

Hallahan, Kirk. Striking Back! John D. Rockefeller's Response to the 1913-1914 Colorado Coal Strike (in preparation). 3/2024

Bibliographic Essay

Archival Sources

Documentary evidence for this study drew heavily on John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s correspondence as well as the several sets of archival records from the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company.

The Rockefellers were remarkable for their slavish recordkeeping, dating back to John D. Rockefeller Sr.'s early business dealings now preserved at the Rockefeller Archive Center in Sleepy Hollow, New York (rockarch.org). These can be searched through the RAC's online database (dimes.rockarch.org). JDR Jr.'s activities are primarily found within the collection devoted to the Office of Messrs. Rockefeller (Record Group 2 Series C-Business Interests, Boxes 11-26). However, pertinent materials also are found in the Educational Interests, Economic Reform Interests and Friends and Services series, as well as the personal papers of John D. Jr., John D. Sr., wife Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, and son JDR 3rd. The RAC also houses the papers of adviser Frederick T. Gates and the Rockefeller Foundation as well as the Russell Sage Foundation (as part of its focus on philanthropy). A notable void was created in 1940, upon the death in 1940 of Col. Arthur Woods, who instructed that materials in his office related to CF&I and other projects be destroyed.

Two especially useful collections are archived by History Colorado's Hart Research Library in Denver (founded as the Colorado Historical Society; www.historycolorado.org/research-learn). The Jesse F. Welborn Papers (MS#1218) preserves the personal papers of CF&I's chief executive officer and includes letters and telegrams exchanged with JDR Jr., Ivy Lee, Mackenzie King, and others. The H. Lee Scamehorn Papers (Colorado Fuel & Iron Research Collection, MS#2332) mostly includes photocopies of materials culled from various archival and other sources by the author of two history books about the company.

Records from CF&I's executive office in Denver are housed by History Colorado (Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporate Collection, MS#1057). An even more extensive collection of operating, personnel and photographic records from Pueblo are preserved in the archives of the Steelworks Center of the West, housed in the former Pueblo administration building (steelworks.us). In particular, the functioning of the Employee Representation Plan is chronicled in the Industrial Relations Record Group (RG2), Pre-unionization Labor Relations Series. The only known complete set of minutes from meeting minutes after 1929 are housed in the National Archives Rocky Mountain Region in Lakewood, Colorado, as part of the records of the U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, (RG276, Box 202).

Unlike JDR Jr., William Lyon Mackenzie King kept exhaustive diaries of his daily activities throughout his lifetime and provided valuable insights about his involvement and

observations of the JDR Jr. and post-Ludlow events. His memoirs from Colorado are contained in a special 774-page typewritten journal about his Colorado experience, which was dictated to his personal secretary Fred McGregor, and is now fully accessible online from Libraries and Archives Canada (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>). His Colorado diary was inserted as page G2539 in the print and microform compilations; each page is individually numbered in the digital files as Items 5138-5935.

Ivy Lee's work while on JDR Jr.'s staff in 1915-1916 is found in the records of the Office of Messrs. Rockefeller. However, insightful materials from before and afterward are contained in the Ivy Ledbetter Lee Papers (MC085) archived at Princeton's Seeley G. Mudd Manuscripts Library (rbmc.princeton.edu).

USCIR Chairman Frank P. Walsh's personal papers were donated and are available to the public at the New York Public Library in Manhattan (archives.nypl.org/mss/3211). The official records of the United States Commission on Industrial Relations are preserved as RG174.6.1 at the U.S. National Archives Center in College Park Maryland (www.archives.gov/research).

Miscellaneous materials consulted in this research are preserved in the History Colorado Hart Research Library (Ellis Meredith and Victor-American Fuel Company Collections), the Colorado State Archives in Denver (papers of governors Elias Ammons and George A. Carlson), the Denver Public Library Western History and Genealogy Research Center (Elinor Bluemel, Edward Lawrence Doyle, John R. Lawson, Priscilla Long and George S. Minot collections, as well as miscellaneous printed ephemera from the period), and the University of Colorado-Boulder Library (Colorado State Federation of Labor, United Mine Workers District 22, Edward P. Costigan and Josephine Roche Collections). Small collections of secondary sources related to CF&I are maintained by Colorado College's Tutt Library in Colorado Springs (mostly pertaining to responses to the strike) and the University of Colorado-Boulder's University Library (composed of CF&I publications).

Digitized Publications and Photographic Images from the Period

Various initiatives to digitize pages of government documents, periodicals and books from period have provided Internet users with ready access to a variety of original source materials cited in this study. Additional online sources have been added yearly, but the vast majority of materials based on print originals.

Perhaps the valuable resource is the Hathi Trust (<https://hathitrust.org>), which has digitally reproduced the full testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Condition of the Coal Mines in Colorado as well as the complete testimony and various reports produced by the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations. Unpublished records of the USCIR's Division of Research and investigation, including reports, staff studies, and background research materials in can be found online in ProQuest's Wilson Administration and American Workers: Documentary Collections, U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations, 1912-1915, <https://about.proquest.com/products-services/historyvault.html>.

The Hathi Trust website also provides access to monographs, other government reports and Congressional hearings transcripts, and many of the most important opinion magazines from

the period as well the early volumes of CF&I's *Industrial Bulletin*. Various monographs from the period now in the public domain also are accessible on a full or preview basis through programs such as Google Books.

By far, the richest depository of digitized photos from Ludlow and the strike period can be accessed from the Denver Public Library's Western History Digital Image Collection, <https://digital.denverlibrary.org/>. A growing amount of material is available online via the website of the Steelwork Works of the West (<https://www.steelworks.us>).

Secondary Sources

History of Strike and Bloody Ludlow

The best general overviews are Scott Martelle's *Blood Passion. The Ludlow Massacre and Class War in the American West* and George McGovern and Leon F. Guttridge's *The Great Coal Field War*. Martelle provides a modern, thorough, well documented recounting of events, but ends in 1914. The McGovern and Guttridge volume is a breezy, popularized version of the senior author's 1953 doctoral dissertation. Not coincidentally, it was published in 1972, the same year McGovern was the Democratic candidate for U.S. president. McGovern would later say that his research shaped much of his political career. Prior to McGovern's dissertation work, the two principal serious academic treatments of the strike were articles by Leon A. Fuller the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (1934) and Eugene O. Porter in *Historian. A Journal of History* (1949). A valuable contemporary short treatment is Larry Bogard's *Ludlow. A Historical Overview*.

Oral histories produced in the early 1980s and featuring then-surviving miners include Bill Mahan's recording "The Ludlow Massacre" and sociologist Eric Margolis' two hour-long documentaries produced as part of the Colorado Strike Oral History Project at the University of Colorado.

For a valuable analysis of the current state of scholarship about the strike and its aftermath, see Sarah Duetsch's 2014 essay, "Learning from Ludlow."

Rockefeller and His Advisers

JDR Jr.'s principal biography is Raymond B. Fosdick's *John D. Rockefeller, Jr. A Portrait*, published in 1956 based on personal interviews while JDR Jr. was still alive and access to JDR Jr.'s still private archives. The book contains two chapters related to the strike and JDR Jr.'s industrial relations initiatives. It provides a useful, factually detailed but hagiographic portrayal of the philanthropists' life but omits various details. For other discussions of JDR Jr.'s life, see: William Manchester, *A Rockefeller Family Portrait. From John D. to Nelson*; Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *The Rockefellers. An American Dynasty*, especially Chapter 5; Ron Chernow, *Titan. The Life of John D. Rockefeller Sr.*, Chapters 28-29; John Ensor Harr and Peter J. Johnson, *The Rockefeller Century*, Chapters 6-7; and Jules Abel, *The Rockefeller Billions*. An earlier work on the life of John D. Rockefeller Sr., John T. Flynn's *God's Gold*, is useful but riddled with errors pertaining to the coal strike. The Rockefellers' philanthropic efforts is retold

in Raymond B. Fosdick. *The Story of the Rockefeller Foundation and Adventure in Giving: The Story of the General Education Board, a Foundation Established by John D. Rockefeller*. Interesting insights into the relationship between JDR Sr. and JDR Jr. are revealed in an easily readable and annotated collection of letters edited by Joseph W. Ernst, *Dear Father/Dear Son. Correspondence of John D. Rockefeller and John D. Rockefeller Jr.*

Mackenzie King provided a treasure trove of details and insights concerning his involvement in the strike in his diary (see above) articulated his philosophy of industrial relations in his arcane *Industry and Humanity* (1918) and explained his early work in Canada in several magazine articles published prior to his involvement. King's personal secretary, Fred McGregor, later weaved together King's diary entries, his own recollections and other sources to chronicle the period when King was out of Canadian politics, *The Fall and Rise of Mackenzie King*. Howard M. Gitelman's *The Legacy of the Ludlow Massacre* parallels many of the same topics examined this volume and depended heavily on entries in Mackenzie King's Diary and focuses on actions in which King was involved from 1914 to 1919.

As one of the looming figures of Canadian history during the 20th century, Mackenzie King's life is recounted in a number of biographies; most devote little attention to this brief interlude in his life. The acknowledged definitive study is R.M. Dawson's *William Lyon Mackenzie King. A Political Biography 1874-1923*. See also H.S. Fern and B. Ostry's *The Age of Mackenzie King*; H.R. Hardy's *Mackenzie King of Canada*; Joy E. Esbrey, *Knight of the Holy Spirit*, and the volume of essays edited by John English and John O. Stubbs, *Mackenzie King: Widening the Debate*. A comprehensive bibliography about King was produced by G. F. Henderson, *W.L. Mackenzie King. A Bibliography and Research Guide*.

Ivy Lee's definitive biography, which devotes four chapters to the strike and his later work for the Rockefellers, is Ray Eldon Hiebert's *Courtier to the Crowd. The Story of Ivy Lee and the Development of Public Relations*. Lee left no memoirs upon his death at the age of 57, and no first-hand accounts of his experience. His philosophies and brief references to the strike are found in a collection of his speeches, *Publicity. Some of the Things It Is and Is Not*. Several useful senior theses completed at Princeton about the school's noted alumnus provide useful insights (see Edward Atwater, A.M. Berlin, and Peter Lyon) and his publicity work in Colorado is examined in a thesis by Charles David Warren. His work is also critiqued in histories of public relations by Stuart Ewen, Marin Olasky, Alan Raucher, Richard S. Tedlow and others.

CF&I History Before and After the Strike

CF&I's corporate history is chronicled in two books by University of Colorado historian H. Lee Scamehorn, *Pioneer Steel Maker of the West* and *Mill & Mine: The CF&I in the Twentieth Century*. For other discussions of early company history see Milo Lee Whittaker, *Pathbreakers and Pioneers of the Pueblo Region*, and Dannette Evans, *Spotlight on Pueblo*. A recent photographic history is Victor Miller and Chris Schrek's *The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. Images of America Series*.

Particularly informative about the response to the Colorado Industrial Plan at CF&I is Jonathan Rees's *Representation and Rebellion. The Rockefeller Plan at the Colorado Fuel and*

Iron Company, 1914-1942, as well as the series of scholarly articles by Greg Patmore that provided the basis for his *Worker Voice: Employee Representation in the Workplace in Australia, Canada, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. 1914-1939*. Research by both scholars is based on stored records not available to the public until the early 2000s with the creation of the Bessemer Historical Society (now Steelworks of the West).

JDR Jr.'s speeches and writings about employee representation and cooperation in industry, along with an updated version of the Colorado Industrial Plan, were compiled in his *Personal Relation in Industry* (1923). During the 1920s, the plan's success and shortcomings was most thoroughly critiqued in Ben Selekman and Mary Van Kleeck's *Employe Relations in the Coal Mines of Colorado. A Study of the Industrial Representation Plan of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company*, and Ben Selekman's *Employe Representation in Steel Works. A Study of the Industrial Representation Plan of the Minnequa Steel Works of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company*, both for the Russell Sage Foundation. Evidence of its operations and success is also evident in issues of the *CF&I Industrial Bulletin*, a magazine published from 1915 to 1929, succeeded by *CF&I Blast*, a newspaper originally produced for steel mill workers.

Labor-Related Issues and People

The most in-depth analysis of the labor, political, and economic factors that contributed to the strike is Thomas G. Andrews' *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*, based on his doctoral dissertation. The lives of miners are richly described in Rick J. Clyne, *Coal People. Life in Southern Colorado's Company Towns, 1890-1930* and Eric Margolis, "Western Coal Mining as a Way of Life," a special Issue of the *Journal of the West*. Archaeological studies of the coal mine grounds have similarly revealed valuable insights of the miners' lifestyles.

Ethnicity and gender issues among the coal miners have received much-needed attention in recent decades through articles by authors such as Sarah Deutsch, Mary E. Rudden, Priscilla Long, and M. Edmund Vallejo. The issue of ethnicity among CF&I employees was a primary topic addressed in Fawn-Amber Montoya's edited volume, *Making an American Workforce. The Rockefellers and the Legacy of Ludlow* and her earlier works.

Efforts to mine coal west of the continental divide are chronicled in Anna Johnson and Kathleen Yajko, *The Elusive Dream. A Relentless Quest for Coal in Western Colorado*, while coal mining in northern Colorado is recounted by Phyllis Smith in *Once a Coal Miner. The Story of Colorado's Northern Coal Field*. The 1927-1928 coal strike near Lafayette is deconstructed in *Slaughter in Serene: The Columbine Coal Strike Reader* edited by Lowell May and Richard Myers.

Insightful discussions of company towns include: James B. Allen, *The Company Town in the American West*; Stuart D. Brandes, *American Welfare Capitalism*; W.J. Ghent, *Our Benevolent Feudalism*; and Carl Abbott, Stephen J. Leonard and David McComb, *Colorado. A History of the Centennial State*, Chapter 8.

Statistics and balanced portrayals can be found in the biennial and annual reports of the (Colorado) State Inspector of Coal Mines for 1911-12, 1913, 1914 and 1915. Issues of *Camp*

and Plant, the official employee publication produced under the Osgood-regime, paints an illustrated, mostly rosy, picture of life among miners working for CF&I from 1901 to 1904, when the publication folded. The early work of CF&I's Sociological Department is reviewed in a helpful dissertation by Barry Bartels.

Labor Union Activities and Histories

Two highly readable overviews of the strike and related organizing activities by celebrated labor leaders: Barron Beshoar's *Out of the Depths, The Story of John R. Lawson, A Labor Leader* and Zeese Papanikolas' *Buried Unsung: Louis Tikas and the Ludlow Massacre*. Both provide unabashedly celebratory, pro-labor perspectives and are marred with factual errors. Neither John Lawson nor Edward Doyle published memoirs, although their papers from the period are archived at the Denver Public Library. Lawson's murder case was the subject of an unpublished master's thesis by Maxine Frances Benson.

Priscilla Long traces the evolution of the United Mine Workers of America in her seminal history of the coal mining, *Where the Sun Never Rises*. The UMWA also is chronicled in Maier B. Fox's *United We Stand* and an edited book by John H. Laslett, *The United Mine Workers of America. A Model of Industrial Solidarity?* Short, mostly self-serving histories of the union locals in Colorado are *United We Stand* and *A Rendezvous with Shame*, both written in the late 1980s by Trinidad writer Patrick Donachy. See also Joanna Sampson's decidedly pro-labor account in her privately printed booklet, *Remember Ludlow!* Negotiation practices of the era are considered in Arthur E. Sufferin's *Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America*.

Besides Thomas G. Andrews' *Killing for Coal*, Colorado's earlier labor strife is told in several works: George G. Suggs, Jr. *Colorado's War on Militant Unionism*; Harold V. Knight, *Working in Colorado*; and Harry Seligman and George E. Bardwell's *Labor-Management Relations in Colorado*. An official congressional report is Carroll D. Wright, *A Report on the Disturbances in the State of Colorado*.

Propagandistic accounts of the events at Ludlow are recounted in Walter Fink's *The Ludlow Massacre*, which has been reprinted in Leon Stein and Philip Taft's handy edited volume, *Massacre at Ludlow: Four Reports*. The official reports by the Colorado Adjutant-General provided a quite different portrayal (also reprinted in Stein and Taft). The question of the use of the militia has been addressed by several researchers, including Oscar R. Romine and Alan Sunseri.

Mother Jones was a prolific letter-writer and speaker, whose writings from the period have been reprinted in several compilations edited by Philip Foner and Edward M. Steele. Her exploits are also recounted in her *Autobiography of Mother Jones* and in Dale Fetherling's *Mother Jones. The Miners' Angel. A Portrait*; Betsy Harvey Kraft's *Mother Jones: One Woman's Right for Labor*; and Elliott J. Gorn's *Mother Jones. The Most Dangerous Woman in America*.

Government, Media and Other Participants

The mission and activities of the United States Commission on Industrial Relations are thoroughly examined by Graham Adams, Jr. in *Age of Industrial Violence 1910-1915*. The commissions' special report on Colorado is contained in George P. West's *Report on the Colorado Strike* (reprinted in the Stein and Taft volume). The Colorado strike also plans a prominent role in the commission's *Final Report*, completed in 1915 and published with the full testimony of the commission's hearings in 1916. The Colorado strike testimony is contained in volumes 7-9 and comprises about one-fourth of the entire printed proceedings (accessible via Hathitrust.org). Many original documents are reprinted as exhibits. The definitive biography of USCIR Chairman Frank P. Walsh remains Maria Eucharia Meehan's unpublished dissertation, *Frank Walsh and the American Labor Movement*.

The work of the Foster Committee has not been fully analyzed, but can be reviewed in its report and testimony (see U.S. House Subcommittee on Mines and Mining in references). Of particular interest to researchers are the legal briefs prepared by attorneys for the coal operator and the unions, which cogently summarize the arguments on both sides (see *Conditions in the Coal Mines of Colorado* in references).

Woodrow Wilson's plight in contending with the strike is chronicled in Manfred Boemeke's unpublished dissertation, Billie Barnes Jensen's article in *Labor History* and other Wilson biographies. Various reports from the period provide valuable insights, including two speeches by Governor Elias Ammons, as well as reports of the Colorado Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Colorado State Inspector of Mines. In particular, the *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Colorado Bureau of Labor Statistics* compiles reports of the work of Commissioner Edwin W. Brake to settle the strike and many of the most important strike documents.

The media's role in the strike is analyzed in a valuable thesis completed by Kathryn Tarasenko and in a chapter in George McGovern's original 1953 dissertation (omitted from popular book). Journalists' experiences in Colorado are recounted in various works: Alex Baskin's Introduction to *Masses*, William Chenery's *So It Seemed*, George Creel's *Rebel at Large*, Max Eastman's *Enjoyment of Living*, Gene Fowler's *A Solo in Tom-Toms*, Mary Craig Sinclair's *Southern Belle*, Upton Sinclair's *Autobiography* and *The Brass Check*, and Robert L. Perkins, *The First Hundred Years. An Informal History of Denver and the Rocky Mountain News*. Biographers of celebrated correspondent John Reed point to the pivotal role that the Colorado trip played in his career (see works by Granville Hicks, Robert A. Rosenstone, and James C. Wilson), while Upton Sinclair's biographers examine his role critically (see Floyd Dell and Leon Harris).

Various major and minor players in the drama devote chapters or make mention of the Colorado strike in their memoirs: I.W.W. agitator Emma Goldman in *Living My Life*, socialist activist Ella Reeve Bloor in *We Are Many*, USCIR Commissioner Mrs. J. Borden Harriman in *From Pinafores to Politics*, USCIR Commissioner John R. Commons in *Myself*; Clarence J. Hicks in *My Life in Industrial Relations*, Senator Edward Keating in *The Gentleman from Colorado*, and miner's wife Mary T. O'Neil in *Those Damn Foreigners*. Frederick T. Gates recounts his early trip to Colorado in *Chapters in My Life*. Standard Oil publicist Joseph I.C. Clarke retells his experience in *My Life and Memories*.

Biographies of other key people touch upon the strike: Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan tell the flamboyant life of CF&I's early investor in *Bet a Million! The Story of John W. Gates*. Sylvia Ruland recounts John C. Osgood's life in *The Lion of Redstone*. Kristen Brown addresses the role of Mrs. J.J. Brown in *Molly Brown Unraveling the Myth*. Edward Fitzgerald explores the troubles involving the USCIR staffer Charles McCarthy in *McCarthy of Wisconsin*. Freeman Champney recounts the controversial publisher's involvement in *Art & Glory. The Story of Elbert Hubbard*. John Velke chronicles the role of the company's agents in his history of the *Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency, Inc.*

Labor Reforms by Business and Government

For valuable background, see Joseph A. McCartin's *Labor's Great War. The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern Labor Relations 1912-1921* and Sanford Jacoby's *Employing Bureaucracy*. Various efforts to improve working conditions in industry during the Progressive Era from 1900 to 1920 are examined in Andrea Tone's *The Business of Benevolence: Industrial Paternalism in Progressive America*. The later expansion of benefits during the 1920s is reviewed by Stuart Brandes's, *American Welfare Capitalism* and Irving Bernstein's *The Lean Years*.

Especially rich resources are the several works by Bruce E. Kaufman, who traces the evolution of enlightened industrial relations and personnel management in *Managing the Human Factor* and *The Global Evolution of Industrial Relations*, along with chapters (and contributions by other) in two volumes he co-edited, *Industrial Relations to Human Resources and Beyond* and *Non-Union Employee Representation*. Insights about the state of the function in business can be gained from the first textbook on the subject, Ordway Tead and Henry C. Metcalf's *Personnel Administration*.

Several critical examinations of New Deal labor reforms, social security and related reforms and particularly the role played by Industrial Relations Counselors and the Special Conference Committee are found in works by sociologist G. William Domhoff and his collaborators.