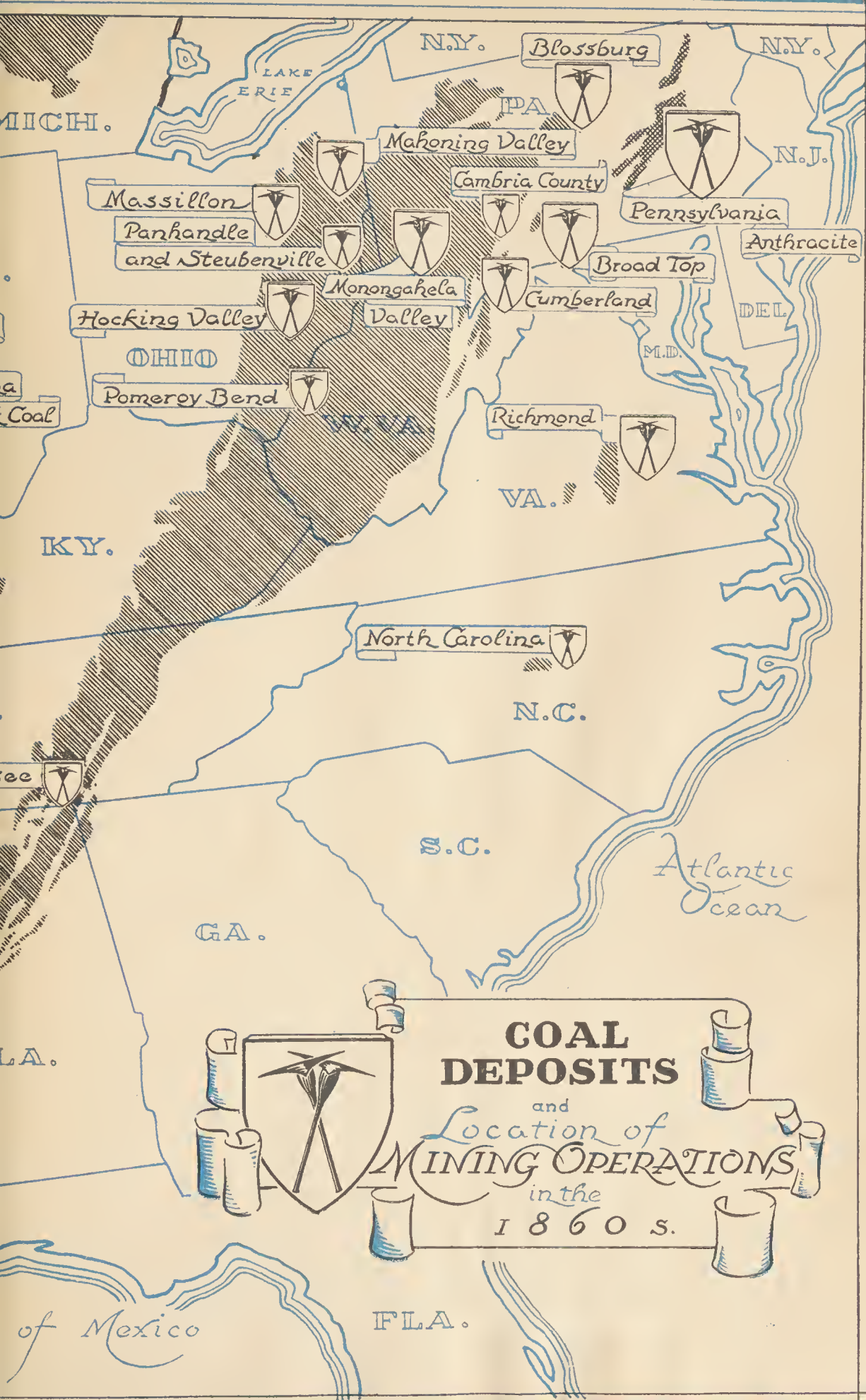
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THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

A RECORD OF THE ORIGIN OF COAL
MINERS' UNIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

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INTRODUCTION

WITHIN the trade-union movement coal miners have occupied a position of strategic importance. Their work supplies a raw material essential to the operation of the basic industries in the modern nation which is founded upon iron and steel. They are themselves a large group in the population, and the security of their livelihood and the stability of their purchasing power is a factor in the domestic market. Working as they do, in close association, conscious of common interests in all branches of mining, as well as with fellow workers in other industries, they have given direction and leadership to the labor movement. A contemporary illustration is the position of the United Mine Workers in the new labor movement which is writing an important chapter in American history. During long years the United Mine Workers of America has been one of the most powerful unions in the American Federation of Labor; and, along with the clothing workers' unions, it has given substantial support both in numbers and in money to the Congress of Industrial Organizations, known as the "C.I.O." In that movement miners have had marked influence in setting the pattern for the development of industrial unionism in the mass-production industries.

This role of leadership by the miners has a long history in the labor movement, both in Great Britain and in the United States. If, therefore, the role of the trade union is to be studied as an important aspect of American national life today, the historical record of the coal miners' organizations needs to be compiled. This study of the American Miners' Association, organized in 1861, calls attention to a significant episode in labor history.

Emerging at the opening of the decade when modern industrial development actually began in the United States, the miners' organization initiated a movement which appears to be inextricably associated with the growth of mass production and the organization of business in corporations. Viewed politically, the trade-union move-

ment may be said to express democracy in the economic system. Viewed socially, the trade union is an institution functioning under conditions which affect the whole community, as the rise and fall of industrial production and the accompanying fluctuations in employment affect the livelihood of all workers.

Thus the record of the American Miners' Association is to be regarded as a contribution to the study of trade unions as social institutions. As such, it comes within the scope of interest of the Russell Sage Foundation, whose purpose is "the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States." In particular, the study belongs in the program of research of the Foundation's Department of Industrial Studies, which has for its task investigation of industrial factors in the social economy of the nation, specifically, all aspects of human relations and conditions in industry.

In fulfilment of this task, the Department initiated in 1919 its Industrial Relations Series. Beginning with experiments in the organization of shop committees and other new forms of association between employers and employees in American industry, which had taken form during the World War and immediately afterward, the Department has been concerned, during the two decades of the 1920's and 1930's, with the interrelation of trade unionism with fluctuations in employment and unemployment. While unemployment tends to weaken a trade union, it prepares the way for new interest in organization to safeguard and increase wages when employment expands and costs of living rise.

As might have been expected, coal miners played an important part during the decade of the war and through the period that followed it. Moreover, the industry gave rise to the first important employees' representation plan, or "company union," as the movement came to be known when the trade unions opposed it. The company union had its origin in the mines of the Colorado coal fields, prior to the World War. A study of this experiment was published as one of the first volumes in the Industrial Relations Series.¹ Concurrently with this first investigation, it was found to

¹ Selekman, Ben M., and van Kleeck, Mary, *Employees' Representation in Coal Mines: A Study of the Industrial Representation Plan of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1924.

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be desirable to analyze the work of the United Mine Workers in the states where it was strongly organized. The analysis led to another publication in the series,¹ in which the actual day-to-day interpretation and administration of agreements between the union and the coal operators were examined as revealed in the disposition of thousands of disputes handled under the joint machinery of the operators and the union in the state of Illinois. This organized procedure, patterned after the courts but involving also efforts to reach agreement by conference, threw light not only on industrial relations in coal mining, but on principles to be observed in human relations in all industry. Following this came a study² of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company's trade-union agreement which had broken the deadlock between the United Mine Workers and the operators in Colorado and had demonstrated results which could be achieved through agreement with the union, in contrast with the opposition to unionism which had characterized the past policy of Colorado coal companies.

In the decade of the 1930's, interest of the Department in new developments in industrial relations led to a study of the National Industrial Recovery Act and its administration, which, in turn, has expanded into a long-time analysis, that is still in process, of industrial relations and their interconnection with unemployment and standards of living during the period of industrial depression that began in 1929. This investigation, in turn, has included particular study of miners; and in the course of it, the importance of the history of miners' unions has become evident. This record of the American Miners' Association is the first result.

The author, Edward A. Wieck, was appointed as research associate in the Department of Industrial Studies in January, 1934, with the special assignment of the investigation of developments affecting trade unions under the National Recovery Administration. Mining

¹ Bloch, Louis, *Labor Agreements in Coal Mines: A Case Study of the Administration of Agreements between Miners' and Operators' Organizations in the Bituminous Coal Mines of Illinois*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1931.

² van Kleeck, Mary, *Miners and Management: A Study of the Collective Agreement between the United Mine Workers of America and the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, and an Analysis of the Problem of Coal in the United States*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1934.

was one of the industries selected for attention. A coal miner himself, living in the important mining state of Illinois, participating actively as a member of the United Mine Workers in that state, and having wide acquaintance with miners of the older generation as well as the new, Mr. Wieck has brought to his task an invaluable experience from which to interpret the documents and records for which he has painstakingly searched in this historical study.

As the investigation shows, the origin of the American Miners' Association and its history are inseparable from the development of the nation's social economy. At the time of the Civil War the nation entered into a new phase of its industrial development—a phase which seems now to be drawing to a close; and the history of the modern labor movement had its origin in that period. It was influenced by past developments, notably in the British Isles. As, politically, Anglo-Saxon tradition profoundly influenced the political structure of the United States, so unquestionably the trade unions trace their heritage to the British Isles. This is notably true of coal mining. From England, Scotland, and Wales came men trained in work in British mines, who transferred to the new country not only their technique but their political and economic experience in British working-class organization. In turn, the miners' unions profoundly influenced the whole labor movement of the new country.

In forming a national labor policy which can best fulfil the aims of American democracy at the present stage of national life, it is important to gain the perspective of history. Therefore this account of the American Miners' Association is offered as a contribution both to historical record and to the development of industrial relations in the present period.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE following study traces the origins of miners' unions in the United States, particularly the rise of the American Miners' Association in the early sixties. This first national miners' union has been neglected by labor historians. It therefore seemed important to search for material bearing upon it before the documents are scattered and lost, and to make the data available to the increasing number of persons who wish to study and understand the labor movement. Hitherto the only accessible accounts have been the meager and inadequate sketches by John McBride,¹ Andrew Roy² and Chris Evans,³ with the probability that the statements of the last two depended somewhat on the earlier information given by McBride.

McBride, an Ohio miner, leader of the Ohio miners in the eighties, president of the United Mine Workers of America in the early nineties, and president of the American Federation of Labor in 1895, wrote his account of the Association in the middle eighties, as part of the story of the miners' struggle up to that time. It appears merely as a chapter in a symposium on the labor movement. Andrew Roy, an Ohio miner of British origin and the first inspector of mines in Ohio, became widely known as an authority on mining and an advocate of legislation for safety in mines. In addition to his *History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, he is the author of *The Coal Mines*, a book on technical phases of the coal-mining industry, published in 1876. His *History of the Coal Miners*, published about 1903, devoted only a few pages to an account of the American Miners' Association. Evans, a British-born miner who

¹ McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners, in The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888.

² Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus, [1903].

³ Evans, Chris, *History of United Mine Workers of America*. United Mine Workers of America, Indianapolis, [1918].

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settled in Ohio, was active in various American miners' unions, beginning in the seventies, and acted in many official capacities in miners' unions for nearly four decades. He served also as secretary of the American Federation of Labor for a number of terms in the early years of the Federation. In his later years the United Mine Workers of America commissioned him to write a history of the union, the first volume of which, *History of the United Mine Workers of America*, appeared about 1918. In the brief account of the American Miners' Association that he gives in his history, he was able to add nothing to what had already been said by McBride and Roy.

Primary source material has hitherto been entirely lacking, with the exception of an undated appeal to the miners to organize, written by Daniel Weaver, first secretary of the Association, about the time of its formation. Weaver was a self-educated British emigrant miner, long a resident of the Belleville district in Illinois, where the Association was first organized, and a leading figure in bringing about its formation. The text of Weaver's appeal, as given by McBride, Roy, and Evans, is not completely identical, and another version, appearing in the *United Mine Workers' Journal* thirty-two years ago,¹ has been used to check their text.

The difficulties encountered in finding additional material for this study are illustrated by the fact that even John R. Commons and his associates, in their comprehensive *History of Labour in the United States*,² mention the Association only in connection with the labor press of the period; the *Weekly Miner*, official organ of the Association, is appraised as a "noteworthy newspaper," and the name of John Hinchcliffe appears as its editor. It is unfortunate that an incorrect date is given for the appearance of its first issue. The name "American Miners' Association" appears in the index of the *Documentary History of American Industrial Society*³ only

¹ *United Mine Workers' Journal*, vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908.

² Commons, John R., and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1926.

³ Commons, John R., and Others, *Documentary History of American Industrial Society*. Prepared under the auspices of the American Bureau of Industrial Research, with the co-operation of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. Clark Company, Cleveland, 1910.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

because delegates from the Association were present at National Labor Union conventions in the late sixties. In this connection the name of John Hinchcliffe also appears, although he is erroneously listed in the index as Richard Hinchcliffe. Only one who has searched for material of this kind covering the period before 1870 knows the difficulties which beset that task.

The search for information on the Association in the usual depositories for such material uniformly brought almost negative results. During the course of this search, the following libraries were visited one or more times: New York Public Library, Columbia University Library, Russell Sage Foundation Library, New York; Library of Congress and United States Department of Labor Library, Washington; Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield; Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; John Crerar Library, Chicago; Mercantile Library, St. Louis; State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; and public libraries in Chicago; St. Louis; Belleville, Illinois; and Canton and Massillon, Ohio. Inquiries were made of the following libraries through correspondence: Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore; Harvard College Library, Cambridge; University of Ohio, Athens; University of Illinois, Urbana; Boston Athenaeum, Boston; Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh; Pennsylvania State Library and Museum, Harrisburg; and public libraries in Peoria and Springfield, Illinois. A visit to the Corning, New York, Public Library, after the manuscript was in press, brought to light additional material on the lockout of the miners in Tioga County, Pennsylvania, in 1865, and this has been incorporated in the text.

Much of the new material used in this study, bearing directly on the Association, was found in the files of the Belleville Weekly Democrat and the Belleville Weekly Advocate in the Belleville Public Library, and the files of the Pittsburgh Gazette, and the Pittsburgh Chronicle, in the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, with supplementary material drawn from the files of St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Canton (Ohio) newspapers. The files of Fincher's Trades' Review, published in Philadelphia, and the Workingman's Advocate, published in Chicago, as well as the two sole surviving copies of the Miner and Artisan, were examined in the State His-

torical Society of Wisconsin Library. The subject of the inquiry was too far in the past for old miners' leaders who were interviewed to render any assistance, beyond referring to the story as related by Roy or Evans; and visits to regional offices of miners' unions revealed that few of them had maintained a complete file of the records of miners' conventions even as late as the period since 1900.

The American Miners' Association was organized in West Belleville,¹ St. Clair County, Illinois, in January, 1861, and from that date both the *Weekly Democrat* and the *Weekly Advocate* gave generous space to news of the Association and the strikes in which it engaged. The *Democrat*, in particular, published many official and semi-official letters and documents pertaining to the Association, including circular letters to the membership by Daniel Weaver, the secretary; the record of the first statewide convention of the Association, held in LaSalle, Illinois, in March, 1863; and reports of several meetings of the Illinois coal operators held at about the same time. The liberal coverage given by both papers makes possible a check of one publication against the other for accuracy.

An extensive search was made for copies of the *Weekly Miner*, published in Belleville from May, 1863, to September, 1865, and circulated throughout the coal fields of the country. The high caliber of its editor, John Hinchcliffe, himself not a miner, self-educated, a practicing attorney at law, but with ineradicable memories of a childhood spent in one of the worst industrial slums of early nineteenth-century Britain, and whose work for the miners will receive frequent mention in this study, indicates that the *Weekly Miner* would be a valuable source of information not only on the American Miners' Association and the mining industry, but also on the general labor movement of the period. Because of its wide circulation, it seems incredible that no copies have been preserved. But inquiries of libraries, advertisements in St. Louis newspapers which circulate in St. Clair County and adjoining territory, and personal inquiries of descendants of old Association members have all failed to bring any copies to light.

The official compilation of production figures of the coal indus-

¹ An independent community adjoining Belleville, county seat of St. Clair County, and now a part of that city.

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try, before the establishment of state labor bureaus in the seventies,¹ was confined to the decennial census years, while data on miners' earnings, mine accidents, and the social and living conditions of miners during that period are scattered and rare almost to the point of nonexistence. Production figures used for the United States are estimates compiled and published by the United States Bureau of Mines.

On a second visit to the Belleville Public Library, in December, 1938, the gathering of material from the files of the Belleville newspapers was much facilitated by work of the men and women on Works Progress Administration Project No. 7489,² who were engaged in cataloguing and indexing by subject the hundred years' accumulation of newspapers. When completed, this work will be of inestimable value to research workers, who will then be able to find immediately on index cards the material they are seeking. It will also preserve the newspapers by minimizing their handling.

I desire to acknowledge the courtesies extended by Miss Bella Steuernagel, librarian of the Belleville Public Library, which several years ago celebrated a century of continuous service to the people of that community; to the workers engaged on Works Progress Administration Projects No. 7489 and No. 80236, and in particular to Leon J. LaFond, project superintendent, and Orville C. Kimberlin, research assistant of the project, for their prompt and generous response to inquiries made during the writing of this study. Special mention should be accorded to Mrs. Jessie Burgess, daughter, and John Hanvey, grandson, of Daniel Weaver, both now living in Edwardsville, Illinois, for particulars regarding the life of Weaver.

¹ State bureaus of statistics of labor and industry were established in the leading coal-mining states, as follows: Pennsylvania, 1872; Kentucky, 1876; Ohio, 1877; Indiana, Missouri and Illinois, 1879. The United States Bureau of Labor, established in 1884, became the Department of Labor without executive rank in 1888, a Bureau of the Department of Commerce and Labor in 1903, and a full department with executive rank in 1913. The United States Geological Survey began compilation of coal production statistics in 1882. Systematic compilation of coal-mine accident statistics by the federal government did not begin until after the creation of the Bureau of Mines under the Department of the Interior in 1910. The Bureau of Mines was transferred to the Department of Commerce in 1925, and back to the Department of the Interior in 1934.

² The project was later placed under the supervision of the Illinois Writers' Project and designated Project No. 80236, Gang No. 1, retaining the same personnel.

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It should be added that in my search for and evaluation of material, I have drawn on my lifetime connection and acquaintance with the coal industry.

For the purpose of their preservation, and to make them more readily available to students, the complete texts of important documents used in the study will be found in the Appendix. As the record will show, the name of the American Miners' Association at first was the Miners' Association. The word "American" did not officially become a part of the name until the convention of the Association held in Springfield, Illinois, in June, 1863.

PART I

ORIGIN AND BACKGROUNDS

CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATION BEGINS IN A STRIKE

SHORTLY after the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States, the coal miners of his home state, who were confronted, as was the nation, with widespread industrial depression, went on strike in a determined protest against wage cuts and declining earnings. From that strike in 1861 in Illinois grew the American Miners' Association, which may justly claim to have initiated the modern labor movement in the United States. Earlier organizations had been formed in coal and in two or three other industries, but the new association did not stem from them. Developing industrialization had begun a new chapter in American history, giving rise to new and modern forms of business organization, with the familiar problems of recurrent recession, unemployment, recovery, rising costs of living, lagging wages, and insecurity in living conditions. The miners' union that pioneered in meeting these conditions was the antecedent of the United Mine Workers of America, which functions today in a social economy still beset with the same problems. For this reason, the labor history of seventy-five years ago belongs in the industrial record of the present.

DEPRESSION OF 1861

Lincoln was elected President in November, 1860, and South Carolina seceded from the Union in December. During November a financial panic ushered in a business recession that deepened into the secession depression of 1861, bringing with it "dullness, unemployment and uncertainty."¹ Immediately the coal industry was affected, especially in Illinois, where there were extensive deposits of bituminous coal.² Conditions in St. Clair County, Illinois, across

¹ Thorp, Willard L., *Business Annals*. National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., New York, 1926, p. 127.

² Bituminous or "soft" coal is spread over a wide area in the United States, while anthracite or "hard" coal is practically confined to a relatively small area in northeastern Pennsylvania. See map on end papers of this volume.

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the river from St. Louis, were described as dull, labor plentiful, with "few chances of obtaining employment in any business."¹ Collapse of the state banks, resulting in unstable and chaotic values of bank notes circulating as currency, further aggravated the situation.²

MINERS' STRIKE AGAINST WAGE REDUCTIONS

Fairly early in this development the coal operators of St. Clair County announced a reduction of one-quarter cent a bushel³ in the mining rate, bringing it to two and one-quarter cents. If the operators had no formal organization, they were at any rate a unit in announcing the reduction. The unorganized miners submitted.⁴ A few weeks later an additional reduction of one-quarter cent was announced, this time resulting in a strike that extended over the entire field. The strike, which began in the week of January 21, was at first, under the circumstances, largely spontaneous. Although there was some hesitation which led to fist fights at two mines,⁵ all mines in the county were idle after a few days.⁶ Within a week, through delegate meetings held in West Belleville, the strike was put on an organized basis. From directing the strike strategy it was but a step to setting up a permanent defense through the organization of the Miners' Association, which took place in these meetings. The Missouri miners in the St. Louis County mines just outside the city of St. Louis, did not join in the strike, but supported it with contributions for the strikers.⁷

¹ Belleville Advocate, January 25, 1861.

² The Belleville Democrat of March 2, 1861, published a list of 12 Illinois and Wisconsin banks whose notes were being accepted at 80 cents on a dollar. The situation in this respect was said to be improving. In its issue of April 27, 1861, the Democrat gave a list of 40 banks whose notes were being accepted at 90 cents on a dollar "by our merchants and business men," with the additional warning that notes of banks not on the list were worth only 50 cents on a dollar.

³ Eighty pounds; 25 bushels to the ton of 2,000 pounds.

⁴ Belleville Democrat, April 6, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

⁵ The Belleville Advocate and the Belleville Democrat, both weekly papers, first mentioned the strike in their issues of January 25 and 26, respectively. The St. Louis dailies, the Missouri Republican and the Daily Evening News, first reported the strike, briefly, on January 28.

⁶ Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Manufactures, reported 16 coal mines in St. Clair County.

⁷ Belleville Democrat, February 9, 1861; Belleville Advocate, February 15, 1861.

ORGANIZATION BEGINS IN A STRIKE

Comment on the strike by the Belleville Democrat indicates that strikes were not unknown in the community, but that this one was considered unique because of its extent. "The strike is fast assuming such proportions as to claim and receive the attention of the press to a larger extent than is usual in such cases."¹

The familiar use of the term "strike," in full conformity with present-day usage—"this strike," "now on strike," "striking for higher wages," "still out on strike," all appearing in the Belleville papers during the early months of 1861—betrays a considerable experience with the subject, although one St. Louis paper, in reporting the beginning of the strike, awkwardly said that the miners "have made a strike."²

The strikers stressed the point that they were not striking for an advance, but against a reduction. In discussing their second demand—honest weights—they spoke of "fraud in weights and measures." Judging by the presentation of their side of the controversy in the Belleville papers, the strikers did an excellent job of publicity. They never missed a chance to put their case before the public. As early as the second week, mention was made of an appeal for legislation to insure honest weights. Action was swift. At a meeting on February 4 it was agreed to memorialize the legislature and present the appeal through their state senator. In a few days the petition had been signed "by about 1,400 of our best citizens in conjunction with the miners."³ The memorial asked for the enactment of "such a law as will protect us from the rapacity of our employers," and asserted that the miners had lost one-fourth of their labor because of unjust weights and measures, "and we are compelled to submit for the reason that we are not provided with any means of redress."⁴ The memorial, along with "The Miners' Bill," was presented to the Senate on February 11, passed by that body and sent to the House on the sixteenth, where it was quickly passed and approved by the governor on the twentieth.

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 2, 1861.

² St. Louis Daily Evening News, January 28, 1861.

³ Belleville Democrat, February 16, 1861.

⁴ Belleville Advocate, February 15, 1861. For full text see Appendix, p. 220.

THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

The act,¹ entitled "An Act to fix the weight of Coal, and provide for the measurement thereof, in St. Clair County," provided for the appointment, by the county judge, of "coal scalers," who were to be paid by the operators while so engaged, and whose duty it was to examine and certify to the correctness of scales used in weighing coal, and to determine and mark the capacity of mine cars when the amount was determined by measurement. Penalties were provided for failure of mine owners to comply with the act within two months after its passage. A unique feature of this pioneer legislation for correct weights for coal miners was a provision declaring it to "be the duty of coal scalers to take into consideration, determine and fix the percent of deduction which should be in any given amount of coal, for slack or dross, whether received by weight or measure."²

Although the community proved its support of the "Miners' Bill" by the large number of citizens who signed the memorial to the legislature, the miners did not overlook the possibility of opposition developing in that body. In this and other phases of their struggle they seem to have taken nothing for granted, and, on the whole, to have used excellent strategy. After the Senate had passed the bill and sent it to the House, the Belleville Advocate suggested that "our representatives should look to it that the bill is not overlooked in the last hurry before adjournment."³ Meanwhile the miners, informed that a number of influential operators had taken steps to defeat the bill, sent a representative to the state capital to protect their interests. When passage of the bill was assured, the operators agreed to restore the two-and-one-half-cent rate, and work was resumed.

The victory of the miners was announced by the secretary of the Association, in a note to the editor of the Belleville Democrat, in a style reminiscent of Caesar's famous message:

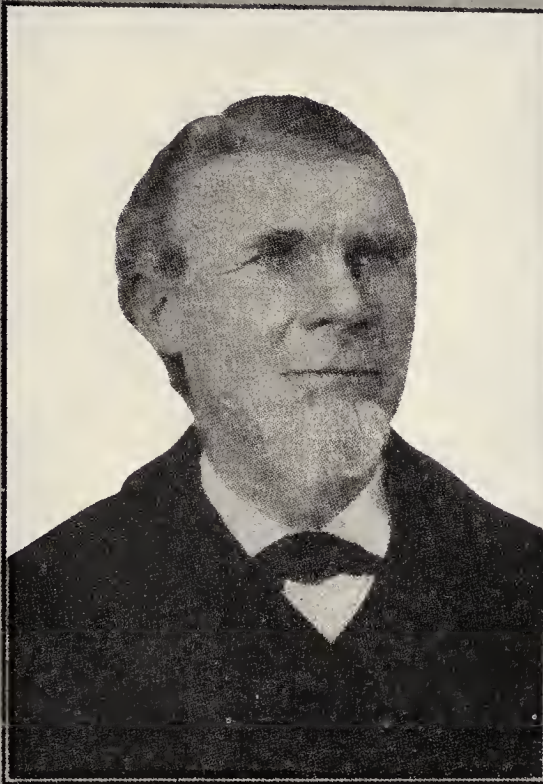
¹ Public Laws of the State of Illinois, 1861, pp. 83-84. For full text see Appendix, p. 221.

² The deduction of stated amounts from the weight of each car loaded by the miners, here sanctioned by law, was widely applied in later years in the non-union fields. In the Eastern Appalachian fields such deductions were known as "rejects," in West Virginia as "dirt tare," and in Alabama as "washer losses."

³ Belleville Advocate, February 15, 1861.

FORTY YEARS A MINER

and Men I Have Known



DANIEL WEAVER.

An old time leader of the Illinois miners from the Belleville tract. One of the organizers of the American Miners' National Association in 1860.

CHAPTER 18

There is no industry in the United States the history of which records the

Rephotographed by Columbia University Library

DANIEL WEAVER, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

(Reproduced from a cut in United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 14, August 13, 1908)

the ratification not their count their advice so accepted? Wh deprive the del ratification the would the offic

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ADDRESS O

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The chairma he knew they spite of the w circumstances some of the happened since had 15 per cen ing 55 per c basis. Unfort fered a reduct left them at the standard r was the fact had been and through depres afraid that th

ORGANIZATION BEGINS IN A STRIKE

Editor, Democrat—Dear Sir: I am happy to inform you that our "Strike" is terminated, and the issue is successful; the Bosses have met us today, and conceded all we required, and we have agreed to resume work forthwith. Hurrah for union.

D. Weaver, Secr'y.¹

There was some discrimination against active strikers and Association members when work was resumed,² but it appears that discrimination occurred at relatively few mines. Weaver said: "Some of the bosses have made it a point to discharge their old hands under various pretexts."³ Apparently the Association did not consider this development serious enough to renew the strike and jeopardize the gains already made, although the action of the employers undoubtedly was the cause of loss of work by a number of miners until they were able to find places in other mines. That some miners may have struck, or threatened to strike, at certain mines because of this discrimination, is indicated by the repeated advice given by Weaver in letters to the miners, counseling patience.⁴ He saw the need for a breathing spell to build up the Association.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MINERS' ASSOCIATION

The Miners' Association was organized in a series of delegate meetings of miners from the St. Clair County field, in West Belleville.⁵ Beginning January 28, 1861, these meetings served the dual

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 16, 1861.

² Belleville Advocate, February 22, 1861.

³ Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861.

⁴ Belleville Democrat, March 23 and April 6, 1861.

⁵ Both Roy (Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus, [1903]) and Evans (Evans, Chris, *History of United Mine Workers of America*, United Mine Workers of America, Indianapolis, [1918]) place this convention in St. Louis, and both Evans and McBride (McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners, in The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill, M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888) report the presence of Missouri delegates. None of the three had personal knowledge, and all wrote from twenty-five to fifty years after the event. Accounts of the meetings in the press of the time leave no doubt that they were held in West Belleville and that only delegates from St. Clair County were present. Both of the Belleville papers reported it in several issues. "The coal miners of St. Clair County held a delegate meeting in West Belleville on Monday last [January 28] at which measures were taken toward the formation of a General Union." (Belleville Advocate, February 1, 1861.) At an adjourned meeting on January 31 the morning session was taken up with discussion of the strike, several

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purpose of directing the strike and of organizing the Association. It was the first national miners' union in the United States, and the first union of any kind in the bituminous coal fields. Chris Evans¹ makes mention of activity in the interest of a national union among the miners of the St. Clair County field "toward the close of the year 1860," brought about through the work of Thomas Lloyd, later to become the first president of the Association, and Daniel Weaver. Both these men were British miners, and both were thirty-seven years of age at the time. Lloyd had come to this country the previous May.

It is difficult to determine just how much, if any, agitation there was before actual formation of the union, but it can hardly be doubted that the strike which began when the operators proposed a second pay reduction within a few weeks, gave impetus to the movement and was probably the determining factor in bringing about the organization of the Association, as well as in its initial success. Weaver gave credit in these words to the influence of the strike: "The bosses now rue the infliction of that second reduction. We silently and sadly submitted to the first fourth cent; but in a few weeks it was repeated and hence our union."²

In their versions of Daniel Weaver's address urging the miners to organize, both Evans³ and Roy⁴ preface the address with the salutation, "To the Miners of the United States." This is not true of McBride's version,⁵ nor of the one appearing in the *United Mine Workers' Journal* in 1908.⁶ The latter prefaces the address with the

operators being present. "The afternoon session was chiefly engrossed by organizing a Miners' Association, embracing among other objects, literary and social improvement." (*Belleville Democrat*, February 2, 1861.) Another adjourned meeting was held at the West Belleville House on February 4, "to perfect their organization. . . . The Miners' Association is now in full blast." (*Ibid.*, February 9, 1861.) At still another adjourned meeting, on February 6, "reports were made from the delegations sent to Missouri, which stated that the feeling there was favorable, and that they would co-operate with their Illinois friends." (*Belleville Advocate*, February 15, 1861.)

¹ Evans, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 5; also McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

² *Belleville Democrat*, April 6, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

³ Evans, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 6-7.

⁴ Roy, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.

⁵ McBride, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

⁶ *United Mine Workers' Journal*, vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908.

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poem, *What Might Be Done*, by Mackay.¹ From the evidence available it appears likely that both Evans and Roy took liberties and added the salutation. The Association, in the beginning and for some time thereafter, was confined to St. Clair and Madison counties in Illinois and to St. Louis County in Missouri, in which were located the mines supplying the St. Louis market. Weaver and his associates were practical men, and there is no evidence that they contemplated organization beyond this district at the time the Association was formed, although it is entirely consistent with their previous experience and knowledge gained in the British mines that they welcomed the opportunity to expand later, after initial success in the Belleville field. The miners in Madison and St. Louis counties, although taking no part in organizing the Association, joined it immediately afterward.

Weaver's address was a powerful argument for the right to organize, as well as for the need of organization, and has hitherto been generally accepted as having been the call for the convention.² It is important to note, however, that the address carried no date, and set no time and place for the meeting to act on its proposals. Judged by its content (and there is no other definite information by which to judge the address), it may have been either a pre-convention or a post-convention appeal.³ If the former, its purpose was primarily educational, in preparation for action when the time was favorable. If the latter, it was a call to rally to the new union—an interpretation which the language of the address strongly suggests.

Injection of a countywide strike into the situation, and the informal manner in which the Association was organized in the strike meetings, further suggests that, while there may have been some previous agitation for a union, formation of the union at that particular time resulted from a chain of circumstances over which the miners had little control. The financial panic of the previous

¹ Charles Mackay, Scottish poet (1814-1889). The poem is from his *Voices from the Crowd* (1846). The Journal omits the fourth of the five stanzas.

² Evans, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 7; Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³ No evidence was found to support the statement that Weaver's address was made in the form of a dramatic speech to the convention that "brought the delegates to their feet applauding." (Harris, Herbert, *American Labor*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1939, p. 102.)

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November, followed by a business recession, a reduction in the miners' wages, submission by the miners, a second reduction, the strike, and organization of the Association, all followed in logical sequence. If, indeed, Thomas Lloyd inspired Weaver and others to activity with tales of Alexander Macdonald¹ and other miners' leaders in the old country, he could not have chosen a more favorable time.

OFFICERS

Of the first officers of the Association, besides Lloyd and Weaver, only Ralph Green, the treasurer, is known.² Although the name of Weaver appears often in the Belleville papers as secretary, during and immediately after the strike of 1861, there appears to have been a reluctance to publicize the names of the officers—a reluctance which was even more manifest in 1863 and later. The name of Lloyd appears only once in the newspaper accounts of the meetings in which the Association was organized, and then as chairman of a strike meeting.³ Green is not mentioned, nor are the other officers. An account of the death of a miner named James Harvey in a mine accident two years later reveals that he had been the "first financial secretary of the first grand lodge in Belleville and has served in many other capacities in the Miners' Association."⁴ Since the community was favorably inclined toward the Association, this timidity must be attributed to fear of discrimination on the part of the operators.

The leading part played by Weaver in the affairs of the Association during the short time he served as secretary may have dwarfed the activities of Lloyd as president, and it is uncertain how long Lloyd served. Both men, however, were present by invitation at a community celebration on the occasion of the opening of the first coal mine in Mascoutah, near Belleville, in December, 1861, Weaver being elected secretary and Lloyd one of the vice-presidents of the

¹ British miners' leader (1821-1881). Stressed legislative reforms as against strikes as method of improving condition of the miners. First president of the Miners' National Association of Great Britain, organized in 1863, the second national union of the British miners. Elected to House of Commons in 1874.

² Evans, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 8; Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³ Belleville Democrat, February 9, 1861. As "chairman" of a meeting on February 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, May 30, 1863.

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meeting,¹ indicating that they were being honored as officers of the Miners' Association. It is known that Lloyd dug coal for the government in Tennessee in 1864, but the date he left Belleville to engage in that work is not known.² Proceedings of the first statewide convention of the Association, held in LaSalle in March, 1863, do not reveal the name of the president, but a man named Ben Barstow was president at the time of the Springfield convention the following June. Since it was at this convention that "American" was added to the name of the Association,³ it would appear that Lloyd never actually was president of the American Miners' Association, although he was president of the organization when it went under the more simple name of the Miners' Association.⁴

GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP

After the successful termination of the strike, the miners at once moved to consolidate their organization. Martin Boyle,⁵ a black-listed strike leader engaged as "lecturer" by the Association, visited Wood River⁶ and Alton in Madison County, Illinois, "and other places to organize lodges under the constitution of the Miners' Association."⁷ We also find him in Caseyville and O'Fallon, St. Clair County, where the miners had taken part in the strike, "for the purpose of perfecting the organization of new lodges," as well

¹ Belleville Democrat, December 28, 1861. All public meetings of the period in this section of the country elected a president, who acted as chairman, two secretaries, and often as many as six vice-presidents.

² Belleville Advocate, May 29, 1868, says that Lloyd was "a most estimable miner and gentleman whose skill supplied the coal to General Sherman's march to the sea."

³ United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 19, September 17, 1908, Chapter 23, Forty Years a Miner and Men I Have Known, by An Old Miner.

⁴ In the many references to the Association in the press of the time, the name American Miners' Association is not found until early in 1865. Up to that time, it was generally referred to in official letters of the Association, as well as in newspaper accounts, as the Miners' Association, or more simply as the Association.

⁵ During the strike he "became famous as a spokesman and leader of the strikers, and was mainly instrumental in obtaining the passage of the weights and measures bill." He was sent to the state capital as the miners' representative when they became alarmed at reports of opposition to the weights and measures bill. (Account of Boyle's death, in Belleville Democrat, August 17, 1861.)

⁶ The Wood River of that period is now East Alton, and is not to be confused with the present city of Wood River in the same county.

⁷ Belleville Democrat, March 2, 1861.

as to address mass meetings of miners in St. Louis County.¹ Toward the end of March, 1861, Weaver reported that the Association had "upwards of five hundred members" in good standing on the books, that the previous reluctance of German miners to join had broken down and that they were joining freely.²

Although nothing beyond these figures is available regarding membership in this early period, it is apparent that the Association grew slowly and did not expand beyond the St. Louis market territory until a year or so later. It is quite probable, however, that St. Clair County and vicinity was fairly solidly organized. In several letters published in the *Belleville Democrat*,³ Weaver counseled patience, and warned against precipitate action. But despite any possible weakness in membership which may have resulted from the disturbed conditions brought on by the outbreak of the Civil War in April, 1861, and the enlistment of miners in the army, the Association was able to maintain the two-and-one-half-cent mining rate re-established by the strike, and to take immediate advantage of the sharp rise in commodity prices during the last half of 1862,⁴ by boosting the rate to three cents on September 15 and to four cents on November 1 of that year.⁵ The increased demand for coal, with rising prices, probably disposed the operators to grant the demands without a strike, but the growing strength of the Association in membership, as well as its expansion into other coal fields in the state, must also have had its effect in helping the operators to reach a decision.

There is evidence, however, that the operators were not pleased with the trend, and sought to blame the miners' wages for the increased price of coal. In a letter addressed to the public by the "Association of Coal Miners of St. Clair County," signed "Officers of Lodge No. 1," the miners denied that the increased price of coal had any connection with the wage increases, and justified the higher wages by the "almost double the usual price for the powder, fuse

¹ *Ibid.*, March 16, 1861.

² *Ibid.*, March 23, 1861.

³ March 23 and April 6, 1861.

⁴ Thorp, Willard L., *Business Annals*, p. 128.

⁵ Letter of the operators to the Union Merchants' Exchange of St. Louis, also letter signed "Many Miners," in *Belleville Democrat*, February 7, 1863.

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and tools," asserting that dishonest weights and measures cheated them out of one-sixth of the coal they dug. Increase in the price of coal, "four cents more per bushel for steam coal and from six to nine cents more for ordinary market and blacksmith coal," they declared was caused by the demand being "more than equal to the supply." They hoped that their statement would "set at rest all false statements" on the question.¹

¹ Belleville Democrat, November 22, 1862.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUNDS IN THE BRITISH ISLES

WHEN American miners began to dig coal, they had five centuries of British coal-mining experience to fall back upon, which involved not only the technique of mining coal and the important problems of adapting it to various uses as a fuel. It involved also a tradition of generations of struggle by British miners for decent living standards, including long experience in organization and in the administration of miners' unions. This experience of the British industry was to a large extent transmitted to America through the migration of British miners, who began to come to this country in great numbers about the middle of the nineteenth century. Transmission was facilitated by a common language, as well as by similarity in industrial development and practices in both countries.

Although there are records of earlier coal-mining activities in the British Isles, the shipment of coal from Tynemouth to London in 1269 marks the beginning of the industry. In the decades immediately following, coal was mined in nearly every coal field now known in England and Wales, with simultaneous development in Scotland. By the beginning of the next century coal had come into general use in London, in households, in blacksmiths' forges, and by brewers, limeburners, dyers, and others requiring a strong fire. In 1306, because of complaints of smoke, Edward I, by royal proclamation, prohibited its use in London and its suburbs, except by blacksmiths. This order, however, had only a momentary effect on the traffic. The limeburners were the first to resume the use of coal, their product being in great demand in London, which was just beginning to shift from wood and wattle construction to brick and stone.

As early as the beginning of the seventeenth century¹ much coal

¹ In 1615 this trade gave employment to 400 ships, half for the London trade, and

was exported to the coasts of France, Germany, and Holland. Coal was "charred" at the beginning of the seventeenth century, at first in response to complaints of smoke, and the process was later extended to the making of coke for smelting lead and copper ores. Coke was first used in smelting iron in 1730. This permitted the growth of the iron industry, which had been hampered by the growing scarcity of wood for the making of charcoal for that purpose.¹

METHODS OF MINING

The first coal in the British Isles was dug from outcroppings, soon followed by stripping² and bell-pits³ in shallow ground. By the middle of the fourteenth century, increased demand and the limited opportunities for shallow work forced the sinking of deep shafts as we know them today. The "bord-and-pillar"⁴ and "long-wall"⁵ systems of mining were developed early. The more modern "panel" system, a refinement of the "bord-and-pillar" method permitting a higher percentage of extraction, was not applied until the early years of the nineteenth century. The problem of drainage was at first solved by various crude expedients; but when deeper shafts made natural drainage no longer possible, as early as 1486

half for other parts of the United Kingdom. There were also many foreign ships engaged in the trade. By 1635 the coal fleet had increased to 600 or 700 ships; and by the middle of that century, to 900. (Galloway, Robert L., *History of Coal Mining in Great Britain*. Macmillan Company, London, 1882, p. 34.)

¹ T. A. Rickard in *History of American Mining* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1932, p. 8) quotes Thomas Heriot, historian of the Roanoke Island settlement in North Carolina, from John Pinkerton's *Voyages and Travels* (vol. 12, p. 594), with reference to "the want of wood and dearness thereof in England" for the purpose of making charcoal to be used as fuel in the iron furnaces.

² Removing the overburden from the coal seam and recovering the coal by quarrying.

³ A shaft sunk to the coal seam from which all coal within easy access was mined without leaving supporting pillars. Another shaft was sunk when the pit caved in.

⁴ The American term is "room-and-pillar," which refers to the method of mining whereby the coal is taken out from successive compartments or rooms separated by pillars of coal left to support the roof.

⁵ In the "long-wall" system all the coal is mined on an ever widening and continuous face, with refuse piled to support the roof, leaving roadways for transporting the coal to the shaft. This method, which was developed in Shropshire, requires particular geological conditions.

horse-driven pumps were installed. The Newcomen "atmospheric steam-engine" pump, built upon the earlier experiments of Captain Savery, patented earlier but introduced about 1715, was displaced after 1769 by James Watt's steam engine. The problems of ventilation took longer to solve. It took a long time to get to the "furnace method,"¹ and the first experiments in forcing fresh air into the mines by mechanical means were not made until the first decade of the nineteenth century. Several more decades were to pass before the new method was successfully applied. The *Compleat Collier*, the first treatise on mining methods, was published in London in 1708. The safety lamp, for use in gaseous mines, was invented by Sir Humphry Davy in 1815, and introduced the following year.

PRODUCTION

Watt's steam engine had a revolutionary effect on both the production and consumption of coal. In addition to solving the problem of removing water from mines, it supplied power to the mechanical hoist to bring coal to the surface, and to the locomotive to transport it by land. Transportation of this bulky commodity had hampered the industry for centuries. But the effect of Watt's invention was most important as a source of power for industry, ushering in the steam age with its constantly increasing demand for coal. Development of the steam engine, with the use of coal in metallurgy, made the modern coal industry.

British coal-production figures further emphasize the extent of the accrued experience at a time when America was hacking the first samples from the outcrop. The average annual production between the years 1210 and 1560 is estimated at 200,000 tons;² and a century later it reached well over 2,000,000 annually. When Watt was perfecting his steam engine in 1770, annual production was over 6,000,000 tons, and in 1800 it reached 10,000,000. This figure was

¹ The draft of the furnace at the foot of one compartment of the mine entrance exhausted the air from the mine, which was replaced by fresh air drawn in through another compartment.

² Nef, John U., *Rise of the British Coal Industry*. G. Routledge and Sons, Ltd., London, 1932.

tripled by 1839, and increased to 54,000,000 by 1850.¹ During 1853, the first year for which official figures are available, nearly 65,000,000 tons were mined.

Until the late 1830's annual production in the United States did not exceed a million tons, the bulk of which was Pennsylvania anthracite. It reached ten million tons some fifteen years later. Continental European countries, however, were far behind Great Britain, and but little ahead of this country in the development of their coal fields. France produced slightly over 200,000 tons in 1787, and reached the five-million mark in 1846. Belgium produced three million tons in 1836, and reached ten million in the early 1860's. The German coal regions (including brown coal, or lignite) produced two million tons in 1837, and ten million twenty years later.²

The coal industry in all these countries, including the United States, had one characteristic in common: once fairly begun, annual production figures mounted with each passing year. The steam engine, and the accompanying need for more and cheaper iron and steel, changed the basis of Western civilization. Coal was needed if a nation was to stay in the race. This transformation of the national economy brought about changes in the political life of nations as new governing groups arose, with their power based on the new economy. The ease with which budding industrialists annulled the decree of Edward I in 1306, prohibiting the use of coal in London and its suburbs, was indicative of the new power that was destined to sweep the feudal state into the discard.

EARLY BRITISH MINERS' UNIONS

With all the achievements of the early British coal industry in technology, the British miners, according to Sidney Webb, remained for centuries in a "semi-servile" state of poverty and degradation, under a system of "bound" labor.³ Development of the safety lamp,

¹ Gibson, Finlay A., *The Coal Mining Industry of the United Kingdom*. Western Mail, Ltd., Cardiff, 1922.

² There are records of coal being mined in Belgium in the twelfth century, and in France and Germany in the fourteenth century, but extensive development came much later in those countries than in Britain.

³ Under the "bond" system all miners were hired on a given day each year, under

designed primarily as a humanitarian instrument to save life, was used to open still deeper and more gaseous seams, without the necessary improvement in ventilation having been made. Water, which had to be removed in order to work the mines at all, was conquered early, while ventilation, affecting chiefly the life and health of the miners, remained in a primitive stage until much later.

British miners had no formal union until after repeal of the Combination Acts¹ in 1825, although many earlier struggles for freedom from the "bond" and for better conditions are recorded. Sidney Webb² says that in 1662 the miners of the Tyne and Wear districts in the North of England, petitioned the King "for redress of grievances," asking, among other things, better ventilation to alleviate the danger from gas, but apparently without results. During 1756-1757 "rebellions" broke out among the miners in Shropshire, Somerset, and Carmarthenshire. In 1765 the Tyne and Wear miners won a six weeks' strike to modify the conditions of the

a contract which bound them to work for eleven and a half months at the wages and under the conditions stipulated in the contract, which usually included many fines and arbitrary deductions from earnings. The employer usually paid each miner a few shillings as "binding money." The miner was obligated to work every day the mine operated, but the employer was not under a reciprocal obligation to work his mine steadily. The contract was enforceable under the law, which was frequently invoked, and miners were imprisoned for absences from work and other violations of their "bond." (Webb, Sidney, *The Story of the Durham Miners, 1662-1921*. Fabian Society, London, 1921, pp. 7-9.)

¹ Combinations were prohibited in England for centuries under acts of Parliament for the regulation of industry—"fixing wages, the prevention of embezzlement or damage, the enforcement of the contract of service or the proper arrangements for apprenticeship." (Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The History of Trade Unionism*. Longmans, Green and Company, New York and London, 1911 edition, p. 58.) "Some combinations of journeymen were at all times recognised by the law. . . . Many others were only spasmodically interfered with. . . . The utmost rigour of the Combination Laws was not felt until the far-reaching change of policy marked by the passage of the severe Acts of 1799-1800, which applied to all industries whatsoever." (*Ibid.*, p. 57.) "The right of collective bargaining, involving the power to withhold labour from the market by concerted action, was for the first time expressly established" in the Act of 1825, "although many struggles remained to be fought before the legal freedom of Trade Unionism was fully secured." (*Ibid.*, p. 97.) The disturbed political state of Europe and the Napoleonic wars account for much of the severity and ruthless enforcement of the Acts of 1799-1800.

² Webb, Sidney, *The Story of the Durham Miners*, p. 2.

"yearly-bond" system of hiring. The Dragoons were called out and one pit was burned before a settlement was effected.

During 1800, miners and factory operatives were in the lowest scale of labor in Britain, while handicraftsmen were the "aristocracy of labour."¹ The acts of final emancipation in 1799 had liberated the Scottish miners from serfdom in which they were bought and sold with the mining property, but, according to the Webbs, "in the North of England the 'yearly bond,' the truck system, and the arbitrary fines for short measure kept the underground workers in complete subjection," although there were frequent strikes.² During 1810 the Durham and Northumberland miners engaged in a general strike for seven weeks over grievances centering around the "bond." Troops were brought in, strikers evicted from their homes into the snow, strike meetings raided, the jails were filled with strikers and many sent to prison under the Combination Acts. The miners were finally starved into submission, and returned to work on what were practically the employers' terms, although there were some minor concessions, relating to the bond. No formal organization existed among the miners, united action being achieved through delegate meetings held for some months before and during the strike.

The first union of coal miners, according to the Webbs, was "The Colliers of the United Association of Durham and Northumberland," organized after the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1825. The Association published a pamphlet citing the miners' grievances: Low rates for hewing (mining); variations of weights and measures by which they were paid; non-payment for small coal; fines for inclusion of stone or slate, or of small coal; lack of proper ventilation and lighting of pits; arbitrary failure to provide employment; harsh and tyrannous behavior of employers' underlings; and in particular, the sharp practices which habitually cheated them out of the payment of half-a-crown a day which had been promised them in 1810 whenever the pit was laid idle for more than three days.

¹ Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The History of Trade Unionism*, p. 74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 79.

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Describing the condition of the miners in the North of England during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Sidney Webb¹ says that they could generally neither read nor write, and knew or heard little of the world beyond their own village. Hewers (miners) earned from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. per shift, which a hundred years earlier had been as little as 1s. 14d., with a few shillings a year as "binding money," for at least ten and often twelve hours underground. Boys remained in the pit sixteen to eighteen hours a day, with wages less than half those of the miner. The "truck" system² kept them in debt, and there were no schools. This first union went down in 1826 after defeat in a strike, the miners returning to work on the employers' terms, which abolished all guaranteed minimums, and earnings in many collieries dropped to "8s. or 10s. a week owing to want of work."³ Thus the conditions remained unchanged in that district despite the first efforts of the miners to organize.

The early 1830's found miners' unions in a number of districts. The "Pitman's Union of the Tyne and Wear" was organized in 1830, and in March of the next year 20,000 miners met on the moor at "binding" time, petitioned Parliament, sent a deputation of 12 of their number to London, agreed to meet at each colliery twice a week, organized a general committee, resolved not to buy at the truck stores, declined to sign the yearly bond, and resolved to work unbound in the future. The employers refused to deal with the union; but in the strike which followed, the miners won most of their demands through settlements with individual collieries because of division in the ranks of the employers.

Shortly after the return to work, the employers' association was re-established. The owners "made it a fresh subject of complaint that the hewers, in order to equalise employment throughout the pit, had stinted themselves to earn no more than 4s. per day. They declared that many collieries were actually working at a loss." Further irritations resulted from importation of workers

¹ The Story of the Durham Miners, p. 16.

² Company-owned or controlled stores where the miners were obliged to purchase all their supplies.

³ Webb, Sidney, The Story of the Durham Miners, p. 28.

from other industries, and threats of dismissal against certain categories of workers for belonging to the union. At several collieries there were strikes in which men were evicted and victimized. At binding time in 1832 (April), this grew into a major conflict, with the employers refusing to hire any members of the union. With troops in the field breaking up strike meetings and arresting and evicting strikers, and the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, calling on the magistrates to "exercise all their authority to suppress the extensive and determined combinations which have been formed . . . by workmen for the purpose of dictating to their masters," the employers continued to import men from all parts of Britain to take the places of the strikers. The strike was lost and the union formally dissolved in September.¹

As to activities in other districts, we find in 1831 a delegate meeting, representing 9,000 miners of Staffordshire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Wales, voting to join the newly formed National Association of Labour, the first central labor union in Britain. In 1832 Lancashire miners were indicted on the charge of illegal combination for giving their employers notice of intent to strike if certain discharged men were not reinstated.

FIRST NATIONAL MINERS' UNION IN GREAT BRITAIN

The first national miners' union, The Miners' Association of Great Britain and Ireland, was organized in 1841, a federation of strong county unions in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, Durham, and other counties. It grew rapidly, at one time having 53 organizers who visited every coal field in the Kingdom. Delegate meetings in 1844 represented practically the whole of the min-

¹ Webb, Sidney, *The Story of the Durham Miners*, pp. 32-37. The practice of restriction of output in this instance noted by Webb is also reported by Hammond, J. L. and Barbara, in *The Skilled Labourer, 1760-1832*. Longmans, Green and Company, London, 1919, pp. 36-37. "With the object apparently of distributing the work equally over different days, and amongst the different workers, the Union laid down a rule that no hewer should make more than 4s. a day. On this the coal owners seized as a serious grievance, attributing their losses largely to this diminished output. They stated boldly that two-thirds of the hewers made their 4s. in six hours, a statement vehemently denied by the men. Since the guaranteed minimum was 30s. for eleven days, and the owners admitted that eight hours was the customary day for a hewer, the statement on the face of it seems improbable."

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ing districts in Great Britain, and membership rose to 100,000. The announced policy of the organization was not to rely exclusively or mainly on strikes, but to secure as many of their demands as possible through Parliament and the Home Office administration and to obtain permanent joint relations with the operators, when possible on a national scale, and at the same time to bring pressure on the House of Commons, the government, and the courts of law for the benefit of the miners generally. The organization published *The Miners' Advocate*, which gained a wide circulation. An attorney was engaged at a stipulated annual salary to look after the miners' interests in the courts, defending individual miners or groups being prosecuted under the Master and Servant Act, or in actions by employers to enforce "bonds," bringing suit for wages withheld or illegally deducted, and attending inquests and inquiries after mine disasters for the purpose of determining responsibility.¹

STRIKE OF 1844

In 1844, at "binding time," the Attorney General, as he was called, drew up the demands of the Durham and Northumberland miners, which, had they been accepted by the mine owners, would have gone far toward abolishing long-standing grievances of the miners. The operators, however, refused to recognize the union, announcing that they would deal with the miners in each colliery. With the sanction of a delegate meeting of the National Association in session at the time, in Glasgow, the 34,000 miners struck. The strikers in a mass meeting pledged themselves to avoid all violence and disturbance and to "await the result of withdrawing their labour."² Despite vigorous efforts on the part of the mine

¹ With the help of other unions, the miners, in 1844, succeeded in defeating, through their protests to Parliament, a bill authorizing any justice to issue a warrant for the summary arrest of any worker complained of by his employer because of "any misbehaviour concerning such service or employment." A punishment of two months' imprisonment, at discretion of the justice, was proposed. The Webbs regarded this bill as an attempt by the employers to hamper the defense of such cases in the courts, in direct retaliation against the work being done by the miners' attorney. (Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The History of Trade Unionism*, p. 167.)

² Webb, Sidney, *The Story of the Durham Miners*, p. 43.

owners to get "blacklegs"¹ from other districts, during the first four months of the strike only 3,500 were brought in, and only 2,000 strikers had deserted and returned to work. But beginning in July, strikers' families were evicted by the thousands, and forced to camp on the wet moor. The mine-owners' association refused the miners' offer to submit the differences to arbitration, and Lord Londonderry, an operator and one of the largest coal royalty owners in the district, ignored their appeal to act as mediator. Indeed, he enlisted against the miners the help of one of the clergy,² who told them:

You are resisting not the oppression of your employers, but the Will of your Maker—the ordinances of that God who has said that in the sweat of his face shall man eat bread, and who has attached this penalty to the refusal to labour, namely, that if a man do not work neither shall he eat.³

In August the miners, completely beaten by hardships and starvation, returned to work on the employers' terms, which involved substantial reductions in earnings.⁴ They declared that they would never give up their union, but the depression of 1847 wiped out the Miners' Association of Great Britain. There was, however, an amelioration of the "bond" system after the strike. In many places it was substituted by a fortnightly contract of service; and where the

¹ Strikebreakers.

² He also published a warning and threatened reprisals against shopkeepers and tradesmen who extended credit to strikers. In his "dual capacity as Mine Owner and Lord Lieutenant of Durham County" he supervised "the wholesale eviction of the strikers from their homes, and their supersession by Irishmen specially imported from his Irish estates." (Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The History of Trade Unionism*, p. 150.)

³ Webb, Sidney, *The Story of the Durham Miners*, p. 46. The similarity of this statement to that of George F. Baer, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company during the Pennsylvania anthracite strike of 1902 is noteworthy. Baer made the statement in a letter to W. F. Clark of Wilkesbarre, who had appealed to him to settle the strike. Baer said, in part: "The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for—not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God has given the control of the property interests of the country." For the full text of Baer's letter, see Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus, [1903] p. 424.

⁴ For a contemporary account of this strike, see also Engels, Frederick, *Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844*. George Allen and Unwin, London, 1926, pp. 253-257.

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annual contract was retained, many of its most obnoxious features were modified. It was not completely eliminated until thirty years later.

MINING LEGISLATION

Before the extinction of the Association, its attorney general, as a result of his participation in the investigation of a mine explosion in 1844, in which 96 men and boys were killed, began the agitation resulting in the first mine safety legislation in Great Britain, the Mines Regulations Act of 1850, which provided for public inspection of mines. Previous to this, in 1842, Parliament had enacted a law prohibiting women, and boys under ten years of age, from working underground. The miners had hoped, through public inspection of mines, first provided for in the Act of 1850, to get better ventilation and thereby lessen the danger of mine explosions. The act, however, provided for only two inspectors, a number entirely inadequate for the number of mines. Another unsatisfactory feature of the act was a provision for its automatic expiration after five years. Following the collapse of the Association in 1847, the miners remained without a national association until 1863, when the Miners' National Association was organized under the leadership of Alexander Macdonald, head of the Scottish miners. In the interim county associations of fluctuating strength survived, although there was a time in the middle fifties when organization among the miners had all but disappeared.

During this period Macdonald marshaled the miners in support of a program of mining legislation. Among the miners' demands were the establishment of minimum standards of ventilation to be enforced by an adequate staff of inspectors, additional exits from all mines as means of escape in emergencies, honest weights and measures, regulation of company (truck) stores, and education of boys before they were permitted to enter the mines to work. In the face of strong opposition from the mine owners, the Act of 1855 increased the number of inspectors. In the Act of 1860, again with strong opposition from the mine owners, some, but not marked, improvement was made. Parliament finally, in 1862, heeded the demand for additional exits from mines, but not until after the Hartley

Colliery disaster in January of that year, in which 205 men and boys lost their lives by suffocation when an accident blocked the main shaft, the only exit from the colliery. It is not to the credit of American legislators that miners in this country later have had to pay for lack of safety legislation in the same tragic way.

During the long struggle to improve their lot the miners, like the industry, had to learn by experience. There were no precedents. Unlettered,¹ without the right to vote or hold public office, they were victims of customs and laws which kept them in servitude. Nothing beyond ephemeral organization, which dissolved quickly after the end of the strike that gave rise to it, was achieved before repeal of the Combination Acts in 1825, although their bitter early struggles had doubtless been contributing factors in winning the right to organize. Beginning with 1825, however, their associations were organized as permanent weapons for protection of their rights, rather than as a momentary weapon forged in the midst of a strike. By 1841 the need for a national union was recognized, but it was still later before they learned how to maintain an organization in the face of temporary defeat. However, the sustained campaign for legislation carried on by the miners during the fifties, at a time when their union was weak, indicated a ripening experience, which soon afterward led to more stable and permanent organization.

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 32. Roy ventures the opinion that as late as 1850 not one in a hundred miners in England and Wales could read or write. Conditions in Scotland were described as having been improved: "free schools having been established by law in every parish, and pay schools by custom in every mining village."

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUNDS IN THE UNITED STATES

THE existence of coal deposits in the United States was known long before development of them was undertaken. In 1673 Marquette and Joliet, early French explorers, reported coal on the banks of the Illinois River.¹ The great anthracite deposits in northeastern Pennsylvania² were found in 1766, and anthracite was used by local blacksmiths two years later, but sixty years passed before any considerable amount was mined.

The first coal mined in the United States was near Richmond, Virginia, about 1750. This coal was easily accessible and was taken out by quarrying, through the labor of Negro slaves,³ underground mining not being engaged in until much later. During the War of Independence coal from this field was used in the manufacture of arms for the patriot army, and in 1789 it was shipped from Richmond to Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, mainly for iron working, a market it held alone until the semi-bituminous coal from the Blossburg field in Tioga County, Pennsylvania, invaded the market after 1840. The earliest production figures available for Virginia, 54,000 tons in the year 1822, indicate that the early development in that state had not been extensive.

No appreciable amount of coal was mined in the United States until after 1825. The major deposits were not easily accessible to the eastern seaboard, where the bulk of the population resided; moreover, there was little use for coal in the economy that prevailed. Although the industrial revolution had begun to make itself felt in

¹ Andros, S. O., *Coal Mining in Illinois*. Illinois Coal Mining Investigations, University of Illinois, Urbana, Bulletin no. 13, September, 1915, p. 10.

² The only anthracite deposits of any consequence in the United States are located mainly in the counties of Schuylkill, Luzerne, Carbon, Northumberland, Dauphin, Lackawanna, and Columbia, in the state of Pennsylvania.

³ Simonin, L., *Underground Life of Mines and Miners*. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1869, p. 244.

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Great Britain in the early 1770's, the United States did not reach that stage of development until the early 1820's.¹ At the close of the War of Independence we had no steam engines, and produced less than 25,000 tons of iron annually, its use being confined chiefly to the making of nails, cutting tools, and stoves. Wood was the universal household fuel, and charcoal was used for smelting iron, both yielding but slowly to coal. Many earlier attempts had been made to introduce Pennsylvania anthracite into Philadelphia,² but it was not until after 1820 that the rising price of wood, because of growing scarcity, gave coal a foothold. About the same time coal merchants of New York City furnished coal grates free of charge to customers as an inducement to use the new fuel for household heating, although the rising price of wood was again the major factor in its acceptance.³

EARLY TECHNOLOGY OF THE COAL INDUSTRY

Compared with modern methods the technology of the early American coal industry was extremely crude. Reasons for this are to be found in the nearness of coal seams to the surface, with outcroppings in nearly all the coal fields. The quarrying of coal in the Richmond field has been mentioned. The first anthracite was dug by the same method, with headings drifted into the seams later, as demand increased. Some of the earliest coal mined in Ohio was by the stripping method, none of it being far from the surface. The topography of the Appalachian coal fields afforded many outcroppings ready to be mined, and coal deposits in the bluffs of the Mississippi

¹ Eckel, Edwin C., *Coal, Iron and War*. Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1920, pp. 11 and 30.

² In 1792 the experiment failed completely because the new fuel seemed unnecessary, and in 1806 it was still a curiosity, wood still being plentiful.

³ McMaster, John B., *A History of the People of the United States, from the Revolution to the Civil War*. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1900, vol. 5, pp. 129-130. As an example of the amount of wood consumed as fuel, McMaster points to the weekly consumption of 3,000 cords by the ferry boats and the Hudson River boats out of New York City. The "scarcity" here reported was in the older and more settled eastern seaboard sections. It is interesting to note that similar reports came from interior Ohio cities and from Chicago fifty years later, as the planless destruction of the forests kept pace with the westward movement of population.

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and Illinois rivers made possible the opening of drift mines¹ at small expense. Over the entire area where coal-mining activities were carried on in 1860, there was little need for deep shafts and extensive outlay of capital to open a mine.

The extensive outcroppings along the Monongahela River in western Pennsylvania stood ready to be mined with only a pick and crowbar, the river providing transportation. As the early miner in this field dug his way into a hill, he first used a barrow to bring the coal to the mouth of the drift. Later a small car was used, a large dog pulling and the miner pushing.² It was not until after 1844, when the river traffic in coal had grown to several hundred thousand tons annually, that the mines in this region were opened in a systematic manner and mules used for haulage. However, pushing of the cars by the miner, all or part of the way to the mine mouth, the pay for which was presumed to be included in the price for mining, continued to be practiced for a much longer time in many fields.³

The hardness of anthracite made blasting necessary to loosen the coal, but in the bituminous fields the early miner depended upon his pick, wedge and sledge, using powder but sparingly, since it shattered the coal, and small coal was not considered merchantable. The usual method was to undermine the coal seam with a pick, shear⁴ one or both sides to the depth of the undercut, and then wedge the coal down. If only one side was sheared, a small charge of powder was used to break the other side, the method varying with localities and conditions. A miner was judged by his skill with a pick. In common with other handicraftsmen, miners were proud

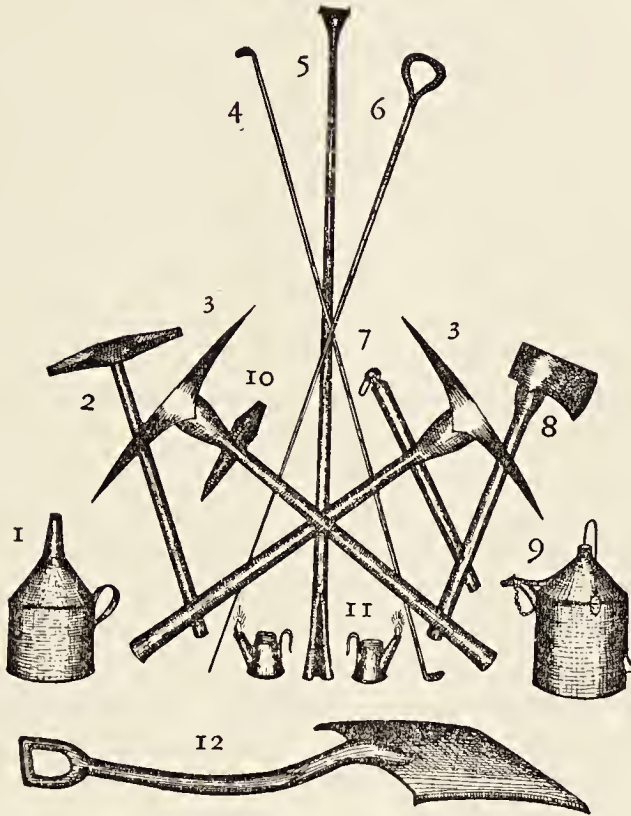
¹ A mine opening driven horizontally into the coal-seam outcrop on a hillside.

² Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903], p. 46. The cars (or boxes) were small, compared with those used today, and varied in size from mine to mine and even in the same mine. A letter signed "Union Miner" in the *Belleville Democrat*, April 11, 1863, says that "open-ended boxes, some 10 bushels, some 12 and 14, and some as large as 30 bushels," were in use in that field. (800, 960, 1,120 and 2,400 pounds.)

³ One of the demands of the miners in the strike in the Belleville field early in 1861 was for two and a half cents a bushel, "exclusive of wheeling." (*Belleville Advocate*, February 1, 1861.)

⁴ A vertical mining cut, as contrasted with undercutting, which runs horizontally and usually at the bottom of the seam.

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TOOLS OF THE HAND MINER OF THE 1860's

(1) Powder flask, (2) Sledge, (3) Pick, (4) Scraper, (5) Churn drill and tamper, (6) Blasting needle, (7) Cartridge pin, (8) Ax, (9) Oil can, (10) Wedge, (11) Lamp, (12) Shovel

(Reproduced from first edition of A History of the Coal Miners of the United States, by Andrew Roy, J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903].)

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of their skill, and fond of their tools, which they selected with care and kept in good order.¹

Roy² observed that in cutting a seam a good hand miner struck an average of 40 blows a minute with his pick, which, incidentally, is the same rate as that of the first successful mining machines (punchers) put into use about 1880. The amount of coal a good hand miner could produce in a day varied with the hardness and texture of the coal, the amount of impurities it contained, and the height of the seam, as well as the skill of the individual miner. Changes in these conditions from day to day, increasing or decreasing the miner's output, make it impossible to arrive at more than an average. According to Roy, a miner could often produce five or six tons in a day of eight or nine hours in a five- or six-foot seam, but in another seam of equal height he might fall short by one and a half or two tons. Roy estimated an average day's work in a four-foot seam at about three and a half tons.

During a strike in the Belleville field early in 1863, the miners cited average earnings in 11 mines, which indicated that the daily average per miner was somewhat less than 75 bushels, while the operators contended that the miners could dig from 90 to 200 bushels, according to individual ability.³ At the same time a St. Louis newspaper,⁴ frankly defending the operators and depending on them for its information, expressed the opinion that the average miner could mine 120 bushels a day, and a "brisk" one 150 bushels. Taking into account the natural bias to be found in each of these three estimates, and taking into account also the nature of the Belleville seam, it is probable that the average skilled miner could produce, in that field, from 100 to 125 bushels, with exceptionally skilled miners doing better some days.⁵ The general average cited by the Miners' Association, including all the miners in that field, may not have been far from the true mark, since the war demand for coal had brought into the mines many new and relatively unskilled men who

¹ Simonin, L., *Underground Life*, p. 243.

² Roy, Andrew, *The Coal Mines*. Robinson, Savage and Company, Cleveland, 1876, p. 62.

³ *Belleville Democrat*, February 7, 1863.

⁴ *St. Louis Evening News*, February 16, 1863.

⁵ Four to five tons. This figure is close to Roy's estimate.

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were able to produce much less than the skilled miners, thus lowering the general average. The wide spread in the operators' estimate, 90 to 200 bushels, points to this probability.

It is important to remember that the miner was paid only for coarse coal. The fine coal was left in the mine. The method of mining aimed at a maximum of coarse coal, but at the same time lessened the miner's output. Despite his care and skill, some fine coal was unavoidable, which he had to separate from the coarse coal in loading. Roy¹ says that in the early Monongahela River mines this was done with a hand rake. A hand riddle was used for this purpose in the Cumberland field in Maryland, before the Civil War,² as well as in the Belleville field and probably in other places. One miner shoveled coal into the riddle held by another miner, who sieved the fine coal through and placed the remainder in the car.

Despite all precautions, there was a chronic complaint by the operators about fine coal, and in many places an arbitrary amount was deducted from each car on that account. An obvious attempt to regulate this practice was the clause in the Illinois Miners' Weights and Measures Act, referred to in Chapter I, which empowered the scalers of weights and measures provided for in the act to "fix the percent of deduction which should be in any given amount of coal . . . for slack or dross."³ The apparent need to deal with this practice through legislation indicates that it was widespread and customary, and not always applied with justice to the miner.

RETARDED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The undeveloped state of our industrial economy during the first quarter of the nineteenth century is revealed in the long delay in applying industrial processes which for many years had been employed in England. Although the steam engine already had appeared in America, our metallurgical processes were those of seventeenth-century England.⁴ Up to 1838 charcoal was practically the sole fuel

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 46.

² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

³ Public Laws of the State of Illinois, 1861.

⁴ This slow development was due in part to restrictions which England placed on industrial enterprise in the American colonies before the War of Independence.

employed in iron furnaces,¹ although coal, in the form of coke, had been used for this purpose in England for more than a century, and had been in general use there since 1780. Introduction of the hot blast in 1839, ten years after its adoption in England, made it possible to utilize anthracite in iron furnaces, and a few years later coke came into use, as well as certain types of raw bituminous coal, although coke did not come into general use in America until 1865. Charcoal, however, was not immediately displaced; the tonnage of anthracite iron did not exceed that of charcoal iron until 1855, and bituminous coal and coke remained less important until 1869.² The introduction of the hot blast and the use of coal resulted in cheaper iron at a time when the beginning of railroad construction and the development of industry in general created the need for it. During the period between 1848 and 1860 there was a steady increase in the number of furnaces, rolling mills, and iron and steel works in all parts of the country.³ Iron production rose from 315,000 tons in 1840 to 565,000 tons in 1850, and 920,000 tons in 1860.⁴ A further indication of our coming of age industrially during this period was our installation of the Bessemer process⁵ in the late fifties, and the open-hearth process for converting steel in the sixties, immediately after their adoption in England.

As most of the bituminous coal fields were inaccessible to the eastern seaboard, this coal had to wait for the settlement and development of the Middle West for a market. Many of the early mining activities in this section, as well as farther east, reveal an impatient desire to exploit a natural resource, rather than to fill an urgent need, since the demand almost always lagged behind the

¹ As early as 1820, unsuccessful attempts were made to use anthracite in furnaces by mixing it with charcoal. Some furnaces tried out coke in the middle 1830's.

² The manufacture of wrought iron by puddling and rolling was begun in England in 1783, and in the United States in 1817; crucible steel was made in England in 1740, and in the United States in 1832.

³ Bolles, Albert S., *Industrial History of the United States*. Henry Bill Publishing Company, Norwich, Conn., 1879, p. 207.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 201, quoting figures of the American Iron and Steel Association.

⁵ The Bessemer process, which made possible the steel rail, is a method of burning out the carbon and other impurities in cast iron by means of a blast of air forced through the molten metal. The open-hearth process, in contrast, releases the carbon by reheating the molten metal.

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capacity and desire to produce. The present-day problem of too much coal, measured by current demand as against the ability to produce, does not appear to be a new one. The early prejudice against the use of coal, which was difficult to overcome, especially as long as wood was plentiful, lingered in many places long after the efficiency and economy of coal had been fully demonstrated. In 1810 the Ohio legislature offered to rebate the rent of salt makers who would agree to use coal for fuel.¹ In the early fifties wood-burning locomotives hauled coal on Illinois railroads. In 1854 it was reported as a distinct sign of progress that an Illinois railroad had ordered five coal-burning locomotives.² Not until 1870 did Ohio railroads begin generally to use coal.³

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

Before railroads were built, the use of coal was restricted to the proximity of the mines, except where water transportation was available, or made available by the construction of canals. The first canal was put into the Pennsylvania anthracite region during the early 1820's, and production had risen to well over a million tons annually before the first railroad was built into the region in 1842. Beginning in 1817, the Monongahela River mines floated coal down that great western highway, the Ohio River, to Cincinnati, Maysville, and Louisville. Locks were put in the Monongahela in 1844, and about the same time tow boats were employed to facilitate the traffic. Completion of the Hocking Valley branch of the Ohio Canal from Columbus to Nelsonville in 1832 gave the Hocking Valley coal field its first outlet;⁴ previously its market had been purely local. The Cumberland field in Maryland was first tapped by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1842, supplemented by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in 1850.

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 58.

² Andros, S. O., *Coal Mining in Illinois*, pp. 34-35.

³ Gephart, William F., *Transportation and Industrial Development in the Middle West. Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law*, vol. 34, no. 1, edited by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University. Columbia University Press, New York, 1909, p. 171.

⁴ The market for this field remained limited until after 1869, when the railroad connected it with Columbus and gave it the opportunity to ship to Chicago either by rail or by lake; this trade developed to great proportions during the seventies.

The famous "smithing" coal¹ of the Blossburg district of Pennsylvania was first floated down the Tioga River on log rafts to Corning, New York, and sent from there to New York City and the Great Lakes through the Chemung and Erie canals. A railroad from Corning to the mines was completed in 1840, connecting with the Erie in 1850, when that road was completed to Corning. Before 1840 the entire seaboard had depended upon the Richmond field coal for "blacksmithing and the manufacture of wrought-iron in all its branches."² Completion of the Ohio Canal to Massillon in 1834 brought the Tuscarawas Valley coal to Cleveland, where a few years later the lake trade in coal was inaugurated by shipments to Chicago and other lake cities to the west. In 1845 the canal to Youngstown, Ohio, brought the Briar Hill coal of the Mahoning Valley into this trade. As late as 1860, Chicago received 90 per cent of its coal by lake from Ohio and Pennsylvania,³ including anthracite, although in that year the Illinois mines produced 728,000 tons.

The fight for markets had its beginning with the movement of Blossburg coal to the seaboard to compete with the Virginia coal in that market, its shipment with other Pennsylvania and Ohio coal on the lakes to the west, and the movement of the Monongahela coal down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to compete with coal of the western states. This contest became intensified with the further development of transportation, and remains one of the big problems of the industry.

The first shipments of Monongahela River coal down the Ohio River were for industrial use in the mills and iron foundries of Cincinnati, Maysville, and Louisville.⁴ Coal did not begin to supplant wood as household fuel in that section of the country until after 1833, and the Ohio River steamboats did not abandon wood until

¹ A grade of caking coal low in sulphur and ash, used by blacksmiths.

² Macfarlane, James, *The Coal Regions of America*. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873, p. 134.

³ Coal receipts in Chicago for the year 1860 were: by lake, 117,000 tons; by Illinois and Michigan Canal (Illinois coal), 7,200 tons; by rail, 6,200 tons. (Saward, Frederick E., *The Coal Trade: Year Book*. New York, 1875, p. 42.)

⁴ Roy, Andrew, *The Coal Mines*, p. 299. The total of 4,640 tons in 1817 was divided as follows: Cincinnati, 1,760 tons; Maysville, 1,200 tons; Louisville, 1,200 tons; Madison Steam Mill, 480 tons. In Cincinnati an iron foundry accounted for 800 tons, and a steam mill for 480 tons, with the balance divided between two manufacturing plants and a sawmill.

the early fifties.¹ As late as 1873, the coal dealers of Cincinnati reported an increasing inland trade caused by "the growing scarcity and high prices of wood,"² and from Chicago it was reported in the same year that "little wood is now being used in Chicago, owing to the cheaper price of coal."³ Lake steamers out of Cleveland began using coal in 1843, and after 1845 coal supplanted wood on the steamers on the lower lakes.⁴

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MIDDLE WEST

In 1840 the Middle West was still the frontier, with practically no railroads. Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin had a combined population of 2,900,000, with more than half of this in Ohio, thinning out to the west. There were only four cities west of the Alleghenies with more than 10,000 inhabitants, the largest, Cincinnati, having 46,000. The location of these cities on navigable rivers reflects the prevailing mode of transportation. The rapid development of this territory during the next three decades is illustrated by the growth in population as shown in Table 1 on page 54.

Railroad construction did not begin in earnest in the Middle West until after 1850. At the beginning of that decade Ohio had 575 miles of railroad; Indiana, 228 miles; and Illinois, 110 miles. By 1860 the combined mileage had increased to 8,000, fairly evenly divided among the three states, out of a total of 30,793 miles in the entire country.⁵ During the decade between 1850 and 1860 the railroad mileage center moved from near Williamsport, Pennsylvania, to a point 60 miles south of Mansfield, Ohio.⁶ During the same decade the center of population moved from 23 miles southeast of Parkersburg, West Virginia, to 20 miles south of Chillicothe, Ohio.⁷

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300. Charles Dickens also observed that on his return trip up the Ohio River in 1842 the boat took on wood fuel at Cairo, Illinois. (*American Notes for General Circulation*. Ticknor and Fields, Boston, 1867, p. 95.)

² Saward, Frederick E., *The Coal Trade: Year Book*, 1874, p. 45.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1875, p. 32.

⁵ Preliminary Report of the Eighth Census of the United States, 1860. In 1860 Ohio had 2,999 miles; Indiana, 2,125 miles; and Illinois, 2,868 miles.

⁶ Gephart, William F., *Transportation and Industrial Development in the Middle West*, p. 184.

⁷ Ninth Census of the United States, 1870.

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TABLE 1.—POPULATION OF MIDDLE WESTERN STATES
AND CITIES, AND OF UNITED STATES, 1840-1870
(in thousands)^a

	1840	1850	1860	1870
Ohio	1,519	1,980	2,339	2,665
Indiana	685	988	1,350	1,681
Illinois	476	851	1,712	2,540
Michigan	212	398	749	1,184
Wisconsin	31	305	776	1,055
Iowa	43	192	675	1,194
Missouri	384	682	1,182	1,721
St. Louis	16	78	161	311
Cincinnati	46	115	161	216
Chicago	4	30	109	299
Pittsburgh ^b	31	68	78	139
Louisville	21	43	68	101
Detroit	9	21	46	80
Cleveland	6	17	43	93
Indianapolis	3	8	19	48
Columbus	6	18	18	31
Toledo	1	4	14	32
United States	17,069	23,192	31,443	38,588

^a Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, vol. 1, Government Printing Office, Washington.

^b Including Allegheny City.

EARLY COAL TONNAGE IN THE MIDDLE WEST

In the year 1840 the total bituminous coal production for the country was 1,103,000 tons, 94 per cent of which came from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ohio.¹ The remaining 6 per cent represented a scattered tonnage in nine other states, including Missouri and Iowa in the West, Alabama in the South, and Maryland in the East. Only two of these states, Kentucky and Illinois, produced more than 10,000 tons, and four produced less than 1,000 tons each. Previous to this time, the economy of the Middle West had little need of coal, although mining had been carried on in widely separated places throughout the area for several decades, chiefly for local consumption, as has been indicated. Wide distribution of the coal deposits and the small cost of development encouraged the opening of mines, making the problem for the middle western states one of waiting for a market to grow out of the settlement and general development of that section of the country. Ohio, alone of these western states,

¹ Pennsylvania, 465,000 tons; Virginia, 425,000 tons; Ohio, 140,000 tons.

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showed signs of emerging from the pioneer stage in 1840. During that year it produced 70 per cent of the 200,000 tons of coal mined in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri. The following table of coal production shows the process as it developed.

TABLE 2.—PRODUCTION OF BITUMINOUS COAL IN MIDDLE WESTERN STATES AND IN THE UNITED STATES AS A WHOLE, AND OF ANTHRACITE IN PENNSYLVANIA, 1840-1870 (in tons)^a

	1840	1850	1860	1870
Ohio	140,536	640,000	1,265,600	2,527,285
Indiana	9,682	60,000	101,280	437,870
Illinois	16,967	300,000	728,400	2,624,163
Kentucky	23,527	150,000	285,760	150,582
Missouri	9,972	100,000	280,000	621,930
Iowa	400	15,000	41,920	263,487
Michigan	..	..	2,320	28,150
Total	201,084	1,265,000	2,705,280	6,653,467
United States	1,102,931	2,280,017	6,494,200	17,371,305
Pennsylvania anthracite	967,108	4,138,164	8,115,842	15,664,275

^a United States Bureau of Mines, Reports. Government Printing Office, Washington.

As the population moved westward during the three decades after 1840, this development spread over the entire area, while the frontier receded across the Mississippi. In 1860 there were still some survivals of the frontier, but by 1870 the entire area was on the threshold of modern industrialism. With this change from an agrarian to an industrial economy came the need for coal, which was reflected in rapidly increasing coal production in the middle western states. This increase was accompanied by a simultaneous growth of output in other coal-producing states, in the East as the process of industrialization was intensified, and farther west as the wave of population swelled into the trans-Mississippi states and their need of coal began to appear.¹

COAL MARKETS—INTERDISTRICT COMPETITION, 1860

A view of the bituminous coal industry in 1860 shows 15 states producing a total of 6,494,000 tons, with five states, Pennsylvania,

¹ The percentages of increase in the three decades, 1840-1850, 1850-1860 and 1860-1870, were as follows: Middle Western states, 600, 214 and 246; remainder of United States, 180, 235 and 283; entire United States, 261, 225 and 267.

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Ohio, Illinois, Virginia,¹ and Maryland, named in order of size of their production, producing 86 per cent of the total. The bulk of the Pennsylvania tonnage came from the western part of the state, while the Blossburg and Broad Top² semi-bituminous fields farther east contributed relatively small amounts. A large portion of the Monongahela River tonnage was shipped to points on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers,³ although the growing iron industry of western Pennsylvania was already a large consumer.⁴ The Blossburg coal went north into New York State, some of it reaching the seaboard, as well as going into the lake trade at Buffalo. The Broad Top product went east, as did that of the Cumberland field of Maryland. In Virginia the Richmond field sold its coal on the seaboard, while farther west the Panhandle district mines (now part of West Virginia) shipped down the Ohio River. The Mahoning and Tuscarawas valleys⁵ in Ohio both shipped coal west on the lakes, as well as supplying fuel for the iron furnaces in Ohio, for which their coal was suitable in a raw state. The Pomeroy district in the southern part of the state had a share in the river trade. The Hocking Valley had not yet risen to the importance as a producer which it attained a dozen years later, after it got both lake and rail connections for the western trade.

In Illinois the St. Clair County field, across the river from St. Louis, was the most important, and, with the Missouri mines just outside the city,⁶ supplied the large market of that center. At that time St. Louis led Chicago both in population and in industrial development, and was the largest single market for Illinois coal. Al-

¹ Including West Virginia, which did not become a state until 1863.

² The Broad Top field covered parts of Bedford, Huntingdon and Fulton counties.

³ In 1860, 1,518,000 tons were shipped on the Monongahela River. (Saward, Frederick E., *The Coal Trade: Year Book*, 1874, p. 16.)

⁴ In 1860 the rolling mills of Pittsburgh consumed 77,500 tons; in 1864, 147,000 tons. Total coal consumption in Pittsburgh in 1864 is estimated as 760,000 tons. (Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, *Manufactures* [1865].) In 1842 Charles Dickens observed that Pittsburgh "has a great quantity of smoke hanging about it, and is famous for its iron works." (*American Notes for General Circulation*, p. 80.)

⁵ Mahoning Valley field, Mahoning and Trumbull counties; Tuscarawas Valley, or Massillon district, Stark, Summit, Wayne, and Medina counties.

⁶ These Missouri mines had a limited area for mining, and the coal was of inferior quality, compared with Illinois coal, for manufacturing purposes.

though Chicago had more than trebled in size in the previous decade, and was destined to forge ahead of St. Louis later, in 1860 it was supplied almost entirely by eastern coal shipped on the lakes. The LaSalle field in northern Illinois, opened in 1856, had to fight its way into the Chicago market from the beginning.¹ In fact, the Chicago market has never been more than shared by the Illinois coal producers, although the reason for this has shifted from an early emphasis on the inaccessibility of Illinois coal because of transportation difficulties, to one of price and quality. Mines were opened early near Peoria and Rock Island, at first chiefly to supply steamboat fuel, but later to fill the needs of these growing centers.² In 1860 the Indiana coal fields were not yet extensively developed. In 1858 the block coal field in that state was opened on a small scale, which became more extensive in the following decade.

It is to be noted that competition between producing districts was already well developed by 1860. Pennsylvania anthracite, the semi-bituminous of the Blossburg and Broad Top fields, and the Cumberland and Richmond fields all competed in the eastern seaboard market. The Monongahela River mines, parts of Ohio, Kentucky and, to some extent, Illinois were all in the lower river trade.³ The Tuscarawas and Mahoning valleys, as well as Pennsylvania, including anthracite, competed in the lake trade, including Chicago, into which northern Illinois had begun to push as its natural market. The Belleville field and the Missouri mines near St. Louis had the St. Louis market to themselves, although the next few years brought Madison County, immediately north of St. Clair County, into this

¹ As an example of the new and the old ways of life existing simultaneously during this period, the following is a curious example. In a list of "Exports and Imports" for the city of Peoria for 1853, the following appear: "Coal (Mineral), 616,517 bushels" (24,660 tons); "Coal (Charred), 8,104 bushels" (324 tons); "1,200 deer-skins." Peoria City Record, March 4, 1854; photostat copy in Bryner, B. C., Abraham Lincoln in Peoria, Illinois. (Privately printed by Edward J. Jacob, 1924.) Second edition, 1926, p. 134.

² The Wilmington field in northern Illinois, about 60 miles from Chicago, became important later in the 1860's, Chicago being its chief market.

³ The Belleville Advocate of October 8, 1846, reprinted from the Memphis Inquirer a bitter complaint about the high price of coal the previous year, and suggested that any operators who would go after the business at "reasonable" prices could command the entire market of that city.

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TABLE 3.—PRODUCTION OF COAL, IN SELECTED STATES AND IN
OF MAXIMUM OUTPUT

<i>State</i>	<i>1860</i>	<i>1861</i>	<i>1862</i>	<i>1863</i>	<i>1864</i>	<i>1865</i>
Pennsylvania						
Anthracite	8,115,842	9,799,654	9,695,110	11,785,320	12,538,649	11,891,746
Bituminous	2,690,786	3,200,000	4,000,000	5,000,000	5,839,000	6,350,000
Ohio	1,265,600	1,150,000	1,200,000	1,204,581	1,815,622	1,536,218
Illinois	728,400	670,000	780,000	890,000	1,000,000	1,260,000
Virginia	} 473,360	445,165	445,124	40,000	40,000	40,000
West Virginia				444,648	454,888	487,897
Maryland				877,313	755,764	1,025,208
Kentucky				250,000	250,000	200,000
Missouri				360,000	375,000	420,000
Tennessee	165,300	150,000	140,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Indiana	101,280	128,000	150,000	200,000	250,000	280,000
Iowa	41,920	50,000	53,000	57,000	63,000	69,574
Alabama	10,200	10,000	12,500	15,000	15,000	12,000
Washington	5,374	6,000	7,000	8,000	10,000	12,000
Michigan	2,320	3,000	5,000	8,000	12,000	15,000
Georgia	1,900	2,500	3,500	6,000	10,000	10,000
Arkansas	200	..	..	..	..	..
California	..	6,620	23,400	43,200	50,700	60,530
North Carolina	..	..	30,000	30,000	25,000	20,000
Colorado	..	..	..	..	500	1,200
Wyoming	..	..	..	..	..	800
Kansas	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other	3,800 ^d	..	..	..	..	..
Total United States						
Bituminous	6,494,200	6,688,358	7,790,725	9,533,742	11,066,474	11,900,427
Anthracite and bituminous	14,610,042	16,488,012	17,485,835	21,319,062	23,605,123	23,792,173

^a Data for the years 1860 to 1869 are from a table showing coal production by states from 1807 to 1925, compiled by L. Mann and E. W. Parker, appearing in *Mineral Resources of the United States, 1925*. Government Printing Office, 1928, pp. 393 to 533. A paragraph introducing the table explains that for the period prior to 1882, when the annual reports on mineral resources began, the main reliance of the compilers was the decennial census reports. These were supplemented by records from State and trade sources. In the absence of other information, estimates were resorted to for the intercensus years. Data for 1937 and (except for a few states) those for the years of maximum production are taken from *Mineral Yearbook, 1939*. Government Printing Office, 1939, p. 780.

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THE UNITED STATES, YEARLY 1860 TO 1869; IN 1937; AND IN YEAR
IN EACH STATE (in tons)^a

1866	1867	1868	1869	1937	Maximum annual production ^b	
					Year	Amount
15,651,183	16,002,109	17,003,405	17,083,134	51,856,000	1917	99,612,000
6,800,000	7,300,000	7,500,000	6,750,000	111,002,000	1918	178,551,000
1,887,424	2,092,334	2,475,844	2,461,986	25,178,000	1920	45,878,000
1,580,000	1,800,000	2,000,000	1,854,000	51,602,000	1918	89,291,000
40,000	50,000	59,051	65,000	13,795,000	1926	14,133,000
512,068	589,360	609,227	603,148	118,646,000	1927	145,122,000
1,217,668	1,381,429	1,529,879	2,216,300	1,549,000	1907	5,533,000
180,000	175,000	160,000	160,000	47,086,000	1927	69,124,000
450,000	500,000	541,000	550,000	4,091,000	1917	5,671,000
100,000	110,000	125,000	130,000	5,213,000	1910	7,121,000
320,000	350,000	375,000	400,000	17,765,000	1918	30,679,000
99,320	150,000	241,453	295,105	3,637,000	1917	8,966,000
12,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	12,440,000	1926	21,001,000
13,000	14,500	15,000	16,200	2,002,000	1918	4,082,000
20,000	25,000	28,000	29,980	562,000	1907	2,036,000
8,000	8,000	10,000	12,000	.. ^c	1903	417,000
..	..	..	..	1,511,000	1907	2,670,000
84,020	124,690	143,676	157,234	.. ^c	1880	237,000
20,000	20,000	18,000	16,000	..	1922	79,000
6,400	17,000	10,500	8,000	7,187,000	1917	12,483,000
2,500	5,000	6,925	49,382	5,918,000	1920	9,630,000
..	..	..	36,891	2,893,000	1918	7,562,000
..	..	..	..	13,454,000 ^c	..	..
13,352,400	14,722,313	15,858,555	15,821,226	445,531,000	..	..
29,003,583	30,724,422	32,861,960	32,904,360	497,387,000	..	..

^b Years and amounts of maximum production for other states are: Montana, 1918, 4,533,000; New Mexico, 1918, 4,023,000; North Dakota, 1937, 2,251,000; Oklahoma, 1920, 4,849,000; Texas, 1913, 2,429,000; Utah, 1920, 6,005,000.

^c Included in "Other."

^d In the original table this item is designated "Miscellaneous." The term as used for this year is not explained.

^e Includes: Montana, 2,965,000; New Mexico, 1,715,000; North Dakota, 2,251,000; Oklahoma, 1,600,000; Texas, 910,000; Utah, 3,810,000; Alaska, 132,000; Other, 71,000.

market, as well as the Indiana block coal which was shipped across Illinois by rail.

This competing traffic, in 1860, was carried to a large extent by water, but during the next decade a more unified railroad system, with added mileage, better motive power, rolling stock and roadbed, made longer hauls by rail both possible and economical, thus widening the market area into which coal from any given mining district might be shipped. This lure of a wider market, deceptive because it concealed within itself more sharply competitive market conditions, gave an added impetus to the already widespread tendency to open mines in excess of market demands. This development was fully as responsible for the opening of new mines in the 1860's and the first years of the 1870's as was increased demand due to the war. It alone seems to account for the paradoxical condition of the industry in the immediate post-war years, with severe unemployment in the mines, and continued annual increases in production at a rate equal to those of the war years. (See Table 3 for coal production during the sixties in the several states.)

Except for slight recessions in production in 1846 and 1869, the production curve for the period 1840-1870 continued upward, with a much sharper rise after 1861, maintained until the end of that decade, despite the fact that in twelve of the thirty years more or less severe business depressions were experienced.¹ The upward curve continued until the depression of 1873, which brought sharp reductions in tonnage over a period of several years, and gave the industry its first real setback. The curtailed demand, combined with the effect of the industry's ingrained habit of opening new mines without regard to market conditions, intensified the force of the blow. Recovery came, however, with the recovery of industry in general. The industrial expansion of the period demanded ever more coal, which justified the coal industry, at least in the light of past experience, in resuming the expansion so rudely interrupted by the upheaval of 1873.

¹ 1841-1843, 1846, 1848, 1854-1855, 1857-1858, 1861, 1866-1867. (Thorp, Willard L., *Business Annals*, National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, 1926, pp. 123-130.)

CHAPTER IV

EARLY STRUGGLES TOWARD ORGANIZATION

IMPELUS for organization of the American Miners' Association in January, 1861, came entirely from within the industry, guided and fostered by miners of British origin. There was no other source from which it could have come. Even had the miners been less isolated from workers in other trades, the small and scattered unions of 1860 in other industries had little to offer by way of example and inspiration. What has been described as "the modest beginnings of labour organisation"¹ in the fifties was almost completely destroyed in the depression following the panic of 1857. Three national unions had survived the crash: the typographical, and those of the hat finishers and the stone cutters. Two others, the unions of iron molders, and of machinists and blacksmiths, were organized during the business revival of 1859.² Depressed business conditions accompanying the outbreak of the Civil War had a demoralizing effect on these organizations. Nothing is known of the activities of either the hat-finishers' union or the stone-cutters' organization during the war period. The machinists' and blacksmiths' convention in November, 1861, revealed a large loss in active locals and in membership, the outlook being so gloomy that only one of the officers attended. The molders' union had severe difficulties during 1861, and their annual convention scheduled for January, 1862, was not held.³ The typographical union held no convention in 1861.⁴

There was no improvement in the condition of these organizations until the last half of 1863, after business conditions had picked up as a result of war demands on industry, and rising costs had stimulated organization of workers in many industries. Before that

¹ Commons, John R., and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1926, vol. 2, p. 5.

² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

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time the Miners' Association had spread throughout the coal fields of Illinois, and into Ohio and Pennsylvania. The fact that the Miners' Association was the only national union established during the three-year period of 1860-1862 emphasizes the difficulties faced by workers seeking to organize during the early war years. With conditions becoming more favorable for organization, two more national unions were formed during 1863, four in 1864, and six in 1865, with only one during the next two-year period.¹ The miners could hardly have chosen a less propitious time to found a national union, if we are to judge by the difficulties encountered by workers in other industries. That they were successful, attests to the impelling forces within the industry.

These forces had gathered strength as the industry grew toward maturity, and can be seen in the strikes and other concerted activities of the miners that took place in a number of districts for more than a decade before the Association was formed in 1861. These struggles centered around wage rates, and the amount of work to be done for a day's pay. They show that in those early years, as today, the miner needed protection against the practice of crediting him with less tonnage than he had dug, thus depriving him of earnings. Working conditions, safety and health, all played their part in the sum total of the social and living conditions which the miner's work and pay made possible for him in the early days of the industry in the United States.

THE ANTHRACITE MINERS

The first miners' union in America was formed in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, during 1848, by anthracite miners, and was confined chiefly to that county. It became known as the Bates Union, after John Bates, an Englishman, who was the "agent" of the organization. Its peak membership was about 5,000. In May, 1849, a strike was called and some violence occurred when the strikers, in an effort to induce miners to join with them, marched to collieries where the men had remained at work. The demands made by the strikers are not entirely clear, but the "store order," good only in trade at the company store, which the miner received as all or part

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-47.

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of his wages, was one of the grievances.¹ In one of the two mass meetings held by the strikers, resolutions were adopted, declaring that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and demanding that none be discriminated against because of membership in the union or taking part in the strike. The mine owners at first refused to negotiate, but after a three weeks' shutdown of the mines a compromise settlement was made. During July of the same year, a suspension of work was ordered by the union, for the purpose of reducing the stock of coal on hand, to steady the market and stave off a reduction in wages. This proposal does not appear to have met with success. The organization died in 1850 from dissension caused by charges that Bates had betrayed the miners and was seeking to further his personal interests in deals with the politicians.²

The truth or falsity of the charges against Bates is less important than their effect upon the union. The simple structure of the union which appears to have made Bates the sole responsible official, was fertile ground for the spread of rumor and suspicion among the inexperienced membership. All accounts agree that failure was due to the miners' loss of confidence in Bates. That some sort of organization existed, supported by regular contributions from the miners, is indicated by the \$12 a week, plus a horse and its maintenance, that Bates received for his services as "agent." Apparently no effort was made to extend the union beyond the Schuylkill field, nor is there any indication that it served as an example to encourage organization in the anthracite field later. In fact, it seems to have had the opposite effect, considering the time which elapsed before the anthracite miners made another attempt to set up a union. The scattered local unions formed in that field during the Civil War had other origins, and nearly twenty years elapsed from the time of the Bates Union until those local unions in 1868 met together to form the Workingmen's Benevolent Association.

The stage of development of the anthracite industry in 1848 and the compactness of the field were factors favorable to the success of

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903], p. 75. Roy says that Bates was "imbued with the lofty principles of Chartism," and that the strike was an effort to eradicate a "number of deep-seated grievances."

² Roberts, Peter, *The Anthracite Coal Industry*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1901, pp. 172-173.

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the Bates Union. This stage had not yet been reached in any of the widely scattered bituminous fields, although the Monongahela Valley field was approaching it. There was little contact then, or for a long time afterward, between anthracite and bituminous miners. The early unions formed in the anthracite field confined themselves to that region. During the early sixties the American Miners' Association made its appeal to all miners, but there is no record that it succeeded in penetrating the anthracite field, although it established an organization in the relatively nearby semi-bituminous field at Blossburg, Pennsylvania. John Siney, who helped to organize and who headed the Workingmen's Benevolent Association in the anthracite field in the late sixties, was a leader in the formation of the Miners' National Association, organized in 1873; and he was also its president. Although a mutual exchange of membership transfer cards was arranged, the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association¹ of the anthracite field never became an integral part of the Miner's National Association. Miners of the two branches of the industry were not united in the same organization until the formation of miners' local assemblies of the Knights of Labor in the latter seventies and of the Miners' and Mine Laborers' National District Assembly No. 135 of the Knights of Labor in 1886.

The initiative for the formation of a national union came always from the bituminous branch of the industry, beginning with the formation of the American Miners' Association in 1861. Only a national organization embracing all or at least the major bituminous fields could adequately protect the standards of the bituminous miners from the effects of competition from unorganized fields. They naturally thought in terms of a national organization of all miners. Competition for markets in the anthracite industry came chiefly from within that industry, between the different producing companies,² a condition no doubt largely responsible for the isolationist attitude of anthracite miners. All of these circumstances make understandable the lead taken by the bituminous miners in the formation of a national union, even though their branch of the industry in 1860 employed a total of only 11,331 workers, scattered

¹ New name adopted in 1870 for Workingmen's Benevolent Association.

² There was some competition with the bituminous industry in the production of coal for steam, but this did not become serious until considerably later.

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through many states, as against 25,126 employed by the anthracite industry concentrated in a relatively small area in northeastern Pennsylvania.¹

THE BITUMINOUS FIELDS—MONONGAHELA VALLEY

Although the record is by no means complete, a study of available information regarding the conflicts between miners and operators in the bituminous fields before the organization in 1861 of the American Miners' Association reveals a condition that would be expected sooner or later to result in the organization of a miners' union. It is natural that accounts of the more widespread and protracted strikes only during that period should have been preserved; but that these were preceded by and interspersed with smaller strikes at individual mines, may be taken for granted. In September, 1848, the Monongahela Valley miners struck against a reduction in wages. The rate for mining in that field had been two cents a bushel, which the operators proposed to reduce to one and three-quarters cents. When the strike became effective, the operators lowered their offer to one and three-eighths cents; but with coal becoming scarce and prices advancing, after a three weeks' period the miners returned to work at one and three-quarters cents.²

In 1859 the Monongahela Valley miners struck for the installation of scales at the mines to determine the amount of coal dug. The prevailing method of payment was by measurement, and there had been considerable dispute as to whether cars had been properly loaded. The strike affected the mines in Allegheny, Washington, and Westmoreland counties, which produced the bulk of output in western Pennsylvania.³ Some mines were struck in September, others joined as the strike progressed. The miners eventually lost, returning to work gradually as strikers deserted. By November 15 most men had returned to work. Miners who continued the struggle, as some did for a few months, were eventually starved into submission.⁴

¹ Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Manufactures.

² Pennsylvania Bureau of Industrial Statistics, Ninth Annual Report, 1881, p. 273.

³ In 1860 Allegheny County had 54 mines employing 2,954 miners; Washington County, 29 mines and 348 miners; and Westmoreland County, 15 mines and 702 miners. (Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Manufactures.)

⁴ Pennsylvania Bureau of Industrial Statistics, Ninth Annual Report, 1881, pp. 277-278.

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The nature of the miners' grievances in these struggles is worthy of attention in relation to the effect on the outcome. In the strike of 1848 the grievance was suddenly thrust upon the miners with the announcement of a reduction in wages. This produced a mass reaction. The miners were fighting for the status quo, for the preservation of their wage, an aim that could not fail to make a strong appeal to their sense of right and justice, and to heighten their morale. In the strike of 1859 the grievance of unfair weights was of long standing; and while the effect on earnings was as real as that of a reduction in the mining rate, the realization of this loss had been gradual, with the amount of the reduction differing at various mines. The intangible nature of the grievance, and the only possible remedy, the installation of scales, gave the miners' demands the appearance of an offensive action, rather than a defensive one to protect something which they were presumed to be already enjoying. These complications, and the ease with which individual operators could promise lukewarm strikers to correct any faults in the prevailing system of measuring, were largely responsible for the lack of unity among the miners and the erratic course of the strike.

Under the circumstances, without a union of some maturity and experience, the miners were defeated from the beginning. Mass revolts of this kind, engaged in by unorganized workers, without previous experience in unions, can achieve success only when grievances and demands are such as to arouse a strong, simple mass reaction. Even a minor complication in either of these factors breaks the unity of the strikers, doubts grow, and the return to work soon becomes a rush, with each one intent on preserving his job. In the instance of organized workers, the precarious unity arising from the strike alone is supplemented by a stronger bond, springing from the union itself. This bond is capable of dissolving individual doubts, and, if necessary, of managing an orderly retreat with ranks intact.

STRIKES IN MARYLAND

During the early fifties two strikes occurred in the Cumberland field in Maryland. Scottish miners were early settlers in this region, who, according to Andrew Roy, were "great disputants of those

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church doctrines which have divided Christians for centuries.”¹ This trait probably added to their aggressiveness in defending their rights as miners. The Cumberland field was then still relatively small, employing about three or four hundred men.² During the winter of 1850-1851 the operators proposed to reduce the mining rate from 28 cents to 25 cents a ton, and to require miners to sign a bond to forfeit all money due them in wages, if they should engage in a strike.³ Under the system in vogue at these mines the workers were paid once a month, on the twentieth, for work done during the second preceding month, and there was always a large balance due each miner. Resistance of the men centered around the bond, which, they held, abridged their rights as citizens. After a six weeks’ strike the operators retreated from their demands, and the miners returned to work under the old terms.⁴

The next year or so saw more mines opened in the district, and a shortage of workers raised the mining rate to 35 cents a ton. Early in 1854, because of a general business recession, which was reflected in the coal trade, the operators proposed a reduction to 30 cents a ton. The miners, in turn, demanded 40 cents, but after fourteen weeks ended the conflict, defeated. The strike had been complete for nine or ten weeks, after which the men at one mine gave in and agreed to the operators’ terms. The militia was brought in to guard the mine after efforts by the strikers to prevent operation. A few weeks later, all had returned to work.⁵

None of these early strikes, either in the Monongahela Valley or in Maryland, resulted in any attempt at union organization, although in the first Maryland strike the miners sent for a former Scottish miners’ leader, who was then farming in Virginia, to manage the strike. If he then, or later, gave them any advice about the formation of a permanent organization, it apparently went unheeded. Andrew Roy, in a letter written in 1908, said that the Maryland

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 53.

² The number employed in 1860 was 705. (Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Manufactures.) Production in 1859 was roughly twice that of 1852.

³ This would seem to indicate that strikes were not altogether unknown in that field.

⁴ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, pp. 54-55.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

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miners had no union until after organization of the American Miners' Association in 1861.¹

THE OHIO AND ILLINOIS FIELDS

The Ohio miners, especially those in the Mahoning, Tuscarawas, and Hocking valleys, were well organized under the American Miners' Association in the later Civil War years, and have been described as "terrible fighters" for the protection of their rights and living standards. Most of them had come from Britain; in the Mahoning Valley nearly all were natives of Wales and "passionately attached to combination."² There is no history of extensive strikes in the Ohio mining districts before the sixties, but it cannot be assumed that the strong organization built up after 1863 was not preceded by a period of preparation during which the miners acted through tacit understandings in individual mines, or even in wider groups, in matters affecting entire districts. During such a period mine owners would have learned to respect the determination and power of resistance of the men. The independent attitude ascribed to them, by producing a less arbitrary attitude on the part of the mine owners, may well have been responsible for the absence of widespread strikes such as took place in the Monongahela Valley and in the Cumberland district; but the same independence probably manifested itself in short strikes at individual mines, as well as in other less open but none the less effective methods of resistance.

The situation in Illinois before 1861 was similar to that in Ohio in this respect; here also there is no history of extensive strikes, although the British influence was strong. But the probably frequent occurrence of strikes in individual mines is strongly implied in a newspaper account of the Belleville district strike of 1861, already cited.³ Beginning in the forties, miners of this district made use of voluntary restriction of individual production as a means of regulating working conditions. Fifteen years before the formation of the American Miners' Association, a St. Louis, Missouri, newspaper, in an announcement of the "re-animation" of a project which had been

¹ United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908.

² Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 72.

³ See p. 23.

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lying idle for a number of years, to construct a railroad to certain mines in the bluffs on the Illinois side of the river, said:

All that is wanting is facility for transportation, and an *avoidance of the combination of the colliers*. With the Railroad and the *mines free from the control of the miners in the amount produced*, they can supply the whole city.¹

The legislation on this subject by the LaSalle convention of the Miners' Association in 1863, which will be referred to later² indicates the value which miners placed upon restriction of production as a means of safeguarding their interests. It also strongly supports the assumption that restriction was so recognized and used throughout the bituminous³ coal fields of the country.

¹ Reprinted in Belleville Advocate, November 26, 1846, from Missouri Republican, St. Louis. (No date.) Author's italics.

² See p. 91.

³ In the Pennsylvania anthracite mines differences in geological conditions and the nature of the work made its general application difficult.

CHAPTER V

CONDITIONS STIMULATING ORGANIZATION

DEFINITE data on the social and living conditions of the early miners are scarce. For the period beginning with the seventies, such information is available in reports of the various state labor bureaus which began to be organized about that time, but little or no light is shed on preceding years. John McBride,¹ referring to his experience as a miner in Ohio, describes the early miners as scattered in remote districts with little opportunity for interchange of ideas, forced by exigencies of the industry to move frequently from mine to mine, digging river coal in the spring and fall, lake coal in the summer and domestic coal in the winter,² and acquiring a reputation for being a shiftless lot. Andrew Roy³ mentions the seasonal drift of the miners of Maryland and western Pennsylvania into the Trade Water River section of western Kentucky in the forties and fifties, to take advantage of the spring and fall work in those river mines. It might be expected, too, that many of the more aggressive miners left the mines for other occupations, profiting by the opportunities afforded through the rapid growth of the country, especially west of the Alleghenies.⁴

THE MINER OF THE SIXTIES

Through the eyes of a foreign observer in the sixties, we get a wider and somewhat more highly colored picture than that given

¹ McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners, in The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888, pp. 241-243.

² The seasons for "river" coal, that is, coal transported on rivers, are spring and fall, when the waters are high enough; while "lake" coal can be transported only in summer, when navigation on the Great Lakes is open. "Domestic" coal, which is used in households, is naturally produced for the cold winter months.

³ Roy, Andrew, *The Coal Mines*. Robinson, Savage and Company, Cleveland, 1876, p. 338.

⁴ *Idem*, *History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903], p. 51. Roy mentions the settlement of many of the early Maryland coal miners on farms in Iowa and Wisconsin.

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by native writers. It is, however, important because of its mention of the British influence.

The United States miner displays a resemblance to the English miner in more ways than one. On both shores of the Atlantic the people and the language are the same, only the political constitution is different; and the greater freedom and the more complete equality which prevail in the States of America react on the habits of the citizen and the workingman. The terms of employer and workman are almost unknown; the miner labours at the mine as though he could fill any other office; he is paid liberally a specified sum. He is your equal, remember; for his part, he will not forget the respect which is due to each; he begins by respecting himself, and on leaving the mine he dons his black coat and hat. The leveling of class-distinctions is complete. We are in a land where Lincoln the rail-splitter, and Johnson the tailor, have attained the office of President in succession. While at work every one is attentive and serious; there is no singing, there are no disputes. There is no smoking, but every one is content to chew his quid of tobacco in silence. Away from his working place, however, the conduct (at least at the liquor-shop or public house) is not always so free from reproach.¹

Daniel Weaver, addressing the Belleville miners after they had won their strike and set up the Miner's Association in 1861, wasted no words telling them that among them were "ignorant as well as intelligent—staid and eccentric—brave men, and cowards."² He was shrewd enough to let each choose his own category. We can safely assume that the miners were no better and no worse than other workers of the period, and that whatever differences existed may be accounted for by their isolation from large centers of population, and by the dangerous nature of their work, which called for a large measure of independence and self-reliance. These conditions made them a strange mixture of pioneer and industrial worker.³

¹ Simonin, L., *Underground Life, or Mines and Miners*. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1869, p. 243.

² Belleville Democrat, April 6, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

³ The editor of the Belleville Advocate (May 29, 1868) attended a miners' meeting during a strike and volunteered the following opinion and advice to the miners: "Those who do not sympathize with you as we do, say you are a thriftless, improvident class. This is plain talk, but some of your friends cannot deny the statement. They say that whether you make \$1.50 or \$6.00 per day, you spend all you make. You know whether this is so or not; admitting that it is, you have an unquestioned right to do it—but is it wise?" He suggested co-operative mines as a way out for the miners.

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COMPANY STORES AND HOUSES

The widely scattered setup of the coal industry, and the intermittent work at mines supplying seasonal markets, early encouraged and in many instances forced the operators to build company houses and establish company stores. The history of the system, both in this country and in Great Britain, is one of constant misuse of monopoly by its owners. The fact that few complaints have come down to us from the earlier period of mining in this country is no proof that abuses did not exist then. The flood of data on the subject appearing in the reports of state bureaus of labor which began to be published in the seventies represents a release of pent-up complaints by the miners, who now had a medium through which they could voice their grievances and bring them to the attention of the public. It is interesting to note that the first recorded complaints against the system were made in the Pennsylvania anthracite region, where the distribution of coal deposits developed more closely grouped mining communities. Between these communities comparisons of the quality of housing, and rentals and store prices were inevitable. The Pennsylvania legislature investigated the company store system in 1834, undoubtedly with a view to its correction, but apparently the abuses continued, the miners striking for reforms in 1842. Again, in 1863, the governor recommended to the legislature that regulatory legislation be enacted, but the miners received no relief until they did the job themselves through their union, about 1870. But with the decline of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association (the Workingmen's Benevolent Association) during the panic of 1873, the operators brought the company stores back to life.¹

In the Monongahela Valley and in the Cumberland district of Maryland during none of the widespread and protracted strikes before 1860 over questions of wages and honest weights, does the question of company houses or company stores seem to have been an issue. Neither did the Belleville district miners in Illinois, in their strike of 1861, make any complaint on this score, although in 1863 they complained of being compelled, under penalty of discharge, to buy "all their supplies of whatever kind . . . at the most exorbitant

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 101.

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rates" from the company stores, and to pay high rents for "shells of houses."¹ However, demands of the strikers did not include these charges as specific grievances to be adjusted. A long-standing evil may be tolerated for want of knowing what to do to eliminate it. Besides, the miners had other and more pressing grievances.

VENTILATION—MINE ACCIDENTS

The mines of this period were of small output as compared with later and present-day mines. In the 1860's a mine having more than 100 employes was the exception, the average employing less than one-fourth of that number.² In the drift mines man- and mule-power brought the coal out over tracks laid with wooden scantlings for rails, with an iron strip nailed on the wooden rail for the main roadways. When shafts were necessary to reach the coal seam, in many instances gin hoists and pumps were powered with horses. It would not be amiss to say that in 1860 the vast bulk of bituminous coal was brought out without the use of steam.³

With the industry equipped in such primitive fashion, it is not surprising that ventilation in most mines was poor. When artificial ventilation became necessary to keep the mine in operation, the furnace method was used. A furnace was installed in one compartment of the shaft, while the other was used to bring out the coal and for the entrance and exit of the miners. Roy,⁴ writing before 1875, said that the furnace had long been the favorite ventilating machine in Great Britain and the United States, but that the exhaust fan, already used for some time on the European continent, was at that time "coming into practice in England and the United States." He was of the opinion that while the furnace was an effective device in ventilating deep mines, it was a poor one for shallow mines. There was also danger of the furnace igniting the shaft or

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863, letter of Miners' Association.

² On the basis of the number of mines and miners reported by the United States Census of 1860, the average for all bituminous mines was 25. In Pennsylvania it was 35, in Ohio 24, and in Illinois 20, while in Maryland it was 88.

³ The Belleville Advocate of August 28, 1857, noted that coal mining was becoming an important industry in that vicinity, "with new [coal] banks opening frequently on the route of the railroad. *Last week we noticed a new bank worked by steam.*" (Author's italics.)

⁴ Roy, Andrew, *The Coal Mines*, p. 102.

slope timbers and trapping the miners in the mine; this occurred in the Avondale disaster in the anthracite region in 1869, suffocating 109 miners.

The mines of that period never had more than one opening, except by chance. State laws requiring separate openings for escape in emergencies, and setting up safety regulations, minimum standards of ventilation, and public inspection of mines, were not enacted until the seventies, after long agitation by the miners and despite the organized opposition of the operators. Before that time such matters were left entirely to the judgment of mine owners. Public sentiment created by the Avondale disaster and another of similar character, but with a smaller number of victims, in Ohio a few years later,¹ had much to do with the passage of the legislation.

In the absence of any safety legislation and public inspection of mines, accidents were probably numerous. In addition to accidents caused by falling of the roof, the method of mining in vogue imposed another hazard. During the greater portion of the undercutting, the miner was forced to lie on his side under the coal, which often, because of hidden "slips" or "faults," fell and crushed him. No official records of accidents were tabulated until the eighties; hence there is practically no information available, covering the previous period. Because of their spectacular nature and the number of lives lost, the disaster at Avondale and the later one in Ohio are given us in detail; but in the absence of tabulated records, we can only speculate on the number of miners killed and injured in accidents which sniped them off singly, the news of which rarely spread beyond the immediate community.

Early in 1863 the Miners' Association of the Belleville district declared that in St. Clair County during the preceding four months, out of considerably fewer than 1,000 employed, eight miners had been killed and "as many, at least if not more, have been crippled, and most of these are made cripples for life."² In reporting a fatal mine accident a number of years later, the Belleville Democrat pro-

¹ July, 1874. Ten of the 21 men in the mine were suffocated when the furnace set fire to the timbers in the slope. (Roy, *History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, pp. 130-131.)

² Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863.

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tested that the "alarming frequency of maimings and death in the coal pits calls for a searching investigation into the cause."¹

In 1863 the Miners' Association had a bill presented to the Illinois legislature, entitled "An Act for the protection of operatives in mines in the State of Illinois," which passed the Senate but was killed by legislative trickery in the House without coming to a vote.² The full scope of the bill is not revealed in the Senate Journal, but that it was quite comprehensive is indicated by the failure of its opponents in the Senate to substitute for the section on ventilation one providing a fine for mine owners who permitted their mines to be "affected with foul air, so as to render the working of the same injurious to the health of the miners." This was the first attempt in this country to secure legislation for the protection of miners in bituminous coal mines. Because of the many accidents in the anthracite mines in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, the miners in 1859 appealed to the legislature for a law providing for official supervision of the mines of that county. It failed to come to a vote, was defeated when reintroduced in 1866, and finally became a law in 1869. However, the Avondale disaster a few months later, in an adjoining county, revealed the inadequacy of legislation that applied to one county only.³

RESTRICTION OF INDIVIDUAL PRODUCTION

Because of the early use of restriction of production in the British mines,⁴ and the presence of many British miners in the American mines, it would be easy to label this practice as a direct importation. But this would ignore the similarity in mining technique and the piecework method of payment prevalent in both countries, which might be expected to produce like results. Without discounting entirely the influence of the earlier British example, the major responsibility must be placed upon influences springing from the technology of the industry. The relation of the early miner to the mine owner was that of a petty contractor. The miner was engaged to dig

¹ July 25, 1867.

² State of Illinois, Journal of the Senate, 23d Legislature, 1st Session, 1863. Baker and Phillips, Springfield, 1865.

³ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 84.

⁴ See p. 38 and footnote.

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and deliver merchantable coal in the mine car at the entry, or in some instances at the mouth of the drift, at a specified price per bushel. He was assigned a particular working place, in which he was responsible for his own safety, doing his own timbering and laying his own track as the place advanced. He furnished all the labor, skill, and knowledge, as well as the tools and powder needed for the work. He was subject to no supervision, beyond inspection of the quality of the coal he loaded, as determined by the amount of impurities and small coal in the car, which was revealed when it came out of the mine. The amount he produced was left to his own judgment, which the piecework system was assumed to control. If increased mine capacity was desired, more miners were hired. Under the circumstances it was quite natural that a miner should acquire a sense of proprietorship, if not ownership, in "his" working place.¹

A miner not only took the liberty of regulating his own pace of work, but it was conceded to him by the mine owner. Both agreed that the miner was the chief loser if he did not produce a day's work. Despite careful planning by the miner, earnings for a variety of uncontrollable reasons varied from day to day, and from one working place to another. Even where no favoritism existed, the dissatisfaction arising from these unequal earnings is fairly obvious. The mine owner lost nothing because of this condition, since he paid only for the coal produced. In fact, it gave him an opportunity to cite the larger earnings of certain miners when changes in the mining rate were proposed. The question being left to the miners, they solved it by voluntary limitation on individual production, based upon a "fair" day's work, which in its final definition carried with it the right of the miner to "make up" cars lost through no fault of his own.

The system had the immediate effect of regulating hours of work, as well as the indirect but none the less recognized and desirable effect of maintaining the rate paid for mining. The universally shorter hours of the British miners, as compared with those of other

¹ Goodrich, Carter, *The Miners' Freedom*. Marshall Jones Company, Boston, 1925, p. 19. Goodrich quotes R. Dawson Hall in *Coal Age* of July 7, 1921, as follows: "Mining is still in a way a 'cottage' industry, only the cottage is a room in the mines." See Goodrich for a discussion of this condition as it existed in the first quarter of the twentieth century, and the restrictions placed on the traditional freedom of the miner by technological changes in the industry.

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workers in the British mines, can be attributed only to this influence. As long as the primitive technology of the hand miner prevailed the question of hours of work remained subordinate in the demands of the miners in this country.¹ Andrew Roy, writing before 1875, in estimating the producing capacity of the American hand miner based it upon a "shift of eight or nine hours,"² obviously accepting that working day as the prevailing standard. Depending as it did upon a tacit agreement among the miners, yielding immediate and direct results, this practice could not fail to be a strong object lesson in united action, as well as a crude but more or less satisfactory substitute for the unions which grew out of this concerted action. The independence of the miner began to lessen with division of labor due to introduction of the coal-cutting machine and organization of big mines with large capital investment in machinery, which depended upon a maximum output for profits. In the modern, completely mechanized mines the miner's early freedom has disappeared entirely. His relatively independent status vanished with the methods of work which gave rise to it.

BRITISH MINERS IN AMERICA

Even the most cursory study of the subject will reveal the influence on the industry in America of British immigrant miners who had worked in the mines of England, Scotland, and Wales. They became union leaders, mine bosses, superintendents, and mine owners. This immigration, however, did not reach large proportions until after 1850, when the increased demand for coal brought about more systematic mining, that required not only a greater number of miners, but also more skill and experience. According to the United States Census report for 1860,³ 37,523 miners entered the country in the decade 1851-1860, compared with 1,735 in the preceding decade.⁴

¹ The anthracite miners supported a general eight-hour law in Pennsylvania in the late sixties, and struck for three weeks in a vain effort for its enforcement in the anthracite mines. It is significant that the bituminous miners of Pennsylvania showed little interest in the law.

² The Coal Mines, p. 62. Although published in 1876, in a foreword Andrew Roy says this book was written several years earlier.

³ Preliminary Report of the Eighth Census of the United States, 1860.

⁴ The early settlement of Germans in St. Clair County, Illinois, resulted in a considerable number of that nationality in the mines. The American Miners' Associa-

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The report makes no distinction between coal miners and other miners, nor does it group the figures to show countries of origin.

While it is probable that the discovery of gold in California accounted for some of this large influx, conditions in the British coal fields after the dissolution of the Miners' Association in 1847, and the dashing of the high hopes engendered by the Chartist agitation in the forties induced many miners to seek new homes across the sea, where rapid expansion of the industry had made jobs plentiful. Annual production of anthracite increased from 4,138,000 tons in 1850 to 8,116,000 in 1860, with bituminous coal production increasing from 2,880,000 to 6,494,000 tons during the same period. One has but to scan the lists of delegates attending early miners' meetings or to examine the origin of prominent leaders among the miners, to dispel any doubts as to the extent of this immigration.

It was natural that the former active members of British unions should assume leadership in the formation of the first miners' unions in America. "Foreigners, it will be seen," wrote John McBride, "were the organizers and officers of the first American association of miners."¹ This fact accounts for the British forms and nomenclature found in our early unions. Both the American Miners' Association of the sixties and the Miners' National Association of the seventies used the term "Association" in their official name, and local organizations were known as lodges.² The masking of the various district miners' unions under the name, "Benevolent Associations" during the interim between the disintegration of the American Association in the late sixties and formation of the National Association in 1873, followed the tactics adopted by the British miners to protect their members from discrimination when their associations were weak and scattered and the opposition of mine owners to

tion, shortly after its formation in 1861, engaged a German miner as an organizer to bring them into the union. No other Germans seem to have served in any official capacity in the Association, and it is probable that their acquaintance with the industry began in this country. Ohio, especially the Massillon district, also had Germans in the mines before and during the Civil War.

¹ The Coal Miners, p. 247.

² Both terms still persist in the American labor movement in a number of unions. The origin of the term "lodge" to designate a local labor organization is disputed by British students, some attempting to trace it to the influence of the Masonic order.

"unions" was strong. Although the American Miners' Association's chief executive officer was known as president at the time of its formation, the convention of 1864, at Cincinnati, reverted to the British example and elected an "agent" to represent the Association as full-time officer, and this term was continued by the convention of 1865, at Cleveland.

Although the first American miners' unions were organized by these men and followed British forms and experience, the growth of the coal industry here had already prepared the soil from which an indigenous plant, in any event, would soon have sprung. The British immigrant miner found here a greater equality as a citizen¹ than he had previously enjoyed, but in the mines he found the same grievances that had plagued him in the old country. In both countries, in addition to the recurrent conflict over wage rates, there were widespread complaints against unjust weights and measures, arbitrary fines and deductions, discrimination against those who stood up for their rights, and abuses of the company-store and company-town systems. In Great Britain remnants of the bond system of hiring still survived, but a beginning had been made in legislation for protection against the dangers of mining, while in America, although a miner was free to leave his employer at will, there was complete absence of any law for his protection while at work.

In 1860 there were probably many small mines, in which the line separating mine owner and miner was faint or even non-existent, but there can be no doubt that the industry as a whole had reached the stage of maturity, and that there was a "definite separation between the functions of the capitalist *entrepreneur* and the manual worker, between, that is to say, the direction of industrial operations and their execution,"—the prerequisite laid down by the Webbs for

¹ A position, however, conceded to the American worker only a few decades previously. The following is a current comment on the subject in the forties: "To every one who is at all familiar with current opinion . . . the strong tide which is setting in favor of the working classes of our country must be very obvious. And when it is conceded, that to them the world is indebted for the enjoyments and luxuries with which it abounds, the only wonder is, that it has not long since swept into oblivion the last trace of superiority which has been so long advanced and maintained by the idle and proud." (Belleville Advocate, October 8, 1846.)

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the "rise of permanent trade combinations."¹ Although labor unions arise in response to such social pressures, the difficulties in achieving necessary group solidarity for successful organization often delay the process, even though all other essential factors are present. This was especially true in the early days when unions were relatively new and untried. Strikes of miners in the Monongahela River mines, and in the Cumberland district of Maryland during the late forties and fifties, were an indication that those fields had reached the stage where organization of miners was both possible and likely, but none followed. The experience that the British miners in America brought to the task of organizing the first associations here may have hastened the process, and it certainly shortened the apprenticeship period through which all such groups must pass before stability in organization is achieved; but aside from that, we must look upon the American Miners' Association as a native product, a logical accompaniment of the new industrial economy.

¹ Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The History of Trade Unionism*. Longmans, Green and Company, New York and London, 1911 edition, p. 35.

PART II

DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER VI

CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

THE union formed by miners who struck against wage reductions and rising costs early in the decade of the 1860's in Illinois adopted a constitution which set a pattern still traceable in the labor movement of the 1930's. Disregarding any constitutional changes necessitated by the growth of the Association, indubitably a number of vital principles were set up in the original constitution, which have come down to us in the laws of later miners' unions. Even if Roy were wrong about Weaver's writing the original constitution,¹ there can be little doubt that it embodied the basic ideas and principles that he had expressed in his address to the miners to which reference has been made in Chapter I.

OBJECTS AND BASIC PRINCIPLES

The objects of the Association were described in Weaver's address as

. . . the physical, mental and social elevation of the miner. . . . We desire it to be understood that our objects are not merely pecuniary, but to mutually instruct and improve each other in knowledge, which is power; to study the laws of life; the relation of Labor to Capital; politics, municipal affairs, literature, science or any other subject relating to the general welfare of our class.²

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903], p. 65.

² For full text of address see Appendix. In Roy's version of the address the term "craft" is used instead of "class," although John McBride and Chris Evans use the latter word. The term "craft" came into wide use among the miners in the eighties and nineties in speaking of their vocation, although not in a narrow sense. The term was meant to include all mine workers. This accounts for its use, probably inadvertently by Roy. It was not in use at the time of the American Association. The call for the first convention of the Miners' National Association, in 1873, uses the word "class" in this connection.

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But we must not assume that when Daniel Weaver penned these words he was controlled entirely by idealism. He was realistic enough not to expect an overnight rush by the men in the mines to study the classics. Neither was it written as so much verbiage.¹ Later, in a number of published letters to the miners, he enlarged on the theme. In one of these letters he gave a blunt opinion of his fellow workers and their capabilities, although it may be doubted that all understood what he was saying about them.

We have all kinds of men to deal with—ignorant as well as intelligent—staid and eccentric—brave men, and cowards. We are a heterogeneous concatenation of the *genus homo*, and to make all these different elements harmonize and cohere and prosper, will be the task of the intelligent, the honest, and the brave. It will require all the foresight, prudence, knowledge and zeal, at our command.²

For all Weaver's florid language, he had his feet on the ground. He had a firm faith in ability of the miners to improve their own condition. The organization of the Association, and the wide support given the Weekly Miner, established by the Association two years later, in 1863, when Weaver was no longer a member, show that he was right in his conviction and had not misjudged the miners. His impatient displeasure, publicly expressed, when the official organ of the Association discontinued publication several years later, and expression of the hope that another paper would soon be established to take its place,³ show that he did not waver in that conviction.

Another vital principle, no discrimination as between nationalities, was included in the address by Weaver, as follows: "Let there be no English, no Irish, Germans, Scotch, or Welsh." While the problem of uniting the English, Irish, Scotch, and Welsh may not have presented many difficulties, some difficulty was encountered,

¹ Sidney Webb notes that similar advice was given miners in the North of England in 1832 by "Tommy" Hepburn, leader of the Pitman's Union of the Tyne and Wear. "It is pathetic to find Tommy Hepburn urging them to 'form libraries,' and to learn to read and think." (The Story of the Durham Miners, 1662-1921. Fabian Society, London, 1921, p. 32.)

² Belleville Democrat, April 6, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

³ Belleville Advocate, July 20, 1866.

CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

in the beginning, with the Germans, of whom St. Clair County had a large number. In some mines, during the strike of 1861, operators tried to use the Germans in an effort to split the ranks, and many of that nationality did not join the Association until the strike was over. After the settlement, Weaver reported in an official letter, with some elation, and probably with relief: "The Germans, now, are joining us by thirties and forties. . . . Our cause is theirs; our interests are identical."¹

This was a speedy and practical vindication of the value of a principle which has been held vital by all miners' unions since that time. It accounts for the traditional attitude of the miners toward the Negro race, although the Negro was still in bondage when the principle was first laid down.

ALL-INCLUSIVE UNION

In the first sentence of Weaver's address, "The necessity of an association of miners, and of those branches of industry immediately connected with mining operations . . ." the pattern was set for the industrial form of organization for the Association, and the other miners' unions to follow. It is probable that the top laborers, numerically and strategically unimportant at the time, may have been excluded, but there seems to be no doubt that all underground workers were included. Whatever may have been the original position of the Association on the question of admitting laborers to membership, however, the policy was made clear in 1863, by action of the LaSalle convention, which resolved:

That no more laborers be admitted as members of this Association, as we have found them to be an injury to us. That upon the application of any person to become a member of any Lodge, he must prove by members of said Lodge, or by letters from any mining district from which he may have come that he is a miner, before he can be admitted as a member of this Association.²

It is evident that the previous practice had been to admit laborers. The intent of the new regulation depends upon the definition given

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861.

² Belleville Democrat, April 4, 1863, Proceedings of LaSalle Convention.

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the term "laborer" as it appears in the resolution. The language would not appear to exclude anyone who could qualify as an experienced miner, and who held, either temporarily or permanently, a job as laborer, since the requirement was for skill and experience. It could, however, exclude one who held such a position, but lacked a miner's experience. If this interpretation is correct, the purpose of the rule would appear to have been to control the influx of inexperienced men into the mines. An accompanying resolution, fixing the regulations for admission of boys as apprentice miners, as well as the existence of a labor shortage at the time, would tend to support this view. It is possible, however, that it was a hasty action, occasioned by resentment because of the use of laborers to load coal previously mined during the strike in St. Clair County the preceding month,¹ and not representative of the general policy of the Association.

Although the policy on this point was not steadfast, the inclination was toward the industrial form of organization. The cause for this trend is to be found in the industry itself, in which at that time, much more than in later years, the bulk of the working force was composed of miners at the face of the coal. This disproportion of miners to laborers is reflected in the character of the miners' demands during the early strikes, which were confined to mining rates and honest weights, matters affecting miners alone. The wages of other workers in and around the mines apparently were left to adjust themselves on a relative basis, which, under the existing conditions, was not so difficult as it may seem. The skill of an experienced miner was both necessary and desirable in much of the work performed by the underground laborer. A miner might be hired as a laborer on a temporary basis, with the promise of a place at the coal later, or an aging or partially disabled miner might prefer such work to the more strenuous work of digging coal. In either case the worker had a fairly good bargaining leverage—the alternative of taking a place at the face. While this method probably did not result in a uniform wage for this kind of work, it no doubt resulted in a wage comparable with that of the miner.

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863, letter signed "In behalf of the Miners' Association."

CHAPTER 19

The circular letter published two weeks ago as being sent out to the American Miners' Association in 1861 was the circular sent out at the formation of the Miners' National Union in 1872, and we, in this issue publish the circular sent out in 1861, signed "D. W.," the initials of Daniel Weaver, whose portrait we published last week:

no South;" and I would say, let there be no English, no Irish, no Germans, Scotch or Welsh. This is our country, and—

"All men are brethren—how the watch-words run!

And when men act as such is justice won."

Come, then, and rally round the standard of union—the union of States and the unity of miners, and with

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CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

FOR THE

GOVERNMENT AND GUIDANCE

OF THE

AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION,

ESTABLISHED JANUARY 28, 1861.

"Union is Strength—Knowledge is Power."

Step by step, the longest march
Can be won, can be won;
Single stones will form an arch,
One by one, one by one.
And, by union, what we will
Can be all accomplished still.
Drops of water turn a mill,
Singly none, singly none.

BELLEVILLE, ILL.:

PRINTED AT THE "MINER" OFFICE.
1864.

What Might Be Done.

What might be done? If men were wise,
What glorious deeds, my suffering
brother,

Would they unite in love and right,
And cease their scorn of one another,

Religion's heart might be imbued
With kindling drops of loving kind-

honesty of purpose, zeal and watchful-
ness—the pledge of success—unite for
the emancipation of our labor, and the
regeneration and elevation physically,
mentally and morally, of our species.

Yours, on behalf of the miners,

D. W.

My old friend, Andrew Ray, writes to
correct the ancient history I gave in the

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Rephotographed by Columbia University Library

COVER PAGE OF THE 1864 CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

(Reproduced from the United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908)

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CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Although no copies of the constitution of the Association appear to have survived,¹ it is possible, from several sources, to reconstruct it sufficiently to arrive at a fair understanding of its provisions. John McBride gives an outline of the organizational setup. It was based upon

. . . the formation of members into lodges, lodges to form districts, all of which were under the supervision of a general board of directors or trustees, who, besides exercising general supervision, represented the association in its corporate capacity. The general board consisted of one president, vice-president, financial secretary, corresponding secretary and treasurer, and one delegate from each lodge in the association, who were elected annually by the lodges. The general officers were elected by the delegates, and held their positions two years, or until their successors should be elected and qualified. They were to meet once a year, unless a majority of the lodges determined to call a special meeting of the board. Delegates were allowed a vote for every twenty members they represented.²

It is apparent, however, that McBride's summary follows the constitution of 1864 or later, after the Association had expanded and the need for district organizations had appeared. In the beginning a simpler organizational setup sufficed. Compactness of the original area covered by the Association obviated the need for district organizations, and permitted frequent meetings of the general board without undue inconvenience and expense to the delegates. Under the first constitution the general board appears to have met quarterly, a rule which continued in effect for some time after the Association had expanded beyond its original area. Although the LaSalle meeting,³ held in March, 1863, divided the

¹ Unfortunately the editor of the *United Mine Workers' Journal*, in reproducing the cover page of the 1864 constitution of the Association in the issue of August 20, 1908, failed to accompany the illustration with even a summary of the provisions of the constitution.

² McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners*, in *The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888, p. 246. A similar summary is given by Evans, Chris, *History of the United Mine Workers of America*, pp. 8-9.

³ *Belleville Democrat*, April 4, 1863, *Proceedings of LaSalle Convention*, March

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state of Illinois into three districts, and the Massillon district in Ohio and the Blossburg district in Pennsylvania were organized about the same time, two subsequent meetings of the board were held in that year, in June and December. Expansion of the organization was reflected in numerous changes and additions to the constitution in the LaSalle meeting, but the change to less frequent meetings of the board did not take place until the six months' interval between the June and December meetings of 1863, with a further change to annual meetings in 1864.

The change in frequency of meetings of the general board was a natural development in the growth of the organization. Much of the business of the old quarterly meetings, when the organization was confined to the St. Louis market area, was of a local nature, and this responsibility for local matters was taken over by the district delegate meetings, leaving the annual meetings of the Association free to handle business affecting the organization as a whole. With this change came also an increase in length of terms of officers. The later constitution provided for a two-year term of office; the original one evidently provided for a much shorter one. In a letter written in April, 1861, the third month after the organization was formed, Weaver said: "My term of office will soon expire."¹ This suggests the election of officers at each quarterly meeting. This change was probably made at the same time as the change in meetings, since the delegates elected the officers.

There was little legislation enacted at the LaSalle convention affecting the district unions, beyond their creation and allocation of lodges to the jurisdiction of each district. To the district secretaries, in addition to the duty of passing on to the lodges in their districts the names of recreant members reported to them by the general secretary of the Association, was also assigned responsibility for the transmission of all other communications from the general secretary to the lodges. The district organizations functioned in

14, 1863. See Appendix for text. The general board, composed of the Association officers and representatives of the local lodges, with voting power based on membership, filled the place and had powers similar to present-day labor-union conventions. The terms, "General Board," "General Board of Delegates," and "General Convention," are all used synonymously in the official proceedings of the LaSalle convention.

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 27, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

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their own areas, under their own district constitutions, held their own district conventions, and elected their own officers, subject to the general laws of the Association. John McBride says that the Massillon district constitution was "very elaborate, and provided for the regulation of work in the mines, and the very careful government of the association." Of the relation of the district unions to the general Association, he says: "A careful examination of the constitutions of the various [district] Associations shows us that each was in itself a general organization, though nominally a branch of the Belleville headquarters."¹

The American miner has always, up to the present time, been suspicious of centralized control of his union and insisted on a generous degree of district autonomy. It may be expected that this feeling entered into determination of the relation between the districts and the general Association. Legislation enacted by the La Salle convention, which will be discussed later, indicates, however, that the general board of the Association reserved for itself more authority than might be inferred from McBride's language.

AUTHORITY OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION

Some time prior to the LaSalle convention, in March, 1863, a sufficient number of new lodges had been organized in the LaSalle district in northern Illinois and in the Peoria field to make necessary a reorganization of the structure and functioning of the Association. The convention designated the LaSalle and Peoria fields Districts No. 2 and No. 3, respectively, while it designated the parent organization in the Belleville field and St. Louis County, Missouri, which had previously functioned as the grand lodge, District No. 1. This convention clearly marked a milestone in the life of the Association, and the legislation enacted there indicated a realization of the need for new regulations to meet the new conditions brought about by the growth of the Association.

New regulations affecting the general organization provided for a meeting of the "General Board of Delegates" (General Convention) "once every three months, in the most central part of the State of Illinois, so as to equalize the expenses." Each lodge

¹ The Coal Miners, p. 248.

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was to be entitled to one delegate with one vote for each 20 members, but in case the delegate had "one more than the half score" he should be allowed an additional vote. The books of the general board were to be audited every six months, and a statement printed and sent to each lodge. The meeting also voted a "levy" of 25 cents per member to pay the expenses of the next quarterly meeting, and reduced to 25 cents the regular weekly "levy" of 50 cents per member for the support of victimized members.

Local lodges were required to "abide by the general laws" of the Association, and failing to do so were to be no longer recognized as members. The miners at "each Shaft, Drift or Slope" were given full power to govern their own affairs "so far as they do so in accordance with the general laws of this Association." Strikes were recommended against operators who discharged any member "without a proper reason," or because of Association membership or activities, the strike to continue until such discharged men were returned to work. All victimized members were to be paid \$10 a week from the special fund provided by the special "levy" on all members for that purpose, but if they refused work "on honorable terms and at a proper price at any union pit" the remuneration was to cease. All members who had "blacklegged" in the past were to be readmitted to the Association only after payment of all arrears and a \$25 fine; any member "blacklegging" in the future was made liable to a fine of \$100.

The convention adopted a uniform system of membership certificates, requiring the seal of the issuing lodge, for transfer of membership from one lodge to another, and a complete set of rules to guard against fraud and misrepresentation by any miner claiming to be a member. Any member leaving a community to work elsewhere who failed to provide himself with a membership certificate was liable to a fine of \$20 by any lodge where he later applied for membership, unless he was able to show good reason for his failure to have such a clearance from the lodge at the mine where he had previously worked. All local lodges, through their corresponding secretaries, were required to report to the general secretary of the Association the name of any member leaving their lodge without a certificate, the general secretary to pass the

CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

names on to the district secretaries, who in turn were required to pass them on to the local lodges in their respective districts. Failure on the part of any secretary to make reports as required under these regulations was made punishable by a fine payable to the general board.

The completeness of the rules regarding membership certificates is eloquent testimony of the growth of the Association during the first two years of its existence. Instructions given by the convention for the printing of certificate blanks indicate that a uniform blank for that purpose had not been in use prior to that time. So long as the organization remained confined to its original area, personal contacts and acquaintance permitted a more informal procedure. But with expansion of the Association, membership became a valuable asset to the miner, and rules became necessary to prevent improper traffic in membership certificates, as well as to prevent members guilty of "blacklegging" and other offenses against the union from being readmitted in other communities, where their record was not known, without paying the penalty prescribed by the Association's laws.

In matters affecting mining rates and working conditions, the general organization assumed sole authority. The convention, by resolution, served notice that "this Association will not submit to any reduction of the present prices of mining, under any circumstance whatever, in any of the mines that come under the jurisdiction of this Association."

The convention revised the rules governing restriction of output, in language that leaves no doubt that this was a long-established practice, and that the miners regarded it as a major weapon for the preservation of working conditions:

That the restriction of our labor be so modified, that in case of accidents occurring at any Shaft, Slope or Drift, each Miner shall have two weeks to make up his loss; but if any Miner, through his own neglect or idleness, shall lose his day's work, he shall not be allowed to make up his loss.¹

Although the autonomy of lodges and districts was measured

¹ For discussion of restriction of output, see pp. 75-77. For reference to its earlier use in British mines, see p. 38 and footnote.

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and affected by the robust democracy of the time, to say merely that they were required "to abide by the general laws of the Association" does not give the full measure of authority of the central organization. More specifically, the LaSalle convention shows the general convention to have been the supreme authority not only in purely organizational matters such as defining eligibility for membership, levying assessments¹ and fixing the amount of initiation fees and dues, paying benefits to victimized members, fixing penalties for "blacklegging," and adopting rules and penalties in connection with membership transfer cards. The emphatic declaration of the convention that no reduction in the mining rate would be tolerated in any mine under the jurisdiction of the Association, the rules laid down in connection with "labor restriction," the ordering of strikes against operators victimizing members of the Association, and the rules regarding boys entering the mines as apprentice miners, indicate a clear understanding of the need for a uniform policy throughout the jurisdiction on questions affecting relations with the operators, if a competitive relation between individual mines, and in the various districts, was to be maintained and, in the last analysis, the Association preserved. To this extent the authority of the general organization was asserted through the general convention, and the autonomy of the lodges and districts restricted.

A period in the history of our country during which the war cries of liberty and self-rule were being extolled and debated feverishly in forum and press, when volunteer companies of soldiers elected their own officers, workers asserted their right to organize and to strike regardless of the exigencies of the national struggle then going on, was not one in which to expect patient submission to centralized control. However, the control exercised by the Association was a truly democratic one, voluntarily granted by the miners, and its extent determined by the general board, on which each local lodge had a representative with voting power based upon membership. Moreover, all representatives came direct from the mines and were under the direct control of their lodges, and fre-

¹ This does not mean that, in an emergency, a lodge or district could not levy an assessment within its own jurisdiction.

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quent meetings of the board made it possible for the lodges to rescind any regulation which they considered as encroaching excessively upon their prerogatives. This latter provision doubtless went a long way in making the plan acceptable to the miners.

INFLUENCE ON LATER MINERS' UNIONS

The organizational structure of the Association, with lodges composing districts, and with both more or less subordinate to the general organization, has persisted in the succeeding miners' unions down to the present time. The boundaries of the three assembly districts of miners organized in Illinois by the Knights of Labor in the late seventies conformed in general outline to the districts that had already been established under the Association. They have remained important subdistricts under the United Mine Workers of America, although others were added as the industry expanded. The rule of no discrimination against nationalities has also remained a basic tenet of later miners' unions.

Although the American Miners' Association wavered in its stand on the question of an all-inclusive union of mine workers, it set the pattern for those unions that have followed. The Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Associations which replaced the Association after it went down in the late sixties "took in men of every trade employed in and around the mines."¹ The Miners' National Association, organized in 1873, in its constitution declared eligible for membership "all men employed in and around the mines of the United States." This claim of the jurisdiction of miners' unions over all coal mine workers not only has been vigorously upheld by later unions, but has been strengthened and extended to include collateral branches of the industry as they have developed, such as coke ovens and coal processing.

The nearness of the Association to the industrial form of organization, dictated by the technology of the industry, must be attributed, specifically, to the overwhelming number of miners in the total number of mine workers. The miners and others who required a miner's experience at their work made up practically the

¹ McBride, John, *The Coal Miners*, p. 248. See also Andrew, Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 71.

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entire working force. The Association was, in effect, a craft union of miners. The technology of the industry in that period made the union practically all-inclusive. In the present technology, with larger mines and power machinery, there is a wider division of labor, requiring a variety of skills, which has also produced an all-inclusive union, but of the modern industrial type. As a secondary influence, the isolation of the mining communities has had some effect in determining the course of events in both these periods, as have competitive conditions in the industry. The latter, however, became more potent during the later period, as competition widened and intensified.

During the course of these changes in the industry, a period came in which the basis for craft and industrial organization approached a balance. During the first years of the present century the United Mine Workers of America, by that time well established, with its tradition of industrial organization bolstered by a broad jurisdictional grant from the American Federation of Labor,¹ was plagued by several of the mechanical crafts in the coal industry, which desired to, and in a few instances did, set up organizations of their own. The strongest of these, the Brotherhood of Coal Hoisting Engineers, had attained a considerable membership in a number of states. Its final liquidation in 1904, and the absorption of its members by the United Mine Workers, securely established the all-inclusive union in the industry.² Since that time social and economic forces have increasingly operated to strengthen the traditional position of the miners on this important question of industrial unionism.³

¹ The National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers was represented in the convention in which the American Federation of Labor was organized in 1886, and was immediately affiliated. The United Mine Workers of America was chartered by the American Federation immediately after its organization in 1890. The Federation was too badly in need of affiliates in that early day to quibble about jurisdictional claims of organizations seeking admission.

² See report of President John Mitchell to the 16th Annual Convention of the United Mine Workers of America, 1905, pp. 22-23. The matter is dealt with also in President Mitchell's reports to the 12th, 13th, and 15th Annual Conventions, 1901, 1902, and 1904.

³ The assumptions of some writers that the experience of the coal miners in the Knights of Labor in the latter seventies and during the eighties set the pattern for the industrial form of organization in the coal mines have no basis.

CHAPTER VII

THE OPERATORS

WHEN the American Miners' Association was organized in 1861 the Belleville field was the major coal-producing field in Illinois. Many of its mines had been developed during the five years immediately preceding. Its pre-eminence was the result of its proximity to St. Louis, which in 1860 had a population of 161,000. Wood had already ceased to be a serious competitor as a domestic fuel anywhere in the country where coal was available at a reasonable price, and the needs of St. Louis for that purpose amounted to a considerable tonnage. But the chief demand came from the city's industries—mills, foundries, and manufacturing establishments. The nearness of the coal to the surface, reached by means of drifts in the river bluffs and shallow shafts in the uplands, made development possible with a small amount of capital. This was true also of the Peoria field, although somewhat deeper shafts were necessary in parts of the LaSalle field.¹ Largely as a result of these conditions, and also because of the financial, transportation and marketing problems involved, the mines were small, with little concentration of ownership.

The 73 mines reported in the state in 1860 employed 1,430 men, an average of 20 to the mine. As the industry matured there was a trend toward larger mines, but for the next decade the state average remained the same;² in St. Clair County, however, the number of miners per mine increased to 27. There was also a trend toward larger producing companies operating more than one mine. In 1863

¹ The LaSalle field, developed in 1856, had to fight its way into its natural market, Chicago, which was already dominated by bituminous coal from Ohio, as well as by Pennsylvania anthracite, shipped by the lakes, a traffic which had begun in the late 1830's.

² The United States Census of 1870 reported 322 mines with 6,301 employes in Illinois. The same report showed 42 mines with 1,112 employes in St. Clair County. The opening of many small mines in new areas kept the state average of men per mine the same, despite the trend toward larger mines in the older fields.

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a St. Clair County operator whose mine employed a hundred miners and about 30 other workers,¹ enlarged his operations by sinking a new mine and leasing another. Several years later he expanded further by acquiring mines in St. Louis County, Missouri. Perhaps the most significant development of this period was the organization of a company with St. Louis capital, including interests owning a large rolling mill in North St. Louis, to develop and operate a group of mines in St. Clair County. The company hauled the coal to the river on its own railroad and loaded it on its own boat from its own pier for transportation across the river.² That this prototype of the modern captive mine³ company ran true to type, is indicated by its being among the first to have difficulties with the miners later in the sixties, when the American Miners' Association was on the wane.⁴

INFORMAL GROUP ACTION

Operators learned the lesson of organization as slowly as did miners. Before the stage of formal organization was reached, the operators, like the miners, resorted to informal agreements among themselves on questions affecting their common interests. Operators in the same producing district, shipping to the same market, co-operated with each other in the effort to minimize the effects of the keen competition and price-cutting which appeared as the industry expanded. This co-operation had its beginning in informal agreements to maintain a uniform mining rate in the district, and in some instances minimum selling prices. That these agreements were sometimes violated by individual operators, especially during dull market periods, is quite probable. But a high degree of co-operation must have existed among operators of the Monongahela Valley district when, in 1848, they put into effect the reduction of a quarter of a cent in the mining rate in all mines of the district, despite a three weeks' strike by the miners. The same was true of the Cumberland district in Maryland during the strikes there in the early fifties.

¹ J. Gartside. *Belleville Democrat*, May 30, 1863, reprinted from the *Weekly Miner*.

² *Belleville Democrat*, June 6, 1863, reprinted from the *Weekly Miner*.

³ A mine operated as a subsidiary organization, selling all or a major part of its output to the parent concern.

⁴ *Belleville Advocate*, October 4, 1867.

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It is evident that the operators of the Belleville field in Illinois acted as a group in making reductions in the mining rate in January, 1861, which precipitated the strike and the formation of the American Miners' Association. It is unlikely that the operators' action in this instance was based upon anything more than a mutual agreement arrived at through consultation or informal meetings. That the operators in this field had probably worked together in this manner for some time previously, is indicated by their policy during the strike. There were a few deserters from their ranks early in the strike, and the strategy of the miners in requiring these friendly operators to agree not to sell coal to operators who refused to settle¹ indicates that the miners were fully aware that the employers were acting as a group. The final settlement of the strike was negotiated between representatives of the operators and the Miners' Association, the operators rescinding their reduction in an orderly manner, as a group.

MINERS PROPOSE JOINT EFFORT TO STABILIZE PRICES IN ST. LOUIS MARKET

Although some operators discriminated against certain members of the Miners' Association after the settlement by refusing to allow them to return to work, joint negotiations between the Association and the operators as a group do not seem to have been affected. During March and April, 1861, following the strike, such negotiations were carried on, in the effort to establish a plan to stabilize wages by stabilizing prices.² It is entirely in keeping with later experience in the industry that this suggestion came from the miners. The operators did not seem enthusiastic about the plan, but the failure to put it into effect may not have been wholly their fault, since Weaver later publicly questioned the propriety of the miners being a party to price-fixing,³ although he does not appear to have opposed the idea in the beginning.

The plan was first suggested at a meeting of miners in St. Louis

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 2, 1861.

² This was the first attempt to set up permanent joint machinery for adjustment of labor relations in the industry—a system which has played such a prominent role in the industry during later years.

³ Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

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County early in March, at which Association leaders from Illinois were in attendance. It provided

. . . that a board of trade should be established, composed of representatives of the Association in Missouri and Illinois, to meet in St. Louis for the purpose of establishing more uniformity in the market price of coal, and to transact other business appertaining to the associations of miners in those two states.¹

As a result, a joint meeting of operators and "miners' delegates" convened in St. Louis on the morning of March 13, with representation from both St. Clair and St. Louis counties. Weaver said that the objects of the meeting "were to adjust some difficulties existing between the men and their employers, and to establish, if possible, a uniform standard of prices of coal in the market."²

The operators were inclined not to discuss the matter in joint session, and accepted the offer of the miners to allow them to discuss it in caucus. The operators, however, were divided, and, after a short session, they adjourned and sent a committee to the afternoon meeting to inform the miners that they wanted more time to think over the proposition and would meet two days later, after which they promised to notify the miners of their decision. The miners appointed a committee to receive the operators' decision and report it to a delegate meeting of miners arranged for the following Sunday in West Belleville. In their second meeting the operators again failed to agree, but they did not drop the matter.

The following week in a letter reporting the progress of negotiations to the miners, Weaver was of the opinion that "it all ended in smoke."³ It was in this letter that he expressed his doubts as to the propriety of miners taking part in price-fixing. This may, however, have been prompted by his desire to disown the plan, since the operators at that time seemed likely not to adopt it. Considering his general attitude and his frequent warnings to the miners against strikes, "rash actions and untimely measures," one would have expected him to push the measure vigorously. To quote from his letter:

¹ *Ibid.*, March 16, 1861.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, March 23, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

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There is no such thing as unanimity among the bosses. True, the Missouri bosses appear anxious that a minimum, but not a maximum price of coal in the city should be established, and many of the miners themselves think we ought to cooperate with the bosses to effect this purpose. I am of a different opinion. The regulation of the selling price of coal is beyond our prerogative. If our employers pay us for digging the price we demand, and at the same time guarantee to us our just weight and measure, we can claim no more. This, of itself, will accomplish the object, provided the prices of digging amongst ourselves be uniform.

Can we establish or maintain a uniformity? I think so; and I believe it to be our duty to do so as far as practicable. An upright operator who wishes to "live and let live," should be shielded from the reckless competition of unprincipled bosses who rob their *own*¹ workmen, in order to undersell other operators, and thus compel *them*¹ to reduce the wages of *their*¹ men also. These fellows must not be lost sight of.²

The operators held a third meeting³ in St. Louis on March 27. The call for the meeting was addressed to all "Coal Men operating their own or leased mines in the Counties of St. Clair, Illinois and St. Louis, Mo.," the stated purpose being to hear the report of the committee of operators "appointed [at the March 13 meeting] to draft resolutions expressing the sense of the Coal Operators upon certain demands on the part of the Coal Miners." This meeting again failed to reach an agreement on the miners' proposal.

More than a week later, in a further report to the miners, Weaver said:

We hear the operators are meeting often now-a-days, and from the paragraph in last week's Democrat, we were led to expect, and almost to hope for a communication from Mr. Kasson. Whether such a communication is intended for us, as workmen or the other bosses, we do not

¹ Original emphasis.

² Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861. An editorial note published with this letter mentioned a visit by the Secretary of the Operators, who said that they might ask the privilege of putting their side of the story before the public. The editor invited them to do so, but later issues of the paper show that they failed to take advantage of the offer.

³ Advertisement announcing the meeting signed W. Marsh Kasson, Sec., in Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861.

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pretend to determine; but anyway it will be interesting and probably instructive.¹

No more was heard of the price-fixing plan,² but whether the operators were unable to agree, or whether they rejected it, is not known. The St. Louis County operators, from the beginning, appear to have favored the plan, and it may be that the two groups of operators, both selling in the same market, were unable to agree on relative prices for coal from the two states. In reporting the attitude of the Missouri operators immediately after the first meeting in St. Louis, Weaver said the miners' delegates had

. . . learned that the Missouri bosses (about twelve in number) had been in caucus and agreed upon a proposition which they would submit to the action of the Illinois operators, viz.: That "Illinois coal, on the Illinois side of the river, should not be sold for less than seven cents per bushel; and that Missouri coal should be sold at not less than six cents a bushel on the platform."³ [F.o.b. the mines.]

Under this proposal Illinois operators would have paid the transportation from the mines to East St. Louis for sale at the designated price, whence the coal was hauled by wagon, via the ferry, across the river, at an added cost. The lower price of St. Louis County coal was f.o.b. the mines, about six or eight miles southwest of the city, whence the coal was also hauled by wagon, the consumer paying for transportation. Considering the inferior quality of the St. Louis County coal, the prices suggested would appear to have given the two groups equal opportunity in the market.

The strike of 1861 was a new experience to the Belleville field operators, and caught them unprepared to deal with it. The technique applicable to strikes in single mines—in which it was possible for them to take an arbitrary stand, discharge the strikers, and hire other men—was useless when the entire field was out, backed by the newly organized Miners' Association. Any effort to enlist the com-

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 6, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

² In a later letter to the miners (Belleville Democrat, April 27, 1861) Weaver made no mention of the plan. His discussion of it in three previous letters, and his repeated assertions in those letters that he would inform the miners of developments, lead to the conclusion that it was abandoned.

³ Belleville Democrat, March 16, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

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munity on their side was noticeably lacking. Belated backstair attempts of the operators to prevent the enactment by the Illinois legislature of the "Miners' Bill" to insure honest weights and measures failed largely because the miners had been farseeing enough to make it practically a community measure. This confusion in the operators' ranks no doubt played its part in their failure to accept the joint price-control plan. Organization of the miners and their successful strike had driven the operators closer together in self-defense, but they were not yet ready to work out the problems of the industry through permanent joint committees of operators and miners as proposed by the miners.

CHICAGO MEETING OF ILLINOIS OPERATORS, FEBRUARY, 1863

Continuation of group activity by the Belleville field operators, after the strike of 1861, was in evidence when during the fall of 1862 the miners gained increases in the mining rate. Moreover something more than informal organization is suggested by the appearance of the same name¹ signed to official communications as secretary for the operators both in March, 1861, and in January, 1863. But beginning with the strike of February, 1863, the Belleville field operators changed their attitude toward the Miners' Association from one of tolerance to a program of open hostility with intent to eliminate it from the industry. In this effort they sought the help of large consumers through the Union Merchants' Exchange of St. Louis, and, since the Belleville field had had longer experience with the Association, the operators in this field can probably be credited with initiating the move to unite the operators throughout the state on this program. By this time Association lodges had been established throughout the Illinois coal fields, and a series of strikes in the northern part of the state, beginning in December, 1862, and continuing into the first months of 1863, had thoroughly alarmed the operators.

The first statewide meeting of operators took place in Chicago on February 18, 1863,² with 24 coal companies represented, 6 from the Belleville field, 3 from Perry County, 11 from northern Illinois, and

¹ W. Marsh Kasson in the first instance, and M. Kasson in the second.

² Belleville Democrat, March 7, 1863, reprinted from Chicago Tribune.

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4 from the Peoria field, the latter including one from Scott County and one from Rock Island County. An interesting feature of the representation at the operators' meeting is that a number of places were represented where we have no record of Miners' Association lodges, and others where the lodges did not affiliate with the Association until the LaSalle convention the following month. All of this indicates the widespread influence of the Miners' Association, and a growing fear of the Association on the part of the operators.

The resolution passed by the Chicago meeting, defining the attitude of the Illinois operators toward the Miners' Association and its activities, might be expected, at a time when organization among workers was a relatively new departure, to express the extremes of laissez-faire philosophy in its application to employer-employee relations. But to find the resolution so similar in language and concept to statements of present-day non-union employer groups in similar situations, marks it as a startling example of similar group reaction to economic factors, even though separated by a fairly long period of time and in an earlier stage of industrial development. The resolution follows:

Whereas, The coal miners of Illinois, or a portion of them have, within the last year, conspired to control each other and their employers as to wages, as to the management of mines, as to the individuals to be employed or discharged, and as to the amount of coal to be produced daily; and

Whereas, The effect of the secret society¹ formed by the miners, has been to enhance, exorbitantly, the price of coal all over the State, while lessening the quantity produced in proportion to the demand; and

Whereas, The history of other mining communities, and the experience of our own, have proved that such a course, if encouraged by submission on the part of the operators of coal mines, leads to the injury of the public, the ruin of the coal operators, and the impoverishment of the coal miners themselves; therefore

Resolved, That the coal operators of Illinois here represented, will not, after the first day of April next, acknowledge or deal with any association of miners whatsoever, but will hire and discharge individuals, as the exigencies of the business and the conduct of those individuals may compel them to do, paying their employees such wages as the market for

¹ Refers to Miners' Association.

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coal may authorize, making such arrangements for the internal management of their mines as they may consider best adapted to the work, and leaving to each of those employes the right to quit their service whenever it may be his interest or desire to do so.

The resolution was signed by representatives of the 24 coal companies present at the meeting. Another resolution quoted below, was adopted to put into effect the "ironclad" or "yellow-dog" agreement,¹ although at the time neither term for such an agreement had yet been coined. This resolution provided

. . . that in all contracts made with Miners and Operators, there shall be a clause inserted, that the said Miner during the time he shall work in said mine, will not enter into or be a member of any Association of Miners.²

SPRINGFIELD AND ST. LOUIS MEETINGS, MARCH, 1863

Organization of the operators at the Chicago meeting apparently went beyond the informal stage, since the chairman and secretary³ of that meeting served in the same capacity, without further appointment or election, at the Springfield meeting held on March 18.⁴ No complete list of those present at the latter meeting is given in the account of the proceedings, but two representatives not present at the Chicago meeting are mentioned as taking part in the meeting, one from the Colchester mines in northern Illinois, and the other from the "North Missouri mines on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad."⁵ The interstate character of the meeting, by virtue of the

¹ "A contract of employment in which the worker agrees not to join a labor union, and which, usually, is terminated if he does join. *Slang*." (Webster's New International Dictionary.)

² Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner." This resolution does not appear in the account of the Chicago meeting of the operators as published in the Democrat of March 7, 1863, which has the appearance of having been curtailed. However, an account of a later meeting of the operators, held in St. Louis on March 20, 1863, mentions "the first resolution" passed in the Chicago meeting, indicating that there was a second resolution. Individual agreements of this type were widely used in later years as a defense against organization by the miners. The practice was finally outlawed by the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932.

³ Chairman, Col. E. D. Taylor, Northern Illinois Coal and Iron Company, LaSalle; Secretary, Major J. Kirkland, Chicago and Carbon Coal Company, Danville.

⁴ Meeting of Western Coal Proprietors, Belleville Democrat, March 28, 1863.

⁵ Macon County, Missouri.

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representation from Missouri, is recognized in the account of it, which terms it a "Meeting of Western Coal Proprietors."

Two resolutions were adopted in the Springfield meeting, "explanatory of and amendatory to the resolutions passed in Chicago," as follows:

Resolved, 1. That in the opinion of this convention, any difficulties between the employers and their men which shall culminate in a stopping of work shall be considered a *strike*—and members of this convention will not employ each other's men from the date of such strike. And in case men shall have been employed before notice of such strike shall have been received, on receipt of such notice said men shall be promptly discharged.

Resolved, 2. That it shall be the duty of all members of this convention, and those who may hereafter cooperate with it, to give immediate notice of the conclusion of any strike which may have been reported.

Although these resolutions leave the inference that the penalties prescribed were expected to be used only during strikes it is difficult to believe that the amendments were not intended to make the Chicago resolution a means of blacklisting any active Association member. The machinery and the will were both present.

The meeting adjourned, to convene in St. Louis the next day, March 19. Apparently a number of those attending the Springfield meeting, including the chairman and secretary, did not attend the St. Louis meeting. Because of poor attendance the meeting decided to adjourn until that night, when "several other proprietors were expected to be present." Operators from Madison County and others from St. Clair County who had not attended previous meetings, appeared, and in the evening meeting the following resolution was passed:

Whereas, By contracting at any specified or fixed rate for the delivery of Coal by the year we place not only ourselves but our customers under the control entirely of our miners in any exorbitant demands they may see fit to make; therefore

Resolved, That all future contracts made by the parties to this convention shall contain a clause that in substance shall suspend the operation of said contract during the continuance of any strike by the miners; and that the price per ton or per bushel shall be based on a certain fixed price

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paid for mining, and shall be subjected to a sliding scale to correspond with any advance or decline in said rate.¹

The day following, after "a full and free discussion," the convention voted to "fully indorse the action of the meeting held at Chicago."

It is evident, however, that the meeting was not in complete harmony. Later in the same session a resolution was adopted "more fully to explain the resolution of Chicago":

Resolved, That the first resolution, passed on the 19th [sic] day of February at Chicago, in reference to employing miners who belong to any association, shall be construed to mean that we will not employ any miner who belongs to any association or Miners' Union, whose object shall be to regulate the manner in which the coal operators shall manage their work, or whose object shall be in the remotest degree to dictate to the operators whom they shall employ or discharge, or to dictate to the operators what shall be their course in reference to their actions between individual miners and themselves.

DIVISION ON POLICY REGARDING THE MINERS' ASSOCIATION

The action taken in the St. Louis meeting was a retreat by the mine owners from the terms of the Chicago resolution which sought to outlaw the American Miners' Association by refusing to "acknowledge or deal" with it under any condition. The absence of some, and probably of most, of the northern Illinois operators from the St. Louis meeting, and its consequent dominance by the Belleville field operators, made this action possible. Settlement of the strike in the latter field since the Chicago meeting had changed the situation there; and although the miners of the Belleville district had retreated from their demand for the employment of all victimized members, the operators probably were not sure of the outcome of a fight to eliminate the Association, as proposed by the Chicago resolution. This action left the northern operators the choice of accepting the modification or of fighting the matter out alone—a situation which probably rankled, since the proposal for united action seems

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 28, 1863, "Meeting of Western Coal Proprietors." The policy here recommended was suggested in the resolution of the Union Merchants' Exchange of St. Louis, adopted January 31, 1863, in supporting the operators of the Belleville field in resisting the miners' demands for higher wages. See p. 122 and footnote.

to have come in the first place from the Belleville field operators. Such a serious division in the ranks of the Illinois operators, coming to a climax only a few days after the miners proved their unity at the LaSalle convention marked the turning point in the struggle of the Miners' Association to establish itself in coal fields outside the original area of the Association.

The fear of legal complications by some of the operators, if the Chicago resolution was adhered to, may have been a contributing factor in the modification of their policy. That the miners were considering an appeal for legislation to protect their rights is strongly hinted in a letter from Association sources, in which the operators' meetings were discussed.¹ Of the Chicago resolution, the letter says:

They would neither acknowledge, deal with, or hire, any member of any association of Miners, etc., but manage their mines to suit themselves, and discharge or hire men at their will. Now we do not expect them to manage their mines to suit us, but *we will look to our Legislature to see after these men.*²

The writer of this letter was fully informed of the division among the operators, and made the most of it. Of the later meetings he says that in Springfield they

. . . passed two resolutions and then adjourned to St. Louis. It seemed as if they thought their action would not stand the scrutiny of the people at the Capital of a free State; consequently a portion of them having principles a little more reasonable than the others went home. They went to St. Louis—that is a portion of them—on the 19th, and they could not organize, so they adjourned until the Friday morning following; they there and then endorsed the Chicago resolutions, and broke up, as I understand, in almost a row.

The appeal to the legislature mentioned in the letter may have referred to a possible re-introduction of what appears to have been a rather comprehensive bill for protection of their rights, which the miners had introduced in the legislature earlier in the year, but which failed of enactment. Continuation of the war market, and absence of widespread strikes in the Illinois mines for the remainder

¹ Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

² Author's italics.

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of the Civil War period, removed the biggest incentive for organization among the Illinois operators on a statewide basis, even though the breach among them could have been healed. The Illinois operators continued, however, to act together within their respective districts on the basis established prior to the organization of the statewide meetings in 1863. Permanent organization of the operators on a wider basis came much later, with the growth of the industry in size and complexity.

PITTSBURGH COAL EXCHANGE

The Pittsburgh Coal Exchange was already in existence, and held regular weekly business meetings, when the miners of western Pennsylvania, late in 1863 and early in 1864, became organized and began to press for wage increases. Membership of the Exchange, in 1864, included both shippers (jobbers) of coal and mine owners. The mine owners were in a minority in the Exchange, as well as representing a minority of the mine owners in the district. There is a strong probability that the Exchange originally was organized by the shippers to meet their peculiar needs, with no intention to intervene in labor relations in the industry. The place of the shipper in western Pennsylvania arose out of the inability of many of the owners of the smaller river mines either to fill or to finance large river shipments.

The jobber, who may or may not have had a financial interest in mines, bought coal from producers, and gathered the barges into tows for shipment down the river to fill contracts previously entered into. His profit was the difference between what he paid the producer for coal, plus transportation and incidental expenses of doing business, and the amount he got for the coal down the river. More or less a speculator, the jobber had two prices to watch, the price coal sold for at the mines, and the price it sold for in the lower river cities. A runaway market at either end might prove disastrous to him. Since this traffic was carried on the river, the securing of improvements in navigation through construction and proper maintenance of locks and dams, and removal of obstructions from the channel, was an important activity of the Exchange. The need for organization of the jobbers was obvious; the Exchange was the result.

The Exchange naturally regarded organization of the miners and their demands for higher wages as a disturbing influence in the industry, and detrimental to the interests of the jobbers, although its activities in that field, prior to 1864, had probably been limited. Throughout the year 1864 the Exchange made strenuous but unsuccessful efforts to organize mine owners, as well as consumers of coal in the Pittsburgh area, for concerted action against the miners' demands. As a result of the unorganized state of the operators, at practically no time during the year 1864 was the rate paid for mining uniform throughout the district. It varied at times between different groups of mines, from a low of five cents to a high of eight cents a bushel, as the miners were able to force piecemeal acceptance of their demands. The wagon and railroad mine operators, who sold their product in the Pittsburgh area, were able, because of the war demand, to use higher wages as a pretext for raising prices to include additional profits, and were usually among the first to yield to the miners' demands. The river mine operators, whose coal was sold chiefly on long term contracts, were unable to make such quick adjustments, although contract commitments often forced them to yield.

Three major crises occurred in the industry in western Pennsylvania during the year 1864: in January, when the miners succeeded in raising the mining rate from four to five cents a bushel; in April, when a demand was made and some mines struck for six cents; and during the strike in August and September, when the miners established a seven-cent rate in most of the mines of the district. A proposal by the Coal Exchange in February, after the five-cent rate was already in effect, that the mine owners pledge themselves individually not to pay more than four cents a bushel, failed of support; and the iron manufacturers of Pittsburgh, appealed to as large consumers, gave lip service, but continued to buy coal wherever they could get it, regardless of the price paid for mining. During the strike in August and September, in a more ambitious effort, the Exchange sought to enlist the entire Pittsburgh community against the miners. The manufacturers, again, could not resist the lure of war profits, and refused to close their plants; and the press, and the public generally in the Pittsburgh area, blamed the mine owners more than

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they did the miners' wages for the high price of coal, and had little confidence in the Exchange as a source of any effort to reduce prices.

Although the Exchange failed, during the strikes of 1864, to organize sufficient opposition to control the miners' wages, it simultaneously engaged in other plans toward that end. These plans, while they had little immediate effect, eventually had much to do with shaping the course of events in the industrial history of western Pennsylvania. During the strikes of 1864, the Pittsburgh newspapers, probably getting their inspiration from the Exchange, frequently belittled the individual skill needed to dig coal, and used this as an argument against the miners' demands for higher wages. But it is evident that members of the Exchange, whether or not they encouraged this attitude of the Pittsburgh press, were fully aware of the monopoly of skill held by the organized miners of the district, and realized that this must be broken before miners' wages could be reduced and kept at a lower level.

At a meeting of the Exchange held on March 1, 1864, a committee was appointed to examine and appraise the usefulness of a "coal digging machine" reported to have been invented.¹ The following September the Pittsburgh Chronicle, in discussing the strike then going on, reported that plans were under way "to push on the manufacture of efficient and labor-saving coal [mining] machines."² A month later the Pittsburgh Gazette reported the use of such machines in England, and asked what had become of the coal-mining machine "being constructed in this city and Steubenville last summer."³ There is no evidence, however, that any such machines were tried out in the mines of western Pennsylvania during that period.⁴ But the miners, over-optimistic as workers usually are regarding such matters, seem to have been of the opinion that no machine would be able to displace manual labor in this instance. The letter by a miner, published in the Pittsburgh Gazette, mentioned the previous report

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, March 2, 1864, minutes of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

² September 1, 1864.

³ October 10, 1864.

⁴ Reports of experiments with mining machines in the mines near Johnstown, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, were made in a meeting of the American Iron and Steel Association in 1865. (Chicago Tribune, September 1, 1865.) Successful operation of such machines was not achieved until more than a decade later.

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of a "Yankee invention for digging coal," and scoffed at the idea, adding: "We foreigners think that some of those machines would be more useful at such places as Gettysburg, more so than digging coal."¹

But a more serious threat to the miners' standards was the importation of immigrant labor to take their places, and to increase competition for jobs. At a meeting of the Exchange held March 30, 1864, a committee appointed at a previous meeting, "to advise as to the practicability of importing workmen from Europe," reported favorably on the project. In the general discussion which followed, it was reported that three hundred Belgian miners had already been imported for "Brady's Bend Coal Works, and that they had given entire satisfaction." Belgian miners had been imported also "in other parts of the country with great benefit to the trade." One member of the Exchange favored importation of English miners "who are acquainted with the operations of coal digging machines," thus combining the two threats to the miners' standards.² A month later the Pittsburgh Gazette, in reporting a miners' strike, observed:

If our coal merchants would import laborers . . . there would soon be an end to these strikes. A few hundred foreign miners, landed at Pittsburgh, would have the effect of bringing these thoughtless men to their senses.³

During the strike in September the Pittsburgh Chronicle reported . . . that measures are now being projected to bring on here a large number of workmen from the East. . . . This can easily be done. Every emigrant ship brings over numbers of [coal] diggers who would be exceedingly glad to work at present rates. We are told that even now there are more diggers than can find employment.⁴

The statement that plenty of miners were already available makes obvious the motive for importation of additional miners.

In the beginning the threat to import miners into western Pennsylvania may have been made for the purpose of frightening the men back to work. But during the fall of 1864 the matter was taken

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, February 10, 1864, letter signed "A Coal Digger."

² *Ibid.*, March 30, 1864, minutes of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

³ April 25, 1864.

⁴ September 1, 1864.

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up in earnest by the Exchange. In November the Pittsburgh Chronicle reported the organization of an immigrant company in New York for importation of all kinds of skilled labor, including miners, and said that the company planned to open an agency in Pittsburgh.¹ Three weeks later the agency was established in Pittsburgh,² and a short time later the representative of the company appeared before the Exchange to explain the details of the service.³ There is no information on the number of foreign miners brought to western Pennsylvania in this manner during this period, but the report of a local strike some months later, and the introduction of foreign miners to take the places of the strikers, indicate that some shipments were made.⁴ It is likely that importation of miners, or the threat of it, influenced the miners of the district when they agreed to the five-cent rate early in 1865. It was also the beginning of a practice that set the pattern for an industrial policy in western Pennsylvania that continued well into the twentieth century.

¹ November 16, 1864.

² Pittsburgh Chronicle, December 8, 1864. Advertisement of American Emigrant Company, 66 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh; head office, 3 Bowling Green, New York. The company guaranteed to bring in and deliver to employers skilled labor of all kinds. Shipments were made from Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Norway, and Sweden.

³ Pittsburgh Gazette, December 21, 1864.

⁴ *Ibid.*, February 27, 1865. Because the operator was furnishing coal on a government contract, the strikebreakers were guarded by soldiers.

CHAPTER VIII

MINERS AND THE CIVIL WAR

THE Belleville convention at which the Miners' Association was organized in 1861 took place in the midst of news of states seceding from the Union. The miners were pressing for the passage of the Weights and Measures Act in the legislature, and the settlement of their strike took place at the same time that the delegates from the seceding states were setting up a provisional government in convention at Montgomery, Alabama, and Jefferson Davis was inaugurated as President of the Confederate States of America. Lincoln was inaugurated on March 4 of that year. Fort Sumter was fired on six weeks later, followed immediately by the first call for volunteers to put down the rebellion. During March and April Martin Boyle, as "lecturer" for the Association, visited the various coal-mining communities in the district, in order to consolidate the organization, while Daniel Weaver, in a series of letters to the miners, published in the Belleville Democrat,¹ reported on negotiations with the operators on price stabilization, and on the growth of the Association. Weaver advised the miners to be patient and to avoid reckless action which might harm the union. In a letter late in April, he discussed the duties and privileges of citizenship, urging that the foreign-born miners become citizens, and that all members prepare themselves by reading and study in order to be able "to vote properly and wisely."

ENLISTMENT OF MINERS

The calm deliberation with which these men went ahead with the establishment of their union in the midst of events which rocked the nation to its foundation should not be attributed to a lack of interest or concern in the grave questions the country was facing. The miners and their leaders no doubt shared the general opinion during these months, held even in high places, that, while the national

¹ March 16 and 23 and April 6 and 27, 1861.

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situation was serious, armed conflict would probably be avoided. But when the storm finally broke, after the firing on Fort Sumter in April, the miners were among the first to volunteer, even though many were of foreign birth and not a few had not yet attained citizenship. Through enlistment in the army, the Association lost many good members, as well as leaders, who would have been a valuable asset during this formative period of the organization, had they remained at work in the mines.

One of the first companies raised in St. Clair County was composed of coal miners, organized on April 29 as the St. Clair County Miners and Sappers. This company was later incorporated in the 22nd Regiment, Illinois Volunteers,¹ which saw much service at the front and ranked as one of the foremost of Illinois regiments in the war. The roster of this company² shows the names of many whose descendants are now working in the Illinois mines.

Martin Boyle gave up his post as "lecturer" for the Association, raised a company of volunteers of which he was elected captain.³ His value to the Miners' Association, and his talent as an organizer, are attested by his having been chosen by the colonel to raise another company to help fill out the regiment. Although he found, on his return with the second company, that his first company had been used for replacements, after a considerable delay the regiment entrained for the front. Boyle, however, never reached there; he died of natural causes on the way.⁴ In addition, several other companies composed of St. Clair County miners were organized and saw service.⁵

Thomas Lloyd, the first president of the Association, although over forty years of age at the time, mined coal for the government near Chattanooga to supply Sherman's army.⁶ John Hinchcliffe, friend and close adviser of the leaders of the Association from its inception as noted, and later editor of the *Weekly Miner*, the official

¹ *Belleville Democrat*, August 31, 1861.

² *Ibid.*, May 4, 1861.

³ *Ibid.*, June 1, 1861.

⁴ *Ibid.*, August 17, 1861.

⁵ *Ibid.*, August 31, 1861.

⁶ *Belleville Advocate*, May 29, 1868; also September 25, 1896, Thomas Lloyd obituary.

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organ of the Association, was a prominent figure in the frequent mass meetings held during the early part of the war to unite the people behind the government and the war. In one such meeting, held immediately after the firing on Fort Sumter, Hinchcliffe acted as secretary. The resolution adopted by the meeting declared for the support of the government, "the best in the world."¹ In December, 1862, Hinchcliffe was appointed Captain in the Commissary Department of the Army and served several months in that capacity in Cincinnati.²

Enlistment of the miners in St. Clair County was not exceptional; miners did the same in all the northern states. Andrew Roy says that "thousands of miners threw down their tools and volunteered."³ He makes special mention of a regiment recruited in the Pennsylvania anthracite region as having placed the charge which was fired under the earthwork defenses of Petersburg in 1864, during Grant's campaign against Richmond. The regiment was commanded by a mining engineer. But the loyalty of the miners in St. Clair County must have been particularly welcome to the federal government in the beginning of the war, faced as it was with the doubtful territory in Missouri and nearly all of southern Illinois. While the large German population of St. Louis, and in St. Clair County across the river, was solidly behind the North, the task was no doubt made easier by the stand of the British-born miners.

EFFECT OF WAR CONDITIONS ON THE ASSOCIATION

The varying fortunes of war did not affect the Association or its activities directly, but the Association did react quickly to the economic consequences of the war. There is little reason to believe that there would have been any essential difference in the course of the development of the Association during the first year or eighteen months of its existence, even had there been no war. Not until after the First Battle of Bull Run, in July, 1861, did the full seriousness of the conflict become generally recognized. The subsequent heavy drawing upon the resources of the North, in men, money and mate-

¹ *Ibid.*, April 19, 1861.

² *Ibid.*, December 26, 1862, and March 6, 1863.

³ A History of the Coal Miners of the United States. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus, [1903], p. 45.

rials, for the prosecution of the war on a much vaster scale, brought in its train conditions which not only resulted in a rapid extension of the Association, but pushed it into demands, and strikes, for higher wages.

However, these conditions were not immediately manifest. With military operations largely stalemated in the East in the fall and winter of 1861, Grant in the West fought his way into Kentucky, forcing the surrender of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in February, 1862, and fighting the Battle of Shiloh in April, with Farragut capturing New Orleans the same month. The strain of the mobilization of the resources of the North began to show itself in April, 1862, when greenbacks were first issued, and the resultant inflation brought a steady trend toward higher prices, which was generally felt by July, when the gold premium had reached 20 per cent. The extension of the Association began about this time, and on September 15, two days before the Battle of Antietam, with prices continuing to go up, the St. Clair County miners demanded and gained their first increase in wages since the organization of the Association, one-half cent a bushel, followed by a further increase of one cent a bushel on November 1.

Dissatisfaction with the progress of the war in the East resulted in the displacement of McClellan by Burnside in November, 1862—the first of a series of rapid changes in the commanders of the eastern army. The spring campaign of 1863 in the East wound up with the invasion of the North by Lee and his defeat and retreat from Gettysburg in the first days of July. In the West, Grant during February and March began a series of maneuvers which resulted in the siege of Vicksburg, and its capture simultaneously with the northern victory at Gettysburg. The difficulties of the North during this period were emphasized by issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in January, the adoption of conscription, and congressional action authorizing the President to suspend habeas corpus, both these latter in March. The gold premium stood at 34 in December 1862, at 50, in the spring of 1863, but made a temporary drop to 24 as a result of the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg.¹

¹ Fite, Emerson D., *Social and Industrial Conditions in the North during the Civil War*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1910, pp. 119 ff. The gold premium was

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It was during the latter months of 1862 and the first four or five months of 1863, that the Association proved its ability to expand beyond its original territory and maintain its gains by making the necessary adjustments in its organizational structure and policies to enable it to function over a wider area. The outbreak of strikes in the mines throughout Illinois during this period is eloquent testimony of the effect of war conditions on living standards, and the straits to which workers were reduced who had no union to protect them. The militant declarations of the LaSalle convention in March, 1863, as well as the militant action of the men in the mines, were a direct reaction to these conditions. Although the loyalty of miners to the cause of the North cannot be questioned, they kept that loyalty separate and apart from their loyalty to their Association, and their own interests as miners as opposed to those of the mine owners. At no point in the official record of the LaSalle convention is there any reference to the war, or even an inkling that a state of war existed.

Although the Union Merchants' Exchange of St. Louis early in 1863, in response to an appeal from the St. Clair County operators for assistance in resisting the demand of the miners for an increase in wages, suggested in an official resolution that the government furnish strike-breakers and protect these men while at work, the miners, as far as can be found, never publicly called attention to their war record, or at any time sought to use it to their advantage.

The wage rates established by the Association in Illinois during the strikes early in 1863 appear to have continued to be satisfactory to the miners for the remainder of the war period, since we hear of no more widespread strikes in that area until after the war. Association miners held a preferred position, in that their earnings kept closer pace with living costs as compared with the miners and other workers who were not organized, or did not have strong organizations. The following summary of the condition of the workers, generally, during the war period is interesting in comparison with the condition of the Association miners:

2 per cent when greenbacks were first issued, in April, 1862. It reached its highest point, 185 per cent, in July, 1864. Depreciation of greenbacks may be measured by the appreciation of gold.

The war closed with labor still regarding itself as aggrieved and persecuted, still arrayed against capital, still on the defensive and probably, from the standpoint of labor alone, entirely apart from all outside sources of aid, worse off than in 1860. But from the time when labor finally rose up in self-defense there had been improvement. Industrial wages had advanced from the low figure of 1863; the laborer was more sure of his daily bread from this source and of decent comfort than at the middle period of the war; his ability to lay by a part of the wage for a rainy day was improved, but he was still far from the good times of the previous decade. The crisis had been an extraordinary one. It was neither a time of industrial peace nor yet of profound strife; rather a time of peaceful agitation. With paper currency and rising prices, scarcity of labor, and extreme industrial activity, an unusual set of new conditions arose, to which it behooved labor as well as capital to seek adjustment. It was a time of changing relations on every hand. Capital and labor alike organized and pushed out along new lines; each sought to augment its share in the extraordinary profits of industry, and naturally the advantage lay with the richer and better organized class; but labor was perfecting its organization and laying foundations for the future.¹

By this criterion, the Miners' Association was outstanding. It was forehanded in organizing; it aggressively asserted and maintained the right of workingmen to organize; it won wage increases before "the low figure of 1863"; it fought for legislation to protect miners in the mines; it formulated principles and policies and laid the foundation for future organization among the miners. And by its example it encouraged organization among all workers.

¹ Fite, Emerson D., *Social and Industrial Conditions in the North during the Civil War*, p. 212.

CHAPTER IX

STRIKES OF 1863

THE steady rise of commodity prices following the issuance of greenbacks in April, 1862, was accompanied by widespread business activity resulting from the Civil War, with a brisk market, at rising prices, for all coal the mines could produce.¹ It was in this setting that the Miners' Association in the Belleville district, basing its demands on higher living costs, was able in the fall of 1862 to gain an increase in the mining rate from two and one-half cents to four cents a bushel without a strike. The economic situation was also favorable to the extension of the Association into other coal fields of the state, although its success in the Belleville district may be expected to have given that process considerable impetus. The exact date of the beginning of this extension is uncertain, but it was in full swing during the latter part of 1862, with earlier isolated beginnings. As a result, the opening months of 1863 witnessed strikes for higher wages in all the coal fields of Illinois, some of which began late in 1862.

This was a critical period for the Miners' Association. Considerations of principle, strategy, and self-defense, all demanded extension of the organization into other coal fields of the state. Resistance of the operators, organized on a statewide basis during the course of the strikes in a program of refusing to recognize or deal with the Association, not only challenged the extension of the organization into new territory, but threatened to destroy it in the original area, the Belleville district. For this reason the strikes engaged in by Association miners in Illinois during this particular period should, in their relation to the fortunes of the Association, be considered as a single struggle in which the existence of the Association was at stake.

¹ Belleville Democrat, November 22, 1862; letter, signed "Officers of Lodge No. 1," asserted that the high price of coal was due to "the demand being more than equal to the supply."

STRIKES OF 1863

The first strike of this period took place in December, 1862, in the mines near Morris, in northern Illinois. A settlement was effected in some of these mines early in January, by the operators who acceded to the wage demands of the miners. The remainder, however, continued on strike.¹ LaSalle and Coal Valley² were on strike during January, and on February 1 the Belleville district struck for an additional cent a bushel to bring their mining rate to five cents. In April Danville was on strike and LaSalle was out again, both resisting wage reductions, with the bitterly contested Coal Valley strike still unsettled.

There seems to have been no common understanding between the miners in the various districts, in the calling of these strikes. Each district chose its own time and made its own demands and settlements, independently of the others. The chief impetus was the abnormal conditions brought on by the war, although membership in the Association gave the miners courage to fight and greater certainty of success. However, their common struggle soon had the effect of drawing them together, resulting in the LaSalle convention, on March 14, 1863, at which measures for a common defense and a closer co-ordination of effort were worked out. In the succeeding months we find the miners in one district making financial contributions to support the strikers in other districts. St. Louis County was the only section of the Association not involved in strikes during this period because in that county the Association had an arrangement with the employers by which in addition to getting honest weights they were paid on a sliding scale based on the market price of coal.³

¹ Belleville Democrat, January 3, 1863.

² In Rock Island County. Although isolated from other coal communities and located a considerable distance northwest of Peoria, it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Peoria district by the LaSalle convention of the Association.

³ Belleville Democrat, April 11, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner." There were, however, some "difficulties" at these mines in September, 1863, as a result of which a squad of soldiers was sent to the mines and five miners were arrested and charged with disturbing the peace. The Belleville Democrat charged that the St. Louis papers exaggerated the incident, claiming that the military display was unnecessary and that the purpose was to intimidate the miners. (Belleville Democrat, September 5 and 12, 1863.)

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BELLEVILLE DISTRICT STRIKE

In the Belleville field both miners and operators viewed the struggle as crucial from the beginning. Although some operators in this field had practiced discrimination against active Association members after settlement of the 1861 strike, such action seems to have been more the result of the irritation of individual operators, than part of a concerted plan to eliminate the Association. During the interim the Association had been accepted by the operators, perhaps as a necessary evil, and was tolerated. But early in 1863 it became apparent that the struggle had ceased to be a question of wages alone; the right of association, not seriously questioned by the operators in the earlier strike, was now made one of the issues. It is not surprising, therefore, that both sides marshaled support from outside their own ranks wherever it was possible to do so.

As in the strike of 1861, the Association used the newspapers to put its case before the public. The miners' leaders summed up the economics of the situation in language which none could fail to understand, when they asserted that:

It costs as much, or more, now to repair a pick as it used to cost to buy a new one. It takes from three to four times as much money now to buy a yard of muslin as it did eighteen months ago, and everything else, except the staple products of the West, are and have been commanding equally inflated and hitherto unheard of prices. It is true that a dollar is still a dollar; but measured by the standard of drygoods by the yard, groceries by the pound, or its former equivalent in gold, a dollar now is no more than half what it used to be . . . viewed in the light of what can be purchased with a dollar now as compared with what could have been purchased with the same sum when we were paid two and a half cents per bushel for digging coal; at five cents per bushel our wages would buy us no more comforts now than then, and after allowing that price, the proprietors would still have a margin of profits left, one hundred per cent higher than those they received at that time.¹

Even before the strike began, the operators in this field appealed to the large consumers in St. Louis through the Union Merchants' Exchange of that city for help in resisting the demands of the miners.

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863, letter of Miners' Association.

Later, while the strike was in effect, they united with the other operators in the state in a public declaration to refuse any longer to recognize or deal with the Association. In a letter to the Merchants' Exchange¹ the operators asserted that the miners' demands threatened to "embarrass the whole city, and most seriously impair the manufacturing interests so important to prosperity," and they claimed that the miners were able, at the current rate of four cents a bushel, to make from \$3.60 to \$8.00 a day. The letter condemned the miners as "extortioners," and asked the Exchange to

. . . pass such resolutions as will show a sympathy with those imposed upon, and a determination to discountenance such extortions as are threatened, and to support and sustain those who supply this indispensable article, and who are willing and anxious to do so at reasonable rates.

The Exchange, in a resolution supporting the operators, more than matched the outspokenness of the operators' letter. It declared:

The coal miners . . . are already receiving higher wages than any other class of operatives, and in our judgment fully as much as they are entitled to.

The miners' declared intention again to insist upon a rise in wages would "greatly endanger, if not for the time being destroy, the manufacturing interests of the city," and cause hardship and suffering among the "smaller consumers, especially the poor," and since

. . . this threatened evil arises from the combination of labor on the part of these miners, the majority of whom control the minority, and refuse to allow any to work, unless at such prices as they stipulate . . . we discountenance all such acts of extortion . . . [as] contrary to public policy . . . any attempt on their part, through their monopoly, to extort an unfair and exorbitant compensation for their labor, and *preventing others, by their threats, from working*,² deserves the unqualified condemnation of all good men.

To implement their support of the operators in resisting "the con-

¹ Proceedings of meeting of Union Merchants' Exchange of St. Louis, January 31, 1863, containing letter of Illinois coal operators and resolution adopted by the Exchange, in *Belleville Democrat*, February 7, 1863, reprinted from *Missouri Republican* (St. Louis), February 2, 1863.

² Italicized in the text appearing in the *Belleville Democrat*, February 7, 1863.

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stantly increasing and unjust demands of their employes," the Exchange proposed to

. . . recommend such action on the part of heavy consumers, who hold these operators under contract for the daily delivery of large quantities of coal, as will enable them to resist unembarrassed the present extortionate demands of the employes.¹

As a further means of breaking the strike, the resolution proposed that, since

. . . the Government of the United States is materially interested in having a full and constant supply of coal, we recommend the authorities, in case the miners refuse to mine for reasonable wages, to substitute in their stead other labor, and protect them while engaged in mining.

In the means suggested for defeating the miners, both the letter and the resolution were as modern as any recent strike. The Exchange, representing a coal-consuming center, was of course primarily interested in cheap fuel, but its support of the operators in this instance is nevertheless an interesting example of class grouping in the early stages of our industrial development. Today such documents are rarely made public. When they are, it is usually through the subpoena of an investigating committee, and against the wishes of the persons concerned. Three quarters of a century ago, there were few precedents in labor relations, and therefore fewer restraints.

In answering the operators' letter and the resolutions of the Exchange, the miners denied the high earnings attributed to them. They estimated the average wage to be \$2.40 a day under the four-cent rate, based upon an examination of earnings in 11 mines² "on

¹ About six weeks later, on March 19, 1863, the operators, in a meeting in St. Louis, adopted a resolution for the inclusion in all selling contracts between operators and consumers, of a clause to provide for the adjustment of prices named in such contracts to correspond with any advance or reduction of the miners' wages during the life of the contract. This proposal, long since standard in the industry, is, in the opinion of the writer, the beginning of the practice. See p. 104.

² In an official statement of the Association in the *Belleville Democrat*, February 7, 1863, this statement of earnings was credited to an article in the *Missouri Republican* (St. Louis). The miners could well afford to quote this source as one not likely to be considered as biased in their favor. News and comments on the coal-mining industry in the St. Louis papers usually presented the side of the consumer as against that of the miners.

the Belleville Track,"¹ pointing out that to make the wage claimed by the operators it "would be necessary to "dig 200 bushels of coal, which all miners and persons conversant with the business know to be an utter impossibility." They contended that the operators with a five-cent rate, which the miners demanded, would be able to deliver coal at East St. Louis, "including freight and other incidental expenses for 8¼ cents a bushel," which, they asserted, would afford the operators a fair profit without materially affecting the price of coal. They emphatically denied the charge of preventing others "by threats from working. . . . All has been conducted in the most quiet and orderly manner, no broils or strifes of any kind whatever occurring to mar our proceedings."²

While careful to present their side of the case to the public through the press, the miners did not overlook other phases of the struggle. In a strike meeting held in West Belleville on February 4, members of the Association were given permission to return to work for operators willing to pay the five-cent rate, and

. . . who have contracts with manufacturers in Belleville and vicinity, and also for the purpose of supplying the inhabitants of Belleville with coal, provided the bosses will agree not to supply the contracts of those other contractors who are unwilling to pay the price asked.³

Miners returning to work under this plan were to be required to pay one-half cent a bushel out of their earnings into the general fund of the Association, toward defraying the expenses of the strike. It is evident that this action was taken to forestall criticism and to preserve the goodwill of the community, as well as to drive a wedge into the ranks of the operators. At this time, with the strike only a week old, it was reported that the price of coal in St. Louis had jumped to 35 cents and 40 cents a bushel.

At a large meeting in O'Fallon on February 9, held in the open, despite the season, "after a full discussion a resolution was adopted,

¹ John McBride, Andrew Roy, and Chris Evans all incorrectly used the term "Belleville Tract" in designating the Belleville coal field. As a result, later writers, using their writings as sources, have repeated the error.

² Belleville Democrat, February 7, 1863, letter signed "Many Miners."

³ *Ibid.*, February 7, 1863.

without a dissenting vote, to adhere to the demand for 5 cents a bushel." Many Belleville miners attended this meeting, "forming quite a long procession . . . with a band of music and carrying the National flag,"¹ as on their way they marched through the main streets of Belleville.

On February 10 "a meeting of delegates from the various lodges of Coal Miners in the county [St. Clair] and from Madison and Perry Counties," was held in West Belleville, at which a resolution to continue the fight for the five-cent rate was adopted by unanimous vote.² The miners in Perry County, about seventy miles southeast of Belleville, had not taken part in the strike of 1861. Their presence therefore in this meeting represented expansion of the Association farther south in the state, but the exact date of their organization is lacking.

About this time the operators made an effort to stampede the strikers back to work by offering to pay the five-cent rate, but coupled it with conditions that would have seriously weakened, if not destroyed, the influence of the Association. The strategy of the operators did not include official statements to the press of their side of the strike, but an editor of a St. Louis paper,³ who gave as his source of information several "Illinois Coal Proprietors," charged that the miners were acting arbitrarily in refusing to accept the wage concession offered by the operators, that it was believed that they would insist on a still further increase, and that their ability to remain on strike and live "in idleness" was positive proof that their past wages had been "highly remunerative." But the worst injustice on the part of the miners, continued the editor, was that "they not only refuse to go to work themselves, but they refuse to permit the Proprietors to employ others, threatening violence to all laborers who attempt to take their places."

The Association in a long letter⁴ denied the accusations, upheld the right of the miners to cease work "either individually or associatively" in the effort to improve their condition, and bitterly scored

¹ *Ibid.*, February 14, 1863.

² *Ibid.*, February 14, 1863.

³ St. Louis Evening News, February 16, 1863.

⁴ Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863, statement signed "On behalf of the Miners' Association."

the attempt of the operators to discriminate against members of the Association.

The miners have not refused to accept the advance of one cent per bushel conceded by their employers, or "refused to go to work until they get another advance," for the "concession" was at once accepted and the men were immediately ready for work. But, with that "concession" was coupled the edict issued by Messrs. Thompson, Brandenburg, Yochs, Poyton, Haight and others, "that all efficient society men" should be refused employment. At Mr. Thompson's mine no discrimination was attempted, but all hands were paid off and a most unqualified refusal given to the further employment of *any*¹ of them.

It is not true that the miners "will insist on a still further increase," so far from this being the case, such an idea has never once been mooted in the "Association," much less insisted on. The idea is a pure fabrication of the enterprising imagination of those who, yielding with bad grace to the declaration that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," now seek shelter beneath the wings of popular favor from the odium they have incurred, and, to secure that shelter make use of the most unscrupulous means.

It is not proved that the miners' wages are "highly remunerative" by the mere fact of their "abstaining from work" a little more than two weeks; that fact if it proves anything at all, proves only that their powers of endurance are equal to the task not only of the assertion, but also of the maintenance of their rights, whenever and wherever those rights are jeopardized.

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The charge that miners "refuse to permit the proprietors to employ others" would be simply laughable, if it was not made with so much apparent gravity. . . . No one believes it. But it is said the miners threaten violence to all laborers who attempt to take their places. We defy any man to the proof of this statement. The proprietors have, some of them, frequently tempted the men, to entrap them into riotous proceedings by rude and ungentlemanly language, but have most signally failed, hitherto, to accomplish their purpose.

In defending their demands and their actions in the effort to gain them, the miners did not neglect to remind the operators—and the general public—of the principles involved in the struggle. The state-

¹ Original emphasis.

ment closed with an argument not only for the right of association, but in justification of striking to maintain that right.

Under such circumstances we ask from our employers and the public a fair and unprejudiced consideration of our claims—not to “further increase” of our wages, but to be considered as “men and brethren,” and treated as such. We have yet to learn that it is criminal for workingmen to associate themselves for protection against the unreasoning but growing power of the capital they themselves are constantly creating, only to be wielded by the parties for whose benefit it is being produced, as a weapon to crush to the earth both the freedom of body and mind of its creators. We ask the employers to withdraw the tyrannical order issued by them for the discharge of men whose only fault was doing their duty as became men of honor pledged to that end by their associates, and we will instantly resume our occupation. Until this is done we feel bound in honor to stand by our comrades, and prevent their sacrifice on the altar of misguided malevolence.

However, at a mass meeting held in West Belleville on February 26, despite this declaration of intent to remain on strike until all the miners were permitted to return to work, a change in policy was made by the adoption of a resolution¹ to “commence work in the morning for those bosses who will pay five cents,” but to refuse to work in mines where the operators discriminated against active members of the Association.² The resolution also provided

. . . that each lodge appoint a committee to meet at Illinoistown [East

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 28, 1863.

² The Belleville Democrat of March 7, 1863, in announcing the settlement of the strike, said: “The vexed coal question is now settled; the bosses agreeing to give the five cents per bushel demanded by the miners, but refusing to permit some of the most obnoxious ‘strikers’ to work in their mines.” Shortly after the settlement, the engine room and blacksmith shop of a mine near Belleville were destroyed by fire early one morning. The Missouri Republican of St. Louis charged incendiarism, and cited that “great antipathy existed on the part of the coal miners against the owners of the mine.” The Belleville Democrat of March 7 defended the Association men against the charge, putting the blame on “the ‘blacksheep’ as they are called, or those who have gone to work at this mine, in the places of the society men who had been victimized by the proprietors” and who “had a regular carousal on the night previous to the fire, at the engine house, around a fire which they kindled for the occasion; and this carousal was in full blast at a late hour. From which it is fair to infer that the fire was the result of carelessness on the part of the revelers, and not the work of incendiaries.”

St. Louis] on Monday next [March 2] at 10 o'clock a.m. to ascertain how many men are victimized and how much money will be needed to support them, and that each lodge shall levy a contribution on each member in said lodge for that purpose.

This action was taken without a dissenting vote. It is not clear just what occasioned this sudden reversal of policy by the miners. It is clear, however, from the activity of the Association in the months immediately following, that the threatened discrimination against Association members was not general enough to have had a detrimental effect on the organization. Nor was the support of those who were victimized a crippling financial burden. The victimized men were paid \$10 a week until they found work in other mines. The action of the LaSalle convention, held some two weeks after the return to work, in reducing the levy for this purpose from 50 cents to 25 cents a week, indicated either that the original number had been reduced by some finding other jobs, or that the need had been overestimated.

The shortage of labor, which was fast becoming acute because of the drawing of men into the army, and because of increasing industrial activities due to the war, made it difficult for an operator to practice discrimination when such a course kept all other Association men away from his mine. That the practice did not work out to the entire satisfaction of the operators, may be inferred from the action taken by the statewide meeting of operators, in Springfield, March 18, when they agreed on a policy "not to employ each other's men" when a strike was on, and defining a strike to mean "any difficulties between the employers and their men which shall culminate in a stopping of work."¹ Nevertheless, we find, as late as April, "a portion of the Miners out [on strike] on the Belleville track to prevent the Operators for whom they have been working from victimizing men because they are members of the Miners' Association."²

There are indications that these troubles in the Belleville field were not entirely settled until some time later, but there seems to

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 28, 1863, resolution adopted by coal operators in meeting in Springfield, Illinois, March 18, 1863.

² *Ibid.*, April 11, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

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be no reason to doubt that all but a small minority of the miners in that field returned to work at the time the settlement was made. McBride mentions the strike in the Belleville field as taking place "in 1862-3," and says that it was finally won after nine months, the miners being aided by an upturn in prices.¹ It is possible that he was referring to all the strike troubles in Illinois during that period, beginning with the strikes in northern Illinois late in 1862 and ending with the final settlement at the mines where the Association men had been victimized.²

THE LASALLE BLACK LAWS

The strikes in the northern Illinois field during the early months of 1863 were bitterly contested, and accompanied by violence and the use of strikebreakers. These struggles were of importance beyond their immediate effect on the wages and conditions of the northern Illinois miners, for they represented a test of the ability of the Association to extend its organization and influence beyond the immediate coal field in which it was first organized. The operators appear to have had a realization of this phase of the struggle, and in seeking help outside their own ranks they turned to the state legislature, then in session. The legislature hurriedly enacted a drastic anti-picketing measure, the language of which was so general as to make unlawful any effort by strikers, however peaceful, to persuade strikebreakers from taking their places. The law later became generally known as the LaSalle Black Laws.³

¹ McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners*, in *The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888, p. 258.

² McBride asserts that an attempt was made by the operators to introduce Belgian miners into the striking Belleville mines. Contemporary accounts do not bear out this assertion.

³ Public Laws of the State of Illinois, 1863. An Act to amend Chapter XXX of the Revised Statutes, entitled "Criminal Jurisprudence." See Appendix for full text. Section 2 of the law survives today practically intact, as Section 376 of the Criminal Code of Illinois. Section 376 reads: "If any two or more persons shall combine for the purpose of depriving the owner or possessor of property of its lawful use and management, or of preventing, by threats, suggestions of danger, or *any other unlawful means*, any person or persons from being employed by or obtaining employment from any such owner or possessor of property, on such terms as the parties concerned may agree upon, such persons so offending shall be fined not exceeding \$500, or confined in the county jail not exceeding six months." (Circular issued by

The first report of the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics¹ says that the law was enacted as a result "of a series of strikes in and about the city of LaSalle." The provisions of the bill and the date of its introduction are important in fixing the time of the northern Illinois strikes of this period. It was introduced on January 16, and approved by the governor on February 13. Its hurried enactment and a provision that it take effect immediately, indicate that it was designed for application in an existing situation. The strike disturbances which led to its passage were not, however, confined to the vicinity of LaSalle. Initiative for the bill came from Rock Island County, where the Coal Valley strike was then in progress. The senator from that county introduced it, and an accompanying petition from the grand jury and 1,021 citizens of the county would indicate a previous grand-jury inquiry into the Coal Valley strike.² The senator from LaSalle County, however, was later denounced by the miners and other workers as having, in conjunction with the senator from Rock Island County, "engineered the bill through the Legislature, and made many speeches in support thereof, and denunciatory and abusive of the miners as a class."³

The Act prohibited (1) any person, by "threat, intimidation, *or otherwise*,"⁴ from preventing any other person from working, on penalty of a fine up to \$100; (2) any two or more persons from combining "for the purpose of depriving the owner or possessor of

Illinois Manufacturers' Association, February, 1937.) The present law substitutes "any unlawful means" for "other means," which appeared in the law of 1863. The Illinois Manufacturers' Association, in an official circular in February, 1937, advised the application of Section 376 in case of sitdown strikes, prevalent during that period. The Chicago police acted under its provisions in evicting sitdown strikers from many plants.

¹ 1879-1881, p. 8. The report adds: "There have been a number of persons convicted under it, at different times since then, but the law—though remaining on the statute books of the state—is practically a dead letter (p. 8). . . . No Grand Jury has acted under it since 1865" (p. 230).

² Journal of the Senate, State of Illinois, 23d Legislature, 1st Session, 1863, pp. 109, 116.

³ Belleville Democrat, October 22, 1868. An appeal signed "A Workingman," urging defeat of the LaSalle County senator, at the time a candidate for attorney general of the state, characterized the Act as having been framed "in the interest of the capitalists of the Northern portion of our state, and leveled directly at the suppression of the miners' association, and indirectly at the suppression of every other workingmen's organization in the state."

⁴ Author's italics.

property of its lawful use and management," or of preventing, "by threats, suggestions of danger, *or other means*,"¹ any person from being employed by such persons, on penalty of a fine up to \$500, or confinement in the county jail up to six months; (3) any person from entering "the coal banks² of another" without permission, after notice that "such entry is prohibited," on penalty of a fine up to \$500 or confinement in the county jail up to six months; (4) any person from entering any coal bank "with intent to commit any injury thereto, or by means of threats, intimidations, or other riotous or unlawful proceedings, to cause or induce" any person to leave his employment, on penalty of a fine up to \$500 or confinement in the county jail up to six months.

There is reason to believe that the antagonism toward the Miners' Association engendered in the legislature in connection with the passage of the operators' bill had the additional effect of defeating the miners' bill, entitled "An Act for the protection of operatives in mines in the State of Illinois," of which previous mention has been made.³ An official resolution of Belleville Lodge No. 1 of the Miners' Association intimates as much. The resolution thanked their state senator for his sponsorship of the miners' bill and for securing its passage in the Senate, adding:

That we regret the want of attention exhibited by the members of the Legislature to the bill when left in the Committee of the House, whereby our bill was left in suspense while another bill which was tacked on to it in the Senate Committee restricting the liberties of the miners in an especial manner under pains and penalties, was permitted to pass without opposition.⁴

But, disregarding the weight of contributing factors, two signal victories resulted for the operators, the enactment of their own bill,

¹ Author's italics.

² Coal mines.

³ See p. 75. The possible effect of the sudden adjournment of the legislature on February 14, the day after the Senate had approved and the governor had signed the operators' bill, must also be taken into consideration. A Democratic majority in the House had adopted "peace resolutions," calling for the ending of the Civil War. To prevent a vote on those resolutions in the Senate, the Republican senators absented themselves from the chamber, which resulted in the lack of a quorum and forced the adjournment of the session.

⁴ Belleville Democrat, February 28, 1863.

and the defeat of the miners' bill. The operators' bill weighted the balance in their favor during strikes; the defeat of the miners' bill, after the failure of initial attempts to destroy its effectiveness by amendments in the Senate, must have been equally welcome to the operators. Enactment of the operators' bill probably had a bearing on the sudden calling off of their strike, and the return to work by the Belleville district strikers. It also had the effect of uniting the operators in their fight on the Association. A significant feature of the statewide meetings of the operators¹ which immediately followed their legislative victories was that the representation was too widespread to permit questions of competition to become involved. While such questions were the impelling motive that drew together operators in the same producing district, there was as yet little or no competition between the different producing districts in Illinois. This left the meetings with the sole business of fighting the Miners' Association, a basis too narrow to preserve a statewide unity among the operators after the miners were victorious in the various district strikes. The opposition was vigorous, however, while it lasted.

The widespread opposition the Miners' Association encountered early in 1863 was the measure of its strength and influence. The LaSalle convention, held in March, with representatives in attendance from the three main coal fields of the state, revealed the Association virile and unintimidated, and as determined as the operators. The convention further strengthened the Association by reshaping its organizational structure and adopting new policies made necessary by its expansion and the intensified opposition of the employers. It is difficult to account for such a sharp cleavage of social forces so early in our industrial development, except for the abnormal industrial conditions brought on by the Civil War.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS STRIKES

The early strikes in and near Morris and LaSalle in December, 1862, and January, 1863, apparently were settled on terms satisfactory to the miners, since the miners there continued their affiliation with the Association, which would hardly have been possible had

¹ Chicago, February 18; Springfield, March 18; St. Louis, March 19-20. See Chapter VII, The Operators.

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the strikes been lost. Early in April the LaSalle and Danville miners both struck against a reduction in wages.¹ An attempt to reduce the wages of strongly organized miners, at a time when living costs were soaring rapidly, does not appear logical, nor to have had any chance of success. The probable explanation in this instance is that the operators, encouraged by organization on their own side, were seeking to regain some of the advances won by the miners earlier in the year. The operators certainly knew they could not win without a fight, and it is quite probable that they counted on support from the other operators, as well as taking into account the possible effect that the LaSalle Black Laws might have on the activities of the strikers.

The operators were trying out their new weapons. This action represented a significant shift in the psychology and technique of employer-employee relations from what had previously existed. The old system, under which the miners submitted to the will of the employer, or at best made an unorganized and ineffectual protest, was passing. Organization of the miners, or the immediate threat of it, would continue to be an ever-present factor to be reckoned with. To meet this condition, organization among the operators was a primary essential. It had become just as essential to give the same careful consideration to matters affecting labor relations as to any other factor affecting their business. The need for statewide meetings in which to discuss labor relations, and to agree on a common policy, was altogether new to them, although the rapidly changing conditions under which the early entrepreneur did business probably made the adjustment easier. This change would have come eventually with the further growth of the industry, but it was hastened by war-time conditions.

Details of the outcome of the strikes at LaSalle and Danville in April, 1863, are also lacking, but the continued growth of the Association in northern Illinois is evidence that a settlement satisfactory to the miners was achieved. A delegation of miners from northern Illinois, including one from LaSalle, on April 20 visited Belleville Lodge No. 1 on a tour of the coal fields of the state, seeking finan-

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 11, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

cial aid for the Coal Valley strikers.¹ They asked for no contributions for either LaSalle or Danville, indicating that those strikes had been settled. In a semi-official communication which gave an account of the meeting, as well as a financial statement of the money collected by the delegation up to that time,² LaSalle Lodge No. 6 was referred to as the "banner lodge" of the Association. It is hardly likely that it would have been so designated, had the LaSalle strike been lost.

The affiliation of the Danville miners with the Association is indicated in another communication,³ which says that the proposed reduction in wages in Danville "according to the rules, cannot be submitted to on any account whatever." The reference was to the declaration of the LaSalle convention against any reduction in wages "under any circumstances whatever, in any of the mines that come under the jurisdiction of the Association."⁴ Had the Danville strike still been in effect, it is not likely that contributions for support of the strikers would have been overlooked.

The Coal Valley strike was long and hard-fought, but we have no definite information either as to its cause or its outcome. Association sources mention it as a "long struggle" in which "blacklegs" were introduced by the operators.⁵ It is certain that the strike began before the LaSalle Black Laws were presented to the legislature in the middle of January, 1863, and it was still in effect on April 20, when the delegation seeking contributions visited Belleville. The location of Coal Valley, a considerable distance northwest of Peoria, isolated it from that district, to which it had been attached by the LaSalle convention, as well as from the LaSalle district, which lies to the east. The collection of funds in support of their strike from the miners in all parts of the state shows that they were not allowed to suffer from this isolation, and likewise marks it as the last re-

¹ Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

² The contributions were itemized as follows: Peoria, \$75; Peru, \$30; LaSalle, \$63.40; Fond du Lac, \$34.25; Pekin, \$30; Belleville, \$80; total, \$312.65. The traveling expenses of the delegation up to that time had been \$35.10.

³ Belleville Democrat, April 11, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

⁴ Belleville Democrat, April 4, 1863, Proceedings of LaSalle Convention, March 14, 1863.

⁵ Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

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maintaining major struggle in this particular period in the history of the Association, during which the organization had succeeded in firmly establishing itself in all the coal fields of the state. The organization of the Association into districts in March, and the establishment of the Weekly Miner late in May, were evidence of the continued growth of the Association during this period, which would not have been possible, had the miners lost their strikes in northern Illinois.

CHAPTER X

EXTENSION OF THE MINERS' ASSOCIATION

ALTHOUGH the American Miners' Association remained confined to the St. Louis market area for some time after its formation, it could lay claim to being an interstate organization from the beginning, because of the inclusion of Missouri lodges. At the time of its organization little pretense appears to have been made that the Association was intended to cover other than the immediate area. But evidently some among its founders, from the outset, envisioned expansion into other coal fields. Within three weeks after the Association was formed, the Belleville Democrat, which was sympathetic and close to the leaders, praised the organization as "based upon good principles" and worthy of being "preserved and sustained by the *united miners* of the West."¹

There are good reasons to believe that the first extension outside the original area was the establishment of lodges in LaSalle County, in northern Illinois. The LaSalle County mines were opened in 1856, and in 1860 employed 282 miners in five mines, being second only to St. Clair County of the Illinois mining counties in number of men employed.² The low numbers, 5 and 6, assigned to two of the LaSalle County lodges indicate that they were organized early. The unusually large number of men per mine shows a high state of development of the industry in that field, and the consequent need for organization by the miners.³ It is also unlikely that men like Ben Hetherington, an Irishman who had worked in the mines in Wales before coming to LaSalle at the time the mines opened there,⁴ would have delayed long in organizing a lodge, once the formation of the Association became known. Hetherington was one of the

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 23, 1861.

² Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Manufactures.

³ A letter from the LaSalle miners' lodge, in the Workingman's Advocate, August 3, 1867, places the date of their organization as the summer of 1862.

⁴ United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908.

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delegation that canvassed the Illinois lodges in April, 1863, for contributions to aid the Coal Valley strikers. He was at that time an outstanding leader of the Association in northern Illinois, and had organized a new lodge at Kingston Mines, Peoria County, while on the trip.¹ He was later elected general treasurer of the Association.²

EXTENSION OF THE ASSOCIATION IN ILLINOIS

The strikes in northern Illinois late in 1862 and early in 1863 are the first direct evidence of activity by the Association in that part of the state. Definite information on the extent of the expansion of the Association in Illinois at this time is found in the proceedings of the LaSalle convention of the Association, held in March, 1863, which convened with 13 lodges as members. Six of these were in the Belleville field, three in St. Louis County, Missouri, three in the LaSalle field, and one in the Peoria field. The convention admitted to membership as new lodges, one from the LaSalle field and three from the Peoria field, and created another by dividing one of the Belleville lodges, bringing the total number of lodges to 18. The lodges were assigned to the three district organizations authorized by the convention, as follows:

District No. 1—Belleville Field and St. Louis County (St. Louis market area)

- Lodge No. 1 Belleville
2 O'Fallon (Ridge Prairie)³
3 Belleville
4 Caseyville³
7 Bethalto³
8 Alton³
11 Belleville⁴
1 St. Louis County
2 St. Louis County
3 St. Louis County

¹ Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

² United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 19, September 17, 1908.

³ The LaSalle convention reported Lodges Nos. 2, 4, 7 and 8 by number only. Location established from roster of Belleville district lodges that appeared in the Miner and Artisan, December 23, 1865.

⁴ New lodge created by dividing existing lodge.

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District No. 2—LaSalle or Northern Illinois Field

Lodge No. 5

6 LaSalle

9

15 Peru¹

District No. 3—Peoria Field

Lodge No. 10

12 Pekin¹

13 Minersville¹

14 Coal Valley¹

Lodges Nos. 5 and 9 were assigned to District No. 2, but information on their location is lacking. The early organization of No. 5 would indicate that it was located in Morris, while Danville was the probable location of No. 9. The only lodge in the Peoria field prior to the convention was No. 10. There is mention of a lodge in Peoria in the month following the convention,² indicating that city as the probable location of No. 10.

It is important to remember that the four lodges admitted by the convention were not necessarily newly organized bodies. Their admission by the convention merely recorded their affiliation with the Association, and acceptance of its laws and policies. That these lodges had functioned prior to the convention as independent associations, is indicated by the language of the resolution under which they were admitted: "That all lodges that have been organized, who think that they will be benefited by entering this Association, be admitted upon application to this General Board."³

The Peru miners' association, for example, had been incorporated by an act of the legislature in January, 1863, as the Peru Miners' Benevolent Association.⁴ Their application for admission to the Association two months later evidently represents a change of opinion as to the status they desired. It is quite possible that some local lodges still remained independent, and that the association lodges did not

¹ Lodges admitted to the Association by the convention. The Kingston Mines lodge in the Peoria district was not organized until the following month.

² Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

³ *Ibid.*, April 4, 1863, Proceedings of LaSalle Convention.

⁴ State of Illinois, Journal of the Senate, 23d Legislature, 1st Session, 1863, p. 289.

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represent the full strength of the organized miners in Illinois, even after the convention.

No lodges outside Illinois and Missouri were represented at the LaSalle convention. However, contemporary sources indicate a spread of the influence of the Association into a number of other states at this time, as well as efforts by the Association to encourage and widen it. Allowing for a natural enthusiasm, the following extract from a semi-official letter illustrates the spirit of the Association at the time, as well as revealing previous widespread contacts outside Illinois.

I once more crave a small portion of your valuable journal, for the insertion of this letter, which I intend for the edification of all the Miners of Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia,¹ Kentucky, and all other places, where this journal can be sent by mail; and also wherever the Miners' Union Association exists, which is one of the most powerful organizations of Working Men in the States of America. This Association is composed of not only talent, but also of capital, that will at some future period of the history of this, our glorious country of adoption, astonish those that look upon the Coal Miner as if he was one of the most degraded of human beings upon the face of the earth. But, . . . there is talent there, that will yet, I have not the least doubt, be heard in our Legislative halls, advocating the rights of the working man; instead of the nabobs of wealth advocating the oppression of the working man.²

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WEEKLY MINER

The Belleville Democrat, as noted, had served, from the inception of the Association, as a medium for the publication of official letters and other notices for the information of members. It was adequate for the purpose, so long as membership was confined to the circulation area of this weekly newspaper. But it became clear in the early months of 1863 that the Association had outgrown its publicity medium, and needed one of its own. The healthy state of the organization is reflected in the promptness with which this need was taken care of by the establishment of the Weekly Miner, with John Hinchcliffe as editor, the first issue of which appeared on May 27,

¹ West Virginia.

² Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner."

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1863.¹ The prospectus announcing the proposed publication gave its name as the Miners' Journal, but this was changed to the Weekly Miner before the first issue came out. The publication of the new paper, said the prospectus, was

. . . prompted by the desire to supply a long felt want by the operative miners of Illinois and other Mining Districts. . . . This paper will be the official organ of the "Miners' Association" . . . devoted to the interests of the working classes generally, and the hitherto neglected Coal Miners especially. It will be devoted to Family Literature, Agriculture, Social Science, General Knowledge, and the current news of the day. It will contain full reports of the state of the markets and commerce generally.²

Subscription was two dollars a year, in advance. McBride³ says that the paper "was recognized as the official organ," leaving doubt as to actual ownership. Although a complete record of the Springfield convention of the Association, held three weeks after the first issue of the Weekly Miner appeared, is not available, an account of a part of the proceedings written in later years states unequivocally that "it was . . . at this convention that the Weekly Union was bought by the union and John Hinchcliffe was made editor at a salary of \$1,000 a year."⁴

The Miner was an immediate success. The eighth issue, on July 15, appeared "in a new dress" with new type.⁵ Six months later it was increased in size, and had installed a power press with a steam engine, "the first printing by steam in Belleville."⁶ In January, 1864, Hinchcliffe announced the proposed publication of the Deutschen Kohlengraber, to be "devoted to the interests of the large number of German coal diggers at work in Illinois, Missouri, and other

¹ Belleville Advocate, May 29, 1863; Belleville Democrat, May 23, 1863.

² Belleville Democrat, May 9, 1863.

³ McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners, in The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888, p. 247.

⁴ United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 19, September 17, 1908, *Forty Years a Miner and Men I Have Known*, by An Old Miner. The use of the name "Weekly Union" is not explained, but the context leaves no doubt that the reference is to the Weekly Miner.

⁵ Belleville Democrat, July 18, 1863.

⁶ *Ibid.*, December 5, 1863, and January 9, 1864.

States."¹ No further mention of this proposed paper has been found, and it is not known whether it was ever published. We have a contemporary appraisal of the *Miner* at the time of its first anniversary, in celebration of which Hinchcliffe gave a dinner.

From its inception we sympathized with the ends toward which the *Miner* aimed—the elevation of the laboring masses, not only the Miners, but all workingmen. Upon labor and the intelligence of laboring men depends the stability of a republican form of government and the greatness of a democratic people. . . .

In a few numbers (and but a few) of the first volume it descended into partisan politics, which we trust it will hereafter ignore.²

This was high praise, indeed, to appear in the leading Republican Party organ of the county, of the work of an editor who was an active Democrat and a member of the Executive Committee of the County Democratic Club,³ in those days of violently partisan politics. But the editor of the *Miner* did not always get compliments from his contemporaries. The next issue of the *Advocate* criticized him severely for publication of a "lengthy article censorious of the military officers of this Government, because of their full-filling their sworn duty in some special cases in certain parts of this Country."⁴ Although the article in question is not further identified, it may have been an attack on an order issued some time previously by Major-General William S. Rosecrans, in St. Louis, which made it a military offense for workers to counsel and aid each other in wage disputes with employers. The order applied only to St. Louis, but there was widespread criticism of it by organized workers.

Hinchcliffe, writing some years later, said: "The paper rose rapidly in favor, and received a liberal advertising patronage." In circulation it "exceeded any other paper ever published in Southern Illinois before or since."⁵ An extended trip made by Hinchcliffe in the spring of 1864 "through the coal regions of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and other states on business connected with the

¹ Belleville Democrat, January 16, 1864.

² Belleville Advocate, June 3, 1864.

³ Belleville Democrat, March 19, 1864.

⁴ Belleville Advocate, June 10, 1864.

⁵ Hinchcliffe, John (editor), *Historical Review of Belleville, Illinois, from the Earliest Times to the Present*. Belleville, Illinois, 1870, p. 52.

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Miner"¹ makes it apparent that the circulation was widespread. The miners' opinion of "the paper was reflected in the circulation. McBride says that Hinchcliffe's influence was so great that a member could not get his clearance card if he was behind in his subscription to the Miner.²

EXTENSION OF THE ASSOCIATION INTO OTHER STATES

The remarkable success of the Weekly Miner must be attributed to the additional circulation which came with the establishment of the Association in mining districts outside Illinois. The Weekly Miner in turn helped to consolidate the organization in the new districts, and extend it to others. This expansion of the Association, stimulated by the continued upward swing in prices, immediately followed the miners' victories in Illinois early in 1863, and spread quickly, once it began. By March, 1863, organization had been established in the Massillon district in Ohio, and in the Blossburg district in Tioga County, Pennsylvania.³

Although neither Evans nor Roy gives the exact date of establishment of organization in the Mahoning Valley and the Hocking Valley districts of Ohio, Evans leaves the impression that this occurred about the same time as in the Massillon district. Without fixing the date of organization in any of the Ohio districts, Roy says that all of them, "more especially the Mahoning Valley, the Tuscarawas Valley [Massillon district] and the Hocking Valley, were well organized in 1865, under the American Miners' Association."⁴

The only definite reference to Maryland is in a letter by Roy, in which he says that miners in the Cumberland field had no union

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 9, 1864.

² McBride, John, *The Coal Miners*, p. 247.

³ John McBride in *The Coal Miners*, p. 248, says that the Massillon district was organized in March, 1863. Chris Evans in *History of the United Mine Workers of America*, p. 12, says that both the Massillon district and the Blossburg district were organized in March, 1863. Andrew Roy in *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus, [1903], p. 103, says that the Blossburg district was organized in March, 1863. In a circular letter in December, 1864, to the miners employed by the Fall Brook Coal Company in the Blossburg field, the president of the company spoke of the union having been in existence there for three years. (For text of letter see Appendix.)

⁴ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 72.

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until they were organized under the American Miners' Association, but again leaves the date in doubt.¹ The disruption of the industry in the Cumberland field in 1861 and 1862, due to military operations, is reflected in a greatly reduced output during those years, and it is not likely that the miners there were able to organize until late in 1863, or early in 1864, after conditions in the industry had improved. The Maryland miners may be expected to have been organized in March, 1864, when they engaged in a strike which was "suppressed by military interference" and "twenty-five of the disaffected men were sent to Fort Delaware."²

The miners in the territory immediately adjacent to Pittsburgh, as well as those in the mines farther up the Monongahela River, began to organize during the latter part of 1863. Their union was well established in January, 1864, when the miners forced an increase in the mining rate from four to five cents a bushel,³ although two months previously a number of Monongahela River miners had been prosecuted and heavily fined for "combining to intimidate certain miners who refused to join the strike, and prevent them from continuing to work."⁴ The Pittsburgh Chronicle, in reporting this incident, incorrectly prophesied that the result would be "the absence of combinations" among the miners. A resolution adopted in a mass meeting of miners held near Pittsburgh during a strike in August, 1864, directly confirms the miners' previous affiliation with the American Miners' Association.⁵

The growth of the Association is reflected also in its conventions, both in the change made in their frequency, and in their geographical location. Reference has already been made to the less frequent conventions, beginning with the six months' interval between the Springfield convention in June, 1863, and the Peoria convention the following December, with annual meetings thereafter. A shifting of the geographical center of the Association, with a strong growth in the states to the east of Illinois, is indicated by the holding of the

¹ United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908.

² Fincher's Trades' Review, March 26, 1864.

³ Pittsburgh Chronicle, February 11, 1864.

⁴ *Ibid.*, November 23, 1863.

⁵ *Ibid.*, September 1, 1864.

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1864 convention in Cincinnati, and the 1865 and 1866 conventions in Cleveland.¹

At the time of the Springfield convention, in June, 1863, Thomas Lloyd and Daniel Weaver were no longer officers of the Association. Sometime in 1862 Weaver joined a partnership enterprise to open a mine in Freeburg, southeast of Belleville.² He apparently withdrew from active participation in the affairs of the Association at that time. The time of Lloyd's retirement from the presidency is more uncertain. Following Lloyd, the next president we hear of is Ben Barstow, who was president at the time of the Springfield convention, but of whom nothing further is known. Whether Barstow was elected at the Springfield convention or at some previous convention, is not clear. Neither is it known whether he was Lloyd's immediate successor.

The Peoria convention, held in December, 1863, apparently opened without a president. John Hinchcliffe, editor of the *Weekly Miner*, was elected president pro tem, to serve until the convention elected officers, being ineligible to hold office under the constitution, which provided that none but a miner could hold the position of president.³ This convention elected James W. Thorley president, Frank Bussey vice-president, and Edwin Wakefield secretary,⁴ and increased Hinchcliffe's salary as editor to \$1,500 a year.

¹ *United Mine Workers' Journal*, vol. 19, no. 19, September 17, 1908. The material used in relation to the Springfield convention, the Peoria convention, the Cincinnati convention, and the Cleveland convention of 1866 is from this source, appearing in Chapter 23 of a series entitled *Forty Years a Miner and Men I Have Known*, by An Old Miner. *Fincher's Trades' Review*, June 18, 1864, gives the date of the Cincinnati convention as September 7, 1864. The *Boston Voice*, July 17, 1865, gives the date of the Cleveland convention of 1865 as August 21. There remains, however, considerable doubt that a convention of the general Association was held in 1866, in Cleveland or elsewhere. See footnote no. 4, p. 172. In December, 1865, the Illinois Branch of the Association, initiated a move for a general convention to be held in April, 1866, at Massillon, Ohio, but there is no evidence that the convention was ever held. (*Miner and Artisan*, December 23, 1865.)

² *Belleville Democrat*, December 27, 1862, and January 10, 1863.

³ This incident is probably the basis for the assertion by both Roy and Evans that Hinchcliffe was the second president of the Association, succeeding Lloyd. McBride also says that Hinchcliffe later became president.

⁴ Thorley came from Caseyville, St. Clair County. Nothing is known of his previous activities in the Association. He was an active leader in the attempt to revive the Association in the Belleville field in 1868. Wakefield came from Grundy County, in the LaSalle field in northern Illinois. He was corresponding secretary of the

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Continued growth of the Association is seen in the election of Thorley as "Agent" by the Cincinnati convention in September, 1864. This suggests a position in which the incumbent spent his full time administering the affairs of the organization, leaving the president as the nominal head of the Association, his main duty being to preside at the annual meetings. With the exception of the editor of the *Weekly Miner*, Thorley was probably the first full-time officer of the Association.

It is not known whether delegates from districts outside Illinois attended the Peoria convention. Because of the almost complete absence of official records of the Association, it is impossible to determine the exact date of affiliation with the Association of the districts outside Illinois. In most instances it is probable that affiliation took place a period of months after the new district became organized. The miners in these new districts organized themselves; the realization of the desirability and the need for affiliation with organized miners in other districts through the Association came some time later.

To visualize expansion of the Association on the basis of the present-day union technique of sending paid organizers into unorganized districts, would be a misconception. This stage had not been reached by the labor movement of the sixties. But the Association influenced organization in other ways. By example, it showed what could be done to improve the condition of the miners through organization. Miners moving from an organized district to work in an unorganized district carried with them the message of organization. This would be particularly true of miners who had been black-listed for union activity.

It would also be a misconception to consider the newly organized district unions outside Illinois as rivals of the Association, in the interim before such unions officially became part of it. Beginning in May, 1863, the *Weekly Miner* circulated throughout these districts, taking over the task of keeping contact between them and the Association miners, which had previously been done by correspondence

Illinois branch of the Association in December, 1865. Of Bussey, nothing more is known.

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and an occasional copy of a Belleville paper carrying news of Association activities. The *Weekly Miner* was doubtless a major influence in bringing the new district unions into the Association, as well as encouraging further organization. Since the Massillon district in Ohio and the Blossburg district in Pennsylvania were organized early, it is probable that they joined the Association sometime late in 1863. In January, 1864, the *Weekly Miner* reported an application for admission to the Association of a newly formed district in Ohio, and another application from the "miners of Pennsylvania."¹ The Pennsylvania miners referred to were probably those in the Pittsburgh and Monongahela River districts, since their union was well established by that time. There appears little doubt that the three Ohio districts, as well as the above-named Pennsylvania districts, were all affiliated with the Association by the early part of 1864, and that all were represented in the Cincinnati convention in September of that year.

In most instances establishment of the Association in districts outside Illinois, with the accompanying and subsequent adjustments in wage rates to meet rising living costs, was effected without serious clashes between miners and mine owners. We hear of no such strikes during the Civil War period in the Ohio districts. Roy says that Ohio miners "kept wages up by a skillful use of the power which intelligent organization confers on workingmen," adding that the class of men employed in the Ohio mines made it a "dangerous experiment on the part of their employers to attempt a reduction of wages without good and sufficient reasons."² In the Blossburg district of Pennsylvania the union was established without a strike, and for two years closed-shop conditions prevailed in the mines of that district, with amicable relations existing between the miners and mine owners. Union membership was compulsory. The union regulated the number of workers employed by refusing membership to new men, when the hiring of additional workers would tend to overcrowd the mines, with a consequent reduction in individual earnings. Union committees settled grievances with company representatives,

¹ Reprinted from the *Weekly Miner* by Fincher's *Trades' Review*, February 6, 1864.

² Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 72.

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and recurrent demands by the miners for wage increases to meet increasing living costs were negotiated in like manner.¹

THE ASSOCIATION IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

During the Civil War years the western Pennsylvania mining district, embracing the mines in the immediate vicinity of Pittsburgh and south along the Monongahela River and its tributary, the Youghiogheny River, was the largest producer of bituminous coal in the country. In addition to supplying the fuel needs of Pittsburgh and its iron, steel, copper, glass, and textile manufacturing establishments, a large tonnage was shipped down the Ohio River on barges to Cincinnati, Louisville, and other river cities.² Owing largely to the conflicting interests of different groups of mine owners in western Pennsylvania, growing out of the two different markets served—Pittsburgh and the river trade—establishment of the union in this district was accompanied by frequent but not always widespread strikes, a state of belligerency which continued throughout the year 1864.

The "wagon" mines near Pittsburgh supplied most of the household coal for the city, and the manufacturing establishments received most of their supply from the "railroad" mines somewhat farther from the city. The operators of these two groups of mines, supplying a war market, usually granted wage increases asked by the miners without a strike, and raised the price of coal sufficiently not only to cover the increased wages, but a cent or two more per bushel to yield additional profits. The manufacturers, also selling in a war market, added the additional cost to the price of their product,³ and were, as a rule, not interested in the appeals of a minority of operators, organized in the Pittsburgh Coal Exchange, to join in a united fight against the miners' demands. The operators of the river mines,

¹ Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), *The History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania*. W. W. Munsell and Company, New York, 1883, p. 52.

² Shipments on the Monongahela River: 1860, 1,518,000 tons; 1861, 835,000 tons; 1862, 743,000 tons; 1863, 1,135,000 tons; 1864, 1,403,000 tons; 1865, 1,581,000 tons. (Macfarlane, James, *The Coal Regions of America*. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873, p. 668.)

³ *Pittsburgh Gazette*, April 30, 1864, minutes of special meeting of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange, April 30, 1864.

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selling in a highly competitive market down the river, mainly on long-term contracts, were slower to grant wage increases, and late in 1864 we find a condition in the district where the men in the wagon and railroad mines were being paid seven cents a bushel, while at the same time many of the river mines paid five and six cents. This condition resulted in many strikes during the year 1864, the miners trying to make the rate uniform, with much complaint in Pittsburgh at the high price of coal.

In January, 1864, with their organization well established, the miners in the wagon and railroad mines forced their rate to five cents, with some of the river mines continuing to pay four cents. Immediately after this rate was established, the Coal Exchange, in a meeting on February 9, took action in the effort to reduce the rate to four cents.¹ After hearing reports that none of the mining districts in other states was paying as much as five cents,² the Exchange adopted a resolution that "a committee of six be appointed to meet a similar committee of representatives of the coal diggers, and freely explain the necessity of reducing the price of mining to four cents per bushel." Another committee was appointed, to "wait on the owners of mines, and get them to agree in writing not to pay over four cents per bushel from the 1st day of March, 1864, and to join the Pittsburgh Coal Exchange."

A committee was also appointed to confer with the iron manufacturers in the effort to get their co-operation to bring about the proposed reduction. A miner³ who had been invited to attend the meeting and give his views, contended "that if the price of coal fell in the market down the river, in Cincinnati and Louisville, the price of mining coal would fall here. If it raised [*sic*] in price there, the price of digging would raise." The miner doubtless had in mind past wage reductions that had been justified by the operators by a fall in price on the lower river; he evidently expected it to work both ways. He denied that miners were earning ten and twelve dollars a day, as claimed by some operators in the meeting, and maintained

¹ *Ibid.*, February 11, 1864, minutes of meeting of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

² Illinois was reported as paying only four cents a bushel, which was erroneous. It is possible that this information was given out for its effect.

³ The minutes of the Coal Exchange do not give the miner's name, nor indicate whether he was a member or an officer of the miners' union.

that the miners' demand for five cents a bushel was warranted by the selling price of coal.

Reports of these committees at the next meeting of the Coal Exchange, on February 16,¹ were not encouraging to the operators who wished to reduce the mining rate. In the light of later developments, the reply of the iron manufacturers that they considered the five-cent rate "entirely too high," and that they would support the Coal Exchange "so far as possible," did not mean that they intended to do anything about the matter. The committee appointed to sign up the mine owners to agree not to pay over four cents was able only to report progress, and was continued. The report of the committee which conferred with the miners was even more discouraging. As summarized in the minutes of the meeting,

. . . the interview amounted to nothing. The delegation with whom the Committee consulted, consisted mainly of Saw Mill Run men, and they were among the most conservative, yet they all expressed a determination to adhere to the five cents, and thought that the market could afford to pay it. These men had evidently been instructed, by their lodges, to adhere to the five cents. No practical good whatever had been accomplished, and no arrangement was made for further consultation.

The Exchange was evidently willing to let the matter drop after this meeting. The members apparently reconciled themselves to acceptance of the five-cent rate, since nothing appears in the minutes of the meeting on March 1 on the question of wages.² But events moved faster than the Exchange. A strike in a number of mines, for six cents a bushel, resulted in a special meeting of the Exchange on April 30,³ this time to consider "the propriety of paying not more than five cents per bushel for digging coal." In an indignant resolution the Exchange declared that

. . . the *real cause*⁴ of the exorbitant prices of coal and of coal digging is exclusively owing to the imperative demands of the iron men and

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, February 17, 1864, minutes of meeting of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

² *Ibid.*, March 2, 1864, minutes of meeting of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

³ *Ibid.*, April 30, 1864, minutes of meeting of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

⁴ Original emphasis.

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other manufacturers, who refuse to have their works cease operations, and who add all advances to their manufactories.

The resolution denounced "the extortionate demands of the coal diggers," and "unanimously resolved to pay not over five cents per bushel."

That we come to this conclusion regardless of the pits or coal banks at Saw Mill Run, or any parties who do not belong to this Association, who will doubtless soon see the propriety of refusing to pay the outrageous demands of the coal diggers.

That we earnestly recommend all the members of the Association to refuse to load boats or barges at any bank that pays six cents per bushel after any contracts made based on five cents per bushel have expired.

Resentment of the Exchange members toward the iron manufacturers, evident in the meeting, was not allowed to smolder. An official committee was appointed, "to memorialize Congress not to grant any further tariffs on iron, as the present high prices of iron enable the manufacturers to oppress the coal dealers."

At its next regular meeting, on May 3, the Exchange recommended a general lockout of the miners until they returned to work at the five-cent rate,¹ but there is no indication that the lockout was ever put into effect. The summer months were apparently free from strikes, with the possible exception of brief strikes at individual mines, and the price of mining remained at five and six cents.²

With the opening of the fall season in 1864, the miners again sprang a surprise on the operators, with a demand for an increase in the mining rate to seven cents a bushel.³ Some mines struck about the middle of August, but the strike became generally effective on August 22. The Coal Exchange, in a special meeting on August 24,⁴ pledged its members to resist the demand and "not pay more than five cents per bushel," and "to close all pits until the diggers agree to take the price." Although the Exchange had received no help

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, May 4, 1864, minutes of meeting of Pittsburgh Coal Exchange.

² Although the wages of the men in the river mines lagged behind those of the men in the wagon and railroad mines, the river men usually got the higher rate some time later.

³ Pittsburgh Chronicle, August 18, 1864.

⁴ *Ibid.*, August 25, 1864; also Pittsburgh Gazette, August 25, 1864.

from the iron manufacturers the previous spring, it again turned to them in this crisis by appointing a committee to "confer with the iron and glass manufacturers, and other large consumers of coal."

This time the manufacturers responded to the appeal by publishing a call addressed to the "Iron, Glass, Steel, Copper, Cotton, and other manufacturers, as well as all consumers of coal,"¹ which resulted in a meeting of manufacturers on August 29. A resolution was adopted, recommending that the miners' demands

. . . be not acceded to, and that all consumers of coal, whether as manufacturers who own part or the whole of any coal works, or who do not, be requested to join and cooperate with the coal dealers in resisting the enormous demand now made for mining,

That we as manufacturers and coal dealers, after an interchange of views on the subject of the late exorbitant demand of the miners, think the time has arrived when we should endeavor to check this combination on the part of the diggers to ruin our business and the interests of the city generally,

That this meeting regards the recent demand for increased compensation by the miners to be alike unwarranted by the increased price of provisions, and destructive of the most important interests of the community, and above all oppressive to the less prosperous classes of society, by exorbitantly raising the price of coal,

That we bind ourselves to use all laudable efforts to make the price of coal below *ten cents*² per bushel, and recommend that our manufactories, and large consumers of the article, meet at an early day and consider the propriety of stopping their works until the object is accomplished.³

The Coal Exchange met the next day and took action further to organize the community against the miners' demands. The Exchange appointed committees

. . . to wait on the Mayors of the two cities⁴ and request them to call a meeting of the citizens to get their endorsement of the measures now being taken to resist the extortionate demands of the diggers . . . to wait on the different newspapers and secure their cooperation to the same end . . . [and to] make a record of all the coal banks and works, with

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, August 29, 1864.

² Original emphasis; refers to selling price.

³ Pittsburgh Chronicle, August 30, 1864.

⁴ Pittsburgh and Allegheny. The latter was at that time a separate municipality.

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the view of ascertaining which are working and which are not, and to report at the next meeting.¹

But again resolutions and the appointment of committees failed to bring about the results desired by the Coal Exchange. Although exasperated by the high prices of coal, the citizens of Pittsburgh, generally, blamed the mine owners as much, if not more, than they did the miners for this condition. The meetings of citizens to be called by the mayors failed to take place. On the contrary, the mayor of Allegheny acted as chairman of a strikers' meeting held on the Common in that city, at which, after thanking the miners for the honor conferred on him, he "alluded to the feeling in the community consequent upon the extraordinary high price of coal, and hoped that the gentlemen present, representing the miners of the county, would be able to show that they were not to blame for this state of affairs."²

The Pittsburgh Gazette, while contending that the miner's work, "however laborious, requires no education, and but little skill or experience," and that seven cents a bushel for mining would "place their compensation on an equality with that of the members of Congress—eight dollars a day," was equally severe with the mine owners. Under the five-cent rate, said the Gazette:

. . . the price had been gradually increased upon consumers, until it became out of all proportion to the price paid for digging. The miners, aware of the enormous profits being realized by the pit owners, became dissatisfied, and began to agitate the subject of another strike. They argued that they might as well share in these profits as not, and hence the strike was inaugurated. While this fact would not justify the diggers in their exorbitant demands, it would at the same time, divide the responsibility of the present strike. . . . Even now, while no more than five cents is being paid in most of the pits for digging, coal retails at nineteen cents! Three or four cents per bushel used to be considered a fair margin of profit, but it seems that twelve or fifteen cents are pocketed now with the utmost complacency. It is no wonder, then, that the diggers wish to share in this "grab game."³

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, August 30, 1864.

² Pittsburgh Gazette, September 9, 1864.

³ *Ibid.*, September 2, 1864.

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The miners vigorously denied responsibility for the high price of coal. They pointed out that prices had increased to 12 cents a bushel before the miners had gained the five-cent rate, and had risen to 15 cents immediately after the five-cent rate was put into effect in January, 1864. For some months before the strike in August, 1864, coal sold for 15 and 16 cents a bushel. The miners asserted that with perfect justice they might demand "7 out of 15 and 16; 6 out of 13 and 14; and 5 out of 12 cents."¹

A miners' spokesman declared in a strike meeting on September 8 that "when coal was dug for two cents [per bushel], the market price was four and four and a half cents. And it was notoriously true that for every cent added to the diggers, the bosses got two."²

In addition, the speaker complained of the weighing and measuring by which the miners in most mines lost from three to five bushels on each "wagon."

Although the Pittsburgh Chronicle, when the strike began, blamed both miners and mine owners for high prices,³ it supported the program of the Coal Exchange wholeheartedly. In the same issue in which it reported the resolutions of manufacturers and Exchange, the Chronicle declared: "The movement to checkmate the diggers has now been fairly started, and it will be the fault of the people if they are not soon brought to terms. . . . It is due every coal consumer that he resists it to the last."⁴

Two days later the Chronicle returned to the attack. It conceded that the miners had a powerful and "thoroughly organized association," but declared that because of their "improvidence . . . they are no better off with five cents [per bushel] than with three. They work less and waste more." It was only their leaders who demanded this increase in wages. "The rest have been persuaded into the strike because it has been urged that all they have to do is to ask the advance and it will be given them." The miners' union was termed a "league of foreigners—very many of them unnaturalized and not intending to live in this country permanently"—who wanted "from

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, September 2, 1864, letter by a miner.

² Pittsburgh Gazette, September 9, 1864.

³ Pittsburgh Chronicle, August 18, 1864.

⁴ *Ibid.*, August 30, 1864.

thirty to fifty dollars a week for services which any laboring man with a brief experience can render."¹

Late in September the Chronicle still continued its fight on the miners' demands, and professed to believe that if the miners could be induced, or forced, to work for five cents a bushel, the price of coal would drop automatically to 11 or 12 cents "instead of the eighteen or twenty which consumers have of late had to pay."² On one occasion, however, the Chronicle must have had a momentary doubt. With coal selling at 17 to 20 cents a bushel, it said: "Someone must be making a nice thing out of it."³

The Pittsburgh manufacturers evidently forgot the promises they had made in their resolution adopted at the solicitation of the Coal Exchange. Manufacturers continued to buy coal wherever they could get it, regardless of the price paid for mining. Mines in the vicinity of the city, and railroad mines, the latter supplying the bulk of Pittsburgh's industrial coal, were paying the seven-cent rate demanded by the miners, before the middle of September.⁴

Even during the war years work in the mines in western Pennsylvania remained highly seasonal, because of the natural division of the market between the different groups of mines. A miner writing in the Chronicle early in 1864 complained that "mining on the Monongahela is one of the most uncertain occupations that men engage in," and cited four mines in his immediate locality, three of which had operated forty days each, and the other seventy days, in the eight-month period ending February, 1864.⁵ One of the speakers at a strikers' meeting in the fall of 1864 declared that he had never been able to average more than half-time work during the twelve years he had been in the district.⁶

River conditions, as well as the amount of coal stocked in the cities down the river, determined the operating time of the river mines. The river operators, moreover, were divided into two groups: the more substantial operators, who shipped coal in barges accompanied

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, September 1, 1864.

² *Ibid.*, September 24, 1864.

³ *Ibid.*, September 16, 1864.

⁴ Pittsburgh Gazette, September 15, 1864.

⁵ Pittsburgh Chronicle, February 25, 1864.

⁶ Pittsburgh Gazette, September 9, 1864.

by tow boats, and sold chiefly on a contract basis; and a second group, who floated their coal down the river in "broadhorn" barges, and who, because they sold only for immediate delivery, operated only when the market was brisk. The city of Pittsburgh, except for industrial coal, was mainly a fall and winter market; this resulted in a slowing down of operations in the wagon and railroad mines during the spring and summer. It was this fall demand, and the needs of the Pittsburgh manufacturers, that brought a quick settlement of the strike in the wagon and railroad mines. However, few of the river mines opened, because of an abundance of coal in the cities down the river, and a consequent drop in prices. Cincinnati was reported to have enough coal to last until the following May, even though no more was received during the fall.¹ This stopped the "broadhorn" shippers altogether. Of the other river mines, only those with urgent contract commitments resumed work, even though it meant an operating loss to pay the seven-cent rate. As a result, there was little work in the mines on the river during the fall of 1864.

Although miners in this district took advantage of the division in the ranks of the operators, and used guerilla tactics in forcing wage increases, the need for such tactics sprang from lack of unity among the operators, rather than from lack of organization among the miners. The miners' union was desirous of establishing a uniform rate for mining throughout the district, but the lack of organization among the operators made this impossible. Even the scanty and biased reports in the Pittsburgh newspapers reveal the union as having had a shrewd and intelligent leadership, and a well-disciplined rank and file. With mining rates varying between different groups of mines in the district, only a union with a rigidly self-disciplined and understanding membership, with the patience to wait for the opportunity to remedy these inequalities, could have survived.

A strike in the first pool² on the Monongahela River, in April, 1864, for an increase in the mining rate from five to six cents, is an instance of the strategy employed, and the high state of co-operation

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, September 16, 1864.

² In slack-water navigation the stretch of water behind each dam is called a pool. At the time under study there were four pools on the Monongahela River, and one on the Youghiogheny River. The use of the term "pool" is confined to rivers in the mining regions of western Pennsylvania, and includes the adjacent land area.

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among the miners. During this strike, the nearby Saw Mill Run miners, who already had a six-cent rate, and miners in the second pool, who had a five-cent rate, remained at work and assisted the strikers with regular financial contributions.¹ The Saw Mill Run miners had a direct interest in the strike; if the strikers won their demand, the Saw Mill Run miners would be more secure in their rate. The second-pool men also had a stake in the strike, but from a different angle. If the first-pool miners won their strike, the higher rate could more easily be won by the second-pool miners. Although in this instance the strike was given up after a few weeks, and strikers returned to work at the old rate, it was a strategic retreat, and their organization remained intact. This strategy included short, quick strikes, and, if unsuccessful, a return to work to await a more favorable opportunity. In view of the lack of unity among operators, this kind of strategy suited the needs of the miners very well.

Despite their unfriendly tone, Pittsburgh newspapers, during 1864, revealed, on numerous occasions, the high state of organization among the miners. Although the miners in a delegate meeting on August 25, three days after the strike was inaugurated, "resolved to dig no more [coal] under seven cents per bushel, and to stop work until they get that price,"² in another meeting, held on September 8, they "offered to work for five cents if the 'bosses' would sell their coal for ten cents a bushel."³ This offer by the miners had the effect of putting more heavily on the mine owners the responsibility for the continued high price of coal. There is reason to believe, however, that the offer was made in good faith, although mainly for other reasons. There were likely some far-seeing miners who realized that war-time conditions gave the miners only a temporary advantage which would end with the war, and were willing to trade higher rates in a part of the mines for a uniform rate in all the mines in the district, even if such a uniform rate meant a reduction at some of the mines. That the miners' union viewed the question of wage rates from a competitive basis, not only intra-district, but inter-

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, May 5, 1864.

² *Ibid.*, August 26, 1864.

³ *Ibid.*, September 8, 1864.

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district, is shown by a resolution adopted by a delegate meeting of miners, held in Braddock's Fields, on August 29:

That we recommend to the National Convention, to be held at Cincinnati,¹ the consideration of some practical plan for making more uniform, throughout the various mining States, the prices paid for digging coal, always of course to be ruled by the height of the vein and the quantity of the coal to be cut or mined.²

A cry in the wilderness when it was first voiced by the organized miners of western Pennsylvania in 1864, the principle laid down in this resolution was advocated by the miners for weary decades before the first timid responses came from the coal operators, and more decades were to pass before it was finally made the keystone of the arch of a system of industrial relations between miners and operators of the United States, under which wage-scale negotiations are still carried on. That the proposal should have had its origin in the Monongahela Valley, at that time the largest and most highly developed bituminous coal field in the country, seems altogether fitting.

In addition, this same meeting adopted a resolution to cover the political activities of the union and its members in the pending presidential election, in which Abraham Lincoln was elected for a second term. The resolution provided:

That during the coming campaign, we recognize as friends only those who do recognize our rights, no matter of what political faith or opinion they may be, and that we will support those with our votes that support us.

This action not only effectively refuted the charge that the miners' union was a "league of foreigners," but proposed a program of political action by labor which the labor movement has not been disposed to change up to the present day. These two pronouncements, alone, mark the miners' union of that period in western Pennsylvania as an organization of considerable maturity in thought and action, although still young in years.

The power of the miners' union was generally recognized during the strike in the fall of 1864. This is strongly reflected in a letter

¹ National Convention of the American Miners' Association which convened at Cincinnati on September 7, 1864.

² Pittsburgh Chronicle, September 1, 1864.

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to the Pittsburgh Chronicle, the writer of which was apparently familiar with the industry, although his chief concern was cheaper coal. The predicament of the consumer did not arise, the letter said, as a result of collusion between miners and their employers, as some had charged,

. . . but because of the extent and perfection of the combination among the diggers themselves. When the diggers at each separate works, or in each neighborhood regulated their own affairs and fixed their own prices, such issues were of frequent occurrence, because our coal proprietors could not afford to pay higher wages than their neighbors, where both depended on the same market; but now affairs are managed differently; the extent and power of the Diggers' Union enables them to fix uniform prices over the whole section of country depending on the same market.

The letter predicted that the operators would resist the miners' demand for a seven-cent rate only long enough to make necessary repairs to their plants, and to prepare the community for the advanced price. In discussing a remedy for the consumer, its writer rejected the proposal to prosecute the miners for "conspiracy and unlawful combination," but only because "public opinion is not yet sufficiently aroused against this combination to secure its suppression." He preferred to wait until coal prices were much higher, as

. . . legislation could then be had for cheap and easy methods of prosecution. . . . Juries could be got to convict and courts to inflict punishment. As public opinion heretofore existed, and the facilities we afford for humbugging courts and juries, no one except some crazy enthusiast would institute a prosecution for conspiracy. Such as had the temerity to do so, mostly had the costs to pay, and where the digger did happen to be convicted his light fine was at once discharged by the *Union*. . . .

The public must feel the smart before it will apply the remedy. The offenders will then be taught that true liberty in regard to labor consists in freedom to each individual to work or not to work for such wages as he sees fit, but forbids combinations with others to obtain extortionate rates, or to dictate for whom, and at what prices others shall be employed.¹

Workers in the United States were at this time still in the early stages of defining their rights, and it is evident that only their or-

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, August 30, 1864, letter signed "Black Diamond."

ganized strength saved the miners from prosecution for unlawful conspiracy in this instance.

Late in November, 1864, the men in the railroad mines struck against a proposed reduction in their mining rate from seven to five cents a bushel, and as a result six or eight of the largest manufacturing plants in Pittsburgh were forced to close for want of fuel.¹ Within a week coal was selling in Pittsburgh at 25 to 27 cents a bushel, and the City Common Council, in an effort to reduce the price, offered to remit all wharfage fees to those who would bring in coal by river and sell it for ten cents a bushel.² The Coal Exchange again adopted a resolution not to pay more than five cents for mining;³ but if we are to judge from the tone of letters from citizens appearing in Pittsburgh newspapers at the time,⁴ it would appear that the Exchange was badly discredited with the public as a source of any action to reduce the price of coal to the consumer. From the lack of further mention of this strike in the Pittsburgh newspapers, it would be a fair assumption that it was soon settled, but on what terms is not known.

There is, however, a reference in a letter by a miner, published in the Pittsburgh Chronicle some time later,⁵ which suggests that the miners accepted some reduction in the mining rate about the first of the year 1865. The writer of the letter made the point that, although "the miners have been reduced for digging coal, it still appears high in the Pittsburgh market—too high for the poor to buy." He asserted that miners of the district would be glad to dig coal without pay one day each month during the winter season, if arrangements would be made to deliver it free to the needy of Pittsburgh. Whether this offer was accepted, is not known, but it evidently was not a new suggestion. It had been made by miners during previous winters, but the mine owners had, in some instances, refused to co-operate.

A letter from another miner, which appeared in the Pittsburgh

¹ *Ibid.*, November 22, 1864.

² *Ibid.*, November 29, 1864.

³ Pittsburgh Gazette, November 23, 1864.

⁴ *Ibid.*, November 22 and 23, 1864.

⁵ January 10, 1865. The miner estimated that one day's work, based on 60 to 70 bushels per miner, would amount to about 4,000 tons.

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Chronicle¹ during the strike in the fall of 1864, declared that the miners were always willing to donate a day's work for this purpose, if the "bosses would also deliver it free of charge. This the bosses won't always do, at least refused . . . last winter." It is probable that the miners were more liberal in this respect than the mine owners, and it may be said, without impugning the miners' motives, that the miners' offer created a bond of sympathy between a large section of the people in Pittsburgh and Allegheny, and the miners isolated in the coal camps huddled around the mines along the Monongahela River and its tributaries. This bond helped miners in their conflicts with the mine owners.

Miners were equally liberal in their donations for war relief. During the spring of 1864, in response to a communication from the Sanitary Commission Fair in Pittsburgh,² Lodge No. 1 of the Miners' union pledged its members "to do all in our power to aid so benevolent and humane an object." A resolution was adopted, calling a delegate meeting of miners to be held on Saturday morning, April 2, for the purpose of appointing a committee to act with the executive committee of the Sanitary Commission Fair. It called for delegates from "all coal banks on the Monongahela and its tributaries" and from "every coal pit, from Saw Mill Run to Brownsville." This area included all the mines in western Pennsylvania. The Coal Exchange, which also received an appeal from the Sanitary Commission Fair, did not take action until four days later, after the miners had acted favorably at their delegate meeting. The Exchange authorized an appeal to the mine owners to "run their mines one day in the interest of the Sanitary Fair," and no doubt irked the miners, because of their previous action, by adding the request that the miners be asked to "appropriate one day's work for the same worthy purpose."³ In view

¹ September 2, 1864.

² Pittsburgh Gazette, March 31, 1864. The Sanitary Commission was created by the Secretary of War in 1861, and charged with the distribution of "relief" to the soldiers during the Civil War. The relief included food, clothing, medical stores, hospital supplies, etc. In addition, the Commission provided lodging for many soldiers, the preparation of hospital directories, the collection of vital statistics, the inspection of hospitals, and the adoption of various preventive measures. (Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia.)

³ Pittsburgh Gazette, April 6, 1864.

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of the generosity of the men in these community matters, it is easier to understand their bitterness at the accusations made against them in the Pittsburgh press during strikes, and the continued urging by the newspapers that workers be imported from Europe to take the miners' places, and to create more competition for jobs so as to force wages down.

Even though the assumption is correct, that the miners of western Pennsylvania accepted a reduction in wages late in 1864, there is no indication that their union suffered in the process. On the contrary, it appears to have continued as vigorously as before. Early in February, 1865, a bill was presented to the legislature of Pennsylvania, for incorporation of the "American Miners' Association of the State of Pennsylvania." The objects of the Association were stated in the bill to be:

The intellectual and social improvement of the members; the devising and carrying into operation the best means for securing to its members, while in the prosecution of their dangerous employment, better protection for their lives, limbs, and health against accidents and incidents resulting from fire-damps, accumulations of noxious gases, imperfect ventilation of mines, the falling of insecure roofs, and all other preventable accidents to which miners, as a class, are peculiarly liable; to create a fund for the relief and assistance of sick and disabled members, and for the burial of the dead; to create and bring into existence a printing office for the purpose of printing and publishing a newspaper devoted to the elucidation and advocacy of the material interests of the members of the Association, and for the promotion of the objects above enumerated.¹

In view of present-day opinion on the advisability of incorporating labor unions, it is interesting to note that the legislature summarily rejected the bill, and that John Hinchcliffe, nearly a year later, as editor of the *Miner and Artisan*, successor to the *Weekly Miner*, was still indignant enough to recall the incident editorially and say:

We asked for the passage of a bill which would legalize the existence

¹ Pittsburgh Chronicle, February 4, 1865. Isaac Kear, William D. Brandon, John Flint, Abraham Winters, and Absolom Bowser were named as incorporators. Winters was a speaker at a strikers' meeting held on the West Commons, Allegheny, on September 8, 1864.

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of a society having for its object the devising of means for the protection of the lives and limbs, and general interests of the working miners of that state. Our bill was contemptuously refused, by being defeated before it reached a committee of the House.¹

This application for incorporation of their union by the Pennsylvania miners reveals a further development in the growth of the American Miners' Association—the organization of the various districts in a given state into a state branch. Just when this was done in Pennsylvania is not known, but it is evident that it was an accomplished fact before the application for incorporation was made. It is very probable that this step had already taken place in Illinois some time before, although the only documentary evidence that it took place at all is the record of the convention proceedings of the "Illinois State Branch of the American Miners' Association," held in November, 1865, in which eight Illinois districts were reported.²

¹ *Miner and Artisan*, vol. 1, no. 2, December 30, 1865.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 1, no. 1, December 23, 1865.

CHAPTER XI

DECLINE OF THE ASSOCIATION

THE Association encountered its first reverse early in 1865, when operators in the Blossburg district in Pennsylvania succeeded in eliminating the union in that field after a lockout of more than five months' duration, culminating in the forcible eviction of more than a thousand miners and their families, a total of 4,000 men, women, and children. This was followed, in September of that year, by suspension of publication of the *Weekly Miner*, as a result of serious disagreements in the Cleveland convention of the Association in August, in which the management of the paper and personalities both played a part. There was no connection between these two events. Because of the isolation of the Blossburg district, the loss of the union there, while a serious matter to the miners directly involved, did not have a detrimental effect on the Association as a whole. But the decline of the Association can be dated from the suspension of the *Weekly Miner*, and the dissension it aroused, although unfavorable conditions in the industry, resulting from the termination of the Civil War, had already begun to have their effect.

LOCKOUT IN THE BLOSSBURG DISTRICT

The lockout in the Blossburg district, announced by the operators in that district on December 31, 1864, was deliberately planned by the three companies at Fall Brook and Morris Run,¹ with the object of eliminating the union. These company-owned towns, situated some miles from the "open" town of Blossburg, were two miles apart and had a population of about 2,000 each. The three companies

¹ Fall Brook Coal Company at Fall Brook; Morris Run Coal Company and Onondaga Salt Company, at Morris Run. The latter company operated leased mines to produce coal for their salt works in New York State. John Magee, president of the Fall Brook Coal Company, led the fight against the union. Magee's control of the only outlet from the Tioga County coal field, the railroad to Corning, left the other two companies little choice but to join in the fight even had they been inclined not to do so.

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involved employed "over one thousand men and boys."¹ The Miners' and Laborers' Ben volent Union, organized late in 1862 or early in 1863, at first included both the mine workers, and the timber workers employed in the surrounding forests by the coal companies, as well as the carpenters and other skilled men engaged in construction of houses.² Later the timber and construction workers formed a separate local union, but the two unions continued to work together closely. The union was successful from the beginning; and up to the end of 1864, when the lockout was inaugurated, nothing had occurred seriously to disturb the amicable relations existing between workers and mine owners, although it appears that a strike of short duration took place in the Fall Brook mines in August, 1864.³ In the latter part of 1864 miners were earning from \$6 to \$8 per day; the timber workers, \$2.50 to \$2.75; and skilled builders, a higher rate.⁴

¹ Fincher's Trades' Review, March 25, 1865, resolution by the locked-out workers.

² Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania. W. W. Munsell and Company, New York, 1883, p. 51. Many of the district unions outside Illinois retained the local names under which they were first organized; the Massillon Miners' Association and the Miners' Friendly Association of Western Pennsylvania are other examples.

³ Letters from John Magee, president of the company, to H. Brewer, manager of the mines, dated August 17 and August 18, 1864, and a communication from the workers to the company, dated August 29, 1864. The lockout of four months later is clearly foreshadowed in Magee's letters. In his letter of August 17 Magee said he was strongly inclined "to close the mines, let customers take care of themselves and test the question whether bread or coal is king. It must soon come to this. *A question of time only.*" His letter of August 18 advised, "If the laborers don't resume work on or before Monday next you will close the mines, send away the mules and spare teams and if the laborers shall resume work and the Miners shall make further demands don't concede to them but close the mines. It has to come to this ere long and I am disposed to meet and settle the question now rather than make further concessions to unjust demands." The workers' letter of August 29 to the company was written after the strike had ended. It communicated the result of the deliberations of a special meeting of the union on the strike. The letter was conciliatory, but firm. The workers agreed in future not to strike without giving "at least seven days' notice," conceded the right of the company to hire additional men except when so doing would impair the earnings of those already employed, and declared "we want nothing but a fair days wages for a fair days work." (Letters in possession of Miss Elizabeth Brewer, Corning, New York, granddaughter of Brewer. Copies furnished the author through the courtesy of Sturges F. Cary, Corning, N. Y. For full text of letters see Appendix.)

⁴ Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania, p. 52.

Andrew Roy (A History of the Coal Miners of the United States, J. L. Trauger

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Rapid expansion of mining operations, an outcome of the war,¹ with the employment of many additional men, resulted in a chronic housing shortage in both Fall Brook and Morris Run, with many employes of one company living in houses owned or controlled by another company. Late in 1864, on the initiative of the Fall Brook Coal Company, the three companies agreed to restrict their employes to houses owned by each, and drew up individual contracts to be signed by the miners and laborers, setting forth the terms under which houses were to be occupied. After full consideration in meetings of their local unions, called specifically for that purpose, the workers rejected the contracts, and so notified the companies through their regular committees. The reason for the workers' refusal lay in the terms of the contracts. The law of Pennsylvania defining the relation between landlord and tenant, under which workers occupied the houses, made it practically impossible to evict a tenant within a year, if he continued to tender the rent. The lease contracts sought to evade the law and to permit eviction on short notice for alleged infractions of regulations applying not only to the houses, but to relations between employer and employe. The weapon that this would have given the companies to blacklist and eliminate active union leaders is obvious.

Immediately upon being notified of the workers' decision, the companies on December 31 posted notice that the mines would be closed, "until such regulations as we may hereafter adopt, shall be assented to by our employees, and all payments on account of labor,

Printing Company, Columbus [1903], p. 103) and Chris Evans (*History of United Mine Workers of America*, United Mine Workers of America, Indianapolis [1918], vol. 1, p. 12) both say that during the period in which they had been organized, the miners had increased their wages from 35 cents to \$1.10 a ton, and that the loss of their union resulted from a strike for an additional increase of 15 cents a ton. The detailed account of the trouble given by Sexton, and the letter of the president of the Fall Brook Coal Company which he quotes in full, as well as the additional documents sent by the miners to Fincher's *Trades' Review* and printed in that journal in its issue of March 25, 1865, leave no doubt that the dispute was originated by the coal companies and that no demand for increased wages was involved.

¹ The Morris Run Mines were opened in 1853, but production remained small until the war. The Fall Brook mines were opened in 1860. Total production for all the mines in the district was 97,000 tons for the year 1860, and had increased to 385,000 tons in 1864. (Macfarlane, James, *The Coal Regions of America*. D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1873, p. 666.)

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to occupants of houses, either by money or from store, will be suspended until the said occupants have signed the leases provided, or have vacated the houses occupied by them.”¹

That the house leases were only a pretext to bring about an opportunity to eliminate the union, is clearly evident from the contents of a letter, addressed to the workers, by the president² of the Fall Brook Coal Company,³ announcing the closing of the mines, simultaneously with the serving of eviction notices on all miners and mine laborers in the two towns. The letter announced suspension of operations “as long as the miners and others employed by the company arrogate to themselves the right and exercise the power to dictate and control the business of the company.” The company had “resolved to take charge of their own business . . . independent of dictation from those they employ.” Those who did not like the “rules adopted for the future conduct of the business” could leave and find employment elsewhere. “Disturbers are respectfully requested to leave. They will have no difficulty in selecting themselves from the rest.” The company “have at all times paid liberal prices. . . . Their liberality and kindness have not been generally appreciated.” The company’s coal “is safe in the mountains, and it is better to leave it there than to bring it out at an enormous cost under humiliating circumstances.” The “proprietors” could “get on quite

¹ Among the documents on the controversy printed in Fincher’s *Trades’ Review*, March 25, 1865.

² John Magee, president of the Fall Brook Coal Company, was born in Easton, Pennsylvania, in 1794, and lived during his youth in Livingston County, New York, and near Detroit. He served as a rifleman in the American forces during the War of 1812, and was later a frontier messenger. In 1816 he settled in Bath, New York, where he engaged in the stage coach business and entered politics. After a term as sheriff he served two terms in Congress during the Jackson administration. In 1831 he became president of a bank in Bath, a connection he maintained nearly all the rest of his life. During the forties and fifties he began to deal in railroads and then coal, with sidelines in milling and woolen manufacture. He organized the Fall Brook Coal Company in 1859. He was defeated for Congress in 1861, and again in 1864, but was a delegate to the New York State constitutional convention in 1867. He died in 1868 at Watkins, New York. Although accounts vary as to the size of his estate at the time of his death, the newspaper report of the filing of his will put it at “about two million dollars.”

³ Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), *History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania*, pp. 51-52. See Appendix for text of letter.

comfortably during the time of suspension, be it one, two or more years."

If there remained any doubt of the real purpose of the companies in inaugurating the lockout, it was made quite clear in the latter part of this astounding letter, the house-lease question serving as a lever to eliminate those who would not agree to give up the union.

The houses have been built for the accommodation of those employed and willing to do their duty; not for idlers or disturbers of the company's business. Hereafter no one can occupy a house except he executes a contract defining his rights and duties. To this end a special agreement has been prepared and will be submitted herewith, which must be executed by all who wish to occupy our houses in the future.

There shall be no relaxation on this point. The company will maintain the right to control their property. Self-respect and justice require this. *If the company had at any time denied you full, generous compensation for your services you would have had some reason to form combinations. As it has been, and is, your action is uncalled for, unreasonable and disorderly, as well as disrespectful to your employers and best friends. The continuance of such unjustifiable conduct cannot and will not be tolerated.*¹ The accompanying notice and regulations have been prepared upon mature deliberation on the part of your employers, with the fixed and unalterable determination on their part to insist upon and sustain them at all hazards.

The mines were closed and all outside and inside work ceased. The special agreement, mentioned in the letter, which the miners were to be required to sign before they could occupy a house or obtain work, consisted of the set of "Rules and Regulations" formulated by the employers. These rules provided (1) that the employer would establish the price for all kinds of work, and in case of work of an "irregular or unexpected character," entailing an extra amount of labor, "the Manager shall decide what extra allowance shall be made, whose decision must govern in the settlement of accounts." (2) The houses were to be occupied only by "well disposed people," who would be required "to enter into a special agreement specifying the conditions upon which he or they occupy," and that no house should be used for the sale of intoxicating liquor, or for immoral

¹ Author's italics.

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purposes. (3) "Any attempt by persons, or organizations of persons, to interfere with the progress of the work, by coercing their fellows to limit the time or amount of work, or otherwise, will be rebuked and put down, no matter what the cost. Every person will be protected in his natural right to work as many hours per day as he chooses, and earn as much as he can." (4) The company reserved the right to "employ as many men as they may deem necessary, and from time to time discharge such as may, in their judgement, merit dismissal, unawed by threats or interference by persons or combinations of persons." (5) The "directions and orders of the Superintendent and his Assistants must be observed and respected. Any indignity to them will be regarded and treated as disrespectful to the Company." (6) These Regulations "must be assented to and respected by all persons hereafter employed by this company."¹

Several weeks after the mines had closed, the miners reopened negotiations with the employers, in an effort to reach a settlement. On January 18 a "Commission" of 11 workers in a letter to the president of the Fall Brook Coal Company informed him that they had been selected by the union, and were

. . . fully empowered to settle all difficulties now pending . . . in a spirit not of resentment or anger, but solely to do justice, so that all difficulties may be settled in an honorable and satisfactory manner to both parties. We lay before you, for your consideration, a rough outline of what we consider the rights of the Miners, subject to be modified or altered in case you see fit to negotiate and arrange all difficulties amicably.

The miners' representatives' letter took up the employers' ultimatum point by point. (1) In fixing the price for work of an "irregular or unexpected character," it was proposed that "one or two men [be] chosen by both parties to settle the difficulty." (2) The provision prohibiting the use of the houses for the sale of intoxicating liquor, or for immoral purposes, "we endorse"; but they would not sign the lease, "for it would be giving away the only protection the working-man can claim, i.e., the law of the land in which he gets his living. We hope upon mature deliberation you will recall such an odious

¹ Among the documents on the controversy published in Fincher's *Trades' Review*, March 25, 1865.

proposition." (3) The proposal that the employers should have the sole voice in determining working conditions was summarily rejected; "good reasons will be given if requested." (4) The right of the employer to employ as many men as he saw fit was conceded, but "not to crowd the mines with men, so that the men cannot get their full amount of work out." The employers' right to discharge was conceded, "providing they [miners] merit dismissal by improper conduct. . . . But we cannot concede, nor do we think it right to discharge a man simply because he is a member of an association." (5) The regulation requiring workers to act respectfully to the superintendent and his assistants was declared to be "perfectly right and just. Vice versa, they treat us respectfully." (6) Reply to the requirement of strict observance of all regulations as a condition of employment was "reserved until rules and regulations different from those are submitted."¹

In contrast with the arbitrary position taken by the employers, the miners' reply was a reasonable and businesslike one, upon which negotiations for a settlement of the differences might have been begun. The miners' committee was respectful, and did not quibble; yet it was firm on matters which it considered vital to their rights as men and workers. Summed up, the workers demanded conditions without which their union would be unable to exist and function.

That the employers would accept nothing short of abject surrender by the miners on the employers' terms, is evident from the immediate and ill-tempered reply by the president of the Fall Brook Coal Company to the proposals included in the miners' letter. "With minor concessions, not very important," said the letter, "you are disposed to adhere to your former position of occupying the houses, and controlling the business of the company, as it may suit the will and pleasure of the miners and others employed." The employers would set work prices on a liberal basis, if there were differences, "your right and remedy is to leave and seek employment where you may hope to do better." The houses must be vacated by April 1, which it was hoped,

¹ Among the documents on the controversy published in *Fincher's Trades' Review*, March 25, 1865.

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. . . for your sakes, will be done peaceably. If not, we will take possession through the civil and judicial authority. If this shall be resisted, military aid will be invoked and obtained at any required cost. . . . It must be determined whether the owners of property shall enjoy and control it, or whether the employees of the owner, in mob force, are to dictate terms and conditions. This question will now be settled, peaceably I hope, forcibly if you will it. . . . Submission to your dictation will no longer be tolerated. . . . No power on earth can change this fixed purpose. Self-respect, and duty to God and man, forbid a departure from the principles heretofore and now enunciated. You will concede and respect the right of the proprietors to possess and enjoy their property, to direct and regulate their own business, or you will leave the place. . . . You are pleased to say that you reject the third article of the printed regulation adopted for future government. What consummate impudence! You will go on to dictate to your fellows, domineer over them and your employers as you may choose to will it . . . but one thing is certain . . . you will fall short of bread, and other bodily comforts, before you accomplish this diabolical purpose. Read again and consider well the printed address and regulations submitted to you, December 31st. If you cannot concede the justice of the principles set forth in these documents, leave the place peaceably, and seek a place for residence and employment more congenial to your peculiar notions. . . . The principles advanced in the address and regulations of December will (come what may) be adhered to and carried out in spirit and to the letter. No degrading compromise of inherent rights. . . . You may, in a frenzy of passion, burn and destroy property, and you may and will be judicially punished for crimes committed, but you cannot damage the company very much as they have ample insurance upon all perishable property within your reach. Make up your minds to submit to order and decency, and respect your generous employers' rights or to leave. The sooner you decide the better for yourselves.¹

With the exception of this attempt of the miners to reopen negotiations, the first months of the lockout were uneventful. The apprehension of the president of the Fall Brook Coal Company that the miners might burn down or otherwise destroy the company's property proved to be ill-founded. The miners held meetings, and several times "had processions headed by martial music." The Tioga County

¹ Among the documents on the controversy published in *Fincher's Trades' Review*, March 25, 1865.

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historian, who was by no means partial to the miners—he referred to them as “deluded”—nevertheless appears to have been fair in reporting miners’ conduct during the lockout. “As a general thing,” he says, “they abstained from the use of strong drink, but occasionally overstepped the bounds of propriety and had a convivial time.”¹ The unity of the men was tested in March, after they had been idle for two and a half months, when a freshet washed out a section of the railroad to Blossburg. Despite all efforts, only two of their number could be induced to work with the company managers and store clerks in repairing the damage.

Blocked by the existing law² in their determination to evict the miners, employers had introduced into the state legislature an amendment to the law defining the relation between tenant and landlord. It provided for the eviction, on ten days’ notice, of any tenant occupying a house “under an agreement, verbal or written, to perform labor or services” for the landlord, on proof to the justice of the refusal or neglect of the tenant “to perform such labor or render such services according to the agreement.” This amendment, the “Ten Day Eviction Law,” as it was called by the miners, was enacted by the legislature, and approved on March 14.³ The amendment set apart the tenants of houses in company-owned towns, and denied to them the protection afforded by law to other classes of tenants. Enacted to meet the momentary needs of the Tioga County mine owners, this discrimination was, in later years, a powerful weapon in the hands of employers during strikes in the coal and iron towns of Pennsylvania.

Although in the original letter to the miners announcing the lockout, the employers had said that they were content to keep the mines closed until the miners surrendered, “be it one, two or more years,” they acted at once under the authority of the amended law, and secured writs of eviction from a justice of the peace. The con-

¹ Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), *History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania*, p. 52.

² An Act entitled, “An Act relative to landlords and tenants,” approved December 14, 1863.

³ *Fincher’s Trades’ Review*, March 18, 1865. In the issue of July 1, 1865, and again during the political campaign in the fall, in the issue of September 16, 1865, Fincher’s printed the legislative roll call on the amendment, with a strong appeal to the workers to defeat at the polls members of the legislature who had supported it.

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stable, in compliance with the writs, evicted a number of families, but these were taken in by others and remained in the towns. The sheriff was resisted when he took over the task, which early in May resulted in six arrests and warrants for 64 others. Both men and women were involved. After an appeal by the sheriff to the state for assistance to carry out evictions, 300 soldiers were sent late in May. The soldiers, augmented by a sheriff's posse of two or three hundred, took the miners by surprise, occupied Fall Brook, arrested the miners' leaders, emptied the houses, loaded the household effects on railroad cars, along with the miners and their families, and took them under guard to Blossburg, where they and their household goods were dumped on the streets. The same procedure was followed at Morris Run, both towns being "cleaned of miners," and the doors and windows of the houses boarded up, the soldiers remaining on guard in both places.¹

This violent wholesale deportation of some 4,000 persons, coming after more than five months of idleness, could be expected to break the resistance of the miners. Dumped as they were into a town with a population of hardly half their own number, their plight leaves little to the imagination. The Tioga County historian tells us the outcome in a succinct paragraph:

Negotiations were soon after commenced between the miners and the companies, which resulted in a large majority of them returning to their respective places, signing the contracts and going to work; not, however, at the price they were receiving on the first of January, 1865, for the war was now over and coal had declined materially in the market, and their wages were correspondingly low. They had fallen nearly fifty per cent.²

The employers took full advantage of their victory and gave no quarter. Not only were wages cut in half, but the new "contract" carried with it the "ironclad" agreement of the miners not to become

¹ Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), *History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania*, p. 52. Fincher's *Trades' Review*, July 1, 1865, in describing the towns after the eviction, says: "The houses stood empty, the doors padlocked, and the windows nailed up."

Some weeks after the resumption of work, one of a party of visitors to the Fall Brook mines described, with an unconscious irony, the "Liberty Pole" erected by the miners in the village during the lockout, as still standing, "bleak and bare, the last relic of the Rebellion." (*Corning [N. Y.] Journal*, July 27, 1865.)

² Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), *History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania*, p. 53.

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members of a union. Despite, however, the propaganda and espionage carried on by employers during the succeeding years, the miners in Tioga County organized again, under the Miners' National Association in 1873, although forced into a strike to maintain that right.

Many miners were victimized after the lockout of 1865, and others refused to accept the companies' terms and left the district. Andrew Roy, writing thirty-five years later, said that many of these men "that still survive, or the descendants of those that have passed away, can be found in every mining region of the country."¹ The lockout did not solve the problems the president of the Fall Brook Coal Company so confidently asserted it would.² But it contributed considerably to the future of the miners' union by scattering many stanch and tried union men throughout the coal fields of the country.

SUSPENSION OF THE WEEKLY MINER

Except for the election of William Bowen³ as "agent,"⁴ and

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 105.

² The temper of the employers at the time of the evictions may be judged by the suits for libel brought by John Magee, president of the Fall Brook Coal Company, against the editors of the *Weekly Miner*, the *Buffalo Sentinel*, and the *Buffalo Evening Express*, "for the crime of telling the truth respecting their inhuman proceedings." (*Fincher's Trades' Review*, May 20, 1865.) Fincher was not included, but he was careful in later issues not to mention Magee's name in referring to the lockout. The *Corning (N. Y.) Democrat*, June 15, 1865, says of the libel action: "John Hinchcliffe, editor of the *Miner*, Belleville, Ill. and M. Hagan, editor of the *Buffalo Sentinel*, were indicted at the May Quarter Sessions of Tioga County, Pennsylvania, for libel of Hon. John Magee, contained in an article relating to difficulties with the miners." Recent examination of the court records failed to show that these suits were ever brought to trial.

³ William Bowen was born in Carmarthenshire, Wales, in 1830, came to the United States in 1853 and worked in the mines at Elizabethtown, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Later he worked in the mines in Ohio and Missouri, going to St. Clair County, Illinois, in 1859. He was one of the founders of the American Miners' Association in the Belleville district, and served as secretary of the strike meetings there in 1863. In addition to holding the position of "agent" for the general organization, he served as general secretary during its last days. In 1869 he was blinded by a premature blast while at work in the mines in St. Clair County, where he was still living in 1888.

⁴ The *United Mine Workers' Journal*, of September 17, 1908, in a series entitled *Forty Years a Miner and Men I Have Known*, by An Old Miner, erroneously places the time of Bowen's election as "agent" in 1866, at a convention said to have been

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the action taken with reference to the *Weekly Miner*,¹ which resulted in the resignation of John Hinchcliffe as editor, and the discontinuance of publication a few weeks later, little is known of the business transacted at the Cleveland convention of the Association, held in August, 1865. Hinchcliffe, in the announcement of his resignation, addressed to "The Officers and Members of the Miners' Association," was bitter and defiant toward those he held responsible for the controversy. The resignation was dated to take effect eight months later, April 26, 1866, "for the action taken by them is illegal, informal, and cannot affect our tenure of office during the coming year." He blamed a small clique of officers,

. . . nine men out of 22,000, who under the whip and spur system of dragooning adopted by one of the nine, in aid of his malignant and ambitious but mischievous purpose, rode down all precedents and rules of right for the purpose of annoying a man who is personally obnoxious to him, because he cannot be made use of as a tool, by trifling, designing tricksters.²

From contemporary accounts, the disagreement appears to have arisen over proposed changes in the management of the paper, which, if carried out, would have resulted eventually in the removal of Hinchcliffe as editor. The *Belleville Advocate*, sympathetic toward the editor, also saw danger ahead for the Association. The *Advocate* mentioned "the late convention" of the Association as having been, "if we can judge from the published report, a very extraordinary meeting," and doubted if it reflected the wishes of the membership.

Whether he [Hinchcliffe] has built up the Miners' Association or not, since the publication of the *Miner*, the Association has become thoroughly organized and grown to wonderful proportions, and the *Miner* is their organ. To remove its editor, and conduct the paper as the late convention proposes will result in the suspension of the paper. . . . To pub-

held in Cleveland. In listing a number of conventions this source fails to mention the Cleveland convention of 1865. No other reference to a general convention of the Association in 1866, in Cleveland or elsewhere, has been found. There are several contemporary references to the Cleveland convention of 1865, and the election of Bowen as "agent" at that convention.

¹ The name of the paper had by this time been changed to the *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, although it continued to be generally referred to as *The Miner*.

² East St. Louis (Ill.) *Sunday Herald*, September 3, 1865.

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lish it on that plan it would be a paper without character and its power utterly destroyed. If we could reach the mining community our voice should warn them of the ruin that threatens their organ, and their National Association. . . . The whole thing looks like an attempt of some designing, ambitious man to usurp a position for which he is not qualified or to injure someone who is personally distasteful to him, and Mr. Hinchcliffe intimates as much in his address. We advise the Miners' Association to beware that they do not abuse themselves the most.¹

Actual suspension of publication took place later in September, occasioned, according to the Belleville Democrat, by the refusal of many of the miners to continue to support it because of the action taken by the convention. The suspension was due, the Democrat said:

. . . not to any disinclination on the part of the coal mining fraternity to sustain their own journal but to "family quarrels" among themselves. A few malcontents in prominent places in the Miners' Association have undertaken to discard the tried and faithful editor . . . Mr. Hinchcliffe, and to "run the machine" to suit their own ideas. This arbitrary, and uncalled for action, naturally enough creates dissatisfaction among the fifteen or twenty thousand members of the Miners' Association, who manifest their dissent most emphatically by withholding the needed contributions to keep the press going—a course they will probably persist in until the action of the late convention of the Miners' Association, in removing Mr. Hinchcliffe has been reversed or annulled.²

Neither the details nor the motives that prompted the action of the Cleveland convention with regard to the paper are made entirely clear in the several references and documents available. However, it is apparent that the general officers of the Association elected in Cleveland were in accord with the action taken. Immediately following the convention, the newly elected "agent," William Bowen, and possibly one other representative of the general association, appeared in Belleville and took charge of the Weekly Miner office. Although Hinchcliffe remained for some weeks as editor, it is evident that Bowen had complete control. The action of the convention was protested by many lodges "in unmistakable terms in the published

¹ Belleville Advocate, September 8, 1865.

² Belleville Democrat, September 30, 1865.

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correspondence of 'The Miner,'"¹ and doubtless many of the lodges, to make their protest effective, also withdrew financial support from the paper. This soon led to financial difficulties, and suspension of publication.

The Illinois miners appear to have been generally opposed to the action of the Cleveland convention, although apparently unwilling to take any action except through the constitutional machinery of the Association. Because the Illinois miners were responsible for the existence of the Miner in the first place, it would have been natural for them to have a special feeling of concern for its welfare. However strong this feeling may have been, it was subordinated to an effort to prevent injury to the Association through dissension. Although District No. 1 (Belleville district) of the Illinois branch of the Association voluntarily intervened and paid off the workers in the office of the Miner after they had sued and obtained judgment for wages due, the Illinois branches of the organization took no official action until the annual convention of the Illinois branch of the Association, held November 16-17, at Decatur.

The resolution adopted by that convention on the question, while expressing its differences with the action of the Cleveland convention, at the same time suggested a plan of action to restore the confidence of the membership of the Association. The resolution declared:

That we, the delegates to the Illinois State Convention of the American Miners' Association, now sitting, consider that the late Cleveland Convention overstepped their proper bounds in discharging persons of trust and putting others in their places whom we deem unworthy, and that therefore we consider this good reason for calling a new National Convention.²

The convention then levied an assessment of one dollar per member on the membership in Illinois, "for the purpose of redeeming the press and getting it into operation," and Hinchcliffe was chosen as editor of the new paper, to serve until the next national convention. A special board of trustees was elected to handle the financial mat-

¹ Miner and Artisan, December 23, 1865, Report of Special Board of Trustees, Illinois Branch of the American Miners' Association.

² *Ibid.*, Proceedings of convention of the Illinois Branch of the American Miners' Association, held at Macon Hall, Decatur, Illinois, November 16-17, 1865.

ters pertaining to the re-establishment of the paper as ordered by the convention. This action resulted in the publication of the *Miner and Artisan*, at St. Louis, with Hinchcliffe as editor, the first issue appearing on December 23, 1865.

The special board of trustees, in a report addressed to "The Members of the American Miners' Association,"¹ while reporting conditions as they found them with respect to the *Miner*, emphasized the need for action to restore harmony in the organization. The trustees referred only in passing to the "thoughtless and precipitate action taken at the late Cleveland convention," adding that they considered it their "mission not . . . to wound, but to heal the wounds already made." It was pointed out that the Illinois union had not interfered with the affairs of the *Miner* so long as it remained in the hands of "the parties who were selected for its management by the [Cleveland] convention." The Illinois miners had watched the credit of the paper being steadily impaired under the new management, but had hoped that those in charge would make some effort to save the paper; but they evidently lacked competence, or failed to exert themselves. Investigation by the trustees disclosed that "there were no pressing financial necessities which could not have been met if the proper exertions had been made by the Agent or Agents . . . and that the Editor could, if he had been permitted, have kept up the regular issue of the paper."

After suspension of the paper, the report continued, the office was "abandoned by all but the newly appointed Agent, who seemed to remain for no other purpose but to receive and to collect money." Even after creditors began pressing for payment, and finally brought suit and obtained judgments, "still no efforts were made to save the office, either by the recently selected Cleveland officers, or their newly appointed Agent." After District No. 1 had paid off the judgment in favor of the workers in the *Miner* office for wages, larger creditors sought and obtained judgments in the Circuit Court, and the property was advertised for sale by the sheriff. Although the money from the assessment levied by the state convention was not yet available,

¹ *Ibid.*, Report of special Board of Trustees, Illinois Branch of the American Miners' Association. The report was signed by Joseph Palfreyman, James Mason, Josiah Sutton, and John Pope.

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through arrangements made by the trustees, the office and effects were bought in the name of the Illinois State Board of the Association for the amount of the judgments and costs. It had been "deemed advisable to remove the office to St. Louis," and establish the *Miner and Artisan*.

Because the agent, Bowen, refused to give up the books, the trustees were unable to refund the amounts paid in advance by subscribers, but they hoped that this matter could be adjusted at the next national convention, as well as to make an equitable adjustment of the amount due the State Board of Illinois for money advanced. In order that the entire matter might be settled as speedily as possible, the trustees recommended that a national convention be held at an early date, and suggested April 26, 1866, at Massillon, Ohio, as the time and place. All lodges were asked to vote on the question of holding such convention, and report to the *Miner* office. The majority vote, "as reported, will be accepted as decisive of the question." The trustees hoped "that until the meeting of said Convention, the explanations above given, of the action which it was necessary to take in our late exigencies, will be deemed sufficient for the restoration of full confidence among all our members."

The dispatch, the able manner, and the scrupulous regard for the welfare of the Association, with which the trustees and officers of the Illinois branch of the Association handled this crisis, deserved more success than was achieved. While it is not known as a certainty, it is not likely that the proposed convention was ever held. The first issue of the *Miner and Artisan*¹ reported numerous substantial payments from Illinois and Missouri lodges, and from one Ohio lodge, for the support of the paper, but it is evident that the support received was insufficient to maintain it. The *Miner and Artisan* ceased publication the following July, and the plant was sold to the Workingman's Union of Missouri, which established the *Industrial Advocate*, with Hinchcliffe remaining for a time as editor.²

Whatever may have been the motives which prompted the action

¹ December 23, 1865. Only the first and second numbers of the *Miner and Artisan* have been preserved. They are in the possession of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library, at Madison.

² *Belleville Advocate*, July 6 and August 10, 1866.

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of the Cleveland convention with respect to the Miner, it is evident that much dissension was stirred up among the membership at a crucial time, only a few months after the close of the Civil War, when the miners needed to be thoroughly united if they expected to maintain the standards they had built up under wartime conditions. This was the peak period of the Association, both in membership and prestige, from which it now began to decline, although the momentum it had attained carried it on for several years longer. It had attained a membership far beyond the dreams of the most optimistic of those who had founded it four years and a half before. While exact figures are not obtainable, a rough guess at the membership can be made from the figures given by the Belleville Democrat, 15,000 or 20,000, and the 22,000 suggested by Hinchcliffe in the announcement of his resignation.¹

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The Association was unable to survive the post-war period of economic readjustment.² This process of readjustment was a gradual

¹ It is not clear whether Hinchcliffe meant members of the Association or subscribers to the *Weekly Miner*. But even though the reference is to subscribers, it is evidence of the widespread influence of the Association. There are no official figures on the total number of men employed in the mines in the United States during 1865. The increase in coal production during 1865 over the year 1860 was 83 per cent for bituminous, and 46 per cent for Pennsylvania anthracite. Assuming the same percentage increase over the number employed in the mines in 1860, the last previous census year, 11,331 in the bituminous mines and 25,126 in the Pennsylvania anthracite mines, the number employed in 1865 would have been about 20,000 in the bituminous mines and 36,000 in the anthracite mines. Some, but probably little, adjustment is necessary in these figures; the slack work following the ending of the war in the spring of 1865 would offset the slack work in 1860.

² Business conditions during the immediate post-war period have been described as follows: 1865: Boom; recession. Gradual decline to dullness, summer. 1866: Mild depression. Dullness in trade; active manufacturing, unsteady declining commodity prices. 1867: Depression. Dullness in trade and industry; declining prices; unemployment. 1868: Revival. Marked improvement; commodity prices relatively steady. (Thorp, Willard L., *Business Annals*, National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, 1926, pp. 129-130.) "The year 1867 can hardly be called one of financial panic or industrial depression, although 'hard times' apparently prevailed. The stimulation of all industries resulting from the war, the speculative enterprises undertaken, the extension of credits, and the slackening of production necessarily caused a reaction, and a consequent stagnation of business; but the period was hardly spoken of by business men as one of any particular hardship. People for a while began to be conservative; but the impetus engendered by the war could not be overcome, and

one, although it began to make itself felt in the coal-mining towns even before controversy over the *Weekly Miner* was precipitated in the Cleveland convention. A sample of conditions in the industry during the summer of 1865, in the months immediately following the close of the war, is revealing. In June of that year, the miners in Mineral Ridge, in the Mahoning Valley district of Ohio, after a ten weeks' strike, agreed to accept a substantial reduction in wages, "because coal has been reduced in the market."¹ The strike was, however, immediately turned into a lockout by refusal of the employer to resume operations unless the miners would agree to give up their union. A single issue of the *Weekly Miner*, in July, 1865,² reported that the "coal trade of the Mahoning Region, and indeed in all the iron smelting regions, is utterly prostrated. In other places the trade is at a standstill"; in the Massillon district, after some resistance, the miners accepted a large reduction in wages, "seeing no tendency to improvement in the condition of the trade";³ and all miners were advised to stay away from the mines near Kingston, in the Peoria district in Illinois, because of a strike in progress there. With this early beginning, conditions in the industry grew steadily worse.

Just what course events might have taken, had the Association remained strong and united, is, of course, a matter for speculation. But there is no question that the factional strife, resulting from controversy over the *Weekly Miner*, considerably lessened the ability of the organization to weather the economic storms of the post-war years. The factional strife was, in itself, a serious blow to the Association, but the lack of an official organ intensified its effect by isolating the membership from the general organization, and from each other. The *Weekly Miner*, which had been "wont to tell the story of our grievances to the world, to chronicle our triumphs and to en-

it was not until the crash of 1873, that the effects of undue excitement in all branches of trade and business were thoroughly realized." (First Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1886. Government Printing Office, Washington, p. 60.)

¹ Fincher's *Trades' Review*, July 15, 1865, letter from secretary of miners' lodge in Mineral Ridge, Ohio.

² Reprinted by Fincher's *Trades' Review*, July 29, 1865.

³ Much of the output of the mines in both the Mahoning Valley and the Massillon districts was used in the iron furnaces.

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courage us when suffering defeat,"¹ had been the source of a solidarity badly lacking during the last years of the Association. Under such conditions, given the original controversy, further suspicions were aroused, and the wildest rumors took on the color of truth. The loose district setup of the Association, in which the official organ played the important role of a binding agent, may be considered a contributing factor in the debacle. Post-war economic conditions played their part, but in their full strength only after the Association had been weakened by conditions arising from within. Local and district units continued to exist after the general organization had ceased to function, but the greater part of these, too, soon slipped quietly out of existence. It can safely be said that only isolated local lodges survived after the year 1867, although there were attempts, in the spring of 1868, in the Belleville district in Illinois, and in the Massillon district in Ohio, to re-establish the Association.

We have no information as to just when the Association began to decline in the Belleville field in Illinois, or the particular causes which led up to it. The controversy over the Miner and the elimination of Hinchcliffe doubtless played a considerable part because of the factors of personal association and acquaintance over a long period which were naturally involved. Operators in this field made no general reduction in the wartime mining rate of five cents a bushel, even after the Association had ceased to exist, but did make substantial reductions in the actual earnings of the miners through a gradual increase in the amounts taken from them through dishonest weights and measures. A spontaneous strike in a few mines in the district in the fall of 1867, to remedy this condition, failed.² The account of this strike makes no mention of the Association; and this, with the circumstances surrounding it, leads to the conclusion that the Association no longer existed.

Conditions in the industry grew steadily worse during the following winter. During April, 1868, the Belleville district miners held a number of meetings, not only for the purpose of attempting to better their condition, but to reorganize all the "old lodges of District No.

¹ Miner and Artisan, December 23, 1865, Report of Special Board of Trustees, Illinois Branch of the American Miners' Association.

² Belleville Advocate, October 4, 1867.

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1."1 The entire community sympathized with the miners, the Belleville Democrat being particularly caustic in its reference to the prevailing system of weights and measures:

For some time past the miners of this locality have been suffering from the general depression of the coal trade; but worse than all, they have also suffered from the abominable over-weight system by which they have been compelled to submit to extortions and exactions of a shameless character, in order that they might retain the poor privilege (?) of digging a little, two or three days a week, at starvation rates. Indigence, and in many instances, actual starvation, stare them daily in the face.²

The Belleville Advocate said:

A general depression of business, for a long time continued, has had its effect upon this class of our citizens, and they are now in an actually suffering condition. The meager price paid for their labor, and the small amount of work allowed them, have led to these results.³

The same newspaper, in another issue, connected the straits of the business community with the low earnings of the miners, which doubtless accounts for the presence of a number of business leaders as speakers at the miners' meetings. Estimating the loss in earnings of the miners of St. Clair County from the previous level as exceeding \$200,000 annually, the paper said:

All this sum is really so much loss to the merchants and storekeepers with whom the miners deal. . . . It is not hard to understand the reason for the now chronic complaints of storekeepers about hard times in this locality.⁴

Thomas Lloyd, James W. Thorley, and John Hinchcliffe were among the leaders of the old Association who took an active part in the meetings. Considerable progress was made in rehabilitation of the old lodges, and at a meeting on April 25, attended by miners from all parts of St. Clair County, demands were adopted for four

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 16, 1868.

² *Ibid.*, April 23, 1868.

³ Belleville Advocate, April 24, 1868.

⁴ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1868.

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cents a bushel and railroad weights, to take effect on May 1.¹ Refusal of the operators to concede the demands resulted in a shutdown of the mines, which the miners termed a lockout. The miners' demands in this instance are probably without precedent in the annals of the labor movement, since the four-cent rate demanded was one cent below the prevailing rate. The Belleville Advocate explained the apparent contradiction without mincing words:

Heretofore the operators have been getting from 50 to 100 per cent more coal than was actually counted and while, they were nominally paying 5¢ . . . they were in reality not paying more than 2½¢ or 3¢.²

In the course of several weeks a few of the smaller operators agreed to the miners' demands, but the others held out. Late in May, at a meeting of the miners held in Belleville, a proposal was made that a committee composed of miners and citizens meet with the operators, "with the view of arbitrating our points of difference." Lloyd, Thorley, and Hinchcliffe were among the members of this committee which had power to act.³ In a meeting between this committee and the operators "the difficulties were practically settled by the majority [of the operators] conceding to the miners four cents a bushel and railroad measure."⁴ The indefinite nature of this settlement can be accepted as the measure of its effectiveness, and is doubtless the reason why no effective revival of the miners' union resulted at this time.

Details of the decline of the Association in other parts of Illinois are likewise obscured, although the LaSalle miners in northern Illinois still had their union in 1867. At that time they engaged in a five months' strike against a reduction in wages, and a proposal to weigh the miners' coal after it had passed over a one-inch screen, which allowed them "nothing for what went through." The miners declared that screening of the coal before weighing would amount to an additional reduction of 25 per cent in their wages, and was, in reality, another attempt to destroy their union, which "we have

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 30, 1868.

² Belleville Advocate, May 29, 1868.

³ Belleville Democrat, May 28, 1868.

⁴ Belleville Advocate, May 29, 1868.

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had . . . for the protection of our labor for the last five years."¹ The miners in Braidwood,² also in the northern Illinois field, lost their union in a lockout during the summer of 1868, after the company had broken an agreement with them signed the previous December, and had imported strikebreakers. Following several months of idleness, and after they had lost their case in the courts to prevent eviction, the miners' offer to return to work on the company's terms was refused. Practically all were victimized.³ One of those victimized was John James, who later became secretary of the Miners' National Association when it was organized in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1873.

The Massillon district miners struck for an increase in wages in April, 1868. The strike began early in April and was settled late in June, when the operators agreed to pay 90 cents per ton, an increase of 15 cents per ton. This strike was particularly effective, and compelled the shutdown of the Massillon iron furnaces for want of fuel. Contemporary accounts make no mention of the Miners' Association; and although the fact that the strike occurred at the same time as the Belleville field strike suggests concerted action to rebuild the Association, contemporary sources are silent on this point.⁴

In June, 1866, we find miners of the Monongahela Valley striking against a reduction in the mining rate from four cents to three and one-half cents a bushel. The higher rate they had won during the war period had evidently been given up some time before. The outcome of the strike was indecisive; some mines returned to work at three and one-half cents, while others retained the four-cent rate. But in the fall of 1867 all the miners in the Valley were forced to accept the three and one-quarter cent rate after losing a five weeks' strike.⁵ The earlier retreat from the five-cent rate may have preserved the union in the Monongahela Valley for a time, but it is likely that its strength was badly sapped by the strikes in 1866 and 1867. However, the miners were able to wage a successful strike of

¹ Letter in *Workingman's Advocate*, August 3, 1867.

² The Braidwood mines were opened during the later Civil War years.

³ *Workingman's Advocate*, May 23, June 20, August 1 and 15, 1868.

⁴ *Weekly Repository* (Canton, Ohio), April 15, May 13 and 20, June 10, 17 and 24, 1868. Massillon items.

⁵ Pennsylvania Bureau of Industrial Statistics, *Ninth Annual Report*, 1881, p. 281.

three months' duration in the early part of 1868 which ended in the establishment of a three and one-half cent rate.¹

It was upon the local lodges that survived that the next general organization of miners was built. But a less tangible and probably more important factor in the building of a new union was the accumulated experience in organization gained by the miners generally through the Association. Just how many of the lodges survived the break-up, and how effectively they were able to function, is a matter of conjecture, but the presence of representatives from a number of them in the annual meetings of the National Labor Union in the last half of the sixties reveals at once their existence and the spirit of the men who kept them alive.

At the first meeting of the National Labor Union, held in Baltimore in 1866, the "Miners' Lodge of Illinois" was represented by John Hinchcliffe. In 1867 he was again a delegate,² and the "American Miners' Association of LaSalle, Ill." was also represented. At the New York meeting of the National Labor Union in 1868 Alexander Campbell represented "Miners' Union No. 6, LaSalle," and in the 1869 meeting in Philadelphia he represented "Labor Union No. . . ., Eden, LaSalle County."

Representation of miners at the 1870 meeting of the National Labor Union, held in Cincinnati, revealed a distinct revival of organization among the miners; and although a number of new organization names appeared, the old Association also had increased representation under its name. The Workingmen's Benevolent Association, organized by the anthracite miners in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, two years previously, was represented, as was the Miners' and Laborers' Benefit Association of the Tuscarawas Valley (Massillon district) of Ohio, indicating organization under a new name in the latter district. The "American Miners' Association of Illinois" and "District No. 1 [Belleville Field], American Miners' Association, Illinois," were each represented by a delegate, and Alexander Campbell was again present, representing the "Hope Labor

¹ Workingman's Advocate, April 18, 1868, reprinted from Pittsburgh Commercial, April 10, 1868.

² The organization that he represented is not given. He attended nearly all of the National Labor Union conventions, serving as chairman of the 1866 convention, and later served as treasurer.

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Union of LaSalle." Indiana miners were represented under the name of the "Miners' Association, District No. 1, Brazil, Indiana"; and miners of the Hocking Valley of Ohio had a delegate, but the name of the organization is not given.¹

The next two or three years saw increasing organization among the miners into district, and even larger, units, which in the fall of 1873 became united in the Miners' National Association of the United States of America, as the result of a call issued by the miners' delegates to the Industrial Congress held at Cleveland earlier in that year. The American Miners' Association was gone, but its influence and example lived in the Miners' National Association, the second national miners' union in America.

¹ Proceedings of National Labor Union Conventions, *in* Documentary History of American Industrial Society, by John R. Commons and Others, prepared under the auspices of the American Bureau of Industrial Research, with the co-operation of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. Clark Company, Cleveland, 1910, vol. 9, pp. 126-274.

CHAPTER XII

LEADERSHIP

THE favorable attitude of the citizens of Belleville and of St. Clair County, including the business community, toward the American Miners' Association is remarkable when we consider that labor unions were then a novelty, which in itself is often sufficient to stir up opposition to a new idea. This hospitable reception of the Association by the St. Clair County community was a contributing factor in the initial success of the organization, which in turn gave encouragement to miners in other districts. It also served as a rallying point, and made possible the spread of the union. Two factors contributed to this attitude, the first being economic, the second springing from the unusual background of the community.

The Belleville coal field, with the limited deposits worked in St. Louis County, Missouri, was the sole source of coal for St. Louis, the commercial and industrial center of a large territory, which had grown in population from 16,000 in 1840, to 161,000 in 1860, and had reached 311,000 at the end of the Civil War decade. St. Clair County, Illinois, where the bulk of the Belleville field mines was located, had a population of 14,000 in 1840, 38,000 in 1860, and passed the 40,000 mark by the middle of the Civil War. Belleville, the county seat and largest city in the county, in 1860, had over 10,000 inhabitants, which by 1863 had increased to 12,000. Although coal had been mined in the county in the forties, and earlier, its real development as a coal field took place in the fifties, before which time, being favored with a rich and productive soil, the economic life of the county centered chiefly in agriculture.

Belleville was founded and laid out as the county seat in 1813, in a move to get the seat of government out of the swamps surrounding the old French settlement of Cahokia in the river bottoms. The large German immigration which came to St. Louis, beginning in the thirties, and increased by the '48ers, overflowed into St. Clair

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County and dominated the old French and American settlers there by the middle fifties. This new immigration, which included many graduates of German universities, built up in the county a liberal cultural background that remains strong to this day. The industries of Belleville before and after the war included flour mills, breweries and distilleries, which shipped their products far up and down the Mississippi River, as well as the manufacture of agricultural implements of all kinds.

At the time of the formation of the Association the coal mines were mainly outside the city, nearer St. Louis, where the bulk of the output was sold. The small industries of the county not being large coal consumers, the community was keenly aware that the chief benefit derived from the coal industry was the money it brought into the county and distributed in wages to the miners who lived in small settlements at varying distances from the county seat. The mining industry was welcomed as contributing to the welfare and upbuilding of the community, not primarily as a producer of fuel needed in the community, but as making customers who spent their wages for the necessities of life. This placed the citizens generally, and the business community in particular, on the side of the miners when they demanded higher working and living standards.

This attitude is reflected, throughout the existence of the Association in St. Clair County, through the local press, regardless of the political complexion of particular papers, the business community, and citizens in general. The open manner in which both Advocate and Democrat repeatedly charged that the miners were "cheated" and "made victims of shameless extortions" by the mine owners, through "dishonest weights and measures," leaves little doubt as to where their sympathies lay. The 1,400 citizens who, early in 1861, signed the petition to the legislature for the "Miners' Bill," asking legislation to stop this practice, speak for the community generally. The fact that the coal operators never at any time used the Belleville newspapers to put their side of the case before the public, adds weight to the above argument. There can be no doubt of the effect on the Association of this weighting of public opinion in St. Clair County on the side of the miners.

But the voice of the St. Louis community, as expressed through

the press of that city and its business organizations, was just the reverse. St. Louis, as a large consumer, wanted cheap coal and threw its weight to the side of the operators. This opposition to the miners and their demands ranged from the bitterly hostile attitude expressed by the Union Merchants' Exchange, to the more suave, but nonetheless determined opposition of the daily newspapers. Always the specter of higher prices was raised, along with the argument of the need for cheap industrial fuel to enable St. Louis industries to compete with similar industries in other cities. In this clash of economic interests between the two business communities, St. Louis, because of its size, had the far greater power; but even with the added influence of the operators it was never able to array St. Clair County against the Association. The reason for this might lie, in part, in the liberal cultural background of that county.

The first leaders of the Association, who had the difficult task of launching the ship, were exceptional men. They recognized the value of enlisting the community on their side, and through public statements to local papers never overlooked an opportunity to take the public into their confidence during controversies with the mine owners. By the details we have of those controversies, their strategy in the strikes in the Belleville field in 1861 and 1863 is revealed as excellent. The proposal made by the miners immediately after settlement of the 1861 strike, to set up a permanent joint board of miners and operators for the consideration of questions in the industry affecting their mutual interests, is startling when we consider it in its own time and place. The return to work in the Belleville field strike in 1863 with the question of discrimination against active leaders of the Association left unsettled was a piece of strategy in which the very existence of the Association in that field was at stake. Not to have taken the risk might have alienated support of the community. That the strategy succeeded and the organization came through stronger than ever, justified it; but the taking of the risk at the time testifies to an intelligent and courageous leadership.

As has already been noted, the Association had at no time during its existence more than one or two full-time paid officers. These were confined to the editor of the *Weekly Miner* and officers of the general Association. Other officers, both of the general Association and

of state and district organizations, received only nominal pay and necessary expenses for their services to the union, and made their living working in the mines. Public declarations of policy during strikes were usually made in mass meetings, where the officers were afforded the protection of anonymity in the mass. Letters to the press in defense of the union and its policies, in all but a few instances, failed to reveal the real name of the writer. Considering the period in which the Association was formed, and the atmosphere in which it functioned, the fear of reprisals against individuals was no doubt strongly felt by the miners, and explains why so few of the Association's leaders are mentioned, or stand out, in contemporary accounts of its activities.

Because of this anonymity, our knowledge of the leaders of the Association is confined to only a few men. Daniel Weaver, although his tenure of office was probably less than a year, stands out. Although his Address to the miners was signed only with the initials "D. W.," his letters to the miners, published in the Belleville Democrat during March and April, following the formation of the Association in 1861, were signed with his full name and title as secretary of the Association. He was, no doubt, willing to assume the risk, but conferences with the mine owners in his official capacity in the settlement of the strike had already made fruitless any further attempts to conceal his connection with the Association. John Hinchcliffe also stands out in contemporary accounts, his position as an attorney and editor of the Weekly Miner making him secure from reprisals by the mine owners. Thomas Lloyd, the first president of the Association, and William Bowen, later the "agent" of the general Association, both active during the first years of the organization, received bare mention in the newspapers of the time.

The Association in western Pennsylvania received much mention in the Pittsburgh newspapers because of its activities during 1864, but the anonymity of the leaders in that district was maintained. An account of a mass meeting of strikers in September of that year mentions the names of four speakers, one of which, Abraham Winters, along with four others not previously named, appeared on the bill presented in the state legislature, in January, 1865, for the incorporation of the state Association. The only known officer in any of

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the Ohio districts is John Pollock, secretary of the Massillon Miners' Association, who was later active in efforts to obtain mine safety legislation in Ohio. He was one of the signers of the call that resulted in the formation of the Miners' National Association in 1873.

DANIEL WEAVER

Daniel Weaver was born in Staffordshire, England, February 29, 1824, where he later worked in the mines. Before coming to St. Clair County, Illinois, he resided for a time in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, in the anthracite region, and in Youngstown, Ohio, in the Mahoning Valley. The exact year of his arrival in the United States with his wife and two children is uncertain, but at the time of the formation of the American Miners' Association in 1861¹ he was referred to as a "long-time resident" of the Belleville district.

In 1862 he took part in a venture to open a mine at Freeburg, south of Belleville.² This venture apparently did not prove remunerative. But Weaver never returned to work as a miner; he spent the remainder of his working life as a superintendent and mine boss in Freeburg and other places in St. Clair County.³ In 1873 he went to Collinsville, Madison County, to live. Ill health—miner's asthma—forced his retirement from the mines twenty years before he died, July 7, 1899, in Collinsville, where he is buried in Glenwood Cemetery.⁴

McBride describes Weaver as "self-educated, . . . a deep thinker, logical reasoner, forcible in expression, and a plain, energetic speaker, who brought convictions to the minds of those listening to him."⁵ Evans says that he was a man of "great intelligence, a profound thinker of the problems confronting the . . . workers of his trade,"⁶

¹ Evans, Chris, *History of the United Mine Workers of America*. United Mine Workers of America, Indianapolis [1918], vol. 1, p. 10. On calculations based upon the ages of Weaver's children at the time of their arrival in the United States, some of Weaver's surviving relatives have fixed 1849 or 1850 as the approximate date. All agree that the stay in Pottsville and Youngstown was relatively brief.

² Belleville Democrat, December 27, 1862, and January 10, 1863.

³ Rentchler and Reeb Stations.

⁴ Facts of Weaver's life obtained from surviving relatives.

⁵ McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners, in The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888, p. 247.

⁶ Evans, Chris, *History of the United Mine Workers of America*, vol. 1, p. 6.

while Roy praises him as a man of "superior intelligence, and of lofty ideals."¹ A careful reading of the address and his letters to the miners, published during March and April, 1861, amply confirms these judgments. Although Weaver was brought up in the Church of England, and all his life considered himself an Episcopalian, through reading and study he had acquired such a philosophy of life that he no longer felt the need for church attendance, or the observance of other outward forms of the faith.

Weaver's address to the miners, dealing with the formation of the Association, is a clear, concise, and forceful document, which can hardly be matched in the annals of American labor. It cannot be considered a radical document, measured by present-day standards, although an analysis of the address in the light of conditions in the period in which it was written would make it such. Boiled down to its essence, it proposed that the miners improve their condition through association, an inherent right in any free society. One of the chief requisites to this end was for the workers to acquire "knowledge, which is power." This suggests gradual readjustments, rather than radical and sudden change in their status. These changes were to be accomplished through the economic power of the union, as well as through the exercise of their rights on the political field.

Both McBride² and Roy³ say that Weaver had been active in the Chartist movement in England, the former suggesting that these activities "may, indeed, have hurried his departure." The prefacing of the address with the poem, *What Might Be Done*, indicates, on the part of Weaver, at least a sympathetic interest in the Chartist movement and its objectives. But whatever may have been his attitude toward Chartism in his younger days in England, his own words show that in 1861, while he still considered the objectives good, he had little use for the methods of the Chartists.

What have the Chartists of England done for reform? They have made enough noise and agitation but what have they achieved? I do not mean here to question or dispute the soundness of their doctrines; but I

¹ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903], p. 63.

² McBride, John, *The Coal Miners*, p. 247.

³ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 62.

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am free to assert that their extreme demands, "the Charter and no surrender," and the unanimous and total rejection of, and opposition to every installment movement of reform short of the "six points" has rendered them, as a body, *effete*. Their objects were good, but their general policy was reprehensible. A merchant would be considered crazy in refusing an installment of a debt, especially if it gave him increased facilities to recover the rest of his dues. Not so the Chartists. They stand where they did twenty years ago.¹

The entire letter from which these words are quoted is an earnest appeal to the miners to protect the Association from what he considered the worst of all dangers confronting it—"that reckless zeal, and mad, headlong precipitancy, which invariably obstructs, or ultimately annihilates the cause it is intended to promote." His concept of the correct policy for the Association is summed up thus: "It is not wise at all times to demand at once all that is due, but what is attainable." It is safe to assume that the union was guided by this principle so long as Weaver remained an officer.

Weaver's interest in the Association and the miners was maintained after the termination of his connection with the organization. From the sharpness with which he expressed his opinions, in 1866, over the news of the suspension of the Miner and Artisan and the sale of the miners' printing press, it is evident that he had continued to follow closely the affairs of the Association.² In the late sixties, in conjunction with other miners' leaders in the Belleville field, he took part in the drafting of legislation for better ventilation and greater safety in the Illinois mines.³ This legislation failed of passage in the legislature of 1869, and several more years were to pass before laws providing such protection for the miners were finally enacted.

THOMAS LLOYD

Contemporary accounts make little mention of Thomas Lloyd. The fact that he was the first president of the Association cannot be verified from these sources. Lloyd was only a few months younger than Weaver, having been born April 1, 1824, in Staffordshire, England. He landed in New York on May 1, 1860, going direct to St.

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 6, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.

² Belleville Advocate, July 20, 1866, Daniel Weaver letter.

³ United Mine Workers' Journal, vol. 19, no. 21, October 1, 1908.

Clair County, which was his home for the remainder of his life. His obituary refers to him as "president of the first miners' union organized west of the Allegheny Mountains," and cites his service during the war, "mining coal near Chattanooga for the government."¹ He was appointed one of the commissioners of the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics when it was established in 1879, and served four years, his name appearing as such in the first three biennial reports of the Bureau. He also served three terms as county inspector of mines in St. Clair County.

He died in September, 1896, and is buried in Green Mount Cemetery in Belleville. According to his obituary, "he was always as a labor leader moderate and conservative in his views and actions." He was a Republican in politics, at least in his later years, during which period he had been appointed by a Republican governor, to the post in the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Roy says that Lloyd had also participated in the Chartist movement.² He may have done so in his earlier years, but it is most likely that he was influenced later by the conservative policies of Alexander Macdonald, who had a large following among British miners at the time when Lloyd came to America, as well as by the opinions held by Weaver after he arrived here. McBride speaks of him as "an energetic worker and a forceful speaker, . . . the chief support of Weaver in getting the organization established."³

JOHN HINCHCLIFFE

John Hinchcliffe, though not a miner, was nevertheless of great service to the Association, and even after his connection with it as editor of the *Miner* had been severed, never failed the miners as a speaker at their meetings, and in pushing mining legislation, first as a delegate to the Illinois constitutional convention in 1870, and later as a member of the lower house of the legislature and in the State Senate. He was born April 20, 1822, in Bradford, Yorkshire, England, where he worked as a factory boy. He left the factory because of ill health and learned the tailor's trade,⁴ in which he was

¹ Belleville Advocate, September 25, 1896.

² Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 62.

³ McBride, John, *The Coal Miners*, p. 247. McBride refers to Lloyd as a Welshman.

⁴ He entered the factory at the age of six, at wages of 9d. a week. The nature

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an apprentice, journeyman, foreman, and employer in Leeds and Manchester. In 1847, at the age of twenty-five, he came to America and worked at his trade in New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. In 1858 he moved to Mascoutah, in St. Clair County, where he opened a merchant tailor's shop. The following description of him is by a contemporary who first met him there in 1858.

He was then a brilliant, fascinating young man, in appearance very much younger than he was, and giving promise of influence and power in any community where he should cast his lot. His conversation showed more than ordinary talent and intelligence. His whole education was acquired in the parish schools of England, his native country, but a short talk with him sufficed to show that his want of a collegiate or classical training was supplied by extensive reading and a sharp observation of mankind, aided by a quickness of parts and a retentiveness of memory, which were the admiration of us all. He loved books and mastered their contents with celerity, seeming ready at all times to turn them to account in speech or writing.¹

During his stay in Mascoutah he studied law and was admitted to the bar by the Illinois Supreme Court in December, 1860, when just short of the age of thirty-nine; and the following February, at the time of the strike in which the Miners' Association was organized, he moved to Belleville and opened a law office. In addition to his law practice, immediately after his arrival it was announced that he had been made co-editor of the *Democrat*.² It was probably in this connection that he first met Weaver and other miners' leaders, which led to the use of the columns of the *Democrat* for the publication of official letters of the Association and the later connection of Hinchcliffe with the Association as editor of the *Miner*. Although there can be no doubt of the authorship of the letters over Weaver's signature, published in the *Democrat* during March and April, 1861,³ it

of his illness, "rheumatism," the change of occupation following it, and a description of him in later life as "so strong, in such vigorous health, so full of life, so youthful," suggest the factory as the cause of his early ill health.

¹ Belleville Advocate, February 22, 1878, address by Col. N. Niles at memorial services of St. Clair County Bar.

² He gave up the editorial position in October, 1861. (Belleville Democrat, October 12, 1861.)

³ Comparison of the letters with Weaver's address to the miners leaves no doubt of this.

is quite probable that Hinchcliffe encouraged him to write the letters with an offer to publish them. There is reason to believe, however, because of its style, that Hinchcliffe wrote the long letter signed "Union Miner" which appeared in the Democrat on May 2, 1863, a few weeks before the establishment of the Miner.

Immediately after becoming a resident in Belleville, Hinchcliffe began to take a leading part in its community life, and was active in local patriotic meetings held after the firing on Fort Sumter and the outbreak of the Civil War. In the fall of 1862 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the lower house of the legislature on the Democratic ticket, and from December of that year until March, 1863, he served as captain in the Commissary Department of the Army in Cincinnati.¹ He was thus absent from Belleville during the strike in February of that year, but it is evident, from the publication of the Miner, which began in May after his return, that he maintained close contact with the Association and its leaders. His election as president pro tem of the Peoria convention of the Association leaves no doubt of his standing with the miners, and the popularity of the Miner seems to attest to his ability as an editor, although no copies of the large circulation which was built up appear to have survived to enable us to make an independent judgment on this point.

After the suspension of the Miner and Artisan, in July, 1866, Hinchcliffe continued his residence in St. Louis for about six months, as editor of the Industrial Advocate, published by the Workingman's Union of Missouri. He returned to Belleville early in 1867 to resume the practice of law, making an industrial survey of Belleville for the newly organized Board of Trade, of which he served as secretary in 1868. He appeared as a speaker at the miners' meetings in the spring of 1868, during their effort to reorganize the Association and to get just weights, and served on the committee which met the operators to settle that strike. He took part in the

¹ Hinchcliffe was dismissed from his post in the Commissary Department on charges of disloyalty to the cause of the North, first made against him by political opponents at the time of his race for the legislature in the fall of 1862. After further investigation by the War Department, he was exonerated, but he declined to accept the offer of the Secretary of War to appoint him to the next vacancy. The several letters dealing with this matter appearing in the Belleville Democrat, March 28, 1863, make it clear that the charges were groundless.

meetings with Weaver, Walton Rutledge, and others¹ to draft and promote the enactment of mining legislation in the state.

Hinchcliffe's interest in the general labor movement sent him as a delegate to the first convention of the National Labor Union, held in Baltimore in 1866, where he represented several organized labor bodies in St. Louis, as well as the "Miners' Lodge of Illinois." He was elected president of the convention, and served on a committee which went to Washington to present the convention's views on convict labor and public lands to President Andrew Johnson, as well as on the committee to draw up the declaration for the next convention. At the Chicago meeting in 1867 he was elected treasurer.

He was a delegate to the Illinois constitutional convention of 1870, which inserted in the new constitution a clause making it obligatory on the legislature to enact legislation for the protection of the miners,² such measures having failed of passage in the legislature of 1869. He pushed these measures as a representative in the lower house in 1871, and as a member of the State Senate in 1873.³ In 1872 at a luncheon given in his honor, the "working miners of Illinois and Indiana" presented him with a gold watch and chain in

¹ John Morgan, George Kinghorn, and William E. Owens, all prominent miners' leaders in Illinois during the seventies, and George Adams, of Indiana. Morgan was the first president and Rutledge the first secretary of the Miners' Benevolent and Protective Association, organized in 1872, with membership in Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri. Rutledge later served for many years as state inspector of mines in Illinois, and acquired a national reputation as a mining authority. Kinghorn was president of the Illinois district of the Miners' National Association, organized in 1873, and Owens was president of the Belleville district miners' union during the same period. Kinghorn was one of the signers of the call for the Youngstown convention in 1873, at which the Miners' National Association was organized.

² This obligation still rests on the Illinois legislature, the constitution of 1870 still remaining in effect.

³ "In a very considerable degree he used the law as accessory to the work of his life—the amelioration of workingmen. Upon his achievements in this field he was willing to rest his fame; and these are his most durable monuments; for them will he be longest and most gratefully remembered. He had good reason to believe, and did believe, that mainly through his efforts a provision was engrafted in the organic law of the state, making it the duty of the legislature to provide for the better security of persons working in mines, and while a member of the legislature he drew that chapter in the revised statutes of 1874 which carries out this mandate of the constitution. In this work he was in grim earnest. He never grew weary, never faltered, never lost courage." (Belleville Advocate, February 22, 1878, address by R. A. Halbert at memorial services of the St. Clair County Bar.)

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recognition of his services in the enactment of mining legislation.¹ As a Democrat,² active in the councils of the party, his election to the legislature during a period when the Republicans were still campaigning on war issues, was an indication of his popularity, as well as of non-partisan support by the miners. He died suddenly, on February 17, 1878,³ and is buried in Green Mount Cemetery in Belleville.

Not quite fifty-six when he died, the last seventeen years of Hinchcliffe's life covered his public career. It was doubtless because of his outlook on life, and his activities during those seventeen years, that the St. Clair County Bar resolution paid him the following generous and unusual tribute:

He was a very skillful tailor, an able editor and journalist, an excellent lawyer, and a useful legislator, always commanding the respect of his colleagues and the confidence of his constituents; that we condole with the workingmen, and especially with the miners of the country, for the loss to them by his death of a true and faithful friend, advocate and champion of their interests.⁴

Roy says that he was "a ready writer, a good businessman, and a devoted trade unionist."⁵ Evans describes him as "a man of unusual intelligence, ready writer and possessed of an acquired knowledge that made him efficient for the work," as editor of the *Miner*, and a "very consistent advocate of trades unions in the mining field."⁶ Hinchcliffe's chief contribution to the American Miners' Association was effected through the publication the *Weekly Miner*, although

¹ The Illinois and Indiana miners co-operated in the drafting of this legislation, with simultaneous efforts to secure its enactment in both states. This gave the miners of both states the benefit of the advice of a larger group in drafting the legislation, but it was dictated largely by competitive conditions in the industry.

² Hinchcliffe left the Democratic Party in 1874 because of his disagreement with the currency reform planks in the party platform. He actively supported the Republican candidate for Congress that fall. (*Belleville Advocate*, October 2 and 9, 1874.)

³ Facts about the life of Hinchcliffe gathered from files of *Belleville Democrat* and *Belleville Advocate*, including obituary in *Advocate*, February 22, 1878, and from *United Mine Workers' Journal*, vol. 19, no. 19, September 17, 1908, *Forty Years a Miner and Men I Have Known*, by An Old Miner.

⁴ *Belleville Advocate*, February 22, 1878.

⁵ Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, p. 67.

⁶ Evans, Chris, *History of the United Mine Workers of America*, vol. 1, p. 10.

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his advice and counsel in the more than two years before its establishment were also of value. His work in the field of mining legislation is outstanding, coming after the Association had ceased to exist, and it is the measure of the man that he did not harbor bitterness after his removal as editor, which he must have felt to be extremely unfair, but continued unabatedly to work for improvement of the condition of the workers.

CHAPTER XIII

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION IN AMERICAN LABOR HISTORY

THE transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy in the United States was well under way in the 1840's and 1850's. The three key industries indispensable to this basic change—iron and steel, coal, and transportation—meshed gears smoothly as the process accelerated during the two following decades. The unions of coal miners, iron and steel workers, and railroad workers organized in the early sixties were not the result of chance, but the product of social and economic forces loosed by this industrial development. Their mission was to adjust the relations between workers and their employers, made necessary by the basic change that was taking place. The situation required the building of new social forms, and a change of attitude on the part of both workers and employers. The success or failure of the particular unions organized at that time is not important. What is important is that unions appeared, and that when they failed, either through inexperience, or aggressive opposition from employers, others rose to take their places. As with any other emerging social institution, groping for direction was inevitable. Typical of the American labor movement in the sixties, this confusion in methods and objectives declined as experience accumulated in succeeding decades.

Development of the modern labor movement in Great Britain and the United States followed the same general lines, although for obvious reasons the beginnings are separated in time. This similarity was due chiefly to similarity in factors that influenced and shaped industrial development in both countries, and to a lesser degree to a common language and culture, and the influence of British immigrant workers in America. Economic factors, alone, would in all likelihood have produced in this country a labor movement closely approximating, in form and policy, the one that did result. Cul-

tural ties with Great Britain, and the presence of British workers in America, played their part in shortening the period necessary to clarify aims and methods, and to fit the new social organism into the contemporary social environment. However, the rapid expansion of our industrial system, and the consequent need to make haste in the readjustment of human relations, added significance to the contribution made by British experience.

In addition to the newness of the proposal for workers to organize, the ill-defined state of their rights, which made prosecution for conspiracy an ever-present threat, must be given full weight in any appraisal of the American labor movement of the sixties. Although some progress had been made in the organization of labor unions during the thirties and forties, this earlier experience did not serve as a guide and example in the sixties, not only because it had been forgotten, but because of changes in our industrial setup in the interim, and the wider range of competition resulting from better means of transportation. The labor movement of the sixties can be considered a revival only from a historical point of view; for all practical purposes, it was a new and untried movement, without precedents.

A few short-lived labor papers were published in the East during the years immediately preceding the Civil War, but these disappeared during the depression following the outbreak of war. The *Weekly Miner*, first published May 27, 1863, was one of the first of "no less than 120 daily, weekly, and monthly journals of labour reform" to appear during the period 1863-1873. Two other widely known and much quoted labor papers of that period, *Fincher's Trades' Review*, published in Philadelphia, and the *Workingman's Advocate*, published in Chicago, were preceded by the *Weekly Miner*, the first by one week, the latter by thirteen months. "The editors of nearly all of these labour papers believed themselves pioneers in the field, so completely had the movements of the thirties and the forties been forgotten."¹

The effect of this lack of precedents is reflected in the erratic course followed by many of the unions of the period. The *Iron Molders'*

¹ Common, John R., and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1926, vol. 2, pp. 15 and 17.

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International Union has been described as a "typical labour organisation of the sixties,"¹ because of its deviations from the straight road of trade unionism, at one time almost wholly abandoning it for "co-operation and general labour reform."¹ It was not until 1870, after the failure of a co-operative foundry sponsored by the union, that the molders abandoned experiments, and elected a "thorough trades-unionist" as president.² The Machinists and Blacksmiths International Union, with brilliant intellectual leadership, were the "idealists and theorists" of the period, and, as a result, "for a long time lagged behind others in the everyday practical struggle for betterment in the trade." During the post-war depression years their interest was diverted to eight-hour legislation, which at the time had the interest of the general labor movement, and the activities of their union "in the purely economic field were allowed to decline." It was not until the more prosperous years of the early seventies that the union, now under different leadership, took on new life.³

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers,⁴ organized in August, 1863, was a militant trade union during the first year of its existence, after which it passed into the hands of conservative leadership, where it remained for ten years, with an official policy that frowned on strikes, and sought to avoid antagonizing employers. The new policy was designed to win the employers' approval of the union, and they were in turn expected voluntarily to improve working conditions and to raise wages. In defense of this policy, it was contended that the policies adopted by other labor organizations did not fit the needs of the Brotherhood.⁵

An exception to this rule was the Sons of Vulcan, first organized in 1858, a relatively small organization of highly skilled iron workers (puddlers), concentrated in the Pittsburgh iron manufacturing district. It was a straight trade union, without novel features or outstanding leadership. Yet, in 1865, this union entered into a sliding-scale wage agreement with the associated employers in the industry,

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 48.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 56.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 56-58.

⁴ Organized under the name of Brotherhood of the Footboard; changed a year later.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 63.

which, with an upward revision of the scale in 1867, remained in effect until the depression of 1873.¹

It is not the purpose here to evaluate the role played by the intellectual and pseudo-intellectual concepts that cropped up in the early American labor movement. But it is interesting to note in passing that in the examples cited above, deviations from the straight road of trade unionism occurred in unions guided by this more theoretical and idealistic leadership. The more substantial and lasting contributions made to trade-union policy in the sixties originated in unions with no outstanding leaders, in which leadership was nominal and policy was shaped by immediate need, with power in the hands of the rank and file, without intellectual or other domination. The writings of Jonathan C. Fincher and Ira Steward, of the machinists, and William H. Sylvis, of the molders, have been a boon to labor historians, but they also present a danger of underestimating the role played by unions of the same period in which the leaders were less articulate, whose names are largely forgotten, and whose union activities were a part of their everyday struggle for existence. It was the bread-and-butter outlook of these unions that eventually gave direction to the modern American labor movement.

Measured even by present-day standards, the American Miners' Association was a strikingly modern trade union. With the exception of John Hinchcliffe, who as an outsider was never fully accepted by the miners, its leaders were for the most part anonymous, and their influence evanescent. None but Daniel Weaver, with only a short term of office, left any noticeable impress on the Association. If John Hinchcliffe, essentially a promoter and impatient of slow progress, had been clothed with official authority, it would have been entirely in character for him to have led the miners to embrace some of the experiments advocated by the intellectuals of the labor movement of the period. As it was, there is a hint in the circumstances surrounding it that the controversy over the *Weekly Miner* which brought about the resignation of its editor may have had its origin in some such proposal by Hinchcliffe. The doubts created

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 80. The Sons of Vulcan was the strongest of several unions in the iron and steel industry that merged in 1875 to form the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of the United States.

in the young labor movement by the trying times immediately following the close of the Civil War made innovations appear more plausible, and therefore easier to introduce. Although there were isolated instances, in the sixties, of small groups of miners leasing and operating mines on a co-operative basis,¹ there is no evidence that the Association either recommended or encouraged the practice. As a matter of fact, co-operative mines would have helped to break down the theory, already accepted in the industry, of the need for competitive mining rates.

In the economic field the Association, throughout its existence, used the direct method of the strike, not because it was unwilling to try the more peaceful methods of the council table, but because it could get results in no other way. The proposal of the Belleville district miners, in March, 1861, to set up a joint board of miners and operators to stabilize wages by stabilizing the price of coal,² and the later proposal of the western Pennsylvania miners, in August, 1864, for the establishment of a uniform mining rate throughout the mining districts of the country,³ are evidence that the miners were concerned more with practical results than with methods. The miners' strikes against wage reductions in the post-Civil War depression years, with economic conditions that indicated almost certain defeat, resulted in the final dissolution of the Association, but they were strikes in the best trade-union tradition. During a similar critical period following the World War of 1914-1918, Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, counseled resistance through strikes, even if the final result was the loss of the union, on the theory that in such times it was better to have fought and lost than never to have fought.

To improve health and safety standards in the mines, and to insure honest weights and measures, both difficult of attainment by any other means, and to resist legislative restrictions on the rights of

¹ The Belleville Democrat of July 22, 1865, mentions the organization of a co-operative mine in that district by a small group of miners. Commons, John R., and Associates, *History of Labour in the United States* (vol. 2, p. 111) mention coal miners, in listing producers' co-operative ventures organized in the latter sixties, but no specific instances are cited.

² See p. 97.

³ See pp. 155-156.

workers, the Association resorted to the political field. Seeking immediate, practical benefits, the miners were again direct in their methods. They shunned the political abstractions so common during the period, and followed the simple policy of support at the polls for those candidates who would agree to support the miners' legislative demands.¹ Although no practical benefits were gained by the miners through the legislative program carried on during the existence of the Association, the groundwork was laid, and experience gained, that resulted in the enactment of health and safety legislation during the following decade. The Illinois Weights and Measures Act, the single legislative achievement of the Association, did not give the miners the protection they had expected. Whether the fault lay with the scalers whose duty it was to enforce the law, or with inadequacies of the law itself, complaints of short weights continued. Attempts by the miners in the Belleville field to get better enforcement of the law through the courts resulted in the fining of several operators, but the old system of short weights continued relentlessly.

The right of association for mutual protection is a natural right which cannot be denied to its citizens by any country that would call itself free. As with all other natural rights, it cannot be granted; it must be taken. Its free exercise by any given group depends upon the power of that group to assert and defend its rights. The right of association was denied British workers for centuries by circuitous methods. It was directly prohibited by the Combination Acts of 1800, and later established, with some restrictions, by statutory enactment. The right of American workers to organize has never been seriously questioned by statutory enactment, but it was severely restricted in the early days of workers' organizations by application in the courts of rules and precedents derived from our English common-law heritage. American workers established the right to organize only by

¹ At a mass meeting of miners in the Mahoning Valley in August, 1865, resolutions were adopted, denouncing the introduction of bills in the Ohio legislature "to abridge our rights," and declaring the "determination to uphold our right to meeting in associative form, for the discussion and adjustment of our affairs." The miners pledged themselves to disregard all political parties, and to "give our suffrage in the support *only* of such candidates, at the approaching October elections, as shall most unequivocally pledge themselves to oppose all such action in the future." (Fincher's Trades' Review, September 2, 1865, reprinted from Weekly Miner.)

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aggressive assertion of that right in the economic field. Although in the sixties this right had already been confirmed in some states by judicial process,¹ in most states it still remained ill-defined.

It is significant that Daniel Weaver, in his address to the miners at the time of the formation of the American Miners' Association, felt it necessary to enter into a full discussion of the right of association, and to cite examples in all classes of society, from "railroad and banking companies" to "trade associations and sick societies," to justify organization of the miners. He specifically mentioned the need to have "our rights defined." The shadowy border between legal and illegal acts was evidently a cause for concern to the miners during the Belleville field strike of 1861, when they declared in a public statement that they did not "regard the maintenance of their rights as being incompatible with law and order."² During the strike of 1863, in the same coal field, the Association again felt it necessary vigorously to defend the right of association in answering attacks on the strike.³

The concern of the miners over their rights was well grounded; the restrictive "LaSalle Black Laws" had been enacted during the course of the Illinois strikes in 1863. But since this legislation was directed at hampering the activities of workers during strikes, rather than at the more fundamental right to strike, or the right of association, its enactment, although resented by all organized labor in Illinois because of its severity,⁴ nevertheless marks a milestone in the progress of the labor movement. The shifting of the opposition to new grounds gave tacit recognition to the right of workers to organize and to strike. This same shift is seen in the enactment of the

¹ As early as 1842 in Massachusetts.

² Belleville Democrat, February 2, 1861.

³ Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863, letter signed "In Behalf of the Miners' Association."

⁴ During the election of 1864, the Chicago Trades Assembly asked candidates of all parties for the legislature from that city to pledge themselves, if elected, to work for repeal of the "LaSalle Black Laws." (*Workingman's Advocate*, November 5, 1864.) In 1868 the Belleville district miners urged defeat of a candidate who, as state senator, had been active in the passage of the act (*Belleville Democrat*, October 22, 1868), and as late as 1878 the St. Clair County miners included "the repeal of the LaSalle Black Laws" in their legislative program for submission to the representatives of their district in the legislature. (*Belleville Advocate*, November 22, 1878.)

"Ten-Day Eviction Law" in Pennsylvania early in 1865, which came as a result of the Tioga County lockout. The forces that brought about the shift are also to be seen at work in the admitted futility of any attempt during the fall of 1864, to prosecute for conspiracy the striking miners of western Pennsylvania. Juries who would convict could not be found nor judges who would take seriously such prosecutions. But although the economic power of the western Pennsylvania miners held off prosecution in 1864, the prosecution of miners and union leaders on charges of conspiracy in central Pennsylvania a dozen years later¹ is evidence that the long process of "defining our rights" had not yet ended.

The fact that the Miners' Association had few outstanding leaders, and that its policies were determined and written by men who were prouder of their skill with a pick than with a pen, did not prevent the Association's policies from being based upon a clear understanding of the economic situation generally, and of the coal industry in particular. Nor was a knowledge of economic theory lacking. In his address to the miners Daniel Weaver, among other things, advised study of "the relation of Labor to Capital"—a piece of advice which he reiterated in a published letter to the miners some months later.² This advice would appear to have been superfluous, if we are to judge by the knowledge on economic subjects displayed by Association members in published letters and official resolutions.

A number of letters and resolutions have been mentioned or quoted in the foregoing pages, showing the intimate knowledge the miner had of the industry, including figures on costs of production and transportation, selling prices and profits, as well as markets and competitive conditions. And, what is more important, he knew the relation of these industrial factors to his own welfare. In later

¹ As a result of a miners' strike in Clearfield County in 1875, John Siney, president, and Xingo Parks, organizer of the Miners' National Association, and a number of miners were arrested, but only Siney and Parks were tried. Although Parks was found guilty and served part of his sentence of one year before he was pardoned, the law was amended in the following session of the legislature to confirm the right of workers to organize, to strike, and to dissuade new men, by peaceful means, from taking their places. (Roy, Andrew, *History of the Coal Miners of the United States*. J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus [1903], pp. 179-185.)

² *Belleville Democrat*, April 27, 1861.

years knowledge of the economic situation, as it affected the miner, displayed by miners' leaders in joint wage-scale conferences with the operators, has often been noted by observers from outside the industry. Although complicated and subject to swift changes because of the basic and highly competitive nature of the industry, a good working knowledge of economic conditions both inside and outside the industry was, in the sixties, and is still today, indispensable in the formation of policy by any miners' union. The miner of the sixties appears to have been quick to grasp this need.

Coal operators of the sixties could not be expected to miss the chance afforded by a war market to increase their profits by raising prices, and to answer criticism by blaming the price increases on the higher wages of the miners. When this criticism first came to Belleville district miners in the fall of 1862, they countered with a public statement based entirely on the existing economic situation, and without abuse of the operators. Increase in wages, the miners said, was justified by higher living costs due to the war, while the higher price of coal was due to "the demand being more than equal to the supply." A few months later Belleville district miners defended in homely economics a demand for further increase in wages by measuring the war dollar against the price of "drygoods by the yard" and "groceries by the pound," finding that the dollar had depreciated by more than half. For the more sophisticated, the miners obtained the same result by the use of the appreciation of the price of gold as a yardstick. In the same letter miners warned against "the growing power of capital," created by the workers, which they saw being "used as a weapon to crush to earth the freedom of body and mind of its creators." A few months later, in a semi-official letter, the fundamental relations between labor and capital were discussed further, with the conclusion that "labor must rule capital"; labor must be the ruling power "in a nation like the one we live in."

Although it is obvious that increased living costs during the Civil War pressed them as severely as costs did miners in other districts, the miners of western Pennsylvania in their demands for higher wages stressed the high profits of the operators, rather than of living costs. From the anonymous miner who, early in 1864, told the

Pittsburgh Coal Exchange that the price of coal on the river at Cincinnati and Louisville governed the miners' wages in western Pennsylvania, and since prices were high, wages must go up; to the miners' committee sitting in conference with representatives of the Coal Exchange that stated with a calm finality that the market price sustained the miners' demand for higher wages; and the spokesman in a strikers' mass meeting in September of the same year, who attributed the high price of coal to "the rebellion [war] and the avaricious disposition of the bosses," the miners in western Pennsylvania showed that they understood conditions in the industry, and knew how those conditions affected the welfare of the miners. So well and consistently did these miners present their case, that before the end of the year 1864, despite efforts of the operators to fasten on the miners the blame for the extremely high price of coal in Pittsburgh, the people of that city, generally, as consumers, agreed that the operators, and not the miners, were the "extortionists."

The stabilization program proposed by the Belleville district miners in March, 1861, was an early recognition of the effect on the wage structure of the industry of price-cutting on the part of a minority of operators. Daniel Weaver saw clearly the danger presented by the "reckless competition of unprincipled bosses," but felt that the evil could be avoided if the miners were able to maintain a uniform, or competitive, wage. Since the St. Louis market, in 1861, was supplied entirely from mines in the immediate area, the problem that the Belleville district miners sought to solve was one of intra-district competition only. But the proposal of the western Pennsylvania miners, in 1864, to apply the principle of the competitive wage on an industry-wide basis was recognition of an increase in inter-district competition in the intervening three years, and the consequent need for a wider application of the principle. At the same time the proposal emphasized the fact that, from then on, only a national union would be capable of fully protecting the miners' interests.

The basic tenet of this proposal by the miners has remained the only force in the industry to mitigate the twin evils of pauperization of the miners, and bankruptcy of the mine owners, which result from unregulated competition. Its effectiveness has fluctuated through the decades to the present, by the measure of the ability of the miners'

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union to impose and maintain competitive wage rates. Efforts by the National Recovery Administration, "the N.R.A.," in the early 1930's, to regulate competition in the coal industry were unsuccessful, although the simultaneous rebuilding of the United Mine Workers of America under the aegis of the Roosevelt administration brought about much improvement. Whether the current effort of the United States Coal Commission will be more successful in solving this problem that has plagued the industry for eight decades remains to be seen.

Although isolated in the mountains of north central Pennsylvania, miners of the Blossburg district were as advanced as their fellow miners in other districts in their conception of the labor movement, and the relative positions of capital and labor in society. In a resolution adopted early in 1865, during the third month of the lockout in the Blossburg district, the locked-out miners pledged themselves to continue to resist destruction of their union "by all the means that by God and the laws of our country have been given us," and so to "prove our fealty to the cause we have espoused." Evidence of the deep convictions of class self-respect and loyalty stirred up by the controversy, is to be seen in another part of the resolution, which declared:

That labor exists prior to, and is independent of, capital, which as the fruit of labor, could never have had a prior existence to labor itself; and we recognize in labor an element of national greatness and wealth, which should command so much the more high consideration, since it is the creator of capital.¹

Although the language employed in the resolution would appear to have been borrowed, in part, from an official utterance of President Lincoln,² its wholehearted acceptance by the Tioga County

¹ Among the documents on the Blossburg lockout published in Fincher's *Trades' Review*, March 25, 1865. The resolution was adopted in a meeting of the locked-out miners, held March 9, 1865.

² "Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is superior to capital, and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as any other rights. Nor is it denied that there is, and probably always will be, a relation between labor and capital producing mutual benefits." (First Annual Message of President Abraham Lincoln, December 3, 1861, in *A Com-*

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miners, and the interest shown in other districts, indicate that it was hailed by the miners as a confirmation, in high places, of their own beliefs. The convictions it expressed probably had much to do with the stubborn resistance with which the miners of that county met the demand that they give up their union.

It is not intended here to convey the impression that the miners of the sixties were unique in their discussion of economic questions. It may be accepted, however, that the nature of the coal industry, then as now, extremely sensitive to fluctuations of the economic barometer, forced them, in self-defense, to try to understand the social forces at work, and to define their position as workers under the new industrial order. The impact of the basic economic change that was taking place, accelerated by war conditions during the sixties, was not so subtle as to escape the notice of observant contemporaries, who, in the effort to understand and evaluate its course and effect, discussed it more freely than is now generally known or believed. That moral and other considerations sometimes confused issues, may be assumed from the following effort at clarification by a contemporary writer in a business magazine in 1865: "Capital has no bowels or patriotism, and capitalists are instinctive."¹ But on the other hand, the merchants of the Belleville district showed a clear understanding of the connection between high wages and steady work for the miners, and prosperity for the local business community, as well as the need for a miners' union to bring about such conditions. Moreover, it is significant that President Lincoln felt it necessary, with the other big problems facing the Congress in December, 1861, to devote a part of his message to that body to a discussion of the relative rights of labor and capital.

Nor is it to be assumed that in their discussion of economic questions miners of the sixties disputed the fundamentals of the capitalist system of production. Such an assumption would not only do

pilation of Messages and Papers of the Presidents, vol. 7, p. 3258. Prepared under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing, of the House and Senate, pursuant to an Act of the Fifty-second Congress of the United States. Privately printed by Bureau of National Literature, Inc., New York.)

¹ Conant, C. B., *The Coal Fever—Price and Prospects of Anthracite Coal*, in *The Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review*, vol. 52, no. 5, May, 1865, p. 350.

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violence to historical sequence by posing a question in a period before it had attained historical significance, but would be contrary to the expressed thought and action of the Association miners. As the miners saw their status, labor was under a disadvantage in society because of its lack of unity, and ignorance on questions vitally affecting its welfare.¹ They proposed unity and education of the workers through organization to remedy these defects.

The optimistic assertion by the miners that "labor must rule capital" assumed that once the workers were thoroughly organized, and represented in the various legislative bodies on the basis of their preponderant majority in the population, a fair and equitable system of labor relations would logically follow. But the goal of the miners was not to dominate capital; they sought only recognition of their rights on an equality with capital. The miners fully agreed with President Lincoln that capital had rights that should be preserved, and that there existed a mutually beneficial relation between labor and capital.² In their opinion the wrongs suffered by the workers were not the fault of the economic or political system, but the result of the selfishness of some capitalists. It was in the public interest to curb those capitalists by legislative action.

It is necessary, in assessing what appears to be a naïve assumption by the miners that labor would soon, by virtue of its numbers, control the legislative bodies, to take into consideration the period in which the Association arose, and the background of many of its members. Of the British miners among them, it is unlikely that many had been able to qualify to vote under the laws of Great Britain. Free suffrage in this country, and absence of the caste system, such as existed in their home country, were taken seriously by these men, and the proposed use of their new liberty to improve their economic condition is not surprising. Moreover, the concepts of liberty and equality as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, and the influence of the men who signed that document, were

¹ The motto, "Union Is Strength—Knowledge Is Power," appeared on the cover page of the 1864 constitution of the American Miners' Association.

² "We must keep in constant recognition the rights of bosses as well as our own. Capital, as well as labor, must have its due; and that man who would not have his feelings outraged, nor his interests assailed, should extend the same right to others." (Belleville Democrat, March 21, 1861, Daniel Weaver letter.)

still fresh in the minds of people in the middle nineteenth century.¹ Faith in political democracy ran high and was jealously guarded, particularly in the newer parts of the country, away from the eastern seaboard. The miners, native and foreign-born, shared this faith with their contemporaries.

The joint relation between labor and capital envisioned by the Association miners was not a plan for some distant future, when the miners would participate in or take over management of industry, but something to be used in their immediate struggle for higher standards. The settlement of differences between miners and mine owners through joint conferences of representatives of both sides, rather than the resort to strikes and lockouts, would no doubt have fulfilled the conditions of such joint relations. In entering into such joint relations with the operators, the miners most emphatically did not contemplate giving up any of their rights. But they were willing, and anxious, to submit their differences with the operators to the arbitrament of joint discussion before resorting to more drastic measures.

The characteristics of the American Miners' Association that made it unique among the unions of the rising labor movement of the sixties, grew out of the basic and highly competitive nature of the industry, and the consequent pressing, immediate needs of the miners. Their living standards were quickly and adversely affected by seasonally depressed markets, and further reduced by wage cuts when competing operators fought one another for a share in the diminished outlet for their product during these dull periods. The problems of the industry were less complex when viewed in the light of the immediate needs of the miners. Shaped from this point of view, with the leadership of the Association deeply rooted in the rank and file of the miners, the outlook and policies of the Association were simple and direct, aimed to get immediate results in the correction of current grievances.

Although throughout its existence the outlook of the Association remained opportunistic and was based upon immediate needs, it nevertheless early evolved three fundamental policies that were

¹ Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863, letter signed "Union Miner." See Appendix, p. 256.

subsequently adopted by all later American miners' unions, as well as by the trade union movement generally. These fundamental policies, however, grew out of the practice of concentrating on immediate needs, rather than as a result of any conscious effort to formulate a long-term program. They were:

(1) Recognition of the limitations of local and district unions, and the need for a national union in the industry to impose and maintain a competitive wage as between competing districts.

(2) Recognition of the need for joint relations between the union and operators' groups on a scale wide enough jointly to determine and maintain competitive wage rates.

(3) A legislative program based upon the simple and direct method of voting at the polls on election day, regardless of party, for candidates pledged to support the miners' demands for specific laws to remedy immediate grievances, such as dishonest weights, and the absence of minimum health and safety standards enforced by public inspection of mines; and opposition to laws tending to curb the rights of labor.

The characteristics here described may be summarized in the following statement in regard to the place of the American Miners' Association in the history of the trade union movement of the United States: The Association was unique because in outlook and policy it was in advance of the typical trade union of the sixties, and actually set the pattern for the typical trade union of today.

APPENDIX
CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

DANIEL WEAVER'S ADDRESS TO THE MINERS, ON THE NECESSITY FOR ASSOCIATION¹ (PREFACED WITH THE POEM, WHAT MIGHT BE DONE)

What Might Be Done

What might be done if men were wise—
What glorious deeds, my suffering brother,
Would they unite,
In love and right,
And cease their scorn for one another.

Oppression's heart might be imbued
With kindling drops of loving-kindness,
And knowledge pour,
From shore to shore,
Light on the eyes of mental blindness.

All slavery, warfare, lies and wrongs,
All vice and crime might die together;
And wine and corn,
To each man born,
Be free as warmth in summer weather.

What might be done? *This* might be done,
And more than *this*, my suffering brother—
And more than the tongue
Ever said or sung,
If men were wise and loved each other.²

¹ The text here given is that used by McBride (McBride, John, assisted by T. T. O'Malley, *The Coal Miners, in The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, edited by George E. McNeill. M. W. Hazen Company, New York, 1888, pp. 244-245). It differs slightly, but not essentially, from that of Evans (Evans, Chris, *History of the United Mine Workers of America*, Indianapolis, [1918], vol. 1, pp. 6-7), and from that printed in the *United Mine Workers' Journal* (vol. 19, no. 15, August 20, 1908). The version by Roy (Roy, Andrew, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, J. L. Trauger Printing Company, Columbus, [1903], pp. 64-65) is abridged.

² This poem is from Mackay, Charles, *Voices from the Crowd, in The Poetical Works of Charles Mackay*, complete in one volume, Chandoss Classics, Frederick Warne and Company, London, and Scribner, Welford, and Armstrong, New York,

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The necessity of an association of miners, and of those branches of industry immediately connected with mining operations, having for its objects the physical, mental and social elevation of the miner, has long been felt by the thinking portion of the miners generally.

Union is the great fundamental principle by which every object of importance is to be accomplished. Man is a social being, and if left to himself, in an isolated condition, would be one of the weakest creatures; but, associated with his kind, he works wonders. Men can do jointly what they cannot do singly; and the union of minds and hands, the concentration of their power, becomes almost omnipotent. Nor is this all; men not only accumulate power by union, but gain warmth and earnestness. There is an electric sympathy kindled, and the attractive forces inherent in human nature are called into action, and a stream of generous emotion, of friendly regard for each other, binds together and animates the whole.

If men would spread one set of opinions, or crush another, they make a society. Would they improve the sanitary condition of our towns, light our streets with gas, or supply our dwellings with water, they form societies. From the organization of our armies, our railroad and banking companies, down through every minute ramification of society to trades' associations and sick societies, men have learned the power and efficiency of co-operation, and are, therefore, determined to stand by each other. How long, then, will miners remain isolated—antagonistic to each other? Does it not behoove us, as miners, to use every means to elevate our position in society, by reformation of character, by obliterating all personal animosities and frivolous nationalities, abandoning our pernicious

1876, p. 232. In this edition the preface to the 1857 edition of *Voices from the Crowd*, first published in 1846, is quoted as follows: "The Poems entitled, 'Voices from the Crowd,' were for the most part written in the year 1845, and in the early part of 1846, a time of social and political agitation. The Corn Laws were unrepealed; and Sir Robert Peel had not announced the downfall of the old protective system. Many of them were intended to aid—as far as verses could aid—the efforts of the zealous and able men who were endeavoring to create a public opinion in favour of untaxed food, and of Free Trade and free intercourse among all the nations of the world. They were written as plainly as possible, that they might express the general sentiment of the toiling masses in phraseology, broad, simple and intelligent." (*Ibid.*, p. 204.) The *Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia* states that Charles Mackay was a Scottish poet who was special correspondent for the *London Times* in New York during the American Civil War. Born in Perth in 1814, he was editor of the *Glasgow Argus*, 1844-1847, and of the *Illustrated London News*, 1852-1859. It was as editor of the *Glasgow Argus* that he made his reputation in 1846 with the publication of *Voices from the Crowd*. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Marie Corelli was his adopted daughter. He died in London in 1889.

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habits and degrading pursuits, and striving for the attainment of pure and high principles and generous motives, which will fit us to bear a manly, useful and honorable part in the world? Our unity is essential to the attainment of our own rights and the amelioration of our present condition; and our voices must be heard in the legislative halls of our land. There it is that our complaints must be made and our rights defined. The insatiable maw of Capital would devour every vestige of Labor's rights; but we must demand legislative protection; and to accomplish this, we must organize. Our remedy, our safety, our protection, our dearest interests, and the social well-being of our families, present and future, depend on our Unity, our duty, and our regard for each other.

In laying before you, therefore, the objects of this association, we desire it to be understood that our objects are not merely pecuniary, but to mutually instruct and improve each other in knowledge, which is power; to study the laws of life; the relation of Labor to Capital; politics, municipal affairs, literature, science, or any other subject relating to the general welfare of our class. Has not experience and observation taught us what one of the profoundest thinkers of the present day has said, that "All human interests, and combined human endeavors, and social growth in this world, have, at certain stages of their developments, required organizing; and Labor—the grandest of human interests—requires it now. There must be an organization of Labor; to begin with it straightway, to proceed with it, and succeed in it more and more." One of America's immortals said, "To me there is no East, no West, no North, no South," and I would say, let there be no English, no Irish, Germans, Scotch or Welsh. This is our country, and

"All men are brethren—how the watch-words run!
And when men act as such is justice won."

Come, then, and rally around the standard of Union—the union of States and the unity of miners, and with honesty of purpose, zeal and watchfulness—the pledge of success—unite for the emancipation of our labor, and the regeneration and elevation physically, mentally and morally, of our species.

Yours, on behalf of the miners,

D. W.

THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

PETITION FOR ENACTMENT OF THE "MINERS' BILL" TO
INSURE HONEST WEIGHT AND MEASUREMENT
OF COAL MINED

*(Signed by miners and "1,400 citizens" of St. Clair County and presented
to the Illinois legislature, 1861)¹*

To the Honorable, the Senators and Representatives of the State of Illinois, in Legislative Assembly now met:

We the undersigned your petitioners, coal miners and others, citizens of St. Clair County, and State of Illinois, humbly petition your honorable body for the redress of our grievances, which bear hard upon us, as a body of laborers, more especially at this time, as our employers are reducing our wages and still persist in forcing us to give exorbitant weights and measures which they exact without exception, and to which we are forced to submit, and for which we have no redress except through legislation, and which we may state as follows to wit:

We are employed to dig coal by the bushel, for the reason that some men can dig more coal than others, and therefore that they may be paid accordingly, having no other mode by which our earnings can be regulated.

The coal is sent to the bank in boxes, varying in size at the different mines, and some are weighed and others go for measure; but in either case, we have no guarantee for our just dues. Our employers tell us our boxes weigh or measure so many bushels, when in fact they contain fully one-fourth more than the quantity for which our employers pay us, and we are compelled to submit for the reason that we are not provided with any means of redress.

As all other classes of the community are protected in giving, and receiving just weight and measure, we humbly pray your honorable body to grant us redress, by passing such a law as will protect us from the rapacity of our employers, and your petitioners, as in duty bound will ever pray etc.

¹ Belleville Advocate, February 15, 1861.

LAW FOR HONEST WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

*AN ACT to fix the weight of Coal, and provide for the measurement thereof, in St. Clair County*¹

Section 1. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly, That the standard weight of mineral coal shall be eighty pounds.

Section 2. Whenever the quantity of mineral coal is to be determined, in the county of St. Clair, in this State, by the use of boxes, barrows, or otherwise than by actual weight, it shall be the duty of sellers or contractors for the digging of coal by the bushel, to use boxes, barrows, or other measures, the capacity of which, in bushels, has been ascertained and marked on the box, barrow, or measure used, as provided in section three of this act.

Section 3. Upon the application of any person, a resident of said county of St. Clair, it shall be the duty of the county judge of said county to appoint coal scalers for said county, from time to time, sufficient in number for the coal business of said county, whose duty it shall be, upon the application of any one, owner or superintendent or lessee of a coal mine, to determine and mark, by brand or otherwise, on the box, barrows, or other measure, its capacity, as a measure of coal; for which services the said coal scalers shall be allowed, severally, three dollars a day, to be paid by the employers.

Section 4. Before entering upon the duties of said employment the said coal scalers shall procure from said county judge certificates, in writing, of their appointments, and shall take an oath, to be administered by said county judge, faithfully and impartially to discharge the duties required by this act, to be attached to said certificate of appointment.

Section 5. Any person who shall determine the quantity of coal dug or sold, by the use of any box, barrow or measure, not marked or branded, as provided in this act, two months after the same takes effect, shall forfeit and pay, for each violation of the provisions of this act, a sum not less than five dollars, nor more than fifty dollars, to be sued for and recovered in an action of debt in the name and for the use of the informer, before any justice of the peace of said county.

¹ Public Laws of the State of Illinois, passed by the 22nd General Assembly, convened January 7, 1861. Bailhache and Baker, Printers, Springfield, Illinois, 1861, pp. 83-84.

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Section 6. Any person who shall, knowingly, for the purpose of deceiving or defrauding any other person or persons, falsely state and compute the number of bushels of coal contained in any box, barrow or measure, shall forfeit not less than five nor more than twenty dollars, to be sued for and recovered in action of debt, before any justice of the peace in said county, in the name of and for the use of the informer.

Section 7. It shall also be the duty of the coal scalers, provided for by third section of this act, whenever called upon, to test the accuracy of all weighing scales used in said county of St. Clair, for determining the weight of coal dug or sold; and for such services he shall receive the same compensation as is provided for by section three of this act.

Section 8. Any person who shall use any weighing scales or weights, for receiving, buying or selling coal, which shall appear, upon the examination and testing the same by a coal scaler, to be false, and not correct, knowing the same to be incorrect, shall, upon conviction, be fined in a sum not exceeding twenty-five dollars, for the first offense, and on further conviction one hundred dollars, to be sued for and recovered as other penalties mentioned in this act.

Section 9. It shall be the duty of coal scalers to take into consideration, determine and fix the per cent. of deduction which should be in any given amount of coal, for slack or dross, whether received by weight or measure.

Section 10. This act shall be in force from and after its passage.

Approved February 20, 1861.

DANIEL WEAVER'S LETTER TO THE MINERS,
MARCH 14, 1861¹

Ogles [Station], March 14, 1861

MR. EDITOR:

If your columns are not too crowded already, I have a few lines of information which the miners would be glad to see inserted.

Yesterday there was a meeting of miners' delegates and coal operators in St. Louis, the objects of which were to adjust some difficulties existing between the men and their employers, and to establish, if possible a uniform standard of prices of coal in the market; Mr. Thornton, Chairman and Mr. Kasson, Secretary. The Chairman expressed himself as much embarrassed, being ignorant of the objects of the meeting, and deemed it impracticable to transact business when the bosses and workmen were thus brought into collision. The delegates at this juncture expressed themselves willing to withdraw for a time, if the operators would take up the subject. As it was nearly dinner time, the delegates adjourned until 12½ o'clock; the operators, however, continued their deliberations for half an hour; when on a motion from Mr. Gartside, they agreed to take a day or two's time to consider the matter, and meet again on Friday, [March 15] and would report their decision on Saturday morning [March 16] to the delegates from the workmen. The delegates re-assembled after dinner, when Mr. John Allen, of Missouri, was appointed Chairman, and Daniel Weaver Secretary.

Business was resumed, and a deputation from the bosses, Messrs. Kasson and Gartside, brought in a report of their proceedings, which was in substance as I have stated. The delegates then appointed John Kendall, Mr. Thomson, and Mr. Hunter, the respective delegates from Gravois, Blue Ridge and Dry Hill; and Martin Boyle, of Belleville, to wait upon the operators on Saturday morning next to receive their report, and communicate the same to their respective lodges, and to the delegate meeting at Mr. Siddons, [West Belleville House] in Belleville, on Sunday next [March 17]. The meeting then closed, but we afterwards learned that the Missouri bosses (about twelve in number) had been in caucus and agreed upon a proposition which they would submit to the action of the Illinois operators, viz.: That "Illinois coal, on the Illinois side of the river, should not be sold for less than seven cents per bushel;

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 16, 1861.

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and that Missouri coal should be sold at not less than six cents a bushel on the platform." We will furnish the result of their deliberations next week.

Respectfully yours,

D. WEAVER, *Sec'y*

DANIEL WEAVER'S LETTER TO THE MINERS,
MARCH 21, 1861¹

Ogles [Station] March 21, 1861

DEAR SIR:

Last week I promised to furnish a few more particulars concerning the meeting of coal operators in St. Louis; but as far as I can learn there was no decision come to: it all ended in smoke. A word or two with the miners if you please.

There is no such thing as unanimity amongst the bosses. True, the Missouri bosses appear anxious that a minimum, but not a maximum price of coal in the city should be established, and many of the miners themselves think we ought to co-operate with the bosses to effect this purpose. I am of a different opinion. The regulation of the selling prices of coal is beyond our prerogative. If our employers pay us for digging the price we demand, and at the same time guarantee to us our just weight and measure, we can claim no more. This, of itself, will accomplish the object, provided the prices of digging amongst ourselves be uniform.

Can we establish or maintain a uniformity? I think so; and I believe it to be our duty to do so as far as practicable. An upright operator who wishes to "live and let live," should be shielded from the reckless competition of unprincipled bosses who rob their *own* workmen, in order to undersell other operators, and thus compel *them* to reduce the wages of *their* men also. These fellows must not be lost sight of.

Our Association is now powerful for good. Upwards of 500 members stand good on the books. Union has worked wonders already. Since the bosses were unable to co-operate we must set them an example. The Germans, now, are joining us by thirties and forties. Confidence in them has taken root; some of the bosses have made it a point to discharge their old hands under various pretexts, to make room for Germans who were not in the Union: but the incomers are as bad as the outgoers. They begin to see that our aims are right; our objects pure. We *think* as well as *work*. Our cause is theirs; our interests are identical. We are all bound together by reciprocal duties and interests. One unpleasant feature among us is the restless desire to push into rash action and untimely measures; deeming a strike the panacea for every ill. "This is our

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861. Original emphasis.

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right" they say, "and we must have it." They are so quixotic that they would attack not the "wind-mill," but the wind itself.

To all such, I would say, be cautious. One injudicious step might lead to ruin. Let our union be matured, and let us contribute to its stability by not denouncing bosses, but improving ourselves. Let our forces be marshalled, properly disciplined and in effective condition. Let us be equipped for any emergency, adequate for any task. Let us be guarded; not precipitate in action. We have other grievances which still need redress; but, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." There is plenty to do; but united, we are competent for the duty.

Strikes we must steadily discountenance. They should never be permitted only as a last resort. We have better remedies, and must apply them. They are alike ruinous to employer and employe. From menaces, too, we must carefully abstain. Let no man suppose that the Union will justify or defend bad conduct. We must keep in constant recognition the rights of bosses as well as our own. Capital, as well as labor, must have its due; and that man who would not have his feelings outraged, nor his interests assailed, should extend the same right to others. Our course must be onward and upward, no swerving to the right or left, no faction or secession. Union is our motto, and Justice our claim, now, and forever.

D. WEAVER, *Sec'y*

CALL FOR MEETING OF COAL OPERATORS TO DISCUSS
THE MINERS' PROPOSAL FOR JOINT ACTION ON
PRICE STABILIZATION¹

To Coal Men

Pursuant to a resolution at an adjourned meeting of coal operators held in St. Louis, March 13, 1861, whereby a committee consisting of Messrs. Thompson, Kasson, Gratiot and Chilton, were appointed to draft resolutions expressing the sense of the Coal Operators upon certain demands on the part of the Coal Miners, and to call a meeting of all the coal operators upon the completion of their report. Notice is hereby given that there will be a meeting of Coal Operators at Nos. 59 and 61 Fourth Street, over Hambright and Johnson's, St. Louis, at 10 A.M. Wednesday March 27, 1861, and a full attendance of all the Coal Men operating their own or leased mines in the Counties of St. Clair, Ill., and St. Louis, Mo., is earnestly requested.

W. MARSH KASSON, *Sec.*

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 23, 1861.

DANIEL WEAVER'S LETTER TO THE MINERS,
MARCH 30, 1861¹

Ogles [Station], March 30, 1861

DEAR SIR:

I must lay another tax on your patience, or indulgence in soliciting the insertion of a few lines to the Miners in general. We hear the operators are meeting often now-a-days, and from the paragraph in last week's Democrat, we are led to expect, and almost to hope for a communication from Mr. Kasson. Whether such a communication is intended for us, as workmen or the other bosses, we do not pretend to determine; but anyway it will be interesting and probably instructive.

Last week we said some of our men were a little quixotic, and I might have said, we have all kinds of men to deal with—ignorant as well as intelligent—staid and eccentric—brave men, and cowards. We are a heterogeneous concatenation of the *genus homo*, and to make all these different elements harmonize, and cohere and prosper, will be the task of the intelligent, the honest, and the brave. It will require all the foresight, prudence, knowledge and zeal, at our command.

History and our own observation show that powerful organizations have been dissolved by jarring or explosive elements within. Let us then, look into the heart of our union, and see if we can discover any causes which are likely to prove inimical to our interests. Zeal uncoupled with wisdom, is a dangerous element in society (except the Ranters) and courage is of little worth without knowledge and discretion. Selfishness we find in every society, and it is as baneful as it is universal. But worse than all, is that reckless zeal, and mad, headlong precipitancy which invariably obstructs, or ultimately annihilates the cause it is intended to promote. The extremities are the death of organizations, whether in religion (witness the Mormons; in politics, look at John Brown, and the secessionists) or social matters generally.

The Red Republicans of France threw back, and stamped with bloody infamy the cause of freedom. Napoleon first went a step too far in his campaign to Moscow. He never arrived at the climax of his ambition, but at Moscow he reached the summit of his glory, and there his degradation commenced. Look again; where is now the stupid Bomba—the tyrant of Naples. He was the extreme of despotism, hence his ruin.

What did Garibaldi, or Mazzini do for Italy, until they "stooped to con-

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 6, 1861. Original emphasis.

quer"? Victor Emmanuel has somehow extracted their extreme radicalism and yet who questions their bravery, their patriotism, or true greatness? The result is a united Italy again. Again, what have the Chartists of England done for reform? They have made enough noise and agitation but what have they achieved? I do not mean here to question or dispute the soundness of their doctrine; but I am free to assert that their extreme demands, "The Charter and no surrender," and the unanimous and total rejection of, and opposition to every installment movement of reform short of the "six points" has rendered them, as a body, *effete*. Their objects were good, but their general policy was reprehensible. A merchant would be considered crazy in refusing an installment of a debt, especially if it gave him increased facilities to recover the rest of his dues. Not so the Chartists. They stand where they did twenty years ago.

But I shall tire you with illustration, or I might cite the decline and fall of numerous and powerful associations in this country, and generally, I believe, the causes of their downfall may be traced to extreme and reckless legislation amongst themselves. Let us be watchful. Every human enterprise should prove a lesson for us. It is not wise at all times to demand at once all that is due, but what is attainable. The fable of the lion, the fox and the ass, dividing the prey which they had taken, will further illustrate our position. . . . And I presume it ought to be a lesson for us. Extremes don't pay. *The bosses now rue the infliction of that second reduction*. We silently and sadly submitted to the first fourth cent; but in a few weeks it was repeated and hence our union. They advanced a step beyond the tolerable point, and then fell back again defeated in their purpose. We may learn even from them, to shun extremes.

We have launched our vessel, on the ocean of probation, with five hundred passengers on board, exclusive of officers and crew, the haven of justice and right is our destination; our lookouts must be farsighted, and vigilant, the helm's-man must be wide awake, and observe the compass; the captain must keep his weather eye open, and the passengers must yield a willing and cheerful assent to orders, so that, while our gallant bark stems the tide of opposition, battling with the billows of hostile elements, we may steer clear of Scylla and Charybdis which have wrecked so many, and thus be piloted clear of the shoals and quicksands of internal commotion and inefficiency, or outward provoked opposition and danger, until we reach the haven of our hopes in safety.

Yours,

D. WEAVER, *Secretary*

DANIEL WEAVER'S LETTER TO THE MINERS, APRIL, 1861¹

To the Miners Again

MR. EDITOR:

I desire to have a few more words with the miners, if you please. My term of office will soon expire, and before that occurs I wish to call the attention of my fellow workmen to the all important subject of securing the legitimate exercise of their Political Rights and privileges.

When a man decides that this shall be his country, he should declare his intentions to become a citizen, and thus raise himself, politically, to a level with the highest in the land. But I would not advise anyone to claim the privilege of voting unless he first fits himself so as to vote properly and wisely. It is a precious boon of the workingman who has intelligence sufficient to appreciate its value, and knowledge adequate to its exercise.

Where is the man who does not feel the elevating and ennobling influence of being recognized as a full, and a free man. To a man who has escaped from the Old World's tyrannies and inequalities, where he was taxed heavily enough but not represented; such a blessing is incalculable. I would it were estimated at its proper worth, not only by foreigners but the native born; but it is not so. Too many of my own class are both ignorant and careless of political matters generally, and if they do possess, and exercise the franchise, it is often to abuse it. You may as well talk to some men of the Vedas or the Shastra of the East as of the Missouri Compromise or the Dred Scott Decision; and to question them about the political doctrines of a Clay, a Webster, or a Benton, is equal to asking them about the teachings of a Confucius.

Is this as it should be? Is it not the duty of every man to study the history, especially the political history of his country—to ponder the lives of its Washington, its Jackson and its Calhoun—to watch the current events of the day, and to note the actions and compare the doctrines of the prominent statesmen, now in the political arena. Do we not observe the mighty and stirring events passing before us, panorama like, into history. Who can sit unconcerned and indifferent in times like these, when the country is shaken from its center to its circumference, and men are standing on the tip-toe of anticipation, and anxious suspense, fearing the issue.

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 27, 1861. Original emphasis.

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

This is a land where the government is based on the popular will. Then the blame is with the masses if their power is, and has been misapplied. It is our duty to guard and perpetuate the liberties we enjoy. We owe the blessings of freedom to the patriotism of past generations; the happiness, intelligence and liberties of posterity, depend upon us. Our children must be educated—*knowledge is the power* which governs, and it is also the bulwark of our liberties. Freedom is the dearest birthright of man, and should be defended and secured at whatever cost. No maneuvering, political trickster, nor factious demagogue must be allowed to invade the palladium of our rights; every outpost must be watched with the eyes of an Argus.

I am not arguing that politics should engross the whole of a man's time or attention, there are a hundred subjects demanding our attention.

"Science, poetry and thought
Will always make the lot
Of the dweller in a cot"—more happy.

The laws of life and health—political economy, which includes the relations of labor to capital, and man to man, should claim part of our attention. Nor should literature in general be neglected. No one, I think, who has been enraptured with the beauties of an Irving, a Bryant, a Willis, a Whittier, a Taylor, a Poe, to say nothing of the heroes and demi-gods of the Old World, can ever waste his time in low and degrading pursuits. But this is a theme too tempting for either your space or patience, and I must come back to the most important subject of them all—Politics! of which I can say but little more at present.

We must read; read the Democrat, the Advocate, or any other paper that comes our way. It would not do for a man whose political character and principles are still in embryo, to look at one side only. We must keep both eyes open, for there is much to be said on every side; and then, according to Davy Crockett's motto, "Be sure you are right, then go ahead."

Yours respectfully,
D. WEAVER, *Sect'y*

THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT TO THE PUBLIC BY THE ASSOCIATION OF
COAL MINERS OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY, 1862¹

The Association of Coal Miners of St. Clair County, would most respectfully represent to the public, that the high price of coal at the present time, is not at all attributable to them, either individually or collectively. It is true that their wages are somewhat higher, but yet not so high as to make any perceptible difference in the price of coal, whilst at the same time they are compelled to pay almost double the usual price for the powder, fuse and tools used by them in the prosecution of their arduous and dangerous calling.

Notwithstanding they pay so much more for powder, etc., now, than the price they used to pay, their wages have only been advanced from one cent to one cent and a half per bushel over former prices; yet the coal bosses are charging four cents more per bushel for steam coal, and from six to nine cents more for ordinary market and blacksmith coal. It is true that the coal operator has to pay a government tax of *three and a half cents per ton* on all mineral coal, but they will not pretend to say that that is the cause of present high prices. The fact is that the demand is more than equal to the supply, therefore the appreciation in price. One other thing should not be forgotten by those who blame the coal miners for the present high price of coal, and that is that they do not get paid for more than five-sixths of the coal they dig; for the boxes are invariably required to be filled with about one-sixth more coal than the digger is accredited with. In the hope that this statement may set at rest all false statements with regard to this matter, we remain respectfully on behalf of the Coal Miners' Association,

THE OFFICERS OF LODGE NO. 1

¹ Belleville Democrat, November 22, 1862. Original emphasis.

PROCEEDINGS OF MEETING OF UNION MERCHANTS'
EXCHANGE OF ST. LOUIS, JANUARY 31, 1863¹

Union Merchants' Exchange, St. Louis, Mo., January 31, 1863

A meeting of the members of the Union Merchants' Exchange was held this day at 12 o'clock, pursuant to the call of the President, to adopt measures to defeat the movement on the part of the Coal Miners to advance the price of coal.

The President called the meeting to order and stated its object. The following communication to the President was then read:

To George Partridge, Esq., President Union Merchants' Exchange of the City of St. Louis:

SIR:

The Coal Operators doing business in the city of St. Louis, beg leave to state to your honorable body, that in their judgment the supply of coal to this city is threatened with dangers, which if allowed to fully develop themselves, will undoubtedly embarrass the whole city, and most seriously impair the manufacturing interests so important to prosperity.

This matter is laid before you, and your attention directed to its consideration, hoping that by its favorable reception great benefit may accrue to the whole community.

The facts connected with this subject are as follows: The Miners engaged in digging coal previous to 15th of September last, received 2½¢ per bushel, which according to the ability of the Miners, would make from \$2.25 to \$4.50 per day; after this time they raised the price to 3 cents; and again on the first day of November to 4 cents per bushel, making them from \$3.60 to \$8 per day. Yet these men are threatening to demand on the 1st of February 5 cents per bushel whereby they would make from \$4.50 to \$10 per day. Now, if this condition of things is submitted to and allowed to continue, there being no limit, every one must see the final result.

Many of the operators having contracts to furnish coal to the various manufactories based upon usual and fair prices, would, no matter how willing to carry out their contracts, be compelled to forfeit them. And the manufacturer, having based his calculations upon the price he agreed

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 7, 1863; reprinted from Missouri Republican, February 2, 1863. Original emphasis.

THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

to pay for coal, would be compelled to pay such prices as to cause him to close his business, and his contracts would be forfeited. While this would be the certain result of the demands of these extortioners, upon the class above referred to, the effects would be equally as disastrous upon the class of small consumers, who would be compelled to pay any price these men might choose to impose. Hence we say it is due to the suppliers, as well as the consumers, to protest against the unjust demands of men who would make the public subservient to the accomplishment of their own selfish ends, regardless of right or justice.

Suppose this war between the owners or proprietors of the mines, and the Miners, continues until the owners can or will no longer endure it, and for a time no coal comes to the city, all will at once see the loss and suffering that must of necessity ensue; and yet, if this state of things continues, this must be the inevitable result.

Now, in view of these facts, and the danger which is liable to result from a continued demand on the part of the Miners, we respectfully suggest that the Merchants' Exchange pass such resolutions as will show a sympathy with those imposed upon, and a determination to discountenance such extortions as are threatened, and to support and sustain those who supply this indispensable article, and who are willing and anxious to do so at reasonable rates.

By Order of the Committee,

M. KASSON, *Secretary*

The following preamble and resolutions were presented to the meeting, and were, on motion of S. M. Edgell, Esq., adopted:

Whereas, The Coal Miners who supply the City of St. Louis with the greater part of fuel are already receiving higher wages than any other class of operatives, and in our judgment fully as much as they are entitled to; and

Whereas, There is a declared intention on the part of these operatives to still raise the price of their labor to such a degree as to greatly endanger, if not for the time being to destroy, the manufacturing interests of the city, as well as to cause much hardship and suffering among the smaller consumers, especially the poor; and,

Whereas, This threatened evil arises from the combination of labor on the part of these miners, the majority of whom control the minority, and refuse to allow any to work, unless at such prices as they stipulate; Therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Union Merchants' Exchange, of the City of St. Louis,

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that we discountenance all such acts of extortion on the part of said miners, and we pronouſſe their action in this behalf contrary to public policy, and calculated to work injury to all classes; and while we recognize the right and justice of paying a full and fair equivalent for the labor of this valuable class of operatives, yet we say any attempt on their part, through their monopoly, to extort an unfair and exorbitant compensation for their labor, and *preventing others, by their threats, from working*, deserves the unqualified condemnation of all good men.

And be it further resolved, That in any attempt of the Coal Operators to resist the constantly increasing and unjust demands of their employes, we will, to the fullest extent in our power, sustain and support them, and we recommend such action on the part of heavy consumers, who hold these operators under contract for the daily delivery of large quantities of coal, as will enable them to resist unembarrassed the present extortionate demands of the employes.

And be it further resolved, That in view of the fact, that the Government of the United States is materially interested in having a full and constant supply of coal, we recommend the authorities, in case the Miners refuse to mine for reasonable wages, to substitute in their stead other labor, and protect them while engaged in mining.

On Motion, the meeting adjourned.

GEORGE PARTRIDGE, *Pres't*
J. H. ALEXANDER, *Sec'y*

ANSWER BY THE MINERS OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY TO THE
COAL OPERATORS AND TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE
UNION MERCHANTS' EXCHANGE, 1863¹

MR. EDITOR:

We, the Miners of St. Clair County, having been assailed by the coal operators in regard to the present strike, request that you will lend us space . . . to reply . . . We wish to make a statement of facts to the public generally, to show how much wages a Miner has made during the period in which they have been paid 4 cents per bushel for mining. This statement embraces the average wages of a Miner per day from the first of November 1862 (since which time we received 4 cents per bushel for digging) and the average is \$2.40 per day per man; whereas the operators have stated to the public that Miners can earn \$4.50 to \$10 per day, which statement is unfounded. In order that the Miner may make \$10 per day, he must dig 200 bushels of coal, which all miners and persons conversant with the business know to be an utter impossibility.

The above statement is based upon facts—upon a careful examination of the average wages made by different workmen in eleven of the coal pits on the Belleville track.

In the communication to the President of the Chamber of Commerce, the Coal Operators, through Mr. Kasson, their Secretary, endeavor to convey to the public that our strike is fraught with danger and will be attended with alarming consequences to the City of St. Louis, by cutting off their supply of coal at this inclement season of the year, and by the stoppage of factories, etc., will entail much suffering upon her citizens. The additional price demanded by the Miners, we think but right and just, considering the increased prices which he is compelled to pay for every necessary article of consumption, and in our opinion, need not materially, if at all, affect the price of coal in the market, for it is well known that the bosses are getting a very fair equivalent for their coal, and after paying us the advanced price asked, could, if they would, sell their coal at the prices which they have lately been getting, which would afford them a very fair profit—how much we cannot say, as the bosses do not deem it prudent to make it known—but we are reliably informed

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 7, 1863.

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

that they are getting from 14 cents to 18 cents and occasionally 25 cents per bushel.

We would add that, at the advanced rate of one cent per bushel for digging, the bosses can deliver coal at East St. Louis, including freight and other incidental expenses, for eight and one-quarter cents per bushel. . . .

That portion of the resolution as passed by the Chamber of Commerce in which it is stated that we "have prevented others, by threats, from working," has no foundation in fact as far as our knowledge extends—all has been conducted in the most quiet and orderly manner, no broils or strifes of any kind whatever occurring to mar our proceedings.

Yours,

MANY MINERS

THE LASALLE BLACK LAWS¹

AN ACT to amend Chapter XXX of the Revised Statutes, entitled "Criminal Jurisprudence."

Section 1. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly, If any person shall, by threat, intimidation or otherwise, seek to prevent any other person from working at any lawful business on any terms that he may see fit, such person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall be fined in any sum not exceeding one hundred dollars.

Section 2. If any two or more persons shall combine for the purpose of depriving the owner or possessor of property of its lawful use and management, or of preventing, by threats, suggestions of danger or other means, any person or persons from being employed by such owner or possessor of property, on such terms as the parties concerned may agree upon, such persons, so offending, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall be fined in any sum not exceeding five hundred dollars, or imprisoned in the county jail not exceeding six months.

Section 3. If any person shall enter the coal banks of another, without the expressed or implied consent of the owner or manager thereof, after notice that such entry is prohibited, such person shall, on conviction thereof, be fined, in the discretion of the court, in any sum not exceeding five hundred dollars, or imprisoned in the county jail not more than six months.

Section 4. If any person shall enter the coal banks of another, with intent to commit any injury thereto, or by means of threats, intimidations, or other riotous or unlawful proceedings, to cause or induce any person employed therein to leave his employment, such person shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, or imprisoned in the county jail not exceeding six months, or both.

Section 5. This act to take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

Approved February 13, 1863.

¹ Public Laws of the State of Illinois. Passed by the 23rd General Assembly, convened January 5, 1863. Baker and Phillips, Printers, Springfield, 1863, p. 70.

EDITORIAL ON THE COAL MINERS' STRIKE, 1863¹

We have received assurances from several of the Illinois Coal Proprietors that our remarks on the Coal question last Friday do them great injustice, in representing that they are selling their accumulated stocks of Coal at an advance of 10 to 15 cents per bushel.

They assure us that they have no stocks on hand to sell at any price, and have not had, since the commencement of the Miners' strike. So far from it, they are themselves compelled to buy Coal at other mines at the prevailing exorbitant rates, to fill their contracts with large manufacturing establishments, made six months or a year ago. There is no coal being sent to market by the Illinois Proprietors—the scanty supply that arrives in the city coming chiefly from the Gravois [St. Louis County] mines.

This plain statement of the facts in the case is manifestly due the Proprietors. It relieves them of the responsibility for the present state of things, and shows that they are the chief sufferers by the Miners' strike. They could easily afford to give the Miners the additional cent per bushel demanded by them for mining coal, if the family supply for the city alone were involved. But, in reality, the family supply is the most insignificant feature of the Coal trade of this city.

It is the demand of the factories, foundries, mills, and large manufacturing establishments that constitutes the bulk of the trade, and those manufacturing establishments have to be supplied with Coal at a price low enough to enable them to compete with similar establishments in other cities. They must have the large quantities of Coal they require, at eleven cents, and all of them have existing contracts with the Illinois Proprietors, for hundreds and even thousands of bushels per day, at that rate.

The strike of the Miners seems to be prompted as much by a disposition to show their power over the Proprietors, as to secure the advance of wages; for, last week, the Proprietors sent notice to the Miners that they would give the advance of one cent they demanded; but the Miners refused to accept this concession. They would not go to work; and it is believed that they will insist on a still further increase. That the past wages paid to the Miners were highly remunerative, is proved by their ability to abstain from work, and protract their strike for so long a time;

¹ St. Louis Evening News, February 16, 1863.

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for, although living in idleness, they have abundant means and are living comfortably.

Nor is this surprising. An average Miner can mine 120 bushels a day, and a brisk one 150 bushels a day. This, at 4 cents a bushel, would be \$4.80 to \$6.00 for the day's wages. This, certainly, is not only fair, but even munificent earnings for a man who has no capital invested, and no risks involved.

But the gross injustice of the Miners is exhibited in another thing. They not only refuse to work themselves, but they refuse to permit the Proprietors to employ others, threatening violence to all laborers who attempt to take their places.

PROCEEDINGS OF MEETING OF ILLINOIS COAL OPERATORS,
CHICAGO, FEBRUARY 18, 1863¹

At a Convention of the Coal Operators of Illinois, convened in Chicago on the 18th of February, 1863, Col. E. D. Taylor was appointed Chairman, and Major J. Kirkland, Secretary.

Major Kirkland, Mr. Nason and Mr. Galloway were appointed a committee on resolutions. The committee reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, The coal miners of Illinois, or a portion of them have, within the last year, conspired to control each other and their employers as to wages, as to the management of mines, as to the individuals to be employed or discharged, and as to the amount of coal to be produced daily; and

Whereas, The effect of the secret society formed by the miners has been to enhance, exorbitantly, the price of coal all over the State, while lessening the quantity produced in proportion to the demand, and

Whereas, The history of other mining communities, and the experience of our own, have proved that such a course, if encouraged by submission on the part of the operators of coal mines, leads to the injury of the public, the ruin of the coal operators, and the impoverishment of the coal miners themselves; therefore

Resolved, That the Coal Operators of Illinois here represented, will not, after the first day of April next, acknowledge or deal with any association of miners whatsoever, but will hire and discharge individuals, as the exigencies of the business and the conduct of those individuals may compel them to do, paying their employees such wages as the market for coal may authorize, making such arrangements for the internal management of their mines as they may consider best adapted to the work, and leaving to each of those employees the right to quit their service whenever it may be to his interest or his desire to do so.

(Signed)

Northern Illinois Coal and Iron Co., E. D. Taylor, LaSalle
Chicago and Carbon Coal Co., J. Kirkland, Danville
LaSalle Coal Mining Co., J. J. Page, LaSalle
Kewaunee Coal Co., J. J. Galloway, E. Beadle, Kewaunee

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 7, 1863; reprinted from Chicago Tribune under headline, "Coal Mining in Illinois—Important Action of Coal Operators."

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Coal Valley Mining Co., S. S. Guyer, Rock Island
Morris Coal Mining Co., A. Crumb, Morris
Danville Coal Mine, Donlon & Daniel, Danville
Kingston Coal Co., S. Gilfoy, Kingston Mines
Du Quoin Coal Mining Co., C. A. Keyes, Du Quoin
Peru Coal Mining Co., J. J. Page, Peru
Morris Coal Co., Thos. Turner, Morris
Washington Coal Mines, Goalby and Bros., Belleville
Telfer Mines, A. G. Warren, Morris
Union Mines, A. W. Telfer, Morris
Peoria Coal Mines, N. Funk, Peoria
Alma Mines, J. Gartside, Belleville
Kickapoo Mines, W. Rutherford, Peoria
Carbondale Mines, Kasson & Co., Belleville
Wenona Mines, Thompson and White, Belleville
Eureka Mines, W. Haight, Belleville
Wilson Mines, James Wilson, Belleville
Illinois Central Iron and Coal Mining Co., A. W. Nason, St. Johns
Du Quoin Centre Mine, E. Priest, Du Quoin
Neelysville Coal Mines, T. Hollowbush, Neelysville

OFFICIAL REPLY BY MINERS' ASSOCIATION TO EDITORIAL
IN ST. LOUIS EVENING NEWS ON THE STRIKE IN
THE BELLEVILLE FIELD¹

The Coal Miners' Strike

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BELLEVILLE DEMOCRAT:

We ask as an act of justice to be heard in our own defense, and refutation of erroneous statements made in the article headed "The Coal Miners' Strike," published in the Evening News on Monday the 16th inst. The writer of that article, in his anxiety to do the proprietors justice, has been led into error with regard to many statements there made, probably through wrong impressions obtained from interested informants.

And First: It is *not* true that "there is no coal sent to market by the Illinois proprietors," for they do send some, in fact all they can, of coal that has already been dug but not sent up by the miners who are now on strike. For this purpose laborers have been employed in the place of experienced and competent diggers, and have never yet been either molested or even intimidated, except by the fears naturally generated in the hearts of men who feel and know that they were doing wrong.

Second: The Miners have not been "prompted" by "a disposition to show their powers over the proprietors," but have simply done that, in a collective capacity, which they have a perfect right to do either individually or associatively, viz.: Put their own price upon the only marketable commodity they possess—the exercise of their skill and labor.

Third: The Miners have not refused to accept the advance of one cent per bushel conceded by their employers, or "refused to go to work until they get another advance," for the "concession" was at once accepted and the men were immediately ready for work. But, with that "concession" was coupled the edict issued by Messrs. Thompson, Brandenburg, Yochs, Poyton, Haight and others, "that all efficient society men" should be refused employment. At Mr. Thompson's mine no discrimination was attempted, but all hands were paid off and a most unqualified refusal given to the further employment of *any* of them.

Fourth: It is not true that the Miners "will insist on a still further increase." So far from this being the case, such an idea has never once been mooted in the "Association," much less insisted on. The idea is a pure fabrication of the enterprising imagination of those, who, yield-

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 21, 1863. Original emphasis.

ing with a bad grace to the declaration that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," now seek shelter beneath the wings of popular favor from the odium they have incurred, and, to secure that shelter make use of the most unscrupulous means.

Fifth: It is not proved that the miners' wages are "highly remunerative" by the mere fact of their "abstaining from work" a little more than two weeks; that fact if it proves anything at all, proves only that their powers of endurance are equal to the task not only of the assertion, but also of the maintenance of their rights, whenever and wherever those rights are jeopardized. It is asserted "that they have abundant means" and are "living comfortably although in idleness." We respectfully suggest that whatever "means" they have, are their own, earned by hard labor—the accumulations of years of economy and providential foresight such as is commendable either in associations or individuals. That they are "living in idleness" is no more true of them than of any other men who temporarily suspend their mechanical operations while engaged in rearranging and adjusting the future of their business, to suit the exigencies with which the financial condition of the country is pregnant. As a familiar instance, we cite the recent suspension of operations in almost all of the Distilleries of the West, to enable their proprietors to make such arrangements to meet, without loss, the changes produced in their business by the operation of the "Internal Revenue Act."

The fallacy of the statement that the miners can, on an average day, dig and get out 150 or even 200 bushels of coal per day is too transparent for any one to believe who understands the subject, and for the benefit of those who do not, we content ourselves with the assertion of its untruth. The fallacious statement with regard to the extraordinary wages of miners has been sufficiently destroyed in an article recently published in the (Missouri) Republican, where the average earnings at eleven mines in St. Clair County, during the period when four cents per bushel was paid for digging, are shown to be not more than \$2.40 per day. But it is said the miner has no capital invested—no risks involved! We will throw the veil of charity over the motive which prompted the penning of the above sentence, while we make a statement of absolute verities. The lives of eight men have not only been risked, but have fallen a sacrifice to the prosecution of the dreary and dangerous occupation of mining in this county alone during the past four months, while during the same space of time as many at least, if not more, have been crippled, and most of these are made cripples for life. No capital invested! What

greater investment can be made than that made by the miners' family, when the head of the household—leaving his wife and little ones each morning—turns his back upon the light of day and descending amid darkness into the bowels of the earth, throws himself upon the protection of Heaven, or trusts to luck for an escape from the many accidents which continually threaten both life and limb to the very moment of his emergence from his subterranean labors; accidents caused in many instances by the imperfections of machinery, the incompleteness of ventilation, or some other lack for which no one is held responsible, however culpable!

The charge that miners "refuse to permit the proprietors to employ others" would be simply laughable, if it were not made with so much apparent gravity. "Refuse to permit!" "Is thy servant a dog?" Have the proprietors suddenly become slaves in this age of emancipation? Psha! No one believes it. But it is said the miners threaten violence to all laborers who attempt to take their places. We defy any man to the proof of this statement. The proprietors have, some of them, frequently tempted the men, to entrap them into riotous proceedings by rude and ungentlemanly language, but have most signally failed, hitherto, to accomplish their purpose. These same proprietors, in almost all instances, compel their workmen to buy all their supplies of whatever kind, at their stores, under the penalty of immediate discharge from their employment. The workmen, being so compelled, are charged for these supplies most exorbitant rates as the following may serve to illustrate: \$7.50 per keg is charged for powder which can be purchased at other stores for \$5.50. For mere shells of houses rented as habitations to miners, \$4.50 to \$5.50 is charged for places in the country, such as in the city of Belleville would not rent for more than \$3 per month. It costs as much, or more now, to repair a pick, as it used to cost to buy a new one. It takes from three to four times as much money now to buy a yard of muslin as it did eighteen months ago, and everything else, except the staple products of the West, are, and have been commanding equally inflated and hitherto unheard of prices.

It is true that a dollar is still a dollar; but measured by the standard of dry-goods by the yard, groceries by the pound, or its former equivalent in gold, a dollar now is no more than half what it used to be; in other words, viewed in the light of what can be purchased with a dollar now as compared with what could have been purchased with the same sum when we were paid two and a half cents per bushel for digging coal; at five cents per bushel our wages would buy us no more com-

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forts now than then, and after allowing that price, the proprietors would still have a margin of profits left, one hundred per cent higher than those they received at that time.

Under such circumstances we ask from our employers and the public a fair and unprejudiced consideration of our claims—not to a “further increase” of our wages, but, to be considered as “men and brethren,” and treated as such. We have yet to learn that it is criminal for workmen to associate themselves for protection against the unreasoning but growing power of the capital they themselves are constantly creating, only to be wielded by the parties for whose benefit it is produced, as a weapon to crush to the earth both the freedom of body and mind of its creators. We ask the employers to withdraw the tyrannical order issued by them for the discharge of men whose only fault was doing their duty as became men of honor pledged to that end by their associates, and we will instantly resume our occupation. Until this is done we feel bound in honor to stand by our comrades, and prevent their sacrifice upon the altar of misguided malevolence.

Yours in behalf of

THE MINERS' ASSOCIATION

RESOLUTION OF MINERS' ASSOCIATION LODGE NO. 1,
BELLEVILLE, COMMENDING EFFORTS OF STATE
SENATOR IN BEHALF OF MINE SAFETY
LEGISLATION¹

Resolved, That the thanks of Lodge No. 1, of the Miners' Association, are due and are hereby tendered to the Hon. W. H. Underwood, our efficient State Senator, for the fidelity with which he has ever responded to our interests, but more especially in the matter of securing the passage of our bill through the State Senate.

Resolved, That we regret the want of attention exhibited by the members of the Legislature to the bill when left in the Committee of the House, whereby our bill was left in suspense while another bill which was tacked on to it in the Senate Committee restricting the liberties of miners in an especial manner under pains and penalties, was permitted to pass without opposition.

Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be furnished to Judge Underwood.

¹ Belleville Democrat, February 28, 1863.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONVENTION OF COAL MINERS HELD
AT LA SALLE, ILLINOIS, MARCH 14, 1863¹

The meeting being called to order by the President, the following resolutions were passed:

Resolved, 1st, That all Lodges that have been organized, who think that they will be benefited by entering this Association, be admitted upon application to this General Board.

Upon application being made by the Delegate from No. 3 Lodge, for a division of said Lodge, it was resolved that Belcher and Kasson's, or Carbondale mines, be recognized as Lodge No. 11. Upon application being made, the following Lodges were admitted: First—Pekin, Ill., as Lodge No. 12; Second—Minersville, Ill., as Lodge No. 13; Third—Coal Valley, Ill., as Lodge No. 14; Peru, Ill., as Lodge No. 15.

Upon motion being made, a Cash Secretary for this Board was elected to fill the vacancy of that office until January, 1864.

Resolved, That this Association be divided into Districts, as follows: No. 1 District shall be composed of the following Lodges: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 11, Illinois Lodges; and Nos. 1, 2, 3, Missouri Lodges. No. 2 District as follows: Nos. 5, 6, 9, and 15, Illinois Lodges. No. 3 District, as follows: Nos. 12, 10, 13 and 14, Illinois Lodges.

Resolved, That this Association will not submit to any reduction of the present prices of mining, under any circumstances whatever, in any of the mines that come under the jurisdiction of this Association.

Resolved, That the restriction of our labor be so modified, that in case of accidents occurring at any shaft, slope or drift, each Miner shall have two weeks to make up his loss; but if any Miner, through his own neglect or idleness, shall lose his day's work, he shall not be allowed to make up his loss.

Resolved, That in case any Lodge belonging to this Association, refuse to abide by the general laws of this Association, they shall not be recognized as members of this Association until such time as they decide to abide by said laws.

Resolved, That each Lodge be entitled to one Delegate, to represent them at each General Convention, and that he shall be entitled to one vote for every 20 members he represents, and in case he has one more than the half score, he shall be allowed the full vote.

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 4, 1863.

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Resolved, That the General Board of Delegates meet once every three months, in the most central part of the State of Illinois, so as to equalize the expenses.

Resolved, That any member leaving his Lodge without his full certificate of membership, shall be liable to a fine of twenty (\$20.00) dollars at any Lodge where he may apply for entrance before he can be admitted, unless he can show a justifiable reason for leaving as above mentioned.

Resolved, That when any member leaves his Lodge without his certificate, it shall be the duty of said Lodge, through their Corresponding Secretary, to inform the General Corresponding Secretary, and it shall be his duty to inform the District Corresponding Secretary, and said District Secretary shall inform each subordinate Lodge of the case, and the name of the member, and in case either of these officers neglects his respective duties as laid down for them in this resolution, is liable to be fined as the laws of this Association may direct.

Resolved, That in case any such fines as the above are collected, it shall be sent to the General Board.

Resolved, That all *Blacklegs*,¹ as they who have gone and taken our places while we were on strike, and worked for a less price, are generally called, who were members of our Association, shall be again admitted by paying up all arrears and the sum of (\$25.00) twenty-five dollars; but any member who shall blackleg after this date, is liable to be fined (\$100.00) one hundred dollars.

Resolved, That in case any member, or members, of this Association be discharged without a proper reason, or just because they are members of this Association, or having taken an active or prominent part in carrying out the principles of this Association, all Miners or members working for such operator or operators, shall cease working until those who are victimized shall be restored to their work again.

Resolved, That all victimized men who have not yet got employment, shall receive the sum of \$10.00 per week until such time as they may get employment; but in case they should be offered work on honorable terms, and at the proper price at any union pit and should refuse to work, all remuneration shall cease from that date.

Resolved, That the books of the General Board be audited once every six months, and that a correct statement be printed, and circulars sent to every Lodge for their general information. The Chair then appointed

¹ Original emphasis.

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a committee of three to meet at East St. Louis, on Friday, March 20th, 1863.

Resolved, That the Auditing Committee, which shall meet on the 20th of March, be empowered to revise the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association, and also to order the printing of Rules, Certificates, Cards and Circulars.

Resolved, That no more laborers be admitted as members of this Association, as we have found them to be an injury to us. That upon the application of any person to become a member of any Lodge, he must prove by members of said Lodge, or by letters from any mining district from which he may have come that he is a miner, before he can be admitted as a member of this Association.

Resolved, That any person 14 years of age shall be eligible to become a member, by paying half entrance fees, full contribution, half levies, and be allowed half turn until he is 16 years of age, when he shall be eligible to become a full member.

Resolved, That a levy of 25 cents per member be sent to the General Board the next quarterly meeting to defray the expenses of said Board.

Resolved, That the regular weekly levy of 50 cents be reduced to 25 cents per week on each member, for the support of the victimized men.

Resolved, That no Lodge belonging to this Association receive certificates after the 1st of May, unless they have the seal of the Lodge on them.

Resolved, That each Shaft, Drift or Slope, shall govern their own local affairs, so far as they do so in accordance with the general laws of this Association.

Resolved, That No. 1 District meet at Illinoistown on the 11th of April, 1863.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to meet on the 19th of March, 1863, to draft resolutions to offset against those that were published by the operators.

Resolved, That this meeting adjourn to meet again at Springfield, on the 15th day of June, 1863, at the Matteson House.

By order of

THE PRESIDENT

PROCEEDINGS OF MEETINGS OF COAL OPERATORS OF
ILLINOIS AND MISSOURI, HELD AT SPRINGFIELD,
ILLINOIS, MARCH 18, 1863, AND AT ST. LOUIS,
MISSOURI, MARCH 19-20, 1863¹

Pursuant to adjournment at Chicago, the coal proprietors of Illinois met this day at the Chenery House, in Springfield, Col. E. D. Taylor, of LaSalle, in the Chair, and Major J. Kirkland, of Danville, Secretary.

Mr. William Morris, of Colchester mines, on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, and Mr. C. O. Godfrey, of the North Missouri Mines, on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, were introduced to the convention and signified their desire to take part in its action, and were received with welcome. After considerable general discussion of the interests involved, the following resolutions explanatory of and amendatory to the resolutions passed at Chicago, were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, 1. That, in the opinion of this convention, any difficulties between the employers and their men which shall culminate in a stopping of work shall be considered a *strike*—and members of this convention will not employ each other's men from the date of such strike. And in case men shall have been employed before notice of such strike shall have been received, on receipt of such notice said men shall be promptly discharged.

Resolved, 2. That it shall be the duty of all members of this convention, and those who may hereafter co-operate with it, to give immediate notice of the conclusion of any strike which may have been reported.

At the request of Mr. Goalby, it was then resolved to adjourn to meet at the Planters' House in St. Louis, on Thursday, 19th inst., at three o'clock, p.m.

*Planters' House, St. Louis, Mo.,
March 19, 1863—3 p.m.*

Convention met pursuant to adjournment, and organized by appointing Mr. Thos. Hollowbush, of Neelysville, President, in place of Col. E. D. Taylor, absent; and Mr. A. W. Nason, of Saint Johns, Secretary, in place of Major Kirkland, also absent.

¹ Belleville Democrat, March 28, 1863, under headline, "Meeting of Western Coal Proprietors." Original emphasis.

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On motion, it was agreed to adjourn to 7 o'clock, p.m., at which time several other proprietors were expected to be present.

Planters' House, 7 p.m.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment. Messrs. James Mitchell, Thos. Dunford, John Rutledge, and John Taylor, of Coal Branch, Alton, and also representing Messrs. Peter Robinson, Rudolph Cutchamp, and Robert Mitchell, of the same place; also Messrs. John H. Reeves and Robert Miller, of Belleville, were introduced and took part in the Convention.

On motion the following preamble and resolution, after full discussion, was unanimously adopted:

Whereas, By contracting at any specified or fixed rate for the delivery of Coal by the year we place not only ourselves but our customers under the control entirely of our miners in any exorbitant demands they may see fit to make; therefore,

Resolved, That all future contracts made by the parties to this convention shall contain a clause that shall in substance suspend the operation of said contract during the continuance of any strike by the miners; and that the price per ton or bushel shall be based on a certain fixed price paid for mining, and shall be subjected to a sliding scale to correspond with any advance or decline in said rate.

On motion, the Convention adjourned, to meet again at 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Friday Morning, 9 a.m.

Convention met. After a full and free discussion of all the interests involved, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That this Convention fully indorse the action of the meeting held at Chicago on the 19th¹ of February last.

The following resolution was also introduced and adopted, more fully to explain the resolutions of Chicago:

Resolved, That the first resolution, passed on the 19th¹ day of February at Chicago, in reference to employing miners who belong to any association, shall be construed to mean that we will not employ any miner who belongs to any association or Miners' Union, whose object shall be to regulate the manner in which the coal operators shall manage their work, or whose object shall be in the remotest degree to dictate to the operators whom they shall employ or discharge, or to dictate to

¹ The account of the Chicago meeting gives this date as February 18.

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the operators what shall be their course in reference to their actions between individual miners and themselves.

On motion, it was:

Resolved, That the thanks of the convention be, and are hereby tendered to the proprietors of the Planters' House for their courtesy and attention, and the use of their parlors for its sitting.

The Convention then adjourned to meet again at the Planters' House in St. Louis on the 19th day of May next.

THOS. HOLLOWBUSH, *President pro tem.*

A. W. NASON, *Secretary pro tem.*

LETTER FROM A COAL MINER, APRIL, 1863¹

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BELLEVILLE DEMOCRAT:

In behalf of the Miners' Association, I will try to show how much truth there is in the assertion of the Coal Operators, in a preamble gotten up by them at Chicago, in February last: That if they (the Operators) submitted to the demands of the Miners, it would lead to the injury of the public, the ruin of the Operators, and the impoverishment of the Miner himself.

In the first place, I will ask what injury it would be to the public if they did submit to the wishes of the Miners? I can safely say that any Operator can consistently afford to sell coal in the city of Belleville for ten cents per bushel, delivered in any part of the city, and be fully able to pay the present price of five cents for digging—and then reap a profit of three to three and one-half cents per bushel. I will notice briefly the St. Louis market. Coal has been, and I believe at present is, selling at 14 to 18 cents; in addition to the five cents for digging, there is two cents per bushel for freight, and from two and one-half to three cents per bushel to deliver the coal in any part of the city.

I would like to ask the public wherein it can injure them, if the Operators will govern the market according to the wishes of the Miners' Association? One thing I will say which cannot be denied: At the Gravois Mines, the Miner is paid altogether according to the market, and he also gets just weight, a thing that the Miners on the Belleville track are strangers to.

The system generally followed by the Operators on the above named track, I will explain: At some of the mines they have scales, and if the scales were honestly dealt with, it would be all right, but they are not, which I will endeavor to show.

The Operators of Mines have different sizes and different styles of boxes; generally where they have scales, they have open-ended boxes, some 10 bushels, some 12 and 14, and some as large as 30 bushels. These boxes have to be built up more or less above the top of the box; the rule generally followed is this—a box that looks large and well-built up, is not weighed at all, but send a box up that is not so compactly built, and that is weighed; and if it lacks five pounds of being weight, you are docked one bushel; but you may send two or even three bushels

¹ Belleville Democrat, April 11, 1863.

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more, and you get nothing for it. I can prove that there has been two bushels more than weight sent upon boxes at mines in this vicinity, and those that sent it never got one cent for the over-plus.

I would, in conclusion, ask the public, Have we the right, or not, to form ourselves into an Association to try to defend ourselves against such wholesale injustice as this, in a land where justice and equal rights are held up as a motto?

At some future time, I will endeavor to show how the Operators are being ruined; also other matters connected with the interests of the Miners, the Operators, and the public generally of Illinois if you will allow me the space in your journal.

UNION MINER

By late communication from LaSalle, I see that the Miners are on a strike at that place. The cause is a reduction of forty cents per ton for digging, and also ninety cents of a reduction on the yard of entry, which I can say with safety will never be submitted to by the gallant boys of No. 6 Lodge.

The Miners of Danville are also on a strike; the reduction the "boss" wishes to make there is twenty-five cents on the ton, which, according to the rules, cannot be submitted to on any account whatever.

There is also a portion of the Miners out on the Belleville track to prevent the Operators for whom they have been working from victimizing men because they are members of the Miners' Association.

UNION MINER

LETTER FROM A COAL MINER, MAY, 1863¹

MR. EDITOR—SIR:

I once more crave a small portion of your valuable journal, for the insertion of this letter, which I intend for the edification of all the Miners of Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Kentucky, and all other places, where this journal can be sent by mail; and also wherever the Miners' Union Association exists, which is one of the most powerful organizations of Working Men in the States of America. This Association is composed of not only talent, but also of capital, that will at some future period of the history of this, our glorious country of adoption, astonish those that look upon the Coal Miner as if he was one of the most degraded of human beings upon the face of the earth. But, as I have just remarked, there is talent there, that will yet, I have not the least doubt, be heard in our Legislative halls, advocating the rights of the working man; instead of the nabobs of wealth advocating the oppression of the working man. This thing has been done long enough, and I would say here that those that are in power must beware how they use that power, for we have a mighty weapon, which is simply the Ballot Box, the most powerful weapon the citizens of this country are armed with, even sharper than a two edged sword. We are becoming more strong and powerful every day. There are a great many Miners on a strike throughout Illinois; some for price, some for other causes, but we are not getting discouraged yet, for we are confident that victory is on our side; for it is a settled point of argument in my opinion, that labor must rule capital, for without labor, what would capital be worth to the capitalist? Without labor where would all our inventions be? Without labor where would all our mineral wealth be? Without labor where would our fireside instruction and amusement be? Without labor we would be without the power of steam, as it has been developed during the past 75 or 80 years, for without labor this great invention would never have been developed, for who can say that Watt, the inventor of the steam engine, was a capitalist? I think history will prove that he was a working man. Without labor where would our Railroads and our Steamboats be? Without labor our Canals would be undug—our Rivers nothing but fish ponds; our mineral wealth would be buried in the bowels of the earth. Where would our gold be if we were all

¹ Belleville Democrat, May 2, 1863. Original emphasis.

capitalists? Where would our millions of tons of iron ore, our lead, our copper, and last, but not least, our millions of tons of coal just here in the wealthy and flourishing State of Illinois? Is it brought into our market without labor? No. Labor is, and ever will be, the ruling power of a nation like the one we live in. It may be the case in a country under Monarchical Government, but in this Republican country where "equal rights" is our motto—why should the laboring men be governed by capitalists? It must not be tolerated by any freeman, because if it is tolerated it would belie the principles of the founders of this great Republican nation. I would ask of any man, can he doubt the principles advocated by such men as the signers of the Declaration of Independence? I think any man who would for a moment doubt that such men as they were intended that this country was to be governed by capitalists, is not a friend to either himself, his fellow man, or his country. Labor and capital should go hand in hand, and not be as it is at the present time with the Coal Operators and the Miners of Illinois.

It has been set forth by the Operators in the proceedings of their conventions, as they call them, that submission on their part to the Miners' Association—which they see fit to call a secret society, which I emphatically deny—would lead to the injury of the public, the ruin of the coal Operators, and the impoverishment of the Coal Miner himself. Very considerate, indeed! In the first place, I would like to know what injury it would be to the public, if the Miners ask for an advance of wages? They generally ask about one cent per bushel. If the operator would act openly and honestly with his customers, and state the truth to them, and not keep them in the dark as they have done during the existence of this association, I don't see how it would injure the public at all, for I think that there is not a man in the city of St. Louis who would object to advance one cent on his contract, if he knew that it was a uniform rule amongst the Operators and consumers—which it *ought* to be—but the trouble is, the Operators will go and undersell each other; consequently, if the Operator goes to his customer and tells him that he will have to raise the price, he refuses. What is the reason? Why, because when the Miner asks one cent, the Operator asks more than that. I contend that if they would act honest and upright with each other and with their customers, it would not be an injury to the public, but a benefit.

Next, it would lead to the ruin of the Coal Operators. Now the Operators have been paying four and five cents this winter—let us see how they have been ruined. Go to the Recorder's office, and see the

documents some of them have filed there during the past winter; go to East St. Louis and you will there see a fine new steamboat belonging to one of them. *May Dame Fortune soon favor all of us with such ruin.* I think it would be very favorably received. Now, submission on the part of the Operators to the Miners' Association, would lead to the impoverishment of the Coal Miner himself! All credit ought to be given those wise men for their kind consideration in looking to the welfare of the Coal Miner. I would like to ask if we, the Miners in America, will be impoverished by forming ourselves into an association to protect us from the imposition and robbery which is practiced upon the Coal Miner by those exemplary gentlemen that met at Chicago in February last, and unanimously adopted that great and praiseworthy resolution; but if these worthy gentlemen had passed a resolution to this effect, that on and after that date they would give the Miner his rights in the weights and measures, it would have had a great deal of effect in *preventing the impoverishment* of the Miner. Again, this convention passed another resolution, that on and after April 1st, 1853,¹ they would neither acknowledge, deal with, or hire, any member of any association of Miners, etc., but manage their mines to suit themselves, and discharge or hire men at their will. Now we do not expect them to manage their mines to suit us, but we will look to our Legislature to see after these men. Then comes another magnanimous resolution, full of generosity—that in all contracts made with Miners and Operators, there shall be a clause inserted, that the said Miner during the time he shall work in said mine, will not enter into or be a member of any Association of Miners! In the name of God, what is this country coming to? On the one hand, they are trying to set the black men free, and on the other hand these worthy gentlemen would like the Miner to sign away his freedom! God forbid that any free white man should so far forget himself as to consent to do any such thing, in this land of boasted freedom.

Again, this convention met at Springfield, March 18th, passed two resolutions and then adjourned to St. Louis. It seemed as if they thought their actions would not stand the scrutiny of the people at the Capitol of a free State; consequently, a portion of them having principles a little more reasonable than the others, went home. They went to St. Louis—that is a portion of them—on the 19th, and they could not organize, so they adjourned until the Friday morning following; they there and then endorsed the Chicago resolutions, and broke up, as I understand, in almost a row, and adjourned to meet at the Planters' House in St.

¹ The text leaves no doubt that 1863 is the year meant. [E.A.W.]

Louis, on the 19th of May next. Now, I would just remark in conclusion, that if the public will examine every feature of this struggle of the Miners of Illinois, they will see the truthful facts of the case; that is, that the Miners' Association is not, and never was to blame for the extortions practiced upon the community by the raising of the price of coal.

Lodge No. 1 was highly entertained by a visit from a delegation from LaSalle and Coal Valley, on Monday the 20th of April, 1863. The gentleman from LaSalle delivered a speech that would, I think, be hard to be beaten by some of our speech manufacturers. He dealt in nothing but what was to the points at issue, viz.: The propagation of our cause, the protection of our sacred rights as freemen from the oppression as working men that Coal Miners of America have been under for years. I must say, this gentleman from LaSalle was well received by this Lodge; and Lodge No. 6 ought to be proud of such men as there are in their Lodge, for it is the banner Lodge, so far. He also gave us a brief sketch of his tour; he went to Kingston and organized a Lodge at that place, which I hope will stand to the cause, and not be led away by any one, because we know it is, and always will be, a benefit to them by developing talent that needs a very small amount of polishing to become a glistening jewel—that would be smouldering in darkness the same as the vast mineral wealth of America would be, if there had not been a class of men who would and did risk their lives to bring mining to the perfection that it has attained at this present day; and it is still in its infancy in America. The object of this delegation was to get aid for the men who are on a strike in Coal Valley, and who have had a long struggle with the Coal Operators and their tools whom we call Blacklegs, a very obnoxious animal that goes in the face of all honest men and robs them of the bread which they would earn honestly; but even this class of animals are getting sick of this mean business and repenting of their folly. We, as law abiding men, defy the Coal Operators, or any person or persons, to break up this Association, because we are founded on the principles of truth, right, and justice. We wish no extortion to be practiced by any branch of this Association, and we are determined to put down extortion on the part of our employers. We will expose to the utmost of our ability any extortion on the part of the Operators, and lay it before the public through the press.

I will now close by inserting a statement of the amount of money collected by these delegates, with the names of the places and amount given by each, and would also like to see a similar statement by others

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that have been out collecting money, as such things must be done in order to prevent imposition and fraud by any one that might be disposed to commit such a crime—for all men are not honest.

Official Statement by Hetherington and Thomas:

Peoria,	\$75.00
Peru,	30.00
LaSalle,	63.40
Fond du Lac,	34.25
Pekin,	30.00
Belleville,	80.00
<hr/>	
Total	312.65

The sum total of expenses for traveling, &c., is \$35.10, up to date April 20. There would be some more expense to be paid which will be given at some future time; this additional expense will be to take these gentlemen home from Belleville. At some other time, you will hear from me on other subjects. I am rather lengthy this time; but when the spirit moves, the pen must keep going. Yours, in behalf of the Miners' cause.

UNION MINER

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORTHCOMING
PUBLICATION OF THE WEEKLY MINER¹

A Newspaper for the Miners—It gives us pleasure to state that a project is in contemplation for the establishment of a weekly newspaper to be devoted chiefly to the advocacy of the interests of the *Coal Miners of this and other States*; said paper to be published at Belleville as the most central point of mining operations, and to be under the editorial control of our friend John Hinchcliffe, Esq. than whom none is more competent for the position. The number of *Coal Miners* in this state alone may be set down as over *two thousand*, to say nothing of the large numbers engaged in this business in Missouri, and other states, and the number is constantly on the increase as the coal business is being rapidly expanded.

—PROSPECTUS:—

The Miners Journal, a weekly newspaper, to be published in Belleville, St. Clair County, Ill., Terms: \$2 a year in advance. Prompted by the desire to supply a want long felt by the operative miners of Illinois and other Mining Districts, the undersigned intends publishing a Weekly Journal, the first number of which will be issued some time during the month of May. This paper will be the official organ of the "Miners' Association," and will be devoted to the advancement of the interests of the Working Classes generally, and of the hitherto neglected Coal Miners especially. It will be devoted to Family Literature, Agriculture, Social Science, General Knowledge, and the Current News of the day. It will contain full reports of the state of the Markets and Commerce generally. As an advertising Medium it will possess peculiar advantages, circulating as it must, among a class of consumers who are cash customers. It will be the advocate of no partisan schemes, but will fearlessly expose wrongs, no matter by whom they are perpetrated, while the Right will be upheld and defended, irrespective of partisanship, at all hazard.

JOHN HINCHCLIFFE

Belleville, April 27, 1863

¹ Belleville Democrat, May 9, 1863. Original emphasis.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF PITTSBURGH COAL
EXCHANGE, FEBRUARY 9, 1864¹

An important meeting of coal men convened at the Board of Trade Rooms, at one and a half o'clock, on Tuesday afternoon.

The meeting came to order. A. D. Smith, President, in the Chair. Thirty-four members present.

James O'Connor, Secretary, read the minutes of the proceedings of the last meeting, which were approved.

The Committee on Locks reported progress, and asked to be continued, which was granted.

Mr. McQuiston, from the Committee on Digging, reported that in some instances digging had been raised to five cents per bushel by the employers, in anticipation of a demand being made by the employees for an advance.

Mr. Dravo made some remarks, in which he stated that miners were plenty and anxious for employment, and he had no doubt a sufficiency of hands, at four cents per bushel, could be obtained. He suggested that a committee be appointed to wait on the employers and urge a suspension of the operations, unless miners agree to work for four cents per bushel.

Mr. W. H. Brown said, in Illinois miners were paid but four cents per bushel for mining coal; at Steubenville, and throughout Ohio, but three and a half cents is paid. At these places, heretofore, one cent per bushel more had been paid to miners than had been paid them in this vicinity.

Mr. O'Connor suggested that a committee be appointed by the employers and one by the operatives, to ascertain if these matters cannot be amicably compromised and arranged to the satisfaction of all parties.

James O'Connor, Esq., offered the following:

Resolved, That a committee of six be appointed to meet a similar committee of the representatives of the coal diggers, and freely explain the necessity of reducing the price of mining to four cents per bushel, and report to this Exchange on Tuesday, February 16th.

The following named gentlemen were appointed on the above committee: James M. Bailey, William H. Brown, Simpson Horner, John F. Dravo, R. R. McQuiston, James Colvin.

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, February 11, 1864.

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

After some desultory remarks by Messrs. Dravo, Colvin, Bailey, Miller, O'Connor, and the President, the resolution with the committee named, was adopted.

Mr. Dravo offered the following:

Resolved, That a committee of fifteen be chosen, two from each pool, authorized to wait on the owners of mines, and get them to agree in writing not to pay over four cents per bushel from the 1st of March, 1864, and to join the Pittsburgh Coal Exchange—the Committee to report this day week.

A miner being present was called on for his views, and he stated to the meeting that if the price of coal fell in the market down the river, in Cincinnati and Louisville, the price of mining coal would fall here. If it raised in price there, the price of digging would raise. He also stated that the coal diggers on the Monongahela and Saw Mill Run did not average over two dollars per day.

Mr. Dravo, in answer, stated that he had men in his employ who made ten dollars a day.

Another gentleman, whose name we did not hear, said he had hands that made twelve dollars and twenty-five cents per day.

The resolution was then adopted, and the following persons appointed on the Committee:

First Pool Youghiogeny—Wm. Robbins, Robert Grinnell. First Pool, Monongahela—Mr. Watson, Wm. Redman. Second Pool, Monongahela—Mr. Coursin, John F. Dravo. Third Pool, Monongahela—Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Coulter. Fourth Pool, Monongahela—Wm. Clark, Mark Winnett. Saw Mill Run—Robert Long, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Grey. Opposite Pittsburgh—Jas. M. Bailey, Thos. Dickson.

Mr. O'Connor moved that a committee, consisting of the President and two other members of the Exchange, be appointed to call on the iron men and ask their co-operation. Adopted.

The committee consists of the President, and Messrs. O'Connor and Dravo.

Messrs. William Clancy, Robert Long, W. H. Phipps, B. P. Coursin, Blackmore & Nelson and G. G. McFarland & Co. were proposed and became members of the Coal Exchange.

Meeting then adjourned to February 16th, inst., at 1½ p.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF PITTSBURGH COAL
EXCHANGE, FEBRUARY 16, 1864¹

*Meeting of the Coal Exchange—The Price of Digging—
Interesting Discussion*

A meeting of the members of the Coal Exchange was held on Tuesday afternoon, at the Board of Trade Rooms, Fourth street. In the absence of Mr. A. D. Smith, President, Mr. Simpson, Vice President, occupied the chair.

After the minutes of the previous meeting had been read and approved, several gentlemen were admitted as members of the Association.

The Secretary, Mr. James O'Connor, then read "a plan adopted by the War Department for supplying fuel to public and private boats on the Western waters." The plan, which was prepared by Capt. Rasch, was accompanied with a copy of a remonstrance addressed to the Secretary of War, by the officers of the Coal Exchange, against the adoption of the plan, which contemplated in substance, the formation of a Wood Choppers' Brigade, of 6,000 men, to supply fuel for Government use on the Mississippi river. The principal objections urged against the adoption of the plan are—1st. Capt. Rasch asserts that coal costs 60 cents per bushel at Memphis, whereas the Coal Exchange will guarantee to furnish it at 40 cents. 2d. Capt. Rasch asserts that one cord of cotton wood is equal to fifteen bushels of coal, whereas the best of wood, even when dry, is not equal to ten bushels of coal. 3d. That the important fact is omitted by Capt. Rasch, that not much wood can be obtained near the river banks on the Mississippi, between Memphis and Vicksburg, and would have to be hauled by ox-teams at a very heavy cost. 4th. That all wood taken from loyal owners will have to be paid for, which fact was overlooked by Capt. Rasch. Several other reasons were urged, why the plan alluded to should not be adopted. The Exchange express the opinion that it is entirely impracticable, and would only result in immense loss to the Government.

The remonstrance was approved, and was ordered to be forwarded to the Secretary of War.

The Committee of fifteen, appointed at the last meeting to confer with the coal operators, and secure their co-operation to reduce the price of

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, February 17, 1864.

digging, on and after the 1st of March next, to four cents per bushel, made a verbal report, and was continued. The reports, so far as received from the several districts, were favorable. A full report from all the districts is expected at the next meeting.

Mr. O'Connor, from the Committee to wait upon the iron merchants, to secure their co-operation in the movement to reduce the price of mining, reported that they had received a reply setting forth the opinion that the price now paid (5 cents) was entirely too high, and promising their support and co-operation with the Coal Exchange, as far as possible. The report was received and adopted.

W. M. Clancy, of W. M. & H. Clancy & Co., reported that his miners were on a strike, and had been out since Friday last, but was unable to state the cause of the strike.

The Chairman asked for the views of gentlemen present, in regard to the price of digging, or any other subject of importance to the Exchange.

Mr. Bigley remarked that when his miners struck for five cents per bushel he gave it without hesitation. When he paid two cents to the diggers, he rented his houses at \$4 per month. He had raised the rent to \$6, when the diggers at once objected to paying it. He told them they got more than double the price for digging and ought not to object to an increase of one-third on the rent of their houses. They could not see the force of this reasoning, and had been off work for two weeks, refusing even to compromise at \$5. per month. Mr. B. thought that four cents per bushel for digging was enough. There were plenty of miners about—more than he had seen for several years. Every operator had plenty of diggers, and many were running about idle. Four cents a bushel was fully equal to the advance in the prices of living, and it would be necessary at one time or another to set a limit to the demands of the diggers. If the coal men would only act together in good faith, they could control this matter in the course of a few months.

Squire Miller would object to stopping operations on the 1st of March, because of the small quantity of coal loaded. The diggers would make a stubborn resistance, and the stoppage would be long-continued. Besides March, April and May were the most favorable months for floating coal, and thus the best season for water would be lost.

Mr. Stone thought that if it was determined to put the price of digging down to four cents, they should do so without regard to water, or any other contingency. If it was concluded to pay but four cents, the point must be maintained at all hazards. Labor was plenty, and he did not think there was any necessity for paying five cents in the first place.

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Mr. Miller remarked that it was impossible to overlook the conflicting interests at stake. Those who floated all their coal were confined to the months named, and if operations were suspended during that period, then those who had their coal towed in barges would be able to reap large profits, while the other class of dealers could do nothing. It would be an uphill business to get the several interests to act harmoniously together.

Mr. W. H. Brown had told his men that they had about broken the camel's back, and they must come down. They asked him what he thought would be a fair price for digging, and he told them that he thought they ought to be satisfied with four cents. Nearly all of them admitted that five cents was too high, and some of them regretted that a strike for that figure had been made. They feared, however, that if they went to work at four cents, they would be asked to take three cents in a few weeks. This was about the result of the interview.

Mr. O'Connor wished to know whether the action of a majority of the Coal Exchange was to be understood as binding upon the minority?

Mr. Miller remarked that all coal operators were not members of the Exchange, and if those who belonged to the association bound themselves to a certain agreement, others outside would take advantage of the circumstances. One black sheep would spoil a whole flock.

Mr. O'Connor remarked that the Iron Association did not include all the iron merchants, yet a majority ruled. He had heard it asserted that some members of the Coal Exchange had refused to be bound by its action, and if this was so, then there was no use in having an association. He therefore desired a test vote, as to whether the minority would be in honor bound by the action of the majority.

Mr. Dravo remarked that if the minority would not submit to the action of the majority, they might just as well disband. He was desirous, however, of getting every coal merchant into the association.

After some further discussion, a motion was made to postpone the matter for the present, but it was negatived by a decided vote.

The original resolution, that the action of the Exchange should be binding upon all its members, was adopted with but one dissenting vote.

Mr. Bailey, from the Committee to confer with the diggers, reported in substance that the interview amounted to nothing. The delegation with whom the Committee consulted, consisted mainly of Saw Mill Run men, and they were among the most conservative, yet they all expressed a determination to adhere to the five cents, and thought that the market could afford to pay it. These men had evidently been instructed, by

their lodges to adhere to the five cents. No practical good whatever had been accomplished, and no arrangement was made for further consultation.

Mr. Lysle thought that the trade would regulate itself after a while. The law of supply and demand would in due time obviate the difficulties complained of.

After some further discussion, it was agreed to postpone the whole subject until the next meeting of the Exchange—the several Committees to be continued.

The Exchange then adjourned to meet on Tuesday afternoon next, at half-past one o'clock.

LETTER TO PITTSBURGH GAZETTE ON
THE PRICE OF COAL¹

The Price of Coal

A correspondent, signing himself T. F., writes us as follows, in reference to the late meetings of coal merchants, held in this city:

The principal object of the meeting appears to have been the reduction in the price of digging coal. Let us see if the merchants have any cause to complain. It is clear that every man should be able to live by his occupation. Mining on the Monongahela is one of the most uncertain occupations that men engage in. Take for example, the four coal works lying nearest to me, estimate the length of working time, from the first of July to the present—say eight months,

Roberts' works run	40	days
Farrow & Co.	40	"
J. N. & W. O'Neal	40	"
O. P. Berry	70	"

—making an average of less than fifty working days in eight months. The average amount mined by each man is say 100 bushels per day—more falling below than exceeding that amount. At this rate the average wages would not exceed \$400. per year.

The coal merchants allege that they cannot pay the present price of digging (five cents). Let us see how this stands. In 1860 the price of mining was two cents, and loading four cents. After the war began, and prices raised, mining went up also. The prices of mining, as compared with loading, up to the present time, ran thus:

Mining, 2 cents; loading, 4 cents.	
" 3 " ; " 6 "	
" 4 " ; " 8 "	
" 5 " ; " 10 "	

—showing that in every instance where mining raised *one* cent, loading advanced *two* cents—the merchants reaping increased profits at every advance of mining. At the present price of loading (ten cents) a coal works will clear from \$100 to \$200 per day in loading alone.

Those merchants who "run" their coal to the lower markets can stand

¹ February 25, 1864. Original emphasis.

the prices of digging, since they clear from \$3,000 to \$3,000 [sic] on each pair of boats. There is not much prospect of any of them quitting the business.

The merchants agree that the price of outdoor labor has increased, and that it costs more to load coal now than formerly. This is true; but they forget to state that the price of nut coal and slack has so far advanced that it nearly pays for the outdoor labor—and that the mining of this *does not cost them one cent*.

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that the coal merchants are trying to throw all the blame of high prices on the miners, while the fact is they reap all the profits. The men who do the labor simply make a living, while the merchants are now reaping the largest profits ever known to the trade.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF PITTSBURGH COAL
EXCHANGE, MARCH 1, 1864¹

The regular meeting of the Coal Exchange was held on Tuesday afternoon, at the Merchants' Exchange, on Fourth Street, President Smith in the chair. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Mr. John F. Dravo, chairman of the Committee on the Point Bridge, made a verbal report of the progress of the committee, which was accepted.

Mr. O'Connor offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the Committee on the Point Bridge be requested to remonstrate against the piers on said bridge being less than ninety feet high, and not less than five hundred feet apart, and to resist the piers being placed diagonally to the current, and that the committee be requested to learn from the Point Bridge Company the exact location intended for the piers on the Temperanceville side of the river.

Mr. O'Connor stated that he had conferred with our members of Congress in reference to the enrolling of barges, and would report in full at next meeting.

Mr. Miller suggested that a regular price should be fixed for loading coal into barges in the different pools, and thereby remedy the difficulty experienced by the present sliding scale. To bring about that object, he offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of fixing the prices for loading coal in the different pools in the Monongahela and Youghioghenny rivers.

The resolution was adopted, and the following committee appointed: Pool No. 1, James Watson; No. 2, John C. Rasher; No. 3, Capt. Rogers; No. 4, John Logan; Youghioghenny river, Mr. Herron.

Mr. John F. Dravo offered the following:

Resolved, That this Association appoint a competent coal gauger for Allegheny county, whose duty it will be to gauge all coal in flat-bottomed boats, barges and flats, when requested by parties interested, his fee to be twenty-five cents per 1000 bushels.

The resolution was adopted, and the election for coal gauger laid over till next meeting.

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, March 2, 1864.

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

Mr. O'Connor offered the following, which was adopted:

Whereas, A coal digging machine has been invented, and it is said can be made a success, Therefore,

Resolved, That S. Horner, John S. Murdoch and J. F. Dravo be appointed a committee to examine the invention, and report upon the same at the next meeting of the Association.

Mr. O'Connor, appointed at a former meeting to remonstrate to the War Department in reference to the organization of the "Wood Choppers' Brigade," announced that he was authorized by the Secretary of War to state that the brigade would not be formed.

A communication, in answer to one published by the Coal Diggers' Lodge No. 7, was read and adopted, and ordered to be published in the daily papers.

On motion, the hour of meeting of the Association was changed from 1:30 p.m. to 11 o'clock a.m.

On motion, adjourned.

MINERS' RESOLUTION ENDORSING PITTSBURGH
SANITARY COMMISSION FAIR FOR WAR RELIEF¹

At a meeting of Lodge No. 1 of the Miners' Friendly Association of Western Pennsylvania, held on Monday evening, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the communication of the Executive Committee of the Pittsburgh Sanitary Commission Fair be heartily received, and that the request be cheerfully complied with—and we pledge ourselves to do all in our power to aid so benevolent and humane an object.

Resolved, That a general delegate convention of miners and coal diggers be held on Saturday, April 2d, at McLee's old Stand, Camden, to appoint a committee to act in co-operation with the Executive Committee on Pittsburgh Sanitary Commission Fair, and that all coal banks on the Monongahela and its tributaries be earnestly requested to send delegates.

In pursuance of the above action, a convention will be held on Saturday, April 2d, at ten o'clock, A.M., at the place designated in the resolution, for the purpose of appointing said committee. It is requested that every coal pit, from Saw Mill Run to Brownsville, will send a delegate to the convention.

¹Pittsburgh Gazette, March 31, 1864; published under the headline "The Coal Miners and the Sanitary Fair."

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF PITTSBURGH COAL
EXCHANGE, APRIL 30, 1864¹

A special meeting of the Coal Exchange was held this morning at the Board of Trade Rooms, Fourth street, to take into consideration the propriety of not paying more than five cents per bushel for digging coal. An unusually large number of coal men were present.

The following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, Quite a number of our coal banks have had to cease work, owing to the exorbitant demands of the coal diggers, who now demand six cents per bushel, in face of coal having declined very materially in Louisville and the lower markets, Therefore be it

Resolved, That the *real cause* of the exorbitant prices of coal and of coal digging is exclusively owing to the imperative demands of the iron men and other manufacturers, who refuse to have their works cease operations, and who add all advances to their manufactories.

Resolved, That whilst we denounce the extortionate demands of coal diggers, we are unanimously resolved not to pay over five cents per bushel.

Resolved, That we come to this conclusion regardless of the pits or coal banks at Saw Mill Run, or any parties who do not belong to this Association, who will doubtless soon see the propriety of refusing to pay the outrageous demands of the coal diggers.

Resolved, That we earnestly recommend all the members of this Association to refuse to load boats or barges at any bank that pays six cents per bushel after any contracts made based on five cents per bushel have expired.

A resolution was adopted appointing a committee to memorialize Congress not to grant any further tariffs on iron, as the present high prices of iron enable the manufacturers to oppress the coal dealers. Messrs. Horner, Miller and Wilcox constitute the committee.

On motion adjourned until Tuesday morning next at eleven o'clock.

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, April 30, 1864. Original emphasis.

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF PITTSBURGH COAL
EXCHANGE, MAY 3, 1864¹

A meeting of the Coal Exchange was held this morning at the Merchants' Exchange. The President being absent, Mr. Horner was called to the Chair.

Mr. Frank Anderson was unanimously elected coal gauger for Allegheny County. By request of the President, the members of the Exchange present, reported what action they had been taking in regard to the Sanitary Fair. The reports were very encouraging. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That all the coal bank owners should refuse to run their works as long as any works belonging to the Association are on strike, and that they should not encourage such demands of diggers.

Resolved, That on Tuesday next a full meeting be called of all the members of the Association, so as to get a unanimous decision to resist the demands of the coal diggers, and then to urge the resolution to stop all works until all the coal banks pay not over five cents per bushel.

On motion the Association adjourned until Tuesday morning next, at eleven o'clock.

¹ Pittsburgh Gazette, May 4, 1864.

LETTERS FROM PRESIDENT OF FALL BROOK COAL COMPANY, TIOGA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TO H. BREWER, MANAGER OF FALL BROOK MINES, AUGUST 17 AND 18, 1864¹

H. BREWER DEAR SIR:

Corning August 17/64

Our Glasgow importation will be here in course of this day, 34, in number 29 laborers and 5 carpenters. They can be sent to you if this is best or employed elsewhere. I think you had better come down on mail train today. I will remain here today to see you. The point now is shall we close the mines for balance of canal season and fight it out leaving customers to do the best they can or shall we submit to such further insult as the Devil chooses to impose upon us. With a certainty of further indignities monthly perhaps weekly and about half product from this to December I am strongly induced to close the mines, let customers take care of themselves and test the question whether bread or coal is king. It must soon come to this. *A question of time only.*²

JOHN MAGEE

Fall Brook Coal Company,
Corning Office.
Andrew Beers, Agent. Corning, N. Y., August 18th, 1864

H. BREWER ESQ.

DEAR SIR:

I have received your several communications made the last two days in regard to outside men and laborers at the mines and indicating further demands from Miners. You will make no more concessions to either laborers or Miners. We have already conceded too much. Self-respect forbids the continuance of business in the face of the existing state of things. I think we can get on without Coal as long as they can without employment. We will at any rate test that question until it is settled

¹ Original letters in possession of Miss Elizabeth Brewer, Corning, New York, granddaughter of H. Brewer, to whom they were addressed. Copies were furnished the author through the courtesy of Sturges F. Cary, Corning, New York. The handwriting of the letters indicates that Magee himself penned the letter of August 17, while the second letter was dictated to a secretary and signed by Magee.

² Original emphasis.

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which is the most independent party. This thing of leagues, unions and strikes has been carried to a point no longer endurable and must have an end. If the laborers don't resume work on or before Monday next you will close the mines, send away the mules and spare teams and if the laborers shall resume work and the Miners shall make further demands don't concede to them but close the mines. It has to come to this ere long and I am disposed to meet and settle the question now rather than make further concessions to unjust demands. These people have been tolerated too long. They appear to be incapable of appreciating liberal kind treatment or their own true interest.

Yours Truly
JOHN MAGEE

LETTER FROM MINERS AND LABORERS EMPLOYED BY FALL
BROOK COAL COMPANY, TIOGA COUNTY, PENNSYL-
VANIA, TO THE PRESIDENT AND MANAGER OF
THE COMPANY, AUGUST 29, 1864¹

Fall Brook August 29th/64

TO JNO MAGEE ESQR. PROPRIETOR
OR H. BREWER ESQR. MANAGER

We the Miners, Labourers and Mechanics have held a Special Meeting for the purpose of investigating the cause of the present Strike when the following was adopted in view of starting the work and for your Consideration also:

1st. That the Foreman of Fall Brook shall have power to employ any Labourer or Mechanic providing such men employed do not infringe on the rights of the men at work for said Company.

2nd. That we have erred in the case of Moses Barlow and we solicit you as a gentleman to give the said Moses Barlow a job of work. And for the future we will be more cautious in taking action upon such like cases.

3rd. We the Miners, Mechanics and Labourers have mutually agreed not to cause a Strike on our part without giving our employer at least seven days' notice.

4th. This association has not been established to encourage idleness, but for the good of society in general and to create a better feeling between the Employer and Employee. We do not want to defraud you in any way, we want nothing but a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

Justice to all hands.

[No signatures appended]

¹ Original of letter in possession of Miss Elizabeth Brewer, Corning, New York, granddaughter of H. Brewer, manager of the Fall Brook Mines and one of the addressees. A copy was furnished the author through the courtesy of Sturges F. Cary, Corning, New York.

LETTER ON COAL STRIKES TO EDITOR OF
PITTSBURGH CHRONICLE¹

MR. EDITOR: I noticed an error in reference to this subject in some remarks in your popular paper the other day. It was stated that the diggers had struck for seven cents per bushel; that the issue was fairly made between them and their employers and it was to be hoped the latter would hold out and prevail against such extortionate demands. Now the fact is, no such issue exists between the diggers and their employers; nor is there any occasion for it; and this is not because of any combination between them, but because of the extent and perfection of the combination among the diggers themselves. When the diggers at each separate works, or in each neighborhood regulated their own affairs and fixed their own prices, such issues were of frequent occurrence, because our coal proprietor could not afford to pay higher wages than his neighbors, where both depended on the same market; but now affairs are managed differently; the extent and the power of the Diggers' Union enables them to fix uniform prices over the whole section of country depending on the same market. And as coal is an article of prime necessity and must be had, it matters not to the proprietor whether he pays five cents or ten per bushel for digging, he can add the one to the price as easily as the other, and knows that he cannot be undersold by others getting their coal dug at lower rates.

The proprietors will not stand out longer than to make necessary repairs, and prepare the community for the advanced price. The diggers will get the seven cents, or ten if demanded. Indeed, some have put their diggers in already at the advanced price. It is not to be expected that they should keep their works standing idle when coal is in demand, and the price of digging immaterial to them. No; if any issue is to be formed on this subject with the diggers it must be between them and the consumers, as matters stand now. It is the consumer who is interested, and not the proprietor, and the sooner this issue is joined the speedier will be the relief; and to bring this about it will be all the better if the digger demands ten or fifteen cents. He could get that as readily as seven, because the article cannot be dispensed with, and the power and extent of the combination gives him a monopoly, and precludes competition by interlopers in the business.

¹ August 30, 1864. Original emphasis.

How is the remedy to come. The consumers must have the article at any price, therefore they cannot bring the diggers to terms by withholding employment. Should they be prosecuted for conspiracy and unlawful combinations? No. Whatever may be the law theoretically, there is no law in *force* in this country except such as is enforced by public opinion, and public opinion is not yet sufficiently aroused against this combination to secure its suppression; and this is why I say it would be all the better for the community—their relief be nearer at hand—if the diggers raised prices to ten or fifteen cents. One season of coal at twenty to twenty-five cents per bushel, as it probably will be this ensuing winter, would bring about a wholesome condition of public sentiment for the suppression of the evil. Legislation could then be had for cheap and easy methods of prosecution and punishment of all individuals connected with it. Juries could be got to convict and courts to inflict punishment. As public opinion heretofore existed, and the facilities we afford for humbugging courts and juries, no one except some crazy enthusiast would institute a prosecution for conspiracy. Such as had the temerity to do so, mostly had the costs to pay, and where a digger did happen to be convicted, his light fine was at once discharged by the *Union*, and he went his way rejoicing.

The public must feel the smart before it will apply the remedy. The offenders will then be taught that true liberty in regard to labor consists in freedom to each individual to work or not to work for such wages as he sees fit, but forbids combinations with others to obtain extortionate rates, or to dictate for whom, and at what prices others shall be employed.

“BLACK DIAMOND.”

EDITORIAL ON THE COAL STRIKE IN
PITTSBURGH CHRONICLE¹

The last strike of the coal diggers of this region is attracting more than usual attention. It is universally considered entirely unnecessary and unreasonable, and we are glad to know that it is to be firmly resisted. It began to be the belief of many that if the coal dealers and our manufacturers were not in actual collusion with the diggers, yet that they were not very anxious to oppose their exorbitant demands, finding actual profit to themselves in every advance. We think, however, that "Black Diamond" gave the true explanation of the whole matter in our issue of Tuesday. It is the consumers then who are chiefly interested in the matter of these coal strikes, and they should do everything possible to back up the coal dealers and the manufacturers in their firm resolves. Grant the diggers seven cents per bushel to-day and next week or month they may, through the powerful agency of their thoroughly organized association, demand ten cents per bushel. We are credibly informed that, through the improvidence of diggers, they are no better off with five cents than with three. They work less and waste more. We are also informed that it is only their leaders who demand this advance, and that the rest have been persuaded into the strike because it has been urged that all they have to do is to ask the advance and it will be given them.

We understand that measures are now being projected to bring on here a large number of workmen from the East, and to push on the manufacture of efficient and labor-saving coal machines. This can very easily be done. Every emigrant ship brings over numbers of diggers who would be exceedingly glad to work at present rates. We are told that even now there are more diggers than can find employment, and that numbers would gladly go to work, but are prevented by those who have gained the control over them, and such as are thus willing, should know that they will be amply and constantly protected in their rights. Coal miners are now standing in their own light, and are doing everything to damage their interests, and prejudice their future prospect.

Now it is the individual consumers who have to pay in the end for all these strikes. The coal dealer or the manufacturer only adds the advance or more to *their* prices, and the public have to pay. This winter promises

¹ September 1, 1864. Original emphasis.

to be a very hard one, and it is outrageous that the inhabitants of Western Pennsylvania, who live in the midst of hills teeming with the richest, most accessible, and most easily worked veins of coal in the world, should have to pay from twenty to twenty-five cents per bushel for coal. But it don't affect this section alone, but all west of it, and a population of millions are to be subjected to sufferings because a league of foreigners—very many of them unnaturalized and not intending to live in this country permanently—want from thirty to fifty dollars a week for services which any laboring man with a brief experience can render. There is no more favorable season in the year than just now to resist the exorbitant claims of diggers, and to bring them back to reason and moderation.

We now write for the great body of consumers, who outnumber the diggers a thousand to one, and we trust the whole community will at once arouse itself on this subject, and determine that they will be no longer imposed upon.

LETTER FROM A COAL MINER, PUBLISHED AS "A WORD
FROM THE OTHER SIDE" BY THE PITTSBURGH
CHRONICLE¹

We are requested by a coal digger to give his fraternity a hearing in our columns. Certainly. They are entitled to one, and the public is really anxious to know by what arguments they justify their present advance. It will be seen by the subjoined communication that the only reason therein adduced is, that the advance for which they are now on a strike has been made, *not* because it was necessary, or that former wages were not sufficiently high, even in these costly times, but because the coal dealers, or "bosses," advanced before *them*. Supposing his facts true, they would only prove that the great public which consumes coal is being plucked by two classes. Surely the diggers have some better reasons to offer for their present attitude. It will scarcely satisfy a suffering community to know that both dealers and diggers are running a race to discover who can advance most and oftenest. We do not wish to do injustice to any concerned, but we labor in the interests of the great body of consumers, and we and they would much like to know who are to blame for the present enormous and exorbitant prices of coal. The pit miners and coal dealers say it is the diggers. Do we understand that the diggers desire to lay the blame on the other parties. Let us have the exact truth. But here is the article:

MR. EDITOR: In any of the Pittsburgh papers a body hardly ever sees anything printed for the defence of the miners and the working class in general. This, of course, gives the employers unlimited liberty to persecute their employees as much as ever they please—hence the false assertion that it is the miner and not the boss that raises the coal in Pittsburgh; the contrary of which can be proven so plain and so complete that nobody but a fool would doubt any longer.

The bosses exacted of the people of Pittsburgh last winter 12 cents a bushel for coal a long time before the miners demanded 5 cents for digging, and when the latter did so, the former raised it to 15 cents. This summer, again the bosses raised the coal from 12 to 15 and 16 cents a bushel, a good while before the miners demanded 7 cents. For the proof of this, Mr. Editor, a body only needs to look into your valuable paper of date three weeks back. The miners of this locality only came out as

¹ September 2, 1864. Original emphasis.

late as the 22d instant for 7 cents. With perfect justice the miners may demand 7 out of 15 and 16; 6 out of 13 and 14; 5 out of 11 and 12 cents, and so on.

The boss tells the miner what wages he can live on. The miner can tell the boss with as good authority what profit he can live on. The miner never demands more wages, unless he can do so with justice, and the bosses raise the coal whenever they can without being compelled by the miners, and without considering the poor or any other class of people. The miners always consider the poor and would dig a day's coal gratis any time for the poor of Pittsburgh and vicinity, whenever the latter need it if the bosses would also deliver it free of charge. This the bosses won't always do, at least refused the same last winter.

Let me ask you, Mr. Editor, who has done the most in proportion for the Sanitary Commission last spring, for the sick and wounded soldiers? It was the miners, who are always ready to give and who are always grossly misrepresented. It is with the miner the same as with the farmer, who sold an ox for \$75. to a man who afterward sold him again for \$100. The farmer thought—"You shan't have another ox for that price."

HALF MOON

THE COAL DIGGERS' CONVENTION, SEPTEMBER 9, 1864, AS
DESCRIBED IN THE PITTSBURGH GAZETTE¹

Pursuant to published call, the meeting of coal miners was held on the West Common, Allegheny, about noon to-day. Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the attendance was quite limited—less than two hundred diggers being present. They marched to the ground in a body, preceded by a brass band.

The meeting was called to order by the appointment of Hon. A. C. Alexander, Mayor of the city, as chairman. On taking the stand, the Mayor thanked the meeting for the honor conferred, and expressed the hope that their proceedings might be characterized by harmony and good feeling. He alluded to the feeling in the community consequent upon the extraordinary high price of coal, and hoped that the gentlemen present, representing the miners of the county, would be able to show that they were not to blame for this state of affairs. [Cries of "Hear! Hear!"] He understood that this was the object of the meeting, and asked if this was correct. [Cries of "Yes, yes."] Coal merchants and others interested were invited to take part in the proceedings. It was announced that no resolutions would be offered, but that the sentiments of the miners would be represented by speakers selected from among their number.

Mr. Hugh Woods was the first speaker. He alluded to the misrepresentations heaped upon the miners by the public press, but did not specify what these misrepresentations were. After a learned disquisition on "Union," he asked the question whether the miners were justified in demanding seven cents per bushel? He then alluded to the high prices of the articles of living, and held that seven cents per bushel was not too high for the labor of digging. The cause of the high prices of coal, then, was not attributed to the miners but to the rebellion, and the avaricious disposition of the bosses. When coal was dug for two cents, the market price was four and four and a half cents. And it was notoriously true that for every cent added to the diggers, the bosses got two. The measure demanded by the bosses was also a subject of much complaint. Nut coal, that yielded the bosses a handsome revenue, did not bring the diggers one cent. This article was now being sold at twelve cents per bushel, and was all clear profit to the bosses, except the cost of putting it into the market. The diggers ought to have at least two cents

¹ September 9, 1864.

a bushel on nut coal. Complaints were also made about extra labor in the pits, or "dead work" as it is called. This was very considerable in all the pits, amounting to whole days at a time, and for which the digger never received a cent. This work consisted in driving entries, digging drains, setting posts, etc., etc. The most serious complaints were made against the manner of weighing or measuring—the speaker asserting that, notwithstanding the loss of nut coal, the "dead work," etc., the diggers in nearly all the pits were compelled to put on every wagon from three to five bushels extra. This speaker alluded to the high price received for coal in the lower markets last winter, and argued that they (the diggers) should share in the prosperity of the bosses. This was about the substance of his speech.

Abraham Winters was the next speaker. He went over much of the ground which Mr. Woods had occupied; indignantly denied that the diggers were extortionate in their demands, as alleged by the press, and undertook to prove it. The assertion had been made that the diggers were earning five and eight dollars a day. Now, so far as he was concerned, his earnings last year, with the assistance of a boy, were just \$735.50. He considered sixty bushels a sufficient day's work for him, or for any man who wished to do justice to body and mind. If he dug more than that amount, he overtaxed himself. He spent no money for whisky, and wasted none of his earnings, and yet at the end of the year he found himself in debt. This had not been the case in former years. When the public got to understand the difficulties the diggers had to contend with; the exactions of the bosses in the way of "dead labor"; and the fact that diggers did not have employment all the year round, they could better appreciate their course of conduct, and would be willing to do them justice. Justice was all they asked, and justice they would have.

Anthony Bell was next called upon. He denied that the diggers ever received five dollars a hundred for mining. They received nominally that amount, but had to put a big pile on the top of every wagon for nothing. He then alluded to the "dead work," and asserted that if the bosses would only consent to pay a fair price for all extra labor and adhere to honest measure, he, for one, would never ask a cent over five dollars a hundred. But they would not do this—they would rather pay twenty cents a bushel for digging. He stated that during the past twelve years he had not averaged over six months' working time each year, and that sixty bushels was a fair average day's work. The speaker continued in much the same strain as his predecessors.

The chairman then announced that he had been requested to invite

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any coal bosses who might be present, to take seats upon the platform. There was no response, however, to the invitation.

Mr. Keener was the last speaker, but he advanced no new arguments, and we need not trouble the reader with a synopsis of his remarks.

The meeting then adjourned—the miners forming into rank and marching to the city in a body.

LETTER TO MINERS AND LABORERS, ANNOUNCING A
LOCKOUT, BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE FALL BROOK
COAL COMPANY, JOHN MAGEE, FALL BROOK, TIOGA
COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, DECEMBER 31, 1864¹

TO THE MINERS AND LABORERS EMPLOYED AT THE FALL BROOK COAL
MINES:

You have been notified that the business of mining at Fall Brook is this day suspended, and it will continue suspended as long as the miners and others employed by the company arrogate to themselves the right and exercise the power to dictate and control the business of the company. For more than three years you have run the mines very much in your own way; certainly not to the satisfaction or profit of your employers, and it is believed not to the satisfaction of yourselves. The company have therefore resolved to take charge of their own business and manage it hereafter, as they have a right to do, independent of dictation from those they employ. If they cannot obtain men on these terms who will respect the rights of their employers, they *will not resume business*. Their rights must hereafter be respected, and their superintendent and bosses treated with respect and obeyed in the rightful performance of their duty. If you or any portion of you shall regard the rules adopted for the future conduct of the business at Fall Brook, herewith submitted, to be inconsistent with your rights or of the dignity of labor, you will of course leave, and seek employment in some other locality. This you have a right to do; but you have not the right to dictate, control and disorganize the business of your employers. It is well known that a portion—a majority it is believed—of the people of Fall Brook are industrious and well disposed; and it is equally well known that another portion constitute a disturbing element, ever busy in fomenting discontent, seeking to exercise power and dominion over others. These disturbers are respectfully requested to leave. They will have no difficulty in selecting themselves from the rest.

The company have at all times paid liberal prices; they have done everything in their power to make the people comfortable; have respected their feelings, all their rights, and intend always to do so. Their liberality and kindness have not been generally appreciated.

¹ Sexton, John L., Jr. (editor), *History of Tioga County, Pennsylvania*, W. W. Munsell and Company, New York, 1883, pp. 51-52. Original emphasis.

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With you it is left to determine whether work shall be resumed with your aid or stand suspended. To the company it makes but little difference. They have no contracts to perform, no debts to pay. Their coal is safe in the mountains, and it is better to leave it there than to bring it out at an enormous cost under humiliating circumstances. The proprietors are not dependent upon the revenue derived from the mines for their support, and can get on quite comfortably during the time of suspension, be it one, two or more years, without supplies from that quarter. This is not said in a spirit of boasting, but to place before you the fact that we are not in your power. The houses have been built for the accommodation of those employed and willing to do their duty; not for idlers or disturbers of the company's business. Hereafter no one can occupy a house except he executes a contract defining his rights and duties. To this end a special agreement has been prepared and will be submitted herewith, which must be executed by all who wish to occupy our houses in future.

There shall be no relaxation on this point. The company will maintain the right to control their property. Self respect and justice require this. If the company had at any time denied you full, generous compensation for your services, you would have had some reason to form combinations. As it has been, and is, your action is uncalled for, unreasonable and disorderly, as well as disrespectful to your employers and best friends. The continuance of such unjustifiable conduct cannot and will not be tolerated. The accompanying notice and regulations have been prepared upon mature deliberation on the part of your employers, with a fixed and unalterable determination on their part to insist upon and sustain them at all hazards. The above remarks and considerations are addressed to you, believing that their careful and candid consideration as well as observance by you will conduce as much to your welfare as to that of your employers.

JOHN MAGEE, *Pres't.*

RULES AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE FALL BROOK
COAL COMPANY, TIOGA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA,
“FOR THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF THE
BUSINESS AT THEIR WORKS”¹

I.—Regular prices will be established for all kinds of work inside the mines and outside, relatively uniform and equal as near as possible. In cases where miners, or others, may be entitled to an increase on account of the irregular or unexpected character of the work, the Manager shall decide what extra allowance shall be made, whose decision must govern in the settlement of accounts. No employee can complain of this condition, as he can make a special agreement for such unexpected work or abandon it.

II.—The houses shall hereafter be occupied only by well disposed people, who, without exception, will be required to enter into a special agreement specifying the conditions upon which he or they occupy. No house can be used for the sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or for any immoral purpose. No right-minded person will object to this restriction.

III.—Any attempt by persons, or organizations of persons, to interfere with the progress of the work, by coercing their fellows to limit the time or amount of work, or otherwise, will be rebuked and put down, no matter what the cost. Every person will be protected in his natural right to work as many hours per day as he chooses, and earn as much as he can.

IV.—The Company will at all times employ as many men as they may deem necessary, and from time to time discharge such as may, in their judgment, merit dismissal, unawed by threats or interference by persons or combinations of persons.

V. The directions and orders of the Superintendent and his Assistants must be observed and respected. Any indignity to them will be regarded and treated as disrespectful to the Company.

VI. These Regulations must be assented to and respected by all persons hereafter employed by this Company. No severity or injustice is intended toward Miners and Laborers. Order, regularity, and the control of their works, only, is sought to be obtained. This will be insisted upon.

JOHN MAGEE, *Pres't.*

¹ Fincher's Trades' Review, March 25, 1865.

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LETTER OF NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE OF LOCKED-OUT
MINERS TO PRESIDENT OF FALL BROOK COAL COMPANY,
TIOGA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, JANUARY 18, 1865¹

Fall Brook, Jan. 18, 1865.

TO THE HON. JOHN MAGEE:

DEAR SIR:—At a regular meeting of the Miners of Fall Brook, the difficulties that exist between the Miners and the Fall Brook Coal Company were taken into consideration, when they appointed a Commission consisting of eleven of their number, fully empowered to settle all difficulties now pending between said parties, in a spirit not of resentment or anger, but solely to do justice, so that all difficulties may be settled in an honorable and satisfactory manner to both parties.

We lay before you, for your consideration, a rough outline of what we consider the rights of the Miners, subject to be modified or altered in case you see fit to negotiate and arrange all difficulties amicably.

1st.—The lease we cannot sign. Justice to ourselves forbids it, for it would be giving away the only protection the workingman can claim, i.e., the law of the land in which he gets his living. We hope upon mature deliberation you will recall such an odious proposition.

2d.—In your rules and regulations, article 1st, in case of any “irregular or unexpected character of the work.” All we ask in that case is, one or two men chosen by both parties, to settle the difficulty. We think that, no more than fair, right and honorable alike to both parties.

3d.—Article 2d we endorse, striking out the lease in the agreement.

4th.—Article 3d we reject; good reasons will be given if requested.

5th.—Article 4th, you have a perfect right to employ as many men as you see fit, but not to crowd the mines with men, so that the men cannot get their full amount of work out. We think reason would teach any sound mind that it would be very unjust to do so. Your right to discharge we endorse, providing they merit dismissal by improper conduct; this right we concede. But we cannot concede, nor do we think it right to discharge a man simply because he is a member of an association.

Article 5th, is perfectly right and just. Vice Versa, they treat us respectfully.

Article 6th is reserved until rules and regulations different from those are submitted. We remain yours respectfully.

¹ Fincher's 'Trades' Review, March 25, 1865.

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

SAMUEL HERON,
ROBERT SIMSON,
WM. L. RICHARDS,
PETER DUNN,
MICHAEL PETERS,

JONAS HALL,
ED. PAINE,
THOS. MURRAY,
WM. MASON,
WM. WATCHMAN,

JOHN MAXWELL

REPLY OF PRESIDENT OF FALL BROOK COAL COMPANY TO
NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE OF LOCKED-OUT MINERS IN
TIOGA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, JANUARY 19, 1865¹

*Office of the Fall Brook Coal Co.
Corning [N. Y.], Jan. 19, 1865*

TO SAMUEL HERON, EDWARD PAINE, ROBERT SIMSON AND OTHERS. COMMITTEE OF MINERS OF FALL BROOK:

GENTLEMEN:—I have received your communication addressed to me, January 18th, 1865, and gave to it respectful consideration. I perceive that with minor concessions not very important, you are disposed to adhere to your former position of occupying the houses, and controlling the business of the company, as it may suit the will and pleasure of the miners and others employed. As to prices, on any liberal, rational scale, such as will afford generous compensation, we shall not be likely to differ. If we do, your right and remedy is to leave and seek employment where you may hope to do better. You say you will not execute the special agreements for occupancy of the houses. I don't object to this. I concede your right to refuse which, if continued till April 1st, we shall expect you to vacate, and yield possession to the owners. I hope for your sakes, this will be done peaceably. If not, we will take possession through the civil and judicial authority. If this shall be resisted, military aid will be invoked and obtained at any required cost. It would seem we have come to a time when it must be determined whether the owners of property shall enjoy and control it, or whether the employees of the owner, in mob force, are to dictate terms and conditions. This question will now be settled, peaceably I hope, forcibly if you will it. Our great fault is that we have submitted too long to the dictation of unreasonable interference with and domineering over our rights. You have carried the thing too far; run it under. Submission to your dictation will no longer be tolerated. I mean what and all I say. No power on earth can change this fixed purpose. Self-respect, and duty to God and man, forbid a departure from the principles heretofore and now enunciated. You will concede and respect the right of the proprietors to possess and enjoy their property, to direct and regulate their own business, or you will leave the place. It is simply a question of time, limited to the early part of April next. You are pleased to say that you reject the third article of

¹ Fincher's 'Trades' Review, March 25, 1865.

the printed regulation adopted for future government. What consummate impudence! You will go on to dictate to your fellows, domineer over them and your employers as you may choose to will it. Possibly, you may do this, but one thing is certain, and the sooner you perceive it the better for yourselves, you will fall short of bread, and other bodily comforts, before you accomplish this diabolical purpose. Read again and consider well the printed address and regulations submitted to you, December 31st. If you cannot concede the justice of the principles set forth in these documents, leave the place peaceably, and seek a place for residence and employment more congenial to your peculiar notions as to the right of a few desperate spirits to domineer over their fellow-laborers, and the legal and God-given rights of their employers. The principles advanced in the address and regulations of December will (come what may) be adhered to and carried out in spirit and to the letter. No degrading compromise of inherent rights. All I desire, all I ask, is that you leave Fall Brook peaceably. You may, in the frenzy of passion, burn and destroy property, and you may and will be judicially punished for crimes committed, but you cannot damage the company very much, as they have ample insurance upon all perishable property within your reach. Make up your minds to submit to order and decency, and respect your generous employers' rights or to leave. The sooner you decide the better for yourselves.

Respectfully, &c.

JOHN MAGEE, *President*

THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

RESIGNATION OF JOHN HINCHCLIFFE AS EDITOR
OF THE WEEKLY MINER¹

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

GENTLEMEN: Strange things happen sometimes. It may seem strange to the uninitiated that we should tender our resignation as editor and publisher of the Miner to you, to take effect on the 26th day of April 1866, in the face of the action of nine men out of 22,000, who under the whip and spur system of dragooning adopted by one of the nine, in aid of his malignant and ambitious but mischievous purpose, rode down all precedents and rules of right for the purpose of annoying a man who is personally obnoxious to him, because he cannot be made use of as a tool, by trifling, designing tricksters. . . . We also assure you . . . that no action of the convention in reference to ourselves has induced us to take this step; for the action taken by them is illegal, informal, and cannot affect our tenure of office during the coming year. . . .

JOHN HINCHCLIFFE

Editor and Publisher of

The Miner and Workman's Advocate

¹ East St. Louis (Ill.) Sunday Herald, September 3, 1865.

CONTEMPORANEOUS PRESS COMMENT ON RESIGNATION
OF JOHN HINCHCLIFFE AS EDITOR OF THE WEEKLY MINER

THE MINER: The Miner of last week contained an address from its editor in which he tenders his resignation to take effect at the close of the current year. We presume this step is taken by Mr. Hinchcliffe on account of the action taken by the late convention of the American Miners' Association which was, if we can judge from the published report, a very extraordinary meeting. We do not believe that convention represented the wishes of the American Miners' [Association] but if it did it was their greatest enemy. We shall regret to see Mr. Hinchcliffe's resignation take effect, for we have sympathized with his efforts in the cause of labor; we have watched the progress of the Miner with interest; we know something of the disadvantages under which he labored when he commenced its publication. . . .

Whether he has built up the Miners' Association or not, since the publication of the Miner, the Association has become thoroughly organized and grown to wonderful proportions, and the Miner is their organ. To remove its editor, and conduct the paper as the late convention proposes, will result in the suspension of the paper. . . . To publish it on that plan it would be a paper without character and its power utterly destroyed. If we could reach the mining community our voice should warn them of the ruin that threatens their organ, and their National Association. . . . The whole thing looks like an attempt of some designing, ambitious man to usurp a position for which he is not qualified or to injure someone who is personally distasteful to him, and Mr. Hinchcliffe intimates as much in his address. We advise the Miners' Association to beware that they do not abuse themselves the most.¹

This result [suspension of the Miner] is due, as we understand, not to any disinclination on the part of the coal mining fraternity to sustain their own journal but to "family quarrels" among themselves. A few malcontents in prominent places in the Miners' Association have undertaken to discard the tried and faithful editor . . . Mr. Hinchcliffe, and to "run the machine" to suit their own ideas. This arbitrary and uncalled for action, naturally enough creates dissatisfaction among the fifteen or

¹ Belleville Advocate, September 8, 1865.

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twenty thousand members of the Miners' Association, who manifest their dissent most emphatically by withholding the needed contributions to keep the press going—a course they will probably persist in until the action of the late convention of the Miners' Association, in removing Mr. Hinchcliffe, has been reversed or annulled.¹

¹ Belleville Democrat, September 30, 1865.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONVENTION OF ILLINOIS BRANCH,
AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION, HELD AT MACON
HALL, DECATUR, ILLINOIS, NOVEMBER 16-17, 1865¹

The meeting was called to order at the appointed time, by Mr. William D. Smith, President.

The President then appointed the following Committees:

On Credentials and Finance—Geo. Houldsworth, James Wilson, Robt. Wining, Wm. T. Ramsey and Joseph Bruckshaw.

On Petitions—John McGee, Wm. Lease and Josiah Sutton.

On Laws—George Bedea, William Robson and Patrick Skilly.

Receiving of credentials being now in order, District No. 1 being called, Lodge No. 1 (English) no delegate; No. 1 (German) George Randolph, represented 30 members; No. 2 (English) Peter Moulder, represented 116 members; No. 3, Josiah Sutton, represented 74 members; No. 4, Elisha Mayers, represented 60 members; No. 7, William Robson, represented 100 members; No. 8, Robert Wining, represented 30 members; No. 3, Missouri, William Lease, represented 42 members; Nos. 11, 28 and 30, Illinois and Nos. 1 and 2, Missouri, not represented. District No. 2—Lodge No. 5, Joseph Bruckshaw, represented 40 members; No. 6, John McGee, represented 200 members; No. 37, Patrick Skilly, represented 45 members; No. 23, Wm. Evans, represented 40 members; No. 33, Alex. Mitchell, represented 24 members; No. 40, Thos. A. Young, represented 60 members; Nos. 15, 29 and 34 not represented. District No. 3—Wm. T. Ramsey represented Lodges Nos. 10, 12, 16 and 25, in all 78 members; No. 17, Geo. Houldsworth, represented 40 members; No. 35 not represented. District No. 4 not represented. District No. 5—Lodge No. 26, James Wilson, represented 26½ members; Nos. 19, 20, 22 and 42, not represented. District No. 7—Lodge No. 27, George Bedea, represented 23 members. District No. 8 not represented.

The delegate from Lodge No. 6, LaSalle, brought no levies, but explained the reason for this, so that, on motion, it was

Resolved, That he have the privilege to vote and take action in the Convention, and that the Lodge be allowed two months to pay their levy, the money to be sent to the Financial Secretary of the State Board of Illinois.

It was then

¹ Miner and Artisan, December 23, 1865.

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Resolved, That the Du Quoin Union Shaft men be re-admitted into their former District, and that so long as they act in accordance with the laws of the Association they shall not be put out, but they are urged to give all the aid they can in maintaining what is just and right with their brother miners; also, that no fine be inflicted for their re-admittance in the District.

A proposition from Lodge No. 37, Du Quoin, having been submitted for the removal of B. M. Hetherington, it was on motion, laid over.

It was then

Resolved, That the law assessing levies on every member in the State for the support of men on strike, be repealed, and that each District shall support itself.

Resolved, That Lodges No. 23, 34 and 40 be allowed to form a new District.

On motion, the meeting adjourned until next day at 8 o'clock P.M.

November 17, 1865

The minutes of yesterday were read and approved.

Resolved, That we censure Lodge No. 2, District No. 1, for assertions made by their Secretary, under the Lodge Seal, without proof, in regard to delegates being "bought, blindfolded or sold" without giving the names of the parties alluded to.

That the resolution sent from Lodge No. 2, District No. 1, in reference to the Miner office be laid over. Carried.

Resolved, That each and every member of the Illinois Branch of the American Miners' Association be assessed in the sum of one dollar per member for the purpose of redeeming the press and getting it into operation at as early a day as practicable, and that the proceedings of this Convention be published in the first issue of the Miner; also, that John Hinchcliffe be the editor and publisher of the above paper until the next National Convention be held.

Resolved, That all monies paid to redeem from debt the Miner office be sent to the State Financial Secretary, Mr. Joseph Palfreyman, and that he in conjunction with James Mason shall pay all money necessary to clear the Miner office from debt until the next National Convention.

It was further

Resolved, That all the outstanding debts due the Miner office should be sent to the Financial Secretary of the State Board of Illinois, Mr. Joseph Palfreyman.

Resolved, That the starting of the paper and the calling of the National

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Convention be left to Messrs. J. Palfreyman and James Mason, in conjunction with the Trustees appointed by District No. 1.

Resolved, That the case of Frank Karr be laid over until the Convention now under consideration meets.

Resolved, That we, the delegates of the Illinois State Convention of the American Miners' Association, now sitting, consider that the late Cleveland Convention overstepped their proper bounds in discharging persons of trust and putting others in their places whom we deem unworthy, and that therefore we consider this good reason for calling a new National Convention.

On motion, it was further

Resolved, That this Board authorize the Corresponding Secretary of the State Board to send a copy of the proceedings of this Convention to each and every Lodge under his jurisdiction as soon as practicable.

Resolved, That the delegates to this Convention receive five dollars per day for wages and two dollars per day for board.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the money needed to defray the expenses of this Board be drawn from the Treasury, and that the same be refunded by the Lodges indebted to this Board.

Resolved, That the balance of the money in the hands of the Treasurer, which has been received as levies, be applied to defray the debt now owing by the Miner office.

Resolved, That the next State Convention be held at St. Louis, on the first Wednesday in November, 1866.

Adjourned.

THE AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION

ADDRESS TO MEMBERS OF AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION, BY SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ILLINOIS BRANCH, AMERICAN MINERS' ASSOCIATION¹

GENTLEMEN:—Circumstances over which we have had no control, have rendered necessary the step now taken by us, in inditing, to you, this address.

With the thoughtless and precipitate action taken at the late Cleveland Convention, in reference to the Miner office, you are, of course, familiar; and upon that action many of the Lodges have already expressed their opinion in unmistakable terms in the published correspondence of "The Miner." We will add nothing further to this: our mission not being to wound, but to heal the wounds already made. So long as the affairs of the Miner office were in the hands of the parties who were selected for its management by that Convention, we were content to abstain from all interference, in relation thereto. Although we saw that everything was hastening swift-footed to ruin, we still hoped that those in charge would make some efforts to save our paper from suspension, and keep our credit good. This was not done, however. The men in charge either lacked competency for the task, or, if they were competent they did not make the requisite exertion.

The suspension of the publication of the Miner, was, we believe, an unnecessary and unwise step, for we are informed that there were no pressing financial necessities which could not have been fully met if proper exertions had been made by the Agent or Agents (for there seems to have been two of them), and that the Editor could, if he had been permitted, have kept up the regular issue of the paper. It is to be regretted that the suspension took place at all in an economical point of view; for no steps seem to have been taken by those who were instrumental in bringing about this state of things, to avert the misfortunes which quickly followed. The office, abandoned by all but the newly appointed Agent who seemed to remain for no other purpose but to receive and to collect money, relapsed into death-like stillness. The click-click of the cunning types, which had been wont to tell the story of our grievances to the world, to chronicle our triumphs and to encourage us when suffering defeat, were suddenly stopped, yet still we had not lost all hope. But soon a change came over the scene. The creditors of the

¹ Miner and Artisan, December 23, 1865.

office, seeing that no efforts were made to liquidate its indebtedness, felt the necessity of urging speedy payment. Their requests not being complied with, suits were brought, judgments obtained; and, in process of time executions issued. Still no efforts were made to save the office, either by the recently selected Cleveland officers, or their newly appointed Agent.

It was under trying circumstances like these that the action subsequently taken, was deemed necessary, for the common good of the whole Association. When the first executions issued, in favor of the workmen in the printing office, Old District No. 1, through their appointed Agent, James Mason, paid the debt and so saved the office property from being sacrificed. But when the second executions issued from the Circuit Court, in favor of other and larger creditors, and the Sheriff advertised the peremptory sale of the entire office, which had been levied upon: the most prompt and decisive action was necessary.

The State Convention, by whose authority we are acting, had but just adjourned, without knowing the precise time when final satisfaction had to be made for the debts of the office, when we were notified of the fast approaching Sheriff's Sale. Although somewhat taken by surprise, and unprepared, in a financial point of view we nevertheless made all necessary arrangements for bidding in the entire office for the aggregate amount of the judgments and costs. This we did, in the name of the Illinois State Board, and by their authority we have taken steps to secure the re-issue of the Miner, under its old Editor—somewhat altered in some of its features and we trust, upon the whole, improved.

For the authority under which we have acted in the premises, we beg to refer the members of the Association to the minutes of the transactions of the State Board of the Illinois Branch of the American Miners' Association, which minutes will be found reported in another column.

We are sorry to state, that we cannot at present make good to all the old subscribers the amounts they have paid in advance for the paper; not on account of any disinclination of ours, but because we cannot get possession of the old books, which are now, we learn, in the hands of Mr. Bowen, who refuses to surrender them. We hope, however, that on the meeting of the next National Convention, to which body we will give a report of our stewardship, such an arrangement will be made in regard to the credits due the old subscribers as will prevent them from suffering the slightest loss by carrying over to their credit the full amounts of the over-paid subscriptions. It is hoped, also, that such an adjustment will be made between the representatives to that Convention and the

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Illinois State Board, in reference to the money paid by the latter for the redemption of the office from debt, as shall be found, on investigation, to be equitable.

For the purpose of bringing about a speedy adjustment of all these matters, and, in order that we may be enabled, at as early a day as practicable, to report and make surrender of our stewardship, we hereby recommend that steps be taken for the holding of another National Convention of the American Miners' Association, on the 20th day of April, 1866; and we further recommend, that the said Convention be held at Massillon, Ohio, that being deemed by us the most central and available place for the proposed meeting. Upon the question of the time and place of the holding of the Convention, we desire all the various lodges in the Association to take action immediately, and report the votes taken through the Miner, whether for or against the recommendation here given. The majority vote as reported, will be accepted as decisive of the question.

It has been deemed advisable to remove the office to St. Louis; that removal has consequently been made, and it is believed that the change of the place of publication will prove beneficial in more senses than one.

In the hope that until the meeting of said Convention, the explanations above given of the action which it was necessary to take in our late exigencies, will be deemed sufficient for the restoration of full confidence among all our members, we remain, gentlemen, your servants, and the servants of the American Miners' Association, on behalf of the Illinois State Board and the Board of District No. 1.

JOSEPH PALFREYMAN
JAMES MASON
JOSIAH SUTTON
JOHN POPE

Majority of Trustees, Wm. Kendal absent.

DANIEL WEAVER'S LETTER AT THE TIME OF THE
SUSPENSION OF THE MINER AND ARTISAN,
PUBLISHED BY JOHN HINCHCLIFFE IN ST.
LOUIS FROM DECEMBER, 1865, TO JULY, 1866¹

Demise of the Miner

Freeburg [Ill.], July 17, 1866

That the Miners have sold out their press is a matter of regret. It is a loss which, more than likely, is not fully estimated. That it has never been conducted properly may be admitted. It has not done justice to Capital or Labor, to the Association or the bosses. It was not a mentor or censor, but a reflex, merely, of the opinions of the majority, of the Association. It never stamped the organization with any new idea, and seldom or never marked out any course of action, pointing out any errors of legislation or practice. At times it was partly papal, and at another, semi-secesh. It always was hostile to co-operation—the most efficient and powerful agency with which, as yet, capital has been combatted—and is in itself the best element of Union.

It has libelled, and slandered, and bandied the names of the best members from one end of the Union to the other, and if an explanation or a line in reply was offered it was thrown under the table. It did not deal in personalities except on one side. It dared not do justice to a few of its readers for fear of offending the rest. If a member took the responsibility of questioning or opposing any particular course of action, such controversy was seldom allowed. We suppose therefore that its death is natural, having not the principle or vitality on which longevity depends. Thus much would have been said before now but for the possibility of, in any way, injuring the Miner or its cause. Better suffer wrong than render evil for evil and probably injure those who took no part in the matter. We hope, however, the miners will replace their late paper with a more independent, honest, and efficient organ.

Yours, etc.,
D. WEAVER

¹ Belleville Advocate, July 20, 1866.

MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR JOHN HINCHCLIFFE,
ST. CLAIR COUNTY BAR¹

At a Bar meeting of the St. Clair County Circuit Court, held on Monday afternoon, the 18th, to take some action in regard to the sudden death of the Hon. John Hinchcliffe, the Hon. John B. Hay was made chairman, and Col. N. Niles, Hon. Jehu Baker, and R. A. Halbert [were] appointed a committee to prepare suitable resolutions, and to present the same in court on the following morning. At the convening of the court on the 19th the committee reported as follows:

Resolutions

The Members of the Bar of St. Clair County, Illinois, assembled in the Circuit Court room at Belleville to express their sentiments on occasion of the death of their professional brother, John Hinchcliffe, at the comparatively early age of 55, which took place on Sunday, the 17th day of February, 1878, do declare and resolve:

1st. That they regard the example which their deceased brother has left behind him of industry, strict integrity, fidelity to the interests of his clients and to all other trusts committed to him in the many and various relations and avocations of his life, as a most valuable lesson and legacy to his survivors, and especially to all young men. He is an example of what a strong will united with steady and strenuous and persevering industry may do for a young man with but limited education in schools. He was a very skillful tailor, an able editor and journalist, an excellent lawyer, and a useful legislator, always commanding the respect of his colleagues and the confidence of his constituents: that we condole with the workingmen, and especially with the miners of the country, for the loss to them by his death of a true and faithful friend, advocate and champion of their interests. We condole with the friends of temperance for the loss to their cause by this event of a most powerful ally and support; and we condole with his afflicted family in this saddening and irreparable loss, lamenting with them an event for which the only consolation is the reflection and assured belief that all "is ordered by a Being of infinite benevolence and power, whose everlasting purposes embrace all accidents, converting them to good."

¹ Belleville Advocate, February 22, 1878.

CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

2nd. That the Circuit Court be requested, in respect to the memory of our dead brother, to cause these resolutions to be spread at large upon the records of the court, and a copy thereof transmitted by its clerk to the bereaved family.

That these proceedings be furnished to the several papers of this county for publication.

After the reading of the resolutions several members of the Bar addressed the court upon the life and character of the deceased.

Remarks of R. A. Halbert

The death of our friends is almost always a surprise. It comes upon us suddenly and unexpectedly. We think of it as remote, and quickly and sharply the shaft strikes down the friend at our side. John Hinchcliffe seemed so strong, in such vigorous health, so full of life, so youthful, as it were, that none of us foresaw or suspected that he would not live to a ripe old age. A few years since, during a term of our circuit court, he was called to a distant state to attend the funeral of his father, an old man who had lived beyond four score years. And yet he, too, sleeps in the narrow bed. These resolutions express our sorrow for the loss we have sustained, and pay an inadequate tribute to his worth.

Mr. Hinchcliffe came to the bar late in life. He was licensed as an attorney when nearly forty years of age, and for several years thereafter gave his almost undivided attention to the conduct of a journal published in the interest of workingmen. In their behalf he was in constant attendance upon the sittings of the convention which framed our State Constitution, and was a member of the house in the first, and the senate in the second session of the legislature after its adoption. Only for a few years before his death did he devote himself with much assiduity to his profession. It is not likely that he found it very lucrative. Few men do.

He had been a life-long champion of the poor, the weak, the helpless; the friend of the friendless, "the afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate." He became their advocate in court. He made their cause his own, and brought if need be, without money and without price, to their aid, the gift of an eloquence that "reached the heart and made the wisest head its sport." In a very considerable degree he used the law as accessory to the work of his life—the amelioration of workingmen. Upon his achievements in this field he was willing to rest his fame; and these are his most durable monuments; for them will he be longest and most gratefully remembered. He had good reason to believe, and did believe,

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that mainly through his efforts a provision was engrafted in the organic law of the state, making it the duty of the legislature to provide for the better security of persons working in mines, and while a member of the legislature he drew that chapter in the revised statutes of 1874 which carries out this mandate of the constitution. In this work he was in grim earnest. He never grew weary, never faltered, never lost courage.

At the age of six years, when other boys beneath bright skies, by clear brooks, in green fields, were "turning to mirth all things of earth, as only boyhood can," it is to be remembered that Hinchcliffe was penned up for more than ten hours a day, at nine pence a week, in an English factory. Such an experience is not easily forgotten.

"Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."

It is not strange that his ear caught quickly the accents of suffering; and he strove with the strength of a giant to alleviate it, careless of self, thinking only of humanity. The work he had to do he has done well. He has not fallen into an untimely grave. He himself felt that he had rounded the purpose of his life. He had

"A pride in honest fame by virtue gained,
In sturdy boys to virtuous labors trained."

He leaves to us the memory of his kindness, courtesy, fidelity, honesty, and courage—

"Stern sense, deep feelings, passions strong,
A hate of tyrant and of knave;
A love of right, a hate of wrong,
Of coward and of slave;
A kind, true heart, a spirit high,
That could not fear and would not bow."

Remarks of Mr. Baker

May it please the Court: I think I express the sentiment of our bar and the sentiment of our community in general, in saying that we are all deeply touched by the sudden and unexpected death of our brother Hinchcliffe. But the other day his voice was heard in this hall; today his tongue is stilled forever in death; thus illustrating the old truth that "in the midst of life we are in death," or at least often upon the very verge of it. I shall limit myself in the remarks which I shall make, to a very brief sketch of what I apprehend to have been the general

character of the deceased. His character in my opinion approached very closely to the typical national character of the great nation from which he sprang. The first and fundamental element of that character is a certain robust manliness. I recognized Mr. Hinchcliffe as possessing that element.

Closely akin to that is a second trait, frankness of character, which includes the idea of directness, and the absence of cunning. I think that was a trait of Mr. Hinchcliffe's character. The next essential element of the character which I am describing, is a native, inborn integrity, a predominant impulse to do right, instead of wrong. I recognize that as an element of Mr. Hinchcliffe's character. The next great trait of the character, both national and individual, which I am delineating, is courage, physical and moral. From many incidents I have occasion to know that Mr. Hinchcliffe possessed this element of character in an eminent degree. Perhaps it would not be going too far to say that he possessed first-class physical courage; and then the freedom, the directness, the decisiveness with which he expressed and maintained his opinions when in the minority, indicated to me that he possessed a high order of moral courage.

The next great element of the character which I am tracing, is fortitude; that element which bears a man up in the midst of adversity, which makes him strong in his inward center, though surrounded by "a sea of troubles." That is a great element of character, and from an extensive acquaintance with Mr. Hinchcliffe, from some knowledge of the difficulties in life which he encountered, some knowledge of the firmness and persistence with which he met them, I think I am justified in claiming that he possessed in a high degree this element of fortitude. Another trait of the make-up of Mr. Hinchcliffe, as I recognized him, was that he possessed a great deal of natural ability. Had this gentleman possessed in early life the advantages of culture, the advantage of a good "send-off," I am not sure I would be saying too much in supposing that he had enough of native ability to have made a high mark in the highest department of the practical politics of a nation.

The final trait of the character of the deceased to which I draw attention, and which may be of more worth than all that has been said, was his social and generous disposition. Mr. Hinchcliffe was a man of large sympathies, of a large, generous, helpful heart; a man who felt for others, who was ready, at any time, to deny himself and to exert himself for the benefit of suffering or wronged humanity. Such, in brief, is my estimation of the character of our deceased brother, and with this I close.

Col. Niles' Remarks

The first time I saw and made the acquaintance of our lamented brother of this bar, John Hinchcliffe, was twenty years ago in Mascoutah, Illinois. He was working at his trade and had opened a merchant tailor's shop in that town. He was then a brilliant fascinating young man—in appearance very much younger than he was, and giving promise of influence and power in any community where he should cast his lot. His conversation showed more than ordinary talent and intelligence. His whole education was acquired in the parish schools of England, his native country, but a short talk with him sufficed to show that his want of collegiate or classical training was supplied by extensive reading and a sharp observation of mankind, aided by a quickness of parts and a retentiveness of memory, which were the admiration of us all. He loved books and mastered their contents with celerity, seeming ready at all times to turn them to account in speech or writing. After a short stay in Mascoutah he settled in Belleville and here published and edited the "Miner," in the interest of our coal miners, for some years, until he entered our bar, for which he had been long preparing by a diligent and effective study of the law, in his leisure hours.¹ As our State Senator he caused the enactment of the law now on our statute books for the protection of life and limb in our coal mines. A workingman and mechanic himself, he was devoted heart and soul to the cause of labor and the laborer. The proletariat, the masses, the poor and their welfare, these were the objects of his life's labors, and for these he was ever ready to live and work and die. In this respect, as in many mental and physical characteristics, he bore a strong resemblance to another eminent mechanic, the late President Johnson. Both these men had heads of their own and both were equally and perfectly independent and fearless in daring to do what they regarded as the right.

We all remember how, a few nights ago, in a speech of thrilling power, Hinchcliffe in vigorous health to all appearance, and little expecting his end so soon, gave in his accession to the temperance movement. He did so under a sense of right and of conscience which was irresistible, especially with the example, as he said, of his three sons directly before him. He snapped at a blow the chain of habit and social customs, use and want under which he was born and raised, and to

¹ The speaker's memory was faulty as to the time of Hinchcliffe's admittance to practice law. He was admitted to the bar in December, 1860. The Belleville Democrat of February 9, 1861 carried his professional announcement as a practicing attorney in that city. The Miner was not published until May, 1863. [E.A.W.]

which he had been accustomed both in his native and adopted country. He felt with Kossuth that it is better to be at war with the whole world than to be at war with one's own conscience.

As a jury lawyer John Hinchcliffe had few equals at this or any other bar. His native sagacity and power of language and eloquence enabled him to seize and enforce upon his audience, whether a court, a jury, or a popular assembly, his whole subject in all its elements and with great persuasive power. He was one of the most generous of men. His integrity as a man, a legislator, a politician, or in the other two relations which he held, professional and mechanical, his honesty was never questioned. He was a true Englishman, with many of the traits of character which made Goldsmith say of the nation:

Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
You see the lords of human kind pass by.

He leaves a noble example to us all, and especially to the young man. Let us imitate his habits of reading and self-culture, his industry, his public spirit and benevolent activity in behalf of the poor, which made him often a public benefactor. He loved his fellow man, he worked for the public weal, and his works do follow him.

The Court thereupon ordered the resolutions to be spread upon the records, and adjourned till the following day.

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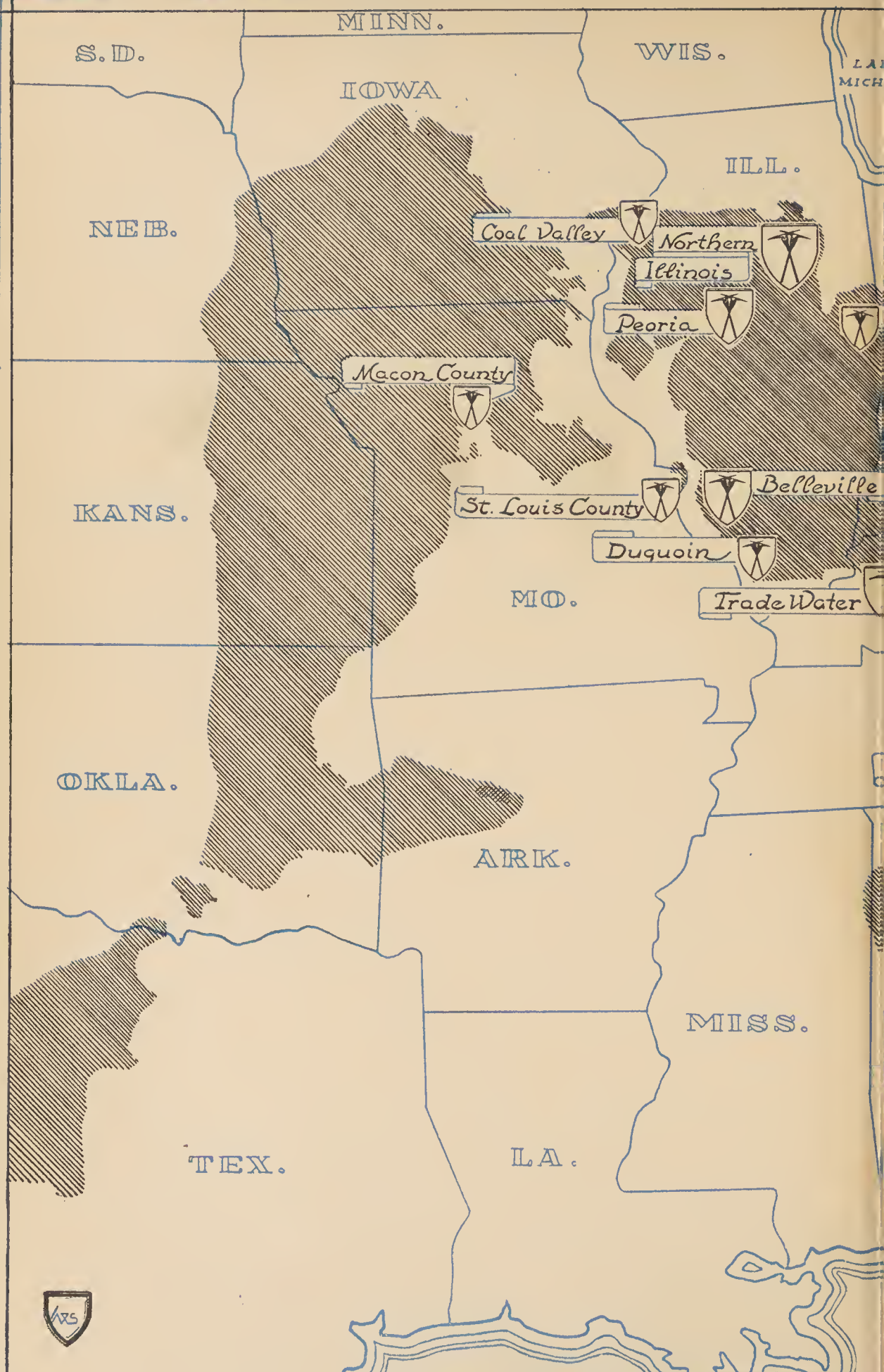
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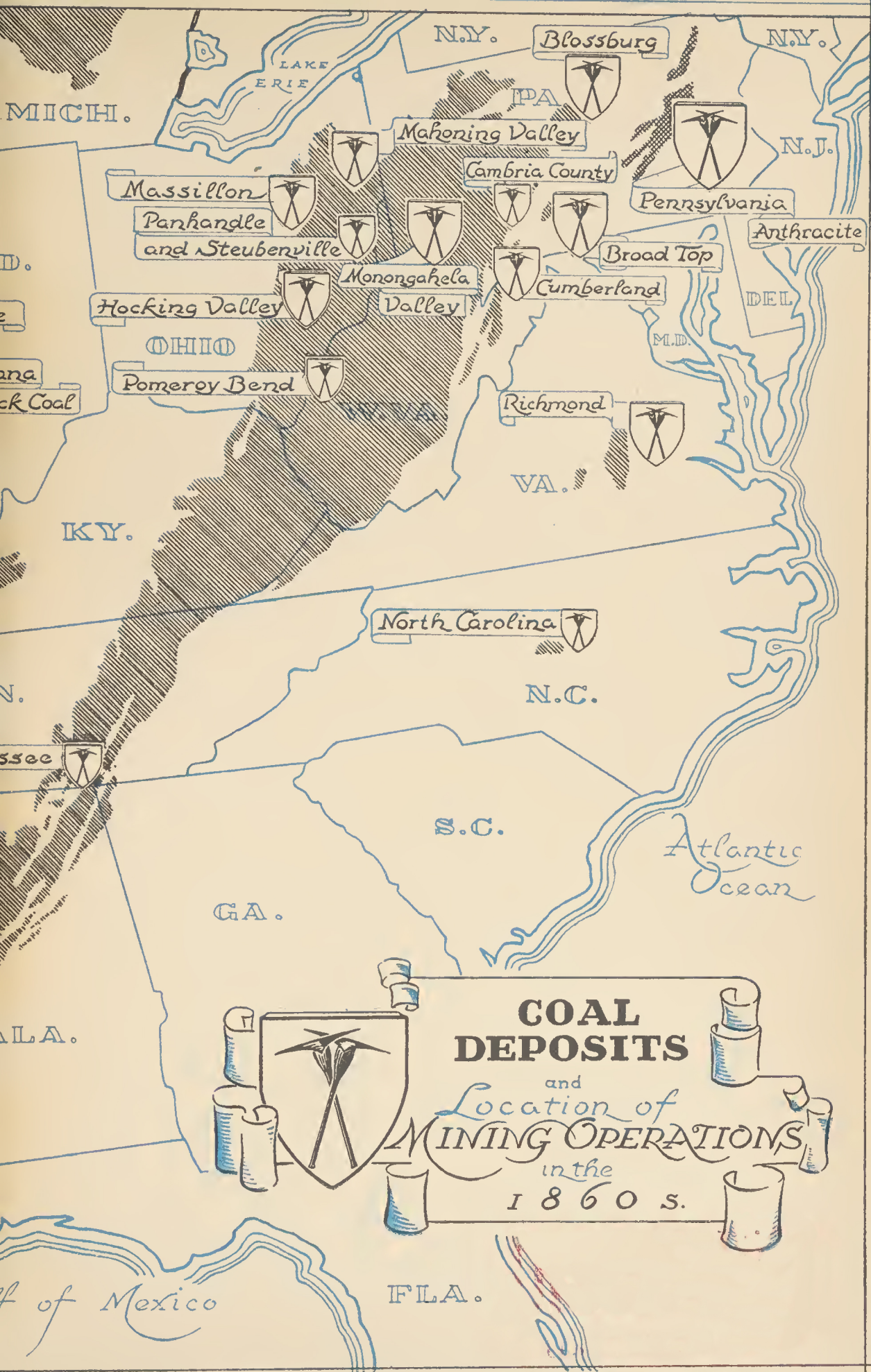
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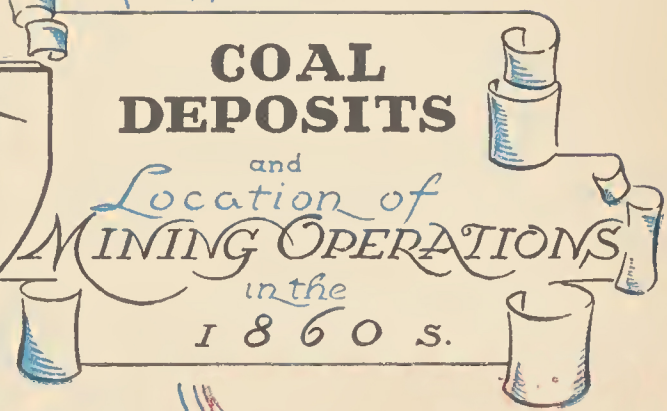
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**COAL
DEPOSITS**
and
Location of
MINING OPERATIONS
in the
1860s.

of Mexico

FLA.