

of Labor action of the 1880s; the disturbances of the turbulent 1890s; the 1903 strike, led by the United Mine Workers of America, that totally unionized Thurber; and, finally, the 1921 disruption that ended union mining at the town.

Gentry studied public records and interviewed both company management and union stalwarts to tell her story. Her revealing correspondence with UMWA official and Thurber miner Gomer Gower is printed in the appendix. Gentry recounts the history of the company store, a subsidiary which operated the various mercantile and service establishments in Thurber, and how the town's workers reacted to its influence on their lives.

In chapters entitled "Living Conditions," "Recreation," and "Foreign Population," Gentry describes the lives of the workers and their families, from baseball and Italian breads, to fistfights and company housing. The final chapter narrates the abandonment of Thurber, as the coal company discovered West Texas oil, became the Texas Pacific Coal and Oil Company, and finally dismantled the town as a money-saving measure during the Great Depression.

Gentry's text shines with a love of her subject, the people and history of the town of her youth. Coupled with her lucid writing style, this makes her narrative a quick, entertaining read. The editor's introduction and preface gives a detailed history of Gentry's life, thesis, and work as a Texas high school teacher, and places her work in its historical context.

The editor chose not to make any substantive changes or annotations to the text. Although coal company records unavailable to Gentry have superseded some of her information, out-of-date facts are allowed to stand without annotation or comment. Readers may also find some 1940s idioms quaint, or stumble over words like "negro" and "colored" in the text. But these are minor quibbles. *Birth of a Texas Ghost Town* is an essential introduction to the history of bituminous coal mining in Texas, and wonderfully details the

birth and death of a vibrant and important company town.

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F. Darrell Munsell. *From Redstone to Ludlow: John Cleveland Osgood's Struggle against the United Mine Workers of America*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2009; 392 pp., b&w photos, drawings, maps, notes, bib., ind., cloth, \$37.50. ISBN: 0870819346.

John Cleveland Osgood was a central figure in the organization and operation of the Colorado Fuel Company, formed in 1883 and merged and reorganized in 1892 as the coal and steel conglomerate, the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. The relatively cash-poor Osgood and his associates ultimately could not resist the Rockefellers' financial juggernaut.

After Rockefeller assumed control, Osgood resigned from CF&I in June 1903, took his gains, and shifted his colors to the Victor and American coal companies, two firms which he had organized separately in 1900. These entities merged into the Victor-American Fuel Company in 1909, with Osgood, who controlled 90 percent of the stock, presiding as one of Colorado's coal barons. As such he played one of the leading roles in southern Colorado's Coalfield War that culminated in the violence associated with Ludlow.

Munsell seeks to shift blame for that disastrous conflict away from the Rockefellers, father and son, and onto Osgood. He believes that, while the Rockefellers bore the brunt of the criticism, Osgood's intransigence was most responsible for the strike and for the bitterness that erupted into bloodshed. He writes in the preface that his purpose is "to mark John C. Osgood's place in U.S. labor history, first as a fierce opponent of organized labor and second as one of the men most responsible for the tragic events that occurred in the southern Colorado coal fields in 1913-1914."

In that undertaking, Munsell pulls no punches. What Osgood learned from his rough-and-tumble years in Colorado's coal industry, according to the author, was ruthlessness, toward competitors, colleagues, and especially toward his workers. Munsell describes Osgood as "an arrogant man insensitive to his miners' condition."

In this stark understanding of Osgood's motives, company improvements were paternalism, company housing was social control, and the purpose of welfare capitalism, including the Redstone experiment, was to defeat unionism. At least initially, the coal fields' ethnic diversity was also part of the anti-union plan—a Shaft of Babel intended to discourage worker solidarity—although that atomizing impulse seems to conflict with the goals of the coal companies' Americanization programs.

As the dominant force on the owners' 1913–14 strike committee, Osgood, "leader of the reactionary forces," simply refused to budge. He never agreed even to meet with workers' representatives, let alone to grant any of their demands, since his larger purpose was "defeating and destroying the UMWA." The owners, consumed by their "irrepressible hatred of the UMWA," corrupted local and county law enforcement and used the state militia to conduct "a reign of terror" against the Ludlow tent camp.

After the confrontation between Victor-American and the United Mine Workers of America boiled over into the Ludlow Massacre and ten days of open warfare, state and federal officials persuaded President Wilson to send U.S. soldiers to restore order in the southern coal fields. In the federal investigations that followed, the Rockefellers, as owners of CF&I, took most of the heat for the circumstances leading to the Ludlow disaster.

Rockefeller Jr., shocked by the events themselves and by the storm of vituperation he faced, sought the advice of Mackenzie King, Canada's former labor minister and future prime minister. Together they developed the "Rockefeller Plan,"

CF&I's corporate welfare and grievance system intended both to improve its employees' working conditions and to thwart the UMWA's attempts to organize the company. The Rockefeller Plan may have reduced workers' discontent somewhat, but it also destroyed the owners' solidarity. Rockefeller and Osgood diverged because the latter remained adamant in his refusal to make any concessions, however superficial, to his workers.

Well, perhaps it was so; absolute reactionaries do exist. But if that is what Osgood was, why did he reverse himself completely only three years later? In 1917 he signed contracts with the UMWA, thus unionizing his operations at least a decade before CF&I and Colorado's northern coal fields did so. Munsell concludes that, isolated by Rockefeller's defection, Osgood's business pragmatism in the face of the labor shortages of World War I dictated this spectacular reversal, but was such behavior possible in a character that Munsell and the sources he employs paint as so completely contrarian?

Unfortunately, at this late date, much evidence of Osgood has disappeared. An exceedingly private individual, he destroyed his personal papers, forcing Munsell to deduce Osgood's character from his public statements and the recorded observations of others. The author is left to conclude that Osgood "was indeed an enigmatic man."

From Redstone to Ludlow: John Cleveland Osgood's Struggle against the United Mine Workers of America is a somewhat misleading title on a couple of accounts. It intends, perhaps, to suggest a flow of actions leading from Osgood's ideal of corporate paternalism in his mountain village to the bloody realities of corporate oppression in the prairie tent colony, an idea that Munsell touches upon perhaps too briefly. The early chapters discuss the companies' self-interested attempts to improve camp life, chiefly those of CF&I's Sociological Department after 1900. This program occurred during Osgood's tenure with CF&I, with Redstone being an important part of the experiment.

But Redstone, the model company coking town in the Crystal River Valley where Osgood built his mansion, is discussed in the last seven pages of chapter two, and then never reappears. Past that point, the story becomes mostly an account, albeit a good one, of the events and decisions leading to and extending from the Ludlow Massacre. In the telling of that story Osgood himself disappears from the text for pages, even chapters, at a time.

From Redstone to Ludlow is the tenth in the University Press of Colorado's excellent and growing "Mining the American West" series. It is attractively produced, sufficiently illustrated, and well edited, save for the singular decision to make "coalminer" one word.

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Larry Jacobsen. *Jewel of the Kootenays: The Emerald Mine*. West Vancouver, BC: Gordon Soules Book Publishing Ltd., 2008; 335 pp., color and b&w photos, maps, tabs., glos., append., ref., paper, \$29.95. ISBN: 0978164010

The Emerald Mine, near Salmo, was located high in the mountains of southeastern British Columbia close to the American border. It produced lead and zinc, but was principally a tungsten mine, first worked in 1896. The Emerald achieved prominence, however, from the late 1940s into the early 1970s, joined by a couple of neighboring properties.

Perhaps the Emerald is not dead, since exploration work continues in the new century, as the price of tungsten rises. "Will the Emerald, like the phoenix of myth, arise out of its ashes and return to life? We don't know. But you can bet that the people of Salmo and the surrounding areas will be eagerly waiting for it to happen [p. 14]."

Author Larry Jacobsen worked at this mine during his mining career, and when he found out it was going to close he set out to save its history.

He interviewed and corresponded with a wide spectrum of people who worked at the mine and lived in the surrounding area. This is a major contribution to mining history.

The book's first forty-six pages recount the mine's and the district's history. Then Jacobsen swings to the core of the book, which is the interviews he conducted with over ninety women and men who had worked there.

The interviews, which took place over several decades, cover a variety of topics and experiences. As might be expected, some are more valuable and interesting than others. Their real significance, however, lies in the fact that they were undertaken and history was preserved. Few other mining properties can claim to have such a complete story, from miner to wife to manager. Photographs of the individuals involved add another dimension.

The concluding chapter, "The Dark Side of Mining," includes fatalities, health and safety problems, and dangerous occupations. The glossary of mining terms will be especially valuable to those unfamiliar with mining slang and terminology.

Author Jacobsen is to be commended for his persistence, dedication, and enthusiasm. He has encompassed a mine and a district, plus its people, into a volume that is a tribute to a time now gone.

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Michael G. Impero. *The Lone Jack: King of the Mount Baker Mining District*. Bellingham, WA: Michael G. Impero, 2007; 180 pp., numerous color and b&w photos, 3 maps, ind., paper, \$24.95. ISBN: 1604027044

Michael G. Impero has spent his entire life in Whatcom County, Washington. The history of the upper Nooksack River Valley was his hobby and, after retiring from thirty-seven years in the