

# *Competitiveness, Control, and Decline in the Northern Anthracite Coalfield of Pennsylvania, 1890-1960*

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The American anthracite area once consisted of a ten-county domain in northeastern Pennsylvania about the size of Manhattan Island. Large quantities of “hard coal” were found only in this part of the U.S., which contained 95 percent of the hemisphere’s deposits. As the industry went through a familiar boom-and-bust cycle between the 1840s and the 1960s, it changed from a decentralized entrepreneurial production system to a highly concentrated corporate form by the turn of the twentieth century, and back to a decentralized structure by the mid-twentieth century. The peak production year was 1917, at over 100 million tons, driven by the demands of World War I.<sup>1</sup> (See Figures 1 and 2.)

Two issues—competitiveness and control—dominated the anthracite corporations’ decision making during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To boost profitability and at the same time address the industry’s declining competitive position relative to its chief rival, “soft” or bituminous coal, the major companies moved to secure greater command over labor, productivity, supply, and cost. Workers, for the most part, resisted the owners’ intentions and sought to maintain traditional mining culture and its norms regarding output, safety, and work organization.

In many respects, the anthracite companies followed the pattern of other period enterprises, such as railroads and steel, by engaging in expansion and concentration. By 1902, a handful of J. P. Morgan-controlled railroads owned the major mining concerns—the so-called “Line Companies”—that produced 62 percent of the coal.<sup>2</sup> Through further mergers and acquisitions, that figure climbed to 78 percent by 1907. When adding the shipments contracted from independently owned collieries, Morgan interests commanded over 88 percent of the market

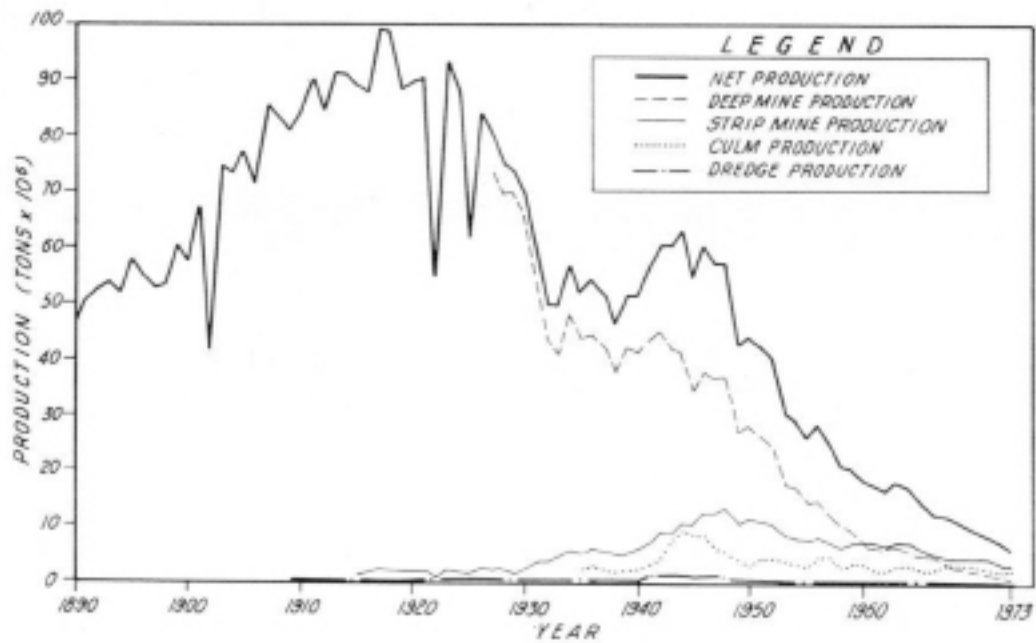


Figure 1. Production trends for the Pennsylvania Anthracite Regions 1890-1973. (U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1147, 1997.)

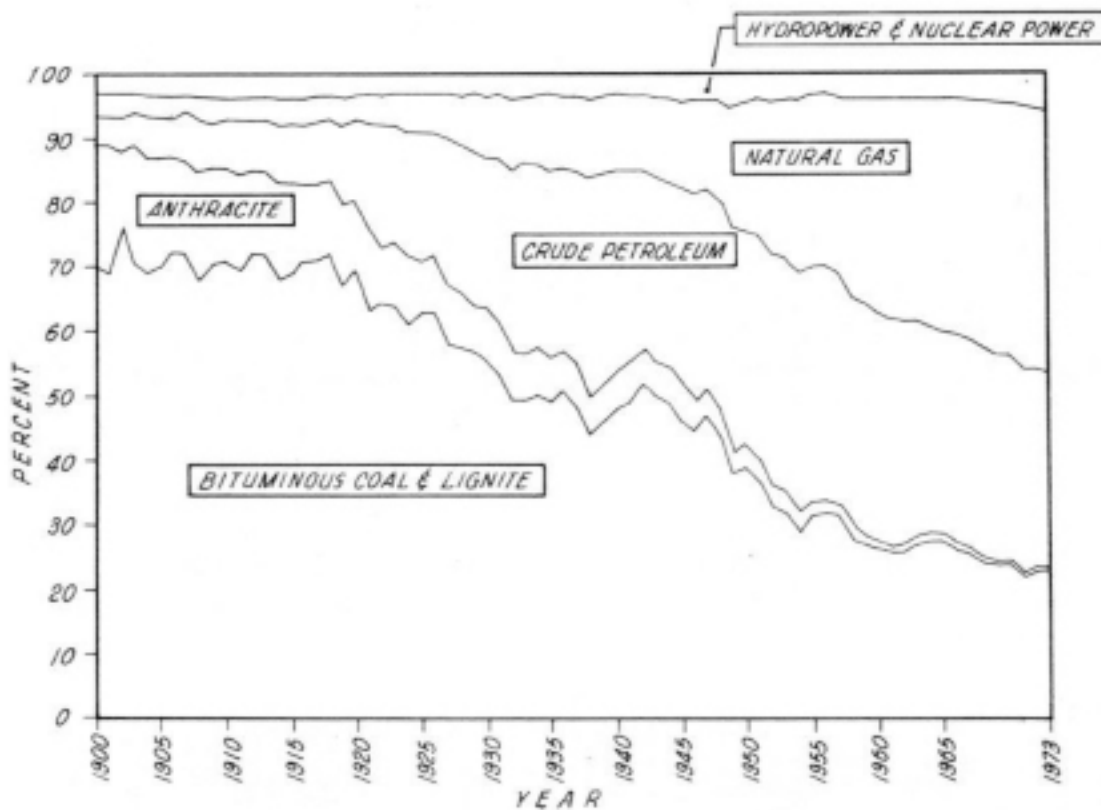


Figure 2. Distribution of Energy Production in the Continental United States, 1900-1973. (U. S. Bureau of Mines.)

supply.<sup>3</sup> They not only governed production but transportation as well, shipping approximately 60 percent of the yield in 1901, and nearly 77 percent in 1913.<sup>4</sup> Despite the consolidation, however, dozens of small independent operators remained, and over-supply was a constant problem.<sup>5</sup>

By the 1880s, the Line-owned companies in the northern-most of the three anthracite fields emerged as the most productive. To enhance their economic position, and at the same time bring greater discipline to the labor force, two northern firms—the Pennsylvania Coal Company (PaCC) and the Delaware and Hudson Coal Company (D&H)—were the first to initiate an organizational innovation that helped attain both goals: the *individual (or special) contract*.<sup>6</sup>

These companies began issuing such “inside contracting” agreements to entrepreneurial miners in the 1890s, granting them exclusive rights to mine coal in specific veins.<sup>7</sup> The subcontracts were most commonly dispensed for “robbing the pillars” of coal left behind from a first mining, or for “development work,” which involved quarrying new tunnels to access unmined seams. The special contractors (or subcontractors) hired and paid their own work crews, which typically numbered up to half a dozen men.

Historian and economist Carter Goodrich described the system as it functioned in the 1890s:

A more systematic step in the same direction was taken by a number of operators in the nineties who divided the work between groups of “shooters” [subcontractors] who were to do the timbering and the shooting [blasting] and all the skilled work, and “loaders” [laborers] who were merely to shovel the coal [into coal cars].<sup>8</sup>

As journalist and economist Frank J. Warne characterized it in 1903:

Under this plan a certain section of a seam of coal, comprising a number of breasts,

or working-places, was let out under contracts to a skilled miner by the foreman; that is, the miner agreed to take out a certain part of a seam for a stated sum of money. He would then employ miners and laborers to do the work, bidding them against each other for the places. The lower the wage for which these men worked the greater the earnings of the [sub]contract miner.

Warne highlighted one of the scheme’s main benefits: “This [sub]contract system aided capital materially in reducing wages throughout the region.”<sup>9</sup>

In response to workers’ grievances over wages, safety, and control, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) entered the anthracite fields in 1892. By 1900, the union had gained broad support among the industry’s 160,000 employees. Under the leadership of charismatic president John Mitchell, it staged successful strikes in 1900 and 1902 discussed below. The elimination of the individual contract stood as the union’s first demand in both shutdowns. Indeed, terminating the strategy remained a primary labor demand in virtually every labor-management negotiation over the next five decades.

### The Contract Miner Versus the Subcontractor

The position of *miner* was reserved for workers with the highest skill and the most experience underground. They were specifically referred to as *contract miners* dating back to the early-nineteenth-century British industry, which was the model used to build Pennsylvania anthracite. Miners were remunerated by the piece (the car of coal) or by the ton. They typically worked in a single chamber at the coalface with one or two laborers they hired and paid. One study found that, during the 1890s, some 90 percent of the miners in the northern and southern anthracite fields,

and 80 percent in the middle fields, held the status of contract miner.<sup>10</sup> Another, smaller group was employed as “company miners and laborers,” paid by the day for projects such as clearing cave-ins and securing the main gangways. An even smaller unit of miners was employed as special contractors, that is, as *subcontractors* harvesting coal using relatively small work gangs.

At the turn of the century a subcontractor was typically a certified miner who secured a special mineral rights agreement from a large company and proceeded to enlist a group of laborers, and occasionally another skilled miner, to harvest the coal that he had fired using black powder or dynamite in the designated vein or veins. He was not a petty capitalist because he owned none of the means of production, nevertheless he functioned as one because of his authorized right to the coal, relative independence in mining, and independent work crew. Although company haulage men transported his raw product to the surface for processing, shipping, and sale, he was an autonomous agent in removing it. His efforts yielded a larger income than that of the ordinary contract miner.<sup>11</sup>

The hearings of the Anthracite Strike Commission of 1902-1903 revealed that certified miners were not the only persons taking special contracts. UMWA president John Mitchell complained that “there are instances of saloon keepers taking pillar-robbing contracts and turning them over to practical [contract] miners. This means that all the men working on the contract must go to the saloon to be paid, and, of course, leave some of their money on the bar.”<sup>12</sup> Even when a bartender or shopkeeper garnered a special agreement, however, he had to hire a contract miner to mine the coal in order to conform to the 1889 Pennsylvania law stipulating that only state-approved miners—which all contract miners had to be—could fulfill vital duties such as drilling holes in the coal, inserting dynamite, blasting the coal face, and “propping the roof.” The laborers loaded the coal into the “empties” transported to the sur-

face by mule-hauled train.

As with the contract miner, convention required that the subcontractor not only recruit his own workers but pay them one-third of his gross earnings. However, many subcontractors were known to have disbursed much less and even to have cheated on the payments. For their part, laborers constituted the most numerous mine-working category, with up to 70 percent employed by contract miners, while a much smaller number (less than 10 percent) toiled under the subcontractors. The other 20 percent were employed as company men handling various tasks above and below ground.<sup>13</sup>

An ethnic division prevailed among the workers, which mirrored the skilled-unskilled divide within many other industries. Based on the region’s “old immigrant” and “new immigrant” demographic history, by the late nineteenth century contract miners and subcontractors were most often of English, Scottish, Welsh, German, or Irish backgrounds, while the laborers were usually Slavs (Poles, Ukrainians, Russians, Slovaks, etc.), Italians, Lithuanians, and other Eastern and Southern Europeans.<sup>14</sup> The region’s occupational composition reflected the fact that Slavs, for example, constituted only two percent of the region’s population in 1880, but 46 percent by 1900.<sup>15</sup>

### The Origins of Individual Contracting and Subcontracting

The British coal industry initiated the practice of labor contracting during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Managers required miners to sign a contract, hence the term *contract miner*, usually in the spring or the “binding time,” obligating them for twelve months or more of work. The policy assured a stable labor force for the companies and a guaranteed income for the miners. The contract miner was usually compensated by the piece (*corve* or basket of coal), although some were paid by weight. He typically worked in one chamber at a time with

one laborer.<sup>16</sup>

Inasmuch as British coal men provided most of the technological and organizational foundations for Pennsylvania anthracite, it is unsurprising that the operators entered into similar arrangements with the labor force. Once having committed to an individual agreement, “contract miners were paid by the colliery operator, by the ton or wagon load; they furnished their own tools and supplies; and they supervised and paid their own laborers.”<sup>17</sup> One study estimated that, between 1800 and 1850, approximately one-third of all employees were contract miners, 7 percent were company miners, and the balance were either inside or outside laborers or other company men paid by the day.<sup>18</sup>

The British industry also developed subcontracting schemes such as the butty system, which was known as the charter-master system in some regions. The plan was typically organized around a miner who secured a special agreement and hired a group of laborers to assist in the coal-taking. However, because of the often-untoward consequences for wages, safety, and workplace relations, workers frequently resisted the butties and charter masters with strike actions.<sup>19</sup> Pennsylvania’s anthracite colliers likewise opposed the subcontract and fought a decades-long battle against it.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Miners’ Freedom and the Individual Contract**

In his 1925 survey of coal mining between the early 1890s and the early 1920s, economist and journalist Carter Goodrich examined the concept of “the miner’s freedom” as an occupational trait deriving from a tradition of skilled craftsmanship as well as the remote geography of subterranean workplaces.<sup>21</sup> In the first instance, miners viewed themselves as accomplished workmen and, as such, demanded a considerable measure of autonomy. Their independence led one researcher to conclude that “it should come as no surprise, therefore, that most coal mines, even quite large ones,

represented a proliferation of small underground workshops.”<sup>22</sup> In the second case, a coalmine’s natural geography, with its numerous levels and dozens of veins, meant that foremen rarely visited the jobsite and scarcely directed day-to-day operations. In the southern anthracite field in 1870, for example, only 273 bosses supervised nearly 16,000 employees.<sup>23</sup>

The ideology of “freedom” began to change following the Civil War, as workers began to pursue collective bargaining through organized labor. In this quest, they organized a series of industrial unions vigorously resisted and eventually defeated by the operators. These included the Workingmen’s Benevolent Association (WBA), established in March 1869 and broken in the Long Strike of 1875; the Knights of Labor, active by 1871 but beaten during the strike of 1887-88; and the Miners’ and Laborers’ Amalgamated Association, mobilized in the middle field in 1879, but also vanquished in the strike of 1887-88.<sup>24</sup>

The desire for collective bargaining nevertheless persisted and, in response, the owners tightened the individual contract such that it “became the operator’s means of control, rather than an agreement between operator and independent miner, presumed equals.”<sup>25</sup> After the Long Strike of 1875, for example, Charles Parrish of Wilkes-Barre—one of the wealthiest “coal barons” in the industry—“forced strikers from the company homes and refused to rehire them without individual contracts.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, the device began to change from a binding contract in the traditional sense to a means of organizing work, enforcing discipline, and boosting output.

The United Mine Workers of America, founded in 1890 by bituminous men, arrived in the anthracite fields soon thereafter and came into prominence with strikes in 1894 and 1897. The first ended in a defeat but the second brought modest gains.<sup>27</sup> The hard-coal workers hoped that the new union would help address three main complaints against the individual contract and the subcontracting system. The first concerned equal



opportunity and its obverse, favoritism. Critics argued that the subcontracts encouraged preferential treatment because they were usually issued to more agreeable (i.e., anti-union) or otherwise favored (through ethnicity, religion, politics, etc.) miners, or to those willing to pay kickbacks—a type of graft outlawed by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in 1897. Subcontractors were often given more accessible (“easy”) coal, and a greater number of empty coal cars (the “free turn”).<sup>28</sup>

Safety was the second concern. Because subcontractors often mined in two, three or more chambers simultaneously, detractors argued that they could not often follow state safety laws. Alterations in wages and work culture constituted the third complaint. If subcontracting were to spread, the large companies would need fewer contract miners, forcing many to become laborers in order to make a living. The trend augured for an increasingly de-skilled workforce, a weakened craft heritage, and lower incomes.<sup>29</sup>

On the other side, employers favored the system for self-interested reasons. Some workers possessed superior physical and mental attributes, they argued, and should be encouraged to win greater tonnage.<sup>30</sup> Managers also saw direct production advantages because the subcontractors were well known to push their workers beyond the traditional “stint” (output quota) of two or three cars per man per shift.<sup>31</sup> In another argument, the companies claimed the constitutional right to issue any type of property contract to any individual without interference from organized labor, government or any other entity.<sup>32</sup>

The operators promoted the subcontract for another reason: its use as a weapon in the ongoing conflict with organized labor. Subcontractors in industries such as garment making, iron molding, stone quarrying, and locomotive manufacturing, were well known to have subverted unions, as well as worker-supported wage standards, production stints, and work rules. As historian David Montgomery concluded: “Subcontracting practices readily undermined both stints and the mutualistic

ethic [among workers]... and they tended to flood many trades with trained, or semi-trained, workers who undercut wages and work standards.”<sup>33</sup>

### The Competitiveness Problem in Anthracite

If the arrangement proved effective in helping to control a union-minded work force, perhaps it could also bolster anthracite’s faltering competitiveness. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, soft coal’s economic advantages became apparent. While the harvests of the fuels remained fairly even until 1860, bituminous took the lead thereafter, with applications in steel making, power generation, railroading, and other industries. By 1900, soft coal had cornered 80 percent of the U.S. market. The contrast in the relative *values* of the fuels showed an equally striking trend. In 1880, anthracite’s output was worth \$42 million while bituminous’ was put at \$53 million; by 1890 the numbers were \$66 million and \$110 million, respectively; and in 1900, \$85.8 million and \$221 million.<sup>34</sup>

Increasing costs stood as an important related factor. One study concluded that hard coal’s mining expenses increased thirty-one cents per ton between 1880 and 1890, while the value of coal sold at the mine rose only eleven cents per ton.<sup>35</sup> Even though soft coal could not easily replace anthracite in all markets, especially home heating, bituminous’ lower price and greater output did not bode well for the future.<sup>36</sup>

Several constraints shaped the companies’ responses. Geology presented a crucial physical limitation. Unlike their bituminous counterparts, who could find coal deposits in thirty-five states (including in central and western Pennsylvania), anthracite operators could not overcome the resource depletion problem by discovering new measures in other places. Because large quantities of hard coal were found only in the ten-county area of northeastern Pennsylvania, firms were forced to dig deeper and more costly shafts that

accessed ever-thinning veins.<sup>37</sup> George O. Virtue highlighted a related conundrum when he argued that the costs of mining deeper seams encouraged companies to recover their investments through greater yields.<sup>38</sup> Thus, even with an oligopolistic position under the Morgan railroads, over-production remained a persistent problem.

The fuel's economic characteristics exacerbated the problem. For as David Brody noted: "[The] market characteristics of coal set it apart from other sectors of heavy industry" because demand for the commodity remained "inelastic," meaning that price increases did not significantly affect demand, at least in the short-run, due to the consumers' need for the product. Supply, however, was "elastic" when demand increased, meaning that production readily expanded due to the ease of entry into the business; but "inelastic" as demand fell because many operators, especially independents, would take low or even no profits rather than reduce output or close down.<sup>39</sup>

As early as the 1850s, over-production encouraged companies to form "coal pools" that set limits on each firm's tonnage.<sup>40</sup> However, as historian Harold Aurand observed, because the pools' allocation quotas were based on output *capacities*, the result was that "each company [would] strive for a larger share of the total allotment by increasing its [physical] plant."<sup>41</sup> Over-building thus became the other side of the over-production coin.

Capital investment represented a critical financial constraint. Despite a record of high profit rates, managers were reluctant to invest in new technologies because of the cost and risk. For example, while bituminous matched improvements in cutting technologies with advances in drilling and blasting, anthracite saw few such parallels. Soft-coal firms used the percussive puncher in the late nineteenth century and replaced it with a chain-breast machine early in the new century, to be followed by short-wall mining machines around 1910. Anthracite was much slower to implement such innovations, in part because of a more difficult geology with steeper veins and

deeper mines.<sup>42</sup>

Labor relations represented the final and, in many ways, greatest operational challenge. During the decades following the Civil War, the dealings between labor and management were among the most rancorous of any American industry.<sup>43</sup> While the bituminous companies in the Central Competitive Field negotiated a contract with the UMWA in 1897, anthracite's owners opposed any union recognition.<sup>44</sup> Workers remained profoundly aggrieved about their inability to bargaining collectively and thereby address problems such as low pay, excessive dockage (pay deductions for rock and other impurities), and, in many cases, company stores and doctors. Within these acrimonious relationships, individual contracting and the subcontracting system emerged as one of several objections in the anthracite strikes of 1900 and 1902.

### The Strike of 1900

Numerous labor actions hit the anthracite region in the late nineteenth century, including the aforementioned boycotts of 1894 and 1897; the infamous strike and massacre at Lattimer, Pennsylvania, in 1897; and wildcat strikes at various northern field collieries in 1899.<sup>45</sup> The hostilities peaked with the UMWA-sanctioned work stoppage on September 17, 1900, which lasted forty-seven days. Although the union had only eight thousand official members, over one hundred thousand men and boys from throughout the coalfields joined the walkout.

The strike of 1900 involved three key issues: wage rates, industrial relations, and work organization. Prior to the shutdown, a group of union representatives met on August 27 and drafted a statement containing nine demands. The individual contract stood as the document's main *non-wage* request by stipulating that there should be "no more than one breast, gangway or working place for one miner at any time nor more than an equal share of cars and work for any miner."<sup>46</sup> The

clause reflected the workers' antipathy toward the subcontractors' "hoggish" behavior and preferential treatment in securing better workplaces and more empty cars. It also pointed to the wide resistance to the reorganization of work inherent in the plan.

As the talks unfolded, UMWA's negotiators removed the individual and special contract from their priority list. The union's strategy became apparent when President Mitchell sent envoy Daniel J. Keefe, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, for pre-strike talks with the operators' chief mediator, U.S. Senator Mark Hanna of Ohio. For that exchange, the union narrowed its demands to five: reduction in the price of powder to \$1.50 per keg, abolition of company stores, abolition of the sliding scale, modification of the dockage system, and a pay increase of at least 10 percent.<sup>47</sup>

UMWA's leaders probably decided to take the subcontract off the table for two reasons. First, at that point in time, only two or three firms actually used the device. Second, the UMWA's neophyte status, coupled with Mitchell's cautious leadership, prompted an emphasis on bread-and-butter concerns such as wages and work hours. Challenging what was essentially a property right—a company's ability to dispense mineral contracts—was seen as a step too far.

However, the companies refused to bargain on any of the issues and, indeed, argued that falling demand required a pay cut. Because of an impending national election, however, the owners yielded to political pressure applied especially by Hanna, who was also serving as chairman of the Republican National Committee.<sup>48</sup> They agreed to a 10 percent wage increase and some minor concessions. The tactic apparently helped William McKinley win re-election with Theodore Roosevelt as vice president. Politics aside, the mineworkers celebrated their first significant victory in more than fifty years of attempted collective bargaining. For decades, they celebrated the October 29 return-to-work date as "Johnny

Mitchell Day."

The strike of 1900 was a watershed moment for another reason. If previously the operators could boost profits directly by lowering wages, or indirectly through tactics such as larger coal cars, higher powder prices, and greater dockage, the presence of the UMWA meant that the old methods would no longer apply. In order to remain competitive—which included a pattern of high returns to stockholders—the companies would have to realize new technological, managerial, or organizational efficiencies. As Frank J. Warne cautioned in 1901, "if there is any one thing certain as to the future of the anthracite coal industry it is that the cost of mining must be reduced more and more."<sup>49</sup>

### The Strike of 1902

Despite the success of the strike of 1900, several unresolved grievances led to over one hundred wildcat actions during the following five years.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, the Morgan railroads continued with monopolistic designs such that their subsidiary mining companies produced nearly two-thirds of the output in 1902. The industrial tensions culminated in another union-authorized strike in 1902, which labor historian Selig Perlman declared "the most important single event in the history of American trade unionism until that time."<sup>51</sup>

The contest pitted an emerging union power with 125,000 potential members against an established industrial giant having a capitalization approaching \$200 million (\$6.36 billion in 2021).<sup>52</sup> The strike began on May 15, 1902, and lasted 163 days. A number of issues from 1900 remained, including the individual contract, but Mitchell and the UMWA limited their demands to five: a 20 percent wage increase, a 20 percent reduction in work hours, payment by the ton, full recognition of the UMWA, and an established grievance procedure.<sup>53</sup> The last item was accompanied by an individual-contract-related clause:



The anthracite mine workers should not be compelled to make or sign individual agreements but should have the right to form such organization and choose such agents and officers as they desire to act collectively instead of individually whenever they deem that their best interests are subserved thereby.<sup>54</sup>

Company negotiators opposed any wage increase or UMWA recognition, while favoring the same hours and car payments. They also wanted to boost productivity well beyond the culturally sanctioned stint of two or three cars per man per shift. In April 1902, at a pre-strike meeting between operators and union leaders, Erie Railroad president Eben Thomas—whose firm owned the Pennsylvania Coal Company and the Hillside Coal and Iron Company—articulated his colleagues' position, which ruled out the closed shop and a standardized wage rate while insisting on

no deterioration in the quantity or quality of work, and that there shall be no effort to restrict the individual exertions of men who, working by the ton or car, may for reasons satisfactory to themselves and their employers produce such a quantity of work as they may desire.<sup>55</sup>

On the workers' side, representatives from the local unions at the Pennsylvania Coal Company—the largest user of the individual contract—secured the passage of an anti-subcontracting resolution during a pre-strike UMWA conference in March 1902:

*Whereas* The [sub]contract system which some of our men are subject to at present and which an effort is being made by the companies to put in force in several of their collieries under a large scale, which is detrimental to our organization.

And *Whereas*, Those working for said [sub]contractors are violating the laws of our Union in every respect. . . .

And *Whereas*, This system of work has caused more men to become traitors to our organization than any other system of work ever introduced into our coal fields, and subject[s] our men who remain faithful to us by being cut short in their cars to supply [sub]contractors on days when the collieries are idle.

And *Whereas*, The Erie Coal Company are [*sic*] the foremost in having this system put in force as through this system they can have their coal mined [for] thirty per cent. less by giving it out to [sub]contractors who will make at least thirty per cent. on each man who works for him [*sic*]. . . .

*Resolved*: That this convention takes into consideration the danger of this [sub]contract system especially under the Erie Coal Co., and [will] force said company to give up said system of work and have our men work at the same, as it has worked before the [sub]contract system was introduced. And be it further

*Resolved* That we the employees of the Erie Co., ask this convention to stand by us in whatever stand we may take to abolish this [sub]contract system.<sup>56</sup>

Some local unions imposed penalties on members who took the subcontracts. For example, Pennsylvania Coal Company miner William Zarn secured an agreement to rob pillars in February 1901 and, to fulfill his obligation, he employed thirteen laborers. The union local called him to a meeting and, after a reprimand, voted to let him quarry ten cars a day for two months. The local president directed the driver boys to provide

him only six empty cars a day.<sup>57</sup>

At the Delaware and Hudson Coal Company—the second-most committed to individual contracting—much of the strife involved “heading men” who garnered agreements for “development work” excavating tunnels to access new veins. Their work often required the removal of fresh coal as they proceeded. In November 1901, at the firm’s Jermyn Colliery near Scranton, unionized workers accused the heading men of overproduction. The driver boys began delivering only a “fair share” of empty cars, and when the company dismissed a group of drivers for the slowdown, all of the employees walked out. After negotiations, the boys were rehired and mining resumed, but the union local passed a motion stating: “Unless all heading men cease loading more than their share of cars you will be expelled from the union.”<sup>58</sup>

Shortly thereafter, a small group of angry workers entered the mine and destroyed the tools of three heading men—Michael McHale, Harry Gilbert, and Henry Richards—who had disregarded the notice.<sup>59</sup> The driver boys commenced delivering empty cars to them, but several laborers refused to load the coal. Convinced that the union was behind the disturbance, managers closed the Jermyn Colliery on December 31, 1901. They reopened it two weeks later, after receiving assurances that no further “harassment” of the subcontractors would occur. Nevertheless, the union continued to pressure the headers to maintain the two-cars-per-man stint, and when heading man John Sobey refused to cooperate, incensed workers sabotaged his home with dynamite.<sup>60</sup>

The operators saw the output limits as defiant and uneconomical acts. In testimony before the Strike Commission of 1902, company officials decried the “spirit of insubordination” among the men, particularly since the strike of 1900. Pennsylvania Coal Company’s superintendent, Henry McMillan, complained that his workers disregarded his entreaties to produce “that extra car of coal.”<sup>61</sup> Theodore Hogan, a foreman at Pennsylvania Coal Company’s Avoca Colliery, com-

plained that since the strike of 1900, his men were no longer producing three cars per shift working alone and five cars working in pairs. He threatened disciplinary steps to stop the behavior, but UMWA District 1 President John T. Dempsey warned of retaliation, so Hogan relented.<sup>62</sup> The company was forced to hire fifty extra employees to attain its desired output. At one Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Company mine, the union local was alleged to have passed a resolution limiting production to six cars for a three-man crew, when previously it had loaded seven to fourteen. Cutbacks were also documented at the Delaware and Hudson and at the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Coal Company.<sup>63</sup>

The organized militancy against higher yields challenged the companies’ authority and profitability. Subcontracting thus became enmeshed in a broader conflict over workplace control and competitiveness. Yet for the mineworkers, output and wages were not the only considerations. When owners cited cases of men producing below capacity, union members replied that fairness in sharing work and distributing empties, along with the possibilities for leisure and family life, were also paramount concerns.<sup>64</sup> Fulfilling one’s quota and going home early was seen as one of the few perks in an otherwise difficult and dangerous job.

The strike of 1902 received broad public support. With recently-inaugurated President Theodore Roosevelt acting as intermediary, and with Morgan and Mitchell assenting, the parties agreed to arbitration under a seven-member Anthracite Coal Strike Commission appointed by the president. The Commission’s final ruling, released in March 1903, granted a 10 percent wage increase and a work-hour reduction from ten to nine. It also established the Anthracite Board of Conciliation to adjudicate grievances.

The workers saw the strike as a success for the UMWA, although the settlement did not address the individual contract or union recognition. Partial acknowledgement of the union would come

in 1916, and full recognition in 1920, but individual contracting remained a source of continual agitation and controversy throughout the period.

### Persistence of the Individual Contract and Subcontracting

The UMWA called for an end to the individual contract in every labor-management negotiation between 1902 and 1923—that is, 1906, 1909, 1912, 1916, 1920, and 1922. For example, in 1906 the union's first demand was "that no contract miner shall have more than one working place at the same time," nor employ "more than two laborers at the same time." However, for the stated reasons, the union's leadership did not press the matter, so the practice continued.

Because of the mounting protests against subcontracting and other issues, coupled with the UMWA's seeming inattention to the workers' many complaints, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) entered the anthracite fields in 1907. The men at Pennsylvania Coal Company were especially supportive of that radical organization, particularly the large Italian (including Sicilian) contingent. The IWW promised to eliminate the subcontracting system and to address matters such as dockage and safety. The union's drive climaxed in a general strike against PaCC in 1916, which, according to union organizer Arturo Calvini, had one main source: "The [sub]contract system of the Pennsylvania Coal Company caused the unrest."<sup>65</sup> But the company broke the strike and thereby retained its status as the field's only major non-union operator. The IWW soon abandoned the hard coal fields for other mining outposts.<sup>66</sup> Yet, workers' dissatisfaction with the UMWA did not go away and reappeared in wild-cat strikes and other forms of protest over the next fifteen years.

At a UMWA Tri-District convention in preparation for the 1916 labor-management negotiations, union representatives from Pennsylvania Coal Company succeeded in keeping the

individual contract at the top of the UMWA's demand list. Some delegates remonstrated that the subcontractors and their crews were excavating as many as thirty chambers in one shift. When the talks with the companies were settled, the UMWA had, as mentioned, gained partial legitimacy as the miners' bargaining agent. That achievement was gratifying in its own right, but it also buoyed union president John B. White, who believed that the acknowledgement "destroyed the subcontractor with his *padrone* system." White's sanguinity proved unfounded, however, for it soon became apparent that the system would persist until it was specifically prohibited in a formal labor-management compact.

White's *padrone* (Italian for "boss") reference referred to a contract-labor system common in Sicily's sulfur mines and used in various other industries during the nineteenth century.<sup>67</sup> Reports of padronism in anthracite dated from at least the mid-1890s. Terrance Powderly, former president of the Knights of Labor and mayor of Scranton, testified in 1895 that "the 'Padrone' system does exist in every large and small center, and particularly in the mining regions."<sup>68</sup>

During the 1910s, Pennsylvania Coal Company employed a large number of Sicilian subcontractors, who hired their countrymen as laborers in an exploitative manner reminiscent of the *padrone* structure. The company's large Italian workforce reacted strongly against the subcontracting system in large part because of that association. Indeed, the Sicilian-born employees (over one-quarter of the total) fought against the plan during the 1910s and 1920s because many had resisted similar arrangements in their country's sulfur mines. As their strong backing of the IWW's campaign indicated, the Sicilians wanted no part of a subcontracting system in their new home, particularly one again spearheaded by organized criminals.<sup>69</sup>

Following the IWW's defeat in 1916, Pennsylvania Coal Company expanded the individual contract, which resulted in another major revolt

in 1920. That uprising occasioned a seven-month strike that finally brought the company's ten thousand employees (along with the two thousand workers at the other Erie Railroad-owned firm, the Hillside Coal and Iron Company) into the UMWA. The victory—at a time when workers in various other industries were fighting “yellow dog” and other types of individual contracts—brought the closed shop to all of anthracite's major producers.<sup>70</sup> Just as importantly, it saw the removal, albeit temporary, of the subcontracting system from the Erie companies' operations.<sup>71</sup>

For the labor-management negotiations of 1920, the UMWA again demanded “that the making of individual contracts in the mining of coal be prohibited.” The wide differences between the parties led to another impasse, whereupon President Woodrow Wilson appointed the Anthracite Coal Commission of 1920 to investigate. That body granted workers a 17 percent wage increase and recommended UMWA recognition, which the companies had little choice but to accept. However, many of the union's rank-and-file did not agree with certain aspects of the decision and thousands walked out in an eighteen-day “vacation strike.”<sup>72</sup>

The individual contract remained one of the 1920 coal commission's most contested issues. In its final report the body decided to uphold a company's prerogative to sub-let mineral rights. Neal J. Ferry, who served as the mineworkers' representative, issued a minority report that addressed the matter. Although he confirmed a company's legal right to issue contracts and subcontracts, Ferry asked the commission to “declare in favor of collective bargaining as a general principle and against individual contracts that tend to supersede or substitute for the basic award or agreement.”<sup>73</sup>

Thus, the union's first demand in 1922 again asserted that “the making of individual agreements and contracts in the mining of coal shall be prohibited.”<sup>74</sup> A stalemate this time led to a protracted strike of 163 days that was arbitrated by yet another federal body, the U.S. Coal Commission,

appointed by President Warren G. Harding. That commission's final report ruled that a corporation had a constitutional right to issue contracts. It cited cases such as *Lochner v. New York* (1905), in which the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a law limiting the workday to ten hours on the grounds that the measure infringed on a company's freedom to contract within the meaning of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.<sup>75</sup>

Recognizing the topic's intractability, the UMWA took a different tack for the 1923 talks, led by recently-inaugurated union president John L. Lewis. It demanded that individual contractors conform to the negotiated wage rates and work rules. When the operators agreed to the idea, a truce was achieved and both sides approved an article requiring that “no contracts shall be made with individual employees at less than the prescribed scale rates or not in keeping with customary practices.”<sup>76</sup>

Based on the provision, a union local at the Hudson Coal Company (formerly the D&H) filed a grievance with the Anthracite Board of Conciliation in 1926. The complaint argued that the use of individual contracts for machine mining violated the labor-management accord. But Charles F. Neill, the board's umpire in Washington, D.C., delivered a blow to the complainants when he ruled in favor of the company. Neill concluded that the negotiated agreement did not prohibit any type of individual or special contract. Moreover, central to Neill's decision was the agreed-upon removal, during the 1916 bargaining, of two workers' demands: a complete end to individual and special contracts, and a prohibition against contract miners having more than one working place.<sup>77</sup>

Because of the 1923 armistice, the UMWA did not mention individual contracts during 1925 contract discussions. However, the parties' inability to resolve other differences led to anthracite's longest strike, 170 days, which carried over into 1926. The contest garnered little public support and, due to the recurring strikes, eroded numerous markets. The final settlement merely extended the existing



labor contract for five years.

By 1928, Pennsylvania Coal Company's workers had exhausted their tolerance of the subcontract and were ready for another confrontation. They initiated a bitter wildcat strike that lasted from mid-January until late May. The closure pitted the workers (who called themselves *insurgents*) against the company and its organized-crime affiliates in a battle that resulted in four murders, numerous beatings, dynamitings, and several other acts of violence. The company eventually overcame the walkout—in part because John L. Lewis and the UMWA did not support unauthorized labor actions—and proceeded to expand subcontracting at all ten of its collieries.<sup>78</sup>

By the late 1920s, it had become apparent that the 1923 truce was not enforceable, and so the effort to abolish subcontracting recommenced in subsequent negotiations. The UMWA realized a partial gain in 1936, when the operators went along with the requisite that all subcontractors sign the labor-

management agreement.<sup>79</sup> In 1939, union officials and owners' representatives passed what seemed to be a path-breaking resolution stating that "special and individual contracts in the mining of coal where now in use shall be eliminated."<sup>80</sup> But the declaration was not binding and was largely ignored by the operators.

At last, in the 1952 agreement, the union succeeded in abolishing the decades-old structure in the northern field, where it was mainly used. According to an official UMWA statement:

It is with a great deal of satisfaction that your officers inform you that they have succeeded in abolishing the system of special or individual contracts in District No. 1. The long-sought goal of the Union was attained only after years of unrelenting efforts. As far back as 1920, an anthracite commission appointed by President Woodrow Wilson declined to eliminate



*The Forest City Breaker, Pennsylvania Coal Company, c. 1920.  
(Courtesy of the National Canal Museum, Easton, PA.)*



the system.... Hardly a convention or a joint conference passed, however, without the UMWA renewing its fight against the system which had such a baneful effect on our contractual structure.<sup>81</sup>

### The Leasing System

Yet, the goal that had occupied three generations of northern field mineworkers came as a hollow victory, for the large companies had since instituted a more complex and sweeping coal-accessing plan called the leasing system. It spread after 1935, when the Pennsylvania Coal Company and another major coal corporation, the Lehigh Valley Coal Company (LVCC), began “putting out” large coal tracts, and even entire collieries, to a new type of independent producer—relatively small, *incorporated* firms often headed by former subcontractors. Initially, the lessees were required to sell their freshly mined coal to the lessor, which processed and sold the final product. Later, some leaseholders built their own processing plants, called breakers, but had to pay the lessor a fixed annual “rental” fee, plus a royalty on each ton mined.<sup>82</sup>

By the late 1940s, Pennsylvania Coal and Lehigh Valley Coal had leased out virtually all of their collieries. Between 1939 and 1959, for example, the former sublet properties to an average of forty-four independent operators each year.<sup>83</sup> The latter dispensed some fifty leases annually between 1932 and 1952.<sup>84</sup> The field’s other major producers—Glen Alden, Hudson, and Susquehanna—began moving in the same direction.<sup>85</sup> Some independent lease-holding firms such as Knox Coal Company, Volpe Coal Company, and several Pagnotti companies—all with organized crime affiliations—rose to become among the field’s larger producers, as the former giants downscaled operations and relied on their lessees to generate income.<sup>86</sup> Leasing spread to the other anthracite fields following World War II.<sup>87</sup>

The colliers who worked for the different

northern operations saw the subcontracting and leasing systems as devices to lower wages, discipline and exploit workers, and weaken if not destroy the UMWA.<sup>88</sup> According to Knox Coal Company laborer William A. Hastie, “in order to break the union, or to weaken it, they installed that [sub]contracting system.” John Usefara, a laborer for the Morgan Bird Company, a lessee of the Glen Alden Coal Company, agreed: “They did the leases to get rid of the union.”

Some on the management side have not disputed this claim. Charles Adonizio, whose father and uncle began as subcontractors for Pennsylvania Coal Company in the 1920s and then moved into colliery ownership, believed that the big companies initiated the leasing system because “they wanted to get away from the union . . . [which] started to come in there strong in the twenties.” Mining engineer Alex Chamberlain, whose family had been in the coal business since the mid-nineteenth century, concurred: “It was a way of companies insulating themselves from labor.”<sup>89</sup>

An over-emphasis on productivity and a taste for illegally mined coal led to numerous accidents among the leaseholders. Workers characterized many of them as “scavengers” who ran “butcher shops” and “slaughterhouses.” Alex Chamberlain described their mining methods as “rip and tear.” Quick-take mining encouraged the deception of government inspectors, as miner Joe Costa recalled:

One time I drove a slope for Pagnotti [Coal Company] up in the back here [in Swoyersville, PA] and we robbed all the pillars and, when we heard an inspector was coming, the superintendent told me to blow it up. I said, “What about the shaker chutes [loading machines], should we get them out?” He said, “Forget those chutes and close it up. It will look more like a real accident.” We closed it up [blew it up] so the inspector couldn’t go down and see what we were doing.<sup>90</sup>

According to evidence uncovered by the Pennsylvania Industrial Commission of 1938, of the 138 northern field operations studied, “many of these mines, in the judgment of the Commission, do not even pretend to comply with any part of the mine laws.”<sup>91</sup> Leasing had become so widespread that, by 1942, the northern field claimed 104 separate lease-holding companies. As late as 1952, the number stood at 76.<sup>92</sup> The premiere lease issuers, Pennsylvania Coal and Delaware and Hudson, had been joined by the other major operators in an epidemic of tenancy. As such, one of the most consolidated industries in the nation in 1901 had, by mid-century, become one of the most decentralized. Thus, while in 1919, 60 independent firms (i.e., not owned by a railroad) were producing 21 percent of the coal, by 1952 some 376 independents (the great majority of them leaseholders) generated 54 percent of the total output.<sup>93</sup>

As Mr. Costa and the state commission offered, the new regime became riddled with corruption. Bogus inspections, short weights, illegal mining, and wage- and work-rule violations became common. What began as a rational economic response by the large companies to bolster a declining competitive position and contain an activist workforce, precipitated such “irrational” counter-reactions as recurring strikes, illegal mining, extensive fraud, accidents and disasters, and the involvement of organized criminals as subcontractors and leaseholders.<sup>94</sup>

UMWA District 1 officials were drawn to the corruption. The Knox Coal Company’s unlawful mining under the Susquehanna River in 1959 caused a breach in the riverbed that drowned 12 men, flooded vast underground workings, and ended deep mining in the middle portion of the northern field. The company, which began with a lease from Pennsylvania Coal Company in 1943, was originally owned by alleged mob boss John Sciandra and later, illegally, by UMWA District 1 President August J. Lippi.<sup>95</sup>

### **The UMWA and the Subcontracting and Leasing Systems**

The UMWA avoided major confrontations over the individual contract during the strikes of 1900 and 1902, and during negotiations for decades thereafter under John L. Lewis, who served as president between 1920 and 1960.<sup>96</sup> Lewis preferred to emphasize wages, benefits, and other tenets of business unionism and, like John Mitchell before him, sought to avoid challenging the companies on matters such as work organization, individual contracting, and lease-holding. But Lewis finally spoke against the leasing system at the Tri-District Convention of March 1939, in New York:

Some of the great coal companies have followed the practices of leasing out their coal lands and their collieries to individuals and companies of doubtful responsibility. They have failed to include as a stipulation in those leases that those lessees should be responsible to the degree that they will pay the rates under the industry, and as a result the chaos has been intensified and large operating companies have found themselves in the unique and paradoxical position that they have been unable to compete in the open market, with the lessee mining coal upon their own property and paying them a royalty for the right to mine.<sup>97</sup>

UMWA vice-president Thomas Kennedy, originally an anthracite worker, also rarely criticized the companies regarding organizational decisions. However, he eventually denounced the leasing system’s negative bearing on the “payment of wages, the maintenance of working conditions, [and] the stabilizing of the price.” He acknowledged that “most companies in the anthracite industry” were engaged in leasing and demurred that the arrangement “has done more to bring

about instability and chaos in the industry than anything else I know of.”<sup>98</sup>

Dissatisfaction with the UMWA’s leadership, rising unemployment, wage-rate violations, excessive dockage, and the growth of individual contracting were among the factors that precipitated a powerful dual union movement in the northern field in 1933. Called the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania (UAMP), it was headed by mineworker Thomas Maloney and former District 1 president Rinaldo Cappellini. The dissidents gained the support of over one-half the field’s fifty thousand workers and, through a series of strikes, paralyzed mining operations between 1933 and 1935. The shutdowns attracted the attention of U.S. Senator Robert Wagner, Pennsylvania Governor Gifford Pinchot, and U.S. Secretary of Labor Francis Perkins.<sup>99</sup> Drawing on their work culture and family-oriented dispositions, UAMP members challenged management by demanding the equalization of work—or job sharing—and an end to the individual contract.<sup>100</sup> Concerted efforts by Lewis, the District 1 UMWA, the companies, and the Roosevelt Administration helped foil the association, which disbanded in November 1935.<sup>101</sup>

August Lippi gained Lewis’ full confidence during his District 1 executive tenure between 1951 and 1965. Even after he had been indicted and convicted of labor law violations, manslaughter, conspiracy, and income tax evasion related to his illegal Knox Coal Company holdings, neither Lewis nor his successors, Thomas Kennedy and W. A. “Tony” Boyle, called for Lippi’s dismissal. Moreover, District 1 members boosted his salary and reelected him as president two more times. Although most of Lippi’s guilty verdicts were overturned on appeal, authorities eventually convicted him of income tax evasion and bank fraud. In November 1965, he resigned from office and entered Lewisburg federal penitentiary to serve two concurrent three-year terms.

Six UMWA union local leaders faced a series of trials, convictions, and prison terms in connec-

tion with the Knox Mine disaster. The charges arose from “sweetheart contracts” and other federal labor law violations.<sup>102</sup> It became apparent that the UMWA’s district leaders not only ignored workers’ grievances, but arranged crooked deals for themselves, the epitome of which was Lippi’s ownership of a coal mining company that held extensive leases. Two other Knox owners were convicted of income tax evasion, serving less than two years each in prison.

Once the largest in the UMWA, District 1 never recovered from these scandals. The international union office ordered its disbandment in 1969 and assigned its remaining members to a new district, No. 25, headquartered in Hazleton, Pennsylvania.

### Epilogue

After a brief resurgence during the 1940s to meet the energy demands of World War II, anthracite’s final collapse came in the 1950s and 1960s, following the Knox Mine Disaster of 1959 and the nationwide switch to alternative fuels. One of America’s first major capitalist enterprises—which had yielded billions in profits, employed up to 160,000 men and boys, and produced over 100 million tons in 1917—was, by 1960, a mere shadow of its former stature.<sup>103</sup> Production has continued, with a handful of small, independent producers. New industries, such as shoes, cigars, and ladies’ garment manufacturing, filled some of the income loss, as did government transfer payments for black lung disease, Social Security, and disability and unemployment compensation.<sup>104</sup> However, the trauma of having lost *the* major employer—notwithstanding its exploitative and violent history—was one feature of deindustrialization from which the ten-county anthracite region has yet to recover.<sup>105</sup>

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### Notes:

1. As historian Alfred Chandler argued, anthracite was the fuel that fired the American industrial revolution after 1830 because of its proximity to the emerging iron and other manufacturing factories along the Eastern seaboard ("Anthracite Coal and the Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in the United States," *Business History Review* 46 [1972], 141-81). The fuel was termed "hard coal" because of its density and reluctance to ignite. The other main type of American coal, bituminous or "soft coal," is less dense, burns less efficiently, but constitutes the vast majority of the U.S. (and the world's) coal supply, with deposits in 35 American states, of which 20 have deep mines. For an overview of Pennsylvania's hard and soft coal industries see: E. W. Miller, *A Geography of Pennsylvania* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1995), 204-23.
2. Geologists charted the anthracite measures into four fields: the *southern*, headquartered at Pottsville; the *western-middle*, located between Mahanoy City and Shamokin; the *eastern-middle*, centered around Minersville and Hazleton; and the *northern*, based in the Wilkes-Barre-Wyoming Valley and Scranton-Lackawanna Valley areas (the focus of this study). The UMWA created three districts corresponding to the fields: District 1, the northern field; District 9, the middle fields; and District 7, the southern field.
3. In 1902, the Morgan-controlled anthracite railroads included the Reading; the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western; the Lehigh Valley; the Jersey Central; and the Erie. All five had coal-producing divisions.
4. Eliot Jones, *The Anthracite Coal Combination in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 103-6. See also: Scott Nearing, *Anthracite, An Instance of Natural Resource Monopoly* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1915), ch. 7. Frank J. Warne ("The Anthracite Coal Strike," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 17 [1901]: 18) reported the 1901 figures, and Jones (*Anthracite Coal Combination*, 154), the 1913 figures.
5. The companies established "coal pools" during the second half of the nineteenth century to limit output and raise prices; however, all of the plans failed because the companies did not honor them and so the over-production problem remained. See: Priscilla Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 22-3; and Harold Aurand, *From the Molly Maguires to the United Mineworkers: The Social Ecology of an Industrial Union, 1869-1897* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1971), 163.
6. Anna Rochester (*Labor and Coal* (New York: International Publishers, 1931), 129) confirmed that "contract miners of this petty boss type are employed only by certain companies in the northern part of the anthracite region." Testimony by company officials and mineworkers before the Anthracite Strike Commission of 1902-03 indicated that only these two companies used the subcontract at that time.
7. The individual contract resulted in an organization of work similar to the "inside contracting" used in various manufacturing industries (see, e.g.: David A. Hounshell, *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800-1932: The Development of Manufacturing Technology in the United States* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 49-50). It is not clear why individual and special contracts, and the attendant "subcontracting system," gained prominence in the northern coalfield among these particular companies. Part of the explanation could be that the large capital investments needed for the field's deep mines required high rates of return to stockholders. Another factor could have been that, as the historically most-profitable and lowest-paying firm among the Line Companies, the Pennsylvania Coal Company's stockholders had become accustomed to high returns. A final possibility could have related to the large Sicilian presence among the company's workers and subcontractors, for subcontracting had been widely used in Sicily's sulfur mines where many of the company's men formerly worked. On Pennsylvania Coal Company's extraordinary profitability see: U.S. Coal Commission, *Report, Part II-Anthracite* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1925), 930, 964.
8. Carter Goodrich, *The Miner's Freedom: A Study of the*



- Working Life in a Changing Industry* (1925; reprint: New York: Arno, 1977), 130-1. Long (*Where the Sun Never Shines*, 138) discussed one mine inspector who described a similar production arrangement in a large bituminous colliery in 1885. He reported that the pit functioned with 32 men who operated 32 undercutting machines, 32 boys who cleaned the cutters, and a third group of unspecified (but presumably large) size that blasted the coal and loaded it into cars. Economist David Gordon and his colleagues characterized such schemes as part of the "homogenization of the production process" initiated by companies in the late nineteenth century to control work and the worker. (David M. Gordon, Richard Edwards, and Michael Reich, *Segmented Work, Divided Workers: The Historical Transformation of Labor in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 157-9.)
9. Frank J. Warne, "The Effects of Unionism upon the Mine Workers," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 21 (Jan 1903): 24.
  10. Warne, "Anthracite Coal Strike," 33.
  11. Rochester, *Labor and Coal*, 129.
  12. Anthracite Mine [Coal] Strike Commission, *Proceedings, 1902-03* (Scranton, PA: Scranton Tribune Publishing, 1903), 146.
  13. Warne, "Anthracite Coal Strike," 32.
  14. David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 334; Thomas Mackaman, *New Immigrants and the Radicalization of American Labor, 1914-1924* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2017), 26-35.
  15. Victor R. Greene, "A Study in Slavs, Strikes, and Unions: The Anthracite Strike of 1897," *Pennsylvania History* 31 (1964), 200. By the 1920s, Pennsylvania Coal Company joined with the other producers in employing mainly eastern and southern European workers, some of whom became subcontractors. By 1928, Sicilians constituted one-third of the Erie Coal Companies' (that is, Pennsylvania Coal Co. and the Hillside Coal and Iron Co.) workforces and held the majority of that firm's subcontracts. (See: Ben Selekman, "Miners and Murder: What Lies in Back of the Labor Feud in Anthracite," *Survey Graphic* 60 (1 May 1928): 151ff.)
  16. T. S. Ashton and Joseph Sykes, *The Coal Industry of the Eighteenth Century* (1929; reprint: Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1964), Ch. 6, 7.
  17. Anthony F. C. Wallace, *St. Clair: A Nineteenth-Century Coal Town's Experience with a Disaster-Prone Industry* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1987), 133. The term *colliery* refers to the full contingent of facilities in and around a coal producing plant: mines, breakers, supplementary buildings (steam house, washery, weigh station, mule barn, and powder house), pockets (which stored the processed coal for loading on railroad cars or trucks), the "yard" surrounding the buildings, and so forth. Because of its geological characteristics, anthracite required a large processing plant called a breaker; bituminous had no similar requirement.
  18. Clifton K. Yearley, Jr., *Enterprise and Anthracite: Economics and Democracy in Schuylkill County, 1820-1875* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1961), 170.
  19. On the British subcontracting plans see: A. J. Taylor, "The Sub-Contract System in the British Coal Industry," in: L. S. Pressnell (ed.), *Studies in the Industrial Revolution* (London: Athlone Press, 1960), 214-35; Robert Goffee, "Incorporation and Conflict: A Case Study of Subcontracting in the Coal Industry," *Sociological Review* 29 (1981): 475-97; Michael W. Flinn and David Stoker, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, v. 2 (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1984), 55-6, 377; and Roy Church and Quentin Outram, *Strikes and Solidarity: Coalfield Conflict in Britain, 1889-1966* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 28-9.
  20. Goodrich (*Miner's Freedom*, 130) incorrectly reported that "this practice [i.e., individual and special contracting] was checked by the increase of the union's [UMWA's] strength after 1900." The same error was made by UMWA historian Maier Fox (*United We Stand: A History of the United Mine Workers of America, 1890-1990* (Washington, D.C.: United Mine Workers of America, 1990), 177), who concluded that "through the grievance process [following the labor-management agreement of 1916] the miners then won another long-standing goal, the elimination of a [sub]contracting system under which low-paid laborers were hired to do most of the work on a day-wage scale." David Montgomery (*Fall of the House of Labor*, 334) spoke to the same issue when he mistakenly wrote that the individual contract was a source of persistent conflict in anthracite "until large numbers of Italians, enrolled in the IWW, fought for the suppression of the contract system in 1916." As discussed later, the system persisted well beyond 1916; UMWA District 1 officials finally secured its elimination with the labor-management agreement of 1952.
  21. Goodrich, *Miner's Freedom*, 17.
  22. Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 65.
  23. Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 60.
  24. On these three strikes see: Victor Greene, *The Slavic Community on Strike: Immigrant Labor in Pennsylvania Anthracite* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), Ch. 4; Harold W. Aurand, *Molly Maguires to the United Mineworkers*, passim.
  25. Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 64.
  26. Greene, *Slavic Community on Strike*, 68.
  27. The infamous Lattimer Massacre typified anthracite's



- wide labor unrest in 1897. The largest labor massacre of the nineteenth century, Lattimer saw nineteen unarmed striking miners, mainly Slavic, shot by Luzerne County Sheriff James Martin's posse near Hazleton in the eastern-middle coalfield. A trial based on one of the shootings ended in acquittal. (See: Paul Schackel, *Remembering Lattimer: Labor, Migration, and Race in Pennsylvania Anthracite Country* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018); Michael P. Roller, "Excavating Labor History': Exploring Class Struggle through Archeology and Material Culture," *Labor: Studies in Working Class History* 17 [Mar. 2020]: 25-43.)
28. The distribution of "empties" remained a perennially contentious issue. The "free turn," as it was called, not only influenced miners' total income, but pointed to the types of favoritism prevalent within the industry. (See: Chris Tilly and Charles Tilly, *Work Under Capitalism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 49.)
  29. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 17.
  30. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 17.
  31. Workers in several industries developed the "stint" (called the "barg" in British mining) to control the pace of work and level of production. On the tradition of two or three cars per shift per worker in anthracite see: Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 146.
  32. The legal rationale for the owners' position could be found in the "Liberty of Contract" idea prominent in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which gave businesses a wide berth in contracting with labor, to include matters such as hours and pay. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the idea in *Lochner v. New York* (1905). (See: Paul Kens, *Lochner v. New York: Economic Regulation on Trial* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998).)
  33. David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 12-15.
  34. U.S. Geological Survey, *Mineral Resources of the United States, 1910, Part II-Nonmetals* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1911), 22.
  35. Warne, "Anthracite Coal Strike," 41.
  36. Because it was smokeless, more efficient, and generated less ash, anthracite dominated home heating, especially in the East and Midwest.
  37. Harold Barger and Sam H. Schurr, *The Mining Industries, 1899-1939: A Study in Output, Employment and Productivity* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., 1944), 184.
  38. G. O. Virtue, "The Anthracite Combinations," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 10 (Apr. 1896), 296-323.
  39. David Brody, "Market Unionism in America: The Case of Coal," In: Brody, *In Labor's Cause: Main Themes on the History of the American Worker* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 132.
  40. On the coal pools see: Yearley, *Enterprise and Anthracite*, 158-64; Jones, *Anthracite Coal Combination*, Ch. 3 and Appendix, Table 6.
  41. Aurand, *Molly Maguires to the United Mineworkers*, 163.
  42. For a good example of anthracite's inadequate investment in plant and equipment during the first half of the twentieth century, see: Paul Wier Company, "Report on Operations of Glen Alden Coal Company, July 1952," as cited in: Robert A. Janosov, "Glen Alden's Huber Breaker: A Marvel of Mechanism," in: Lance E. Metz (ed.), *Canal History and Technology Proceedings* v. 11 (Easton, PA: Canal History and Technology Press, 133).
  43. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the American coal industry (anthracite and bituminous combined) experienced more strike actions than any other sector of the economy. Between 1881 and 1905, for example, while 74.4 workers per thousand in all industries participated in strikes, coal mining was 196 per thousand. The tobacco industry had the next highest strike activity with 100 per thousand. (See: Tilly and Tilly, *Work Under Capitalism*, 50).
  44. The much lower level of consolidation in the bituminous fields contributed to the receptiveness on the part of its mine operators to work with the UMWA as a means of rationalizing the industry. This sort of union-driven rationalization was less necessary in the anthracite industry, where a much greater consolidation had taken place with J. P. Morgan-aligned interests in the forefront. For a discussion of the UMWA's role in rationalizing the bituminous industry in the Central Competitive Field, see: Mackaman, *New Immigrants and the Radicalization of American Labor*, 52-4.
  45. Greene, *Slavic Community on Strike*, 138-42, 156-60; Perry Blatz, "Local Leadership and Local Militancy: The Nanticoke Strike of 1899 and the Roots of Unionization in the Northern Anthracite Fields," *Pennsylvania History* 58 (1991): 278-97.
  46. *Minutes of the Twelfth Annual Convention of the United Mine Workers of America* (Indianapolis: Hollenback Press, 1901), 29.
  47. Robert Cornell, *The Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1957), 54. The sliding scale, obtained by the short-lived Workingmen's Benevolent Association in 1869 for workers in the southern and middle fields, tied wages to the selling price of coal such that wages rose when the coal price went up and fell when it declined, but not below a minimum level.
  48. Robert H. Wiebe, "The Anthracite Strike of 1902: A Record of Confusion," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 48 (1961): 229-51.
  49. Warne, "Anthracite Coal Strike," 51.

50. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 25, 97-8. On labor unrest following the 1902 strike see: Joe Gowaski, "John Mitchell and the Anthracite Mine Workers: Leadership, Conservatism and Rank-and-File Militancy," *Labor History* 27 (1985): 54-83.
51. Selig Perlman, *A History of Trade Unionism in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1937), 177. On the 1900 and 1902 strikes see: George O. Virtue, "The Anthracite Miners' Strike of 1900," *Journal of Political Economy* 9 (Dec. 1900): 1-23; U.S. Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, *Report to the President on the Anthracite Coal Strike of May-October 1902* (Wash., D.C.: USGPO, 1903); Warne, "Anthracite Coal Strike;" Cornell, *Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902*; and Perry K. Blatz, *Democratic Miners: Work and Labor Relations in the Anthracite Coal Industry, 1875-1925* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), Ch. 4.
52. Anthracite employed approximately 100,000 men and 50,000 boys in 1902, but because the boys were counted as one-half members, the total potential membership was closer to 125,000. The 2021 dollar amount was calculated by the inflation calculator at <http://www.in2013dollars.com/1900-dollars-in-2018?amount=200000000>. Warne ("Anthracite Coal Strike," 16) put the capitalization at \$161,784,473 in 1890.
53. Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, *Report to the President*, 40-2.
54. Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, *Report to the President*, 42.
55. Cornell, *Anthracite Coal Strike*, 83.
56. United Mine Workers of America, *Proceedings of the UMWA Tri-District Convention, 1902* (Indianapolis: UMWA, 1902), 20-1. The Erie Coal Company mentioned in this quotation is a reference to the two Erie Railroad-owned firms, the Pennsylvania Coal Company and the Hillside Coal and Iron Company.
57. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 146.
58. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 131-2.
59. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 131-2.
60. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 132.
61. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 145.
62. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 146.
63. Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 84, 146, 156, 157, 170. Anthracite mine laborer William A. Hastie offered three reasons for the workers' traditional support of the stint: first, it allowed them to mine for a longer period of time in a particular place; second, less production meant less coal dust to breathe; third, a lower output helped keep the coal supply down and, therefore, the price higher (see the videotaped interview with Mr. Hastie on "PA Books," Pennsylvania Cable Network, 24 Mar. 2016).
64. Clarence Darrow, the UMWA's chief counsel during the 1902 strike hearings, stressed the great emphasis that mineworkers placed on workplace fairness (Anthracite Mine Strike Commission, *Proceedings*, 168). That concern fit into what labor historian E. P. Thompson referred to as the "moral economy" (see: E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the 18th Century," *Past and Present* 50 (1971): 76-136).
65. "Sheriff Will Prevent All Meetings of I.W.W.," *Pittston [PA] Gazette*, from James Bussacco, *Pittston's Coal Mining Era* (a compilation of original newspaper articles from Pittston newspapers, published by the author, 1995), 196. See also: Patrick M. Lynch, "Pennsylvania Anthracite: A Forgotten IWW Venture, 1906-1916" (M.A. thesis: Bloomsburg State College, 1974).
66. On the IWW's organizing activities in other mining districts see: Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1969).
67. On Sicily's sulfur mining industry see: Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1959), 5, 36, 41, 45. On the general practice of labor contracting in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see: Gunther Peck, "Reinventing Free Labor: Immigrant Padrones and Contract Labor in North America, 1885-1925," *Journal of American History* 83 (1996): 848-71. On Italian and Sicilian labor activism in coal mining see: Stephen Brier and Ferdinando Fasce, "Italian Militants and Migrants and the Language of Solidarity in the Early-Twentieth-Century Western Coalfields," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 8 (2011): 89-121. On the general subject of Italian-American militancy in the U.S. see: Philip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (eds.), *The Lost World of Italian-American Radicalism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003).
68. Quoted in Herman Stump, J. H. Senner, and Edward F. McSweeney, *Report of the Immigration Investigation Commission to the Honorable Secretary of the Treasury* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1895), 36.
69. On organized crime's involvement in Pennsylvania Coal Company's subcontracting (and leasing) systems and Sicilian and other Italian workers' resistance to the gang, see: Robert P. Wolensky and William A. Hastie Sr., *Anthracite Labor Wars: Tenancy, Italians, and Organized Crime in the Northern Coalfield of Northeastern Pennsylvania* (Easton, PA: Canal History and Technology Press, 2013, revised e-edition published in 2021 by Amazon.com). On the influence of organized crime in Sicily's sulfur industry see: Salvatore Lupo, *History of the Mafia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), x; John Dickie, *Cosa Nostra: The History of the Sicilian Mafia* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 72-82.

70. Blatz, *Democratic Miners*, 240-50; Douglas K. Monroe, "A Decade of Turmoil: John L. Lewis and the Anthracite Miners, 1926-1936" (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1976), 81-92.
71. "Contract Mining System Abolished at Underwood Colliery in District No. 1," *United Mine Workers Journal* 39 (15 Dec. 1928), 5.
72. Because the labor-management contract prohibited UMWA members from convening unauthorized strikes, up to 130,000 union men decided to take an unscheduled "vacation" in September 1920, which, in effect, amounted to a strike. On the vacation strike see: Clement Valletta, "'To Battle for Our Ideas': Community Ethic [*sic*] and Anthracite Labor, 1920-1940," *Pennsylvania History* 58 (Oct. 1991): 311-29.
73. Neal J. Ferry, "Minority Report," in *Report, Findings, and Award of the Anthracite Coal Commission of 1920* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1920), 312-23.
74. "The Miners' Demands," *The Anthracite Strike of 1922* (Philadelphia: The Anthracite Bureau of Information, 1923), 5.
75. Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1924* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 159; Kens, *Locher v. New York*.
76. Anthracite Board of Conciliation, *Award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, Subsequent Agreements, and Resolutions of the Board of Conciliation* (Hazleton, PA: Anthracite Board of Conciliation, 1923), 47.
77. "Upholds Contract Mining," *New York Times*, 18 Mar. 1928. See also: Anthracite Board of Conciliation, *Report*, 30-48, Grievance No. 2035, 1928.
78. On the Pennsylvania Coal Company strike of 1928 see: Wolensky and Hastie, *Anthracite Labor Wars*, Ch. 5; Ben Selekman, "Miners and Murders," *Survey Graphic* 60 (1 May 1928): 151ff.
79. UMWA, *Proceedings of the UMWA Tri-District Convention, 1935*, 75-7.
80. Anthracite Board of Conciliation, *Award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, Subsequent Agreements and Resolutions of Board of Conciliation* (Hazleton, PA: Anthracite Board of Conciliation, 1953), 182.
81. UMWA, *Proceedings of the UMWA District 1 Convention, 1939*, 19.
82. If the subcontracting system functioned as an "inside contracting" plan, whereby a non-incorporated, certified, entrepreneurial miner (or a saloon keeper who hired a certified miner) secured an individual contract from a company, the leasing system operated as a "putting out" system, whereby a legally incorporated business (often owned by a former subcontractor) secured a longer-term lease to remove the coal in an entire section of a mine. As discussed, certain lease-holding firms eventually secured the rights for entire collieries, and some later purchased the facilities outright. On the origins of putting-out systems in Britain see: Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), 15-16.
83. "Recapitulation of Tonnage and Coal Royalty Receipts by Lessees for Years 1939-1965," MG 282, Royalty Records, 1883-1968, Pennsylvania Coal Company Papers, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, PA (hereafter: PaCC Papers). A complete listing of the company's leases can be found in the PaCC Papers, Contract File Index, and in the volumes containing the minutes of the Stockholders and Executive Committee Meetings, 1838-1971.
84. Special thanks to Pagnotti Enterprises, Inc., which purchased Lehigh Valley Coal Company in the 1950s, for allowing the first author to review the 18-volume set of the company's lease books.
85. The workings of the extensive subcontracting and leasing systems at the Erie Coal Companies are detailed in Wolensky and Hastie, *Anthracite Labor Wars*.
86. Pennsylvania Coal Company's *Annual Report* for 1941 ranked thirteen lease-holding firms according to the net commercial tonnage each held as reserves through leases. Volpe Coal Company—owned by alleged organized crime boss Santo Volpe—ranked first with 114,480,780 tons. Another Volpe-owned operation, the Daley and Volpe Coal Company, leased PaCC's Sibley Slope where, in 1939, the firm produced 41,272 tons, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Mines (*Mine Inspector's Report, Anthracite Division, 1939*, 234). Volpe also had an interest in the Gateway Coal Company, where he controlled additional reserves. Moreover, he later leased the No. 6 Colliery, the No. 9 Colliery, and the Butler Colliery from the Pittston Company, a subsidiary of PaCC formed in 1929 to handle the parent company's leases.
87. On the spread of the leasing system to the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company in the middle coalfield see: Julian W. Parton, *The Death of a Great Company: Reflections on the Decline and Fall of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company* (Easton, PA: Canal History and Technology Press, 1986).
88. Colliers were the majority of certified miners and laborers, that is, the workers who were not subcontractors or lessees. Subcontractors secured mineral rights agreements as individuals. They were not incorporated and had relatively small work crews. Lessees were incorporated companies, some of which had up to five hundred employees. Some subcontractors eventually evolved to become lease-holders. Both systems were forms of tenancy; subcontracting came first and leasing later.
89. William Hastie, audio-recorded interview, 31 July 1989, Northeastern Pennsylvania Oral and Life History Collection, Eberly Special Collections Library, Penn State University (hereafter: NPOLHC); John Usefara, audio-recorded interview, 28 July 2001, NPOLHC; Charles Adonizio, audio-recorded inter-



- view, 14 Mar. 1996, NPOLHC; Alex Chamberlain, audio-recorded interview, 11 July 1995, NPOLHC.
90. Joe Costa, unrecorded interview, 20 June 1992, Northeastern Pennsylvania Oral and Life History Project, Eberly Special Collections Archives, Pennsylvania State University.
  91. Sen. Leo C. Mundy [commission chairman], letter to Governor George Earle, 10 Jan. 1939, Volpe Coal Company File, *Wilkes-Barre [PA] Times Leader* library.
  92. Each of the firms and their collieries were listed in W. C. Macquown's, *Maps of the Anthracite Coal Fields of Northeastern Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: National Coal Publications, 1942 and 1952).
  93. Valletta, "To Battle for Our Ideas," 328.
  94. The city of Pittston, Pennsylvania, was the recognized hub of organized crime in northeastern Pennsylvania. Founded in the early twentieth century by sulfur miners Santo Volpe and his brother-in-law, Stefano LaTorre, who were immigrants from Montedoro, Sicily, both became prominent subcontractors and leaseholders. Volpe, as mentioned, later became the owner of several collieries. On the gang known as "The Men from Montedoro" see: Wolensky and Hastie, *Anthracite Labor Wars*, Chs. 5 and 6.
  95. On Sciandra's organized crime involvement and Lippi's illegal ownership of the Knox Coal Company see: Robert P. Wolensky, Kenneth C. Wolensky, and Nicole H. Wolensky, *The Knox Mine Disaster: The Final Years of the Northern Anthracite and the Effort to Rebuild a Regional Economy* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1999).
  96. Robert Zieger, *John L. Lewis: Labor Leader* (Boston: Twayne, 1988); Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine, *John L. Lewis: A Biography* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1977).
  97. UMWA, *Proceedings of the UMWA Tri-District Convention, 1939*, 7. Lewis' views on mechanization were examined in: Dubofsky and Van Tine, *John L. Lewis*, 502-3, 505; and in: Zieger, *John L. Lewis*, 69-71.
  98. UMWA, *Proceedings of the UMWA Tri-District Convention, 1939*, 12.
  99. On the UAMP see: Monroe, *Decade of Turmoil*; John Bodnar, "The Family Economy and Labor Protest in Industrial America," in: David L. Salay (ed.), *Hard Coal, Hard Times: Ethnicity and Labor in the Anthracite Region* (Scranton, PA: The Anthracite Museum Press, 1984), 81-4; and Robert P. Wolensky, "The United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania: Labor Insurgency and Dual Unionism in Pennsylvania Anthracite, 1930-1935," manuscript in process.
  100. On the equalization issue see: Thomas Dublin, "The Equalization of Work: An Alternative Vision of Industrial Capitalism in the Anthracite Region of Pennsylvania in the 1930s," in: Lance E. Metz (ed.), *Canal History and Technology Proceedings*, v. 13 (Easton, PA: Canal History and Technology Press, 1994), 81-98.
  101. Although it officially ended operations in November 1935, the UAMP suffered a tragic symbolic ending when its president, Thomas Maloney, was assassinated by a package bomb mailed to his home on April 10, 1936. On Maloney's assassination see: Sheldon Spear, *Chapters in Northeastern Pennsylvania History* (Shavertown, PA: Jemags, 1999); and Robert P. Wolensky and Michael Chmiola, "Who Killed Tom Maloney?: The Good Friday Bombings of April 10, 1936," Public Presentation, Nanticoke Historical Society, 22 Jan. 2018; and Margaret Maloney Bednark, audio-recorded interview, 10 June 1998, NPOLHC.
  102. A "sweetheart contract" involves a corruption of the labor-management agreement. In the typical case, management offers, and a union official accepts, monetary compensation or other rewards in return for lax or non-enforcement of the agreement. It is, in effect, a conspiracy to circumvent a legally binding document.
  103. For an overview of the rise and especially the fall of the anthracite industry see: Thomas Dublin and Walter Licht, *The Face of Decline: The Pennsylvania Anthracite Region in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).
  104. On the area's ladies' garment industry see: Robert P. Wolensky (ed.), *Sewn in Coal Country: An Oral History of the Ladies' Garment Industry in Northeastern Pennsylvania, 1945-1995* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2020).
  105. Along with anthracite, Northeastern Pennsylvania lost numerous other industries during the twentieth century, including railroads, silk, lace, knit goods, shoes, cigars, garments, mining equipment, among others. The area has tried to duly recognize and move beyond its industrial past through numerous heritage projects (see, e.g.: P. A. Shackel and V. C. Westmon, "When the Mines Closed: Heritage Building in Northeastern Pennsylvania," *General Anthropology* 32 (2016), 1-10; Bode Morin, "Contextualizing the Past in Anthracite Heritage," public presentation, Penn State University-Scranton, 24 Jan. 2020; and Philip Mosley, "Historical Sites as Commemorative Mode: Three Coal Mine Tours," public presentation, Penn State University-Scranton, 24 Jan. 2020). On the contemporary political repercussions of de-industrialization in Luzerne County (Wilkes-Barre is the county seat) see: Ben Bradley Jr., *The Forgotten: How the People of One Pennsylvania County Elected Donald Trump and Changed America* (Boston: Little Brown, 2018). On downtown Wilkes-Barre's efforts to stem decline see: Jenno Rattman, et al., "How a Hobbled Main Street Survived the Pandemic 'Asteroid,'" *New York Times*, 1 June 2021; Bob Kalinowski, "New York Times Profiles Downtown Wilkes-Barre Businesses after Four-Month Visit," *Scranton Times-*

*Tribune*, 4 June 2021; and Terrence McGinley, "A Long Look at One Downtown," *New York Times*, 27 June 2021. On the general topic of deindustrialization and cultural meanings see: Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (eds.), *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca, NY: Cor-

nell University Press, 2003); Tim Strangleman, James Rhodes, Sherry Linkon, "Introduction to Crumbling Cultures: Deindustrialization, Class, and Memory," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (Fall 2013): 7–22.