

Lullow

BOOK I

AN ILLUSTRATED TIMELINE
BY BEN THOMPSON

The Colorado Coalfield Wars

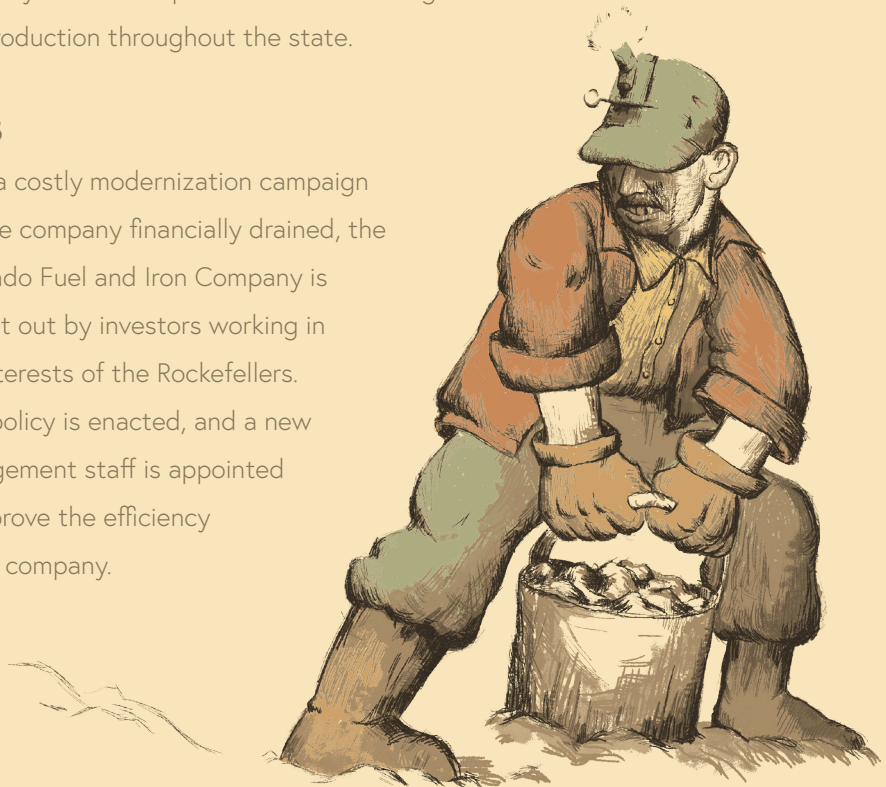
In the autumn of 1913, after years of neglect and mistreatment by the Rockefeller owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, thousands of miners under the banner of the United Mine Workers of America initiated a state wide strike, halting the entire coal economy of Colorado. The Colorado National Guard and factions of the Colorado State Militia were employed at the behest of the CF&I to force an end to the strike, and were encouraged to use whatever means they felt necessary to protect company interests. Not willing to back down so easily, even in the face of state-sponsored intimidation, the miners and their families established a tent colony in the town of Ludlow and braced for the coming winter, with no intentions of returning to work until after their demands for fair treatment were met. The ensuing conflict would come to be known as the Colorado Coalfield Wars, and would usher in an era of guerilla warfare that violence that had not been seen in the United States since the Civil War...

1892

Several smaller scale companies involved with mining and coal production throughout the Midwest merge together to form the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company in an attempt to modernize mining and fuel production throughout the state.

1903

After a costly modernization campaign left the company financially drained, the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company is bought out by investors working in the interests of the Rockefellers. New policy is enacted, and a new management staff is appointed to improve the efficiency of the company.



1903-1913

Firmly under the supervision of the Rockefellers, the CF&I becomes a corporation plagued with a corrupt management staff, enforcing production procedures that are more concerned with advancing the personal profit and political standing of the overseers of the company, while inadvertently creating severely unfavorable working conditions for the laborers operating in mines owned by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company.



September 1913

After several years of mining disasters, failed reforms, and neglect, thousands of miners unionized under the United Mine Workers of America, and set forth a list of demands, requesting proper and fair treatment of the miners be administered, or that the workers would have no choice but to strike. The demands included basic concepts as a wage based on hours worked, and a fair eight hour work day. The demands were ignored once again, and on September 13, 1913, roughly nine-thousand miners joined together and began a state wide strike, only willing to return to work after their calls for fair treatment were answered.



October 1913

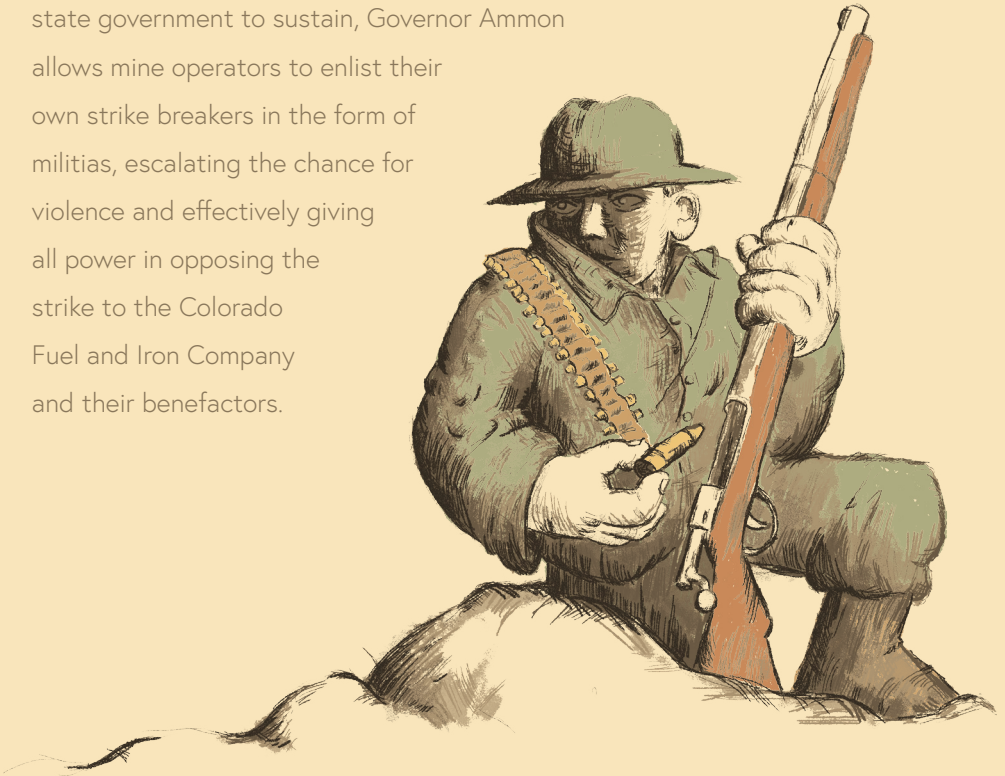
Being forced from their company owned homes with nothing more than what they could carry, the bulk of striking miners and their families set up a tent colony near the town of Ludlow, both using it as a place to withstand the coming winter, and as a base of operations for all striking activities.

Not willing to side with UMWA, Colorado Governor Elias Ammon declares martial law, arming the Colorado National Guard with military grade rifles and machine guns, in order to intimidate the miners, and preserve a positive relationship with the coal company.



November 1913

After the deployment of the National Guard proved to be an inefficient tactic in ending the strike and ultimately too expensive a venture for the state government to sustain, Governor Ammon allows mine operators to enlist their own strike breakers in the form of militias, escalating the chance for violence and effectively giving all power in opposing the strike to the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company and their benefactors.



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BOOK II

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The Ludlow Tent Colony Massacre

With the United Mine Workers of America successfully maintaining the strike through the brutal winter of 1913 and only picking up momentum with the coming spring, the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, in a desperate act to bring an end to the strike, armed the Colorado State Militia with military-grade firearms, and ordered them to prepare for a massive offensive on the Ludlow Tent Colony. The attack was carried out on April 20th, 1914, and resulted in the destruction of the colony, as well as the deaths of twenty-four people. Following the gruesome attack at Ludlow, the UMWA mounted a massive counterattack on the CF&I, doing what they could to damage as much company property as possible, in one final attempt to force the company into accepting their demands for better treatment.

These tactics ultimately proved unsuccessful and the miners were forced to integrate themselves back into the workplace. Despite the ultimate failure of the strike, the miners and laborers of Colorado proved the importance of standing together as a whole, and illustrated in no uncertain terms the lengths that the those in possession of power will take to preserve it.

Winter 1913-1914

The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company grows more and more desperate as the strike persists into the next year. National Guard and Militia presence is increased in the areas surrounding the Ludlow Tent Colony, prompting the strikers to take more extreme measures in preserving the strike, and protecting their families. With more forces acting to dismantle the strike, miner rationale is boosted by labor activists throughout the Midwest who work tirelessly to bring national attention to the strike and the plight of the mistreated workers.



March 1914

With the strike advancing well in the spring of the next year, and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company still refusing to accept the UMWA's demands for fair treatment, the Colorado State Militia were ordered to establish machine gun nests in the hills surrounding the Ludlow Colony. Despite the looming threat of violence, the miners stuck to their principles, and refused to give in to the company.



April 1914

On the morning of April twentieth, the Colorado State Militia, under the strict orders of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, began an assault on the Ludlow Colony, in the hopes that such a brutal attack would force the United Mine Workers of America to admit defeat. The militia wreaked havoc on the colony all throughout the day, burning down tents, destroying food supplies, and ultimately killing twenty-four people, most of which were young children.

This moment lives in history as the Ludlow Massacre, and serves as a potent reminder of the lengths large corporations are willing to take in order to preserve their own financial gain.



April 1914

In the weeks following the brutal massacre at Ludlow, miners and labor activists throughout the state commenced an offensive against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company and their affiliates, attacking coalfields in a last-ditch attempt to preserve the strike, initiating ten days of brutal warfare.

On the last day of battle, Governor Ammon pleads for federal aid

from President Woodrow

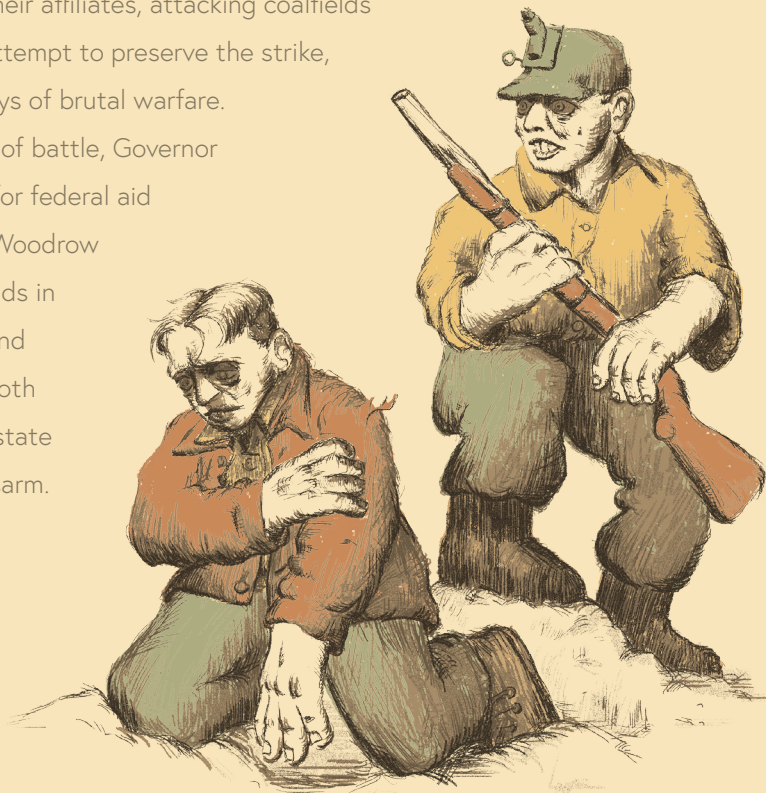
Wilson, who sends in

federal troops and

demands that both

the miners and state

militia forces disarm.



December 1914

The strike officially draws to a close as the coal miners return to work, unable to force their demands upon the coal company. In an effort to keep the peace between the officials of the coal company and the miners, the CF&I took the next few of years to implement a series of new regulations in order to boost the company's public reputation, but ultimately circumvented the initial list of demands for the miners.

It wouldn't be until the 1940s, after years of more mining disasters, and the Great Depression for several of the original demands to become common workplace practice.

