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Mining Manhood:
Gender, Coal Mining, and the Massillon War

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Jason William Sampson

June 2013

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Catherine Allgor, Chairperson

Dr. Molly McGarry

Professor Michael Davis

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The Dissertation of Jason William Sampson is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Mining Manhood:
Gender, Coal Mining, and the Massillon War

by

Jason William Sampson

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, June 2013
Dr. Catherine Allgor, Chairperson

The history of coal mining is a history of gender. Colliers and their wives constructed notions of manhood and womanhood that were uniquely suited to their distinct communities. Within the mines, colliers labored in a predominantly masculine environment where the nature of the work, the structure of the mines, and the lack of supervision fostered an independent spirit among the men who toiled in the depths of Stark County's coal mines. Outside of the collieries, these men built homes and organizations based on notions of manly cooperation and dependence. In the mining household, collier women maintained the home and contributed to the family economy in ways that were often more profitable than their husbands' work in the mines. However, women's work in the coal-mining community did not end at their doorsteps. Collier women participated in strikes and, when conditions demanded, they entered the mines and worked alongside their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Questions of gender among the miners and their families were central to how these men and women lived and worked. In Stark County, Ohio, miners in the Massillon region negotiated and fought in

a highly gendered environment. During the Massillon War, colliers contested wages and working conditions in gendered terms—demanding recognition of their manly rights—and when they did so, it was not a tactic employed to achieve economic goals, it was the goal. When their wives participated in strikes—attacking scabs on the picket lines—they consciously manipulated the operators’ discomfort with their militant motherhood. By problematizing gender and its role in the mining community, this study endeavors to restore considerations of manhood and gender in the scholarship of coal-mining to the same level at which the colliers held it themselves.

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Introduction- A Manly Endeavor

On the night of May 1, 1876, twenty miners dressed in costume and with darkened faces descended on several coal mines north of Massillon, Ohio. Under cover of darkness, the colliers captured the men set to guard the mines and secured them under mine carts. They set fire to the workings, burning the engine houses and other buildings, causing more than \$50,000 in damage.¹ The burning of the mines at Willow Bank and Jacob's Shaft was neither the beginning nor the end of the Massillon War, but it was a turning point in the Stark County coal strike. By the time miners attacked the collieries on May 1, they had been on strike for two months. Miners and their wives engaged in attacks on scabs brought in to work the mines throughout the month of April, and Governor Rutherford B. Hayes sent in the militia to quell the violence. With the area under martial law, state troops exercised extreme force to restore law and order to the region. By the end of the summer, authorities arrested twenty-three miners for their involvement in the riots and arson. While most of the men were acquitted, one miner, Anthony Moran, spent two years in a state penitentiary, while a second, Abram Williams, was shot and killed during his arrest.² With tensions growing between colliers and the militia, in the spring and summer of 1876 Stark County was literally and figuratively on fire.

¹ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 4, 1876; *Canton Repository*, May 5, 1876; Ruth Kane, *Wheat, Glass, Stone and Steel: The Story of Massillon* (Massillon, OH: Massillon Bicentennial-Sesquicentennial Committee, 1976), 109-110; Andrew Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States: From the Development of the Mines to the Close of the Anthracite Strike of 1902 Including a Brief Sketch of Early British Miners*, First Greenwood Reprinting ed. (Columbus, Ohio; Westport, Connecticut: J.L. Trauger Printing Company; Greenwood, 1905; 1970), 172-173.

² "Stark County Courthouse Journal F-2" (Stark County Archives: Canton, Ohio), 592; *The Canton Repository*, May 12, 1876; *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 11, 1876.

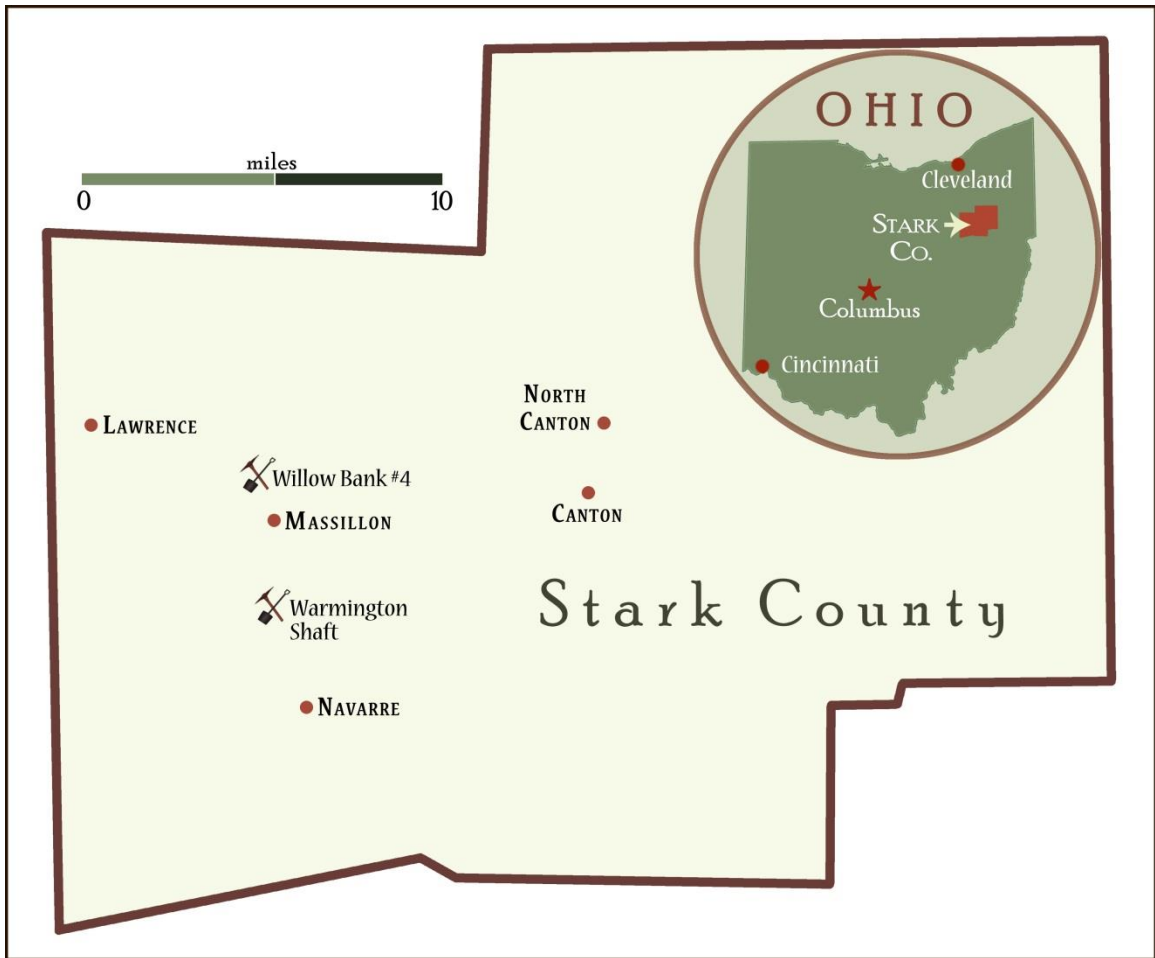


Figure I-1: Map of Stark County. Drawn by Rebecca L. Wrenn.

The Massillon War highlights the conflicts between colliers and mine operators in the Tuscarawas Valley coal region. While the strike began like so many others, over pay cuts and issues of workers' control, the circumstances surrounding the negotiations and walkout illustrate that there were deeper issues involved than mere economic concerns. Stark County's coal miners accepted multiple pay cuts over the fourteen months preceding their walkout at the beginning of March 1876. It was not until operators made a unilateral decision to cut collier pay, excluding miners from the negotiating process,

that the men determined to stop working the mines.³ Massillon's coal miners navigated their relationships with the operators and the mines in a manner which illustrated that financial concerns over pay were secondary to issues of respect and control, and they did so in distinctly gendered terms. Colliers' manly word choices reflected more than just a shared language of patriarchy between men of different classes. Gender was the central relationship of power and status in the mines and in the community.

When Stark County's coal miners contested issues of job skill, unionization, households, and labor struggles in terms of manhood and manly rights, it was not simply an attempt to couch their arguments in terms more relatable those outside of the community. Colliers fought to support and maintain gender ideals that were central to their identity as "practical miners." As young boys entering the mines, men in the mining community had learned the skills that would define them as practical miners, an identity based on their profession but which was synonymous with their conceptions of manhood. A practical miner, defined by his skill and the acknowledgement of his peers, was someone who did "a man's work."⁴ Similarly, when miners negotiated with operators, they did so with the expectation that operators recognize them as men. When the Miners' National Association proposed arbitration with operators, it was on the condition that they were treated as "gentlemen and...equals."⁵ Colliers also gendered membership in the union, tying their collective efforts to their manly identities. When one group of

³ *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), April 1, 1876; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 170-171.

⁴ John Brophy, *A Miner's Life, an Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 50.

⁵ Edward Pinkowski, *John Siney: The Miners' Martyr* (Philadelphia: Sunshine Press, 1963), 79.

miners left the union to take work at a non-union mine, the organization's official paper did not question their loyalty, but rather their very "manhood."⁶ The men who worked in Stark County's coal mines placed a premium on their manly rights, defending their status as men in a manner that raised it above mere material concerns. They demonstrated this tendency in the months leading up to the Massillon War, when colliers agreed to wage cuts, provided they were not accompanied by a challenge to their manhood. When operators excluded the miners and initiated unilateral pay cuts, colliers rose up in response. Colliers constructed their ideas of manhood based on the exigencies of life and labor in coal-mining communities, but they were not alone.

Mining coal was primarily a masculine endeavor, but the mines also shaped collier families and notions of womanhood in the community. While Massillon's colliers toiled in the depths of the region's coal banks, their wives and daughters scrambled to maintain a household. Women engaged in a wide variety of domestic endeavors which contributed to family survival. Maintaining gardens and tending livestock put food on the collier table, while taking in laundry and boarders contributed much needed income. With miners frequently out of work, women's contributions to the family economy were increasingly important and often much more reliable than their husbands' incomes. Collier womanhood combined these elements of domesticity in the home with militancy in the community. Women participated in strikes, walking picket lines and attacking scabs, and, when the situation demanded, entering the mines to work alongside their husbands and brothers. The miner's wife was a dominant figure in the collier household

⁶ *The Miners' National Record*, Cleveland (May 1875), 122.

and her work was central to the family's survival. Combining aggressive engagement at the mines and domestic production in the home, collier women constructed a definition of womanhood uniquely suited to mining communities.

Stark County's coal miners and their families lived and worked in a highly gendered environment. They constructed gender ideals of manliness and womanhood that combined elements of middle-class, hegemonic norms with subaltern values of the working classes. These unique gender identities were shaped by the mines, and in turn helped to form the mining community. Despite the importance which colliers placed on bolstering their manhood in the mines and in the community, and the central role which these notions played in the county's labor struggles, the historiography of coal mining has not emphasized gender at the same level.

Gender is central to understanding life and labor in the Massillon mining region, but historians have yet to adequately explore the topic. Due to collier militancy in organizing and labor actions, scholars have been writing about coal miners as long as coal has been mined. The vast majority of work on coal mining has focused on a few broad themes: proletarian studies, community studies, unions and labor organizations, and comparative immigration. In his classic work, *The Miner's Freedom*, Carter Goodrich argued that colliers were an archetypical proletarian with a unique culture based on their autonomy and labor militancy.⁷ While colliers were indeed active in unions and took part in numerous labor wars in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, they were hardly alone in resisting capital's war on organized labor. Over the

⁷ Carter Goodrich, *The Miner's Freedom: A Study of the Working Life in a Changing Industry* (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1925).

course of the last four decades, Carter's thesis has been whittled away at, most notably in Royden Harrison's edited volume.⁸ Class and identity formation, and its role in collier resistance, continued to be emphasized over the last few decades, however, as historians expanded their explorations beyond the mines to the entire community. Some of the most insightful works on coal mining have come from these focused studies, ranging from Dorothy Schwieder's excellent work on race relations among Iowa colliers to Grace Palladino's study of anthracite miners' draft resistance during the Civil War.⁹ Broad studies of coal mining in general, such as Priscilla Long's *Where the Sun Never Shines*, have noted the influence of manliness on miners' identity formation, but leave gender in a subsidiary role, tied to the dangers of working in a mine.¹⁰ In all of these works, however, class was the primary source of identity among colliers.

Significant work on coal mining has also explored trade unions and their leadership, following a trend set by the John R. Commons school of labor history. Substantial biographical work has been done on the three men who shaped mine workers' unions for almost a century: John Siney of the Workmen's Benevolent Association and the Miners' National Association, and John L. Lewis and John Mitchell of the United

⁸ Royden Harrison, *Independent Collier: The Coal Miner as Archetypal Proletarian Reconsidered* (Hassocks [Eng.]: Harvester Press, 1978).

⁹ Community studies have long been the norm in histories of coal miners. A short list of examples includes: Dorothy Schwieder, *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895-1925* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1983); Grace Palladino, *Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-68* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Anthony F. C. Wallace, *St. Clair: A Nineteenth-Century Coal Town's Experience with a Disaster-Prone Industry* (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1987); Barry P. Michrina, *Pennsylvania Mining Families: The Search for Dignity in the Coalfields* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1993).

¹⁰ Priscilla Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 48.

Mine Workers of America.¹¹ These works highlighted the impact of forward-thinking and pragmatic leadership in the creation of workers' organizations. The unions themselves have also received attention. Classics such as Edward Wieck's monograph on the American Miners' Association still provide valuable analysis of organization and labor/capital relations, but more recent work, such as a number of contributions to John Laslett's edited volume on the UMWA, have offered more complex analyses of the successes and failures of the union movement.¹² Despite the use of gendered language by the miners and their organizations, the role of manhood in forming and maintaining unions has yet to be addressed.

More recent scholarly inquiries on coal mining have focused on transnational approaches, and have begun to touch on the role of gender in shaping collier communities. Two excellent works that have combined issues of immigration and community comparisons across the Atlantic are John Laslett's work on Scottish colliers in Illinois and Ronald Lewis's work on Welsh miners.¹³ These monographs explore both continuity and change in coal mining communities, comparing miners in their native locations and the U.S. regions in which they settled. Lewis's work, primarily devoted to

¹¹ Pinkowski, *John Siney*; Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren R. Van Time, *John L. Lewis: A Biography* (New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book Co., 1977); Craig Phelan, *Divided Loyalties: The Public and Private Life of Labor Leader John Mitchell* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1994).

¹² Edward A. Wieck, *The American Miners' Association: A Record of the Origin of Coal Miners' Unions in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1940); John H. M. Laslett, *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).

¹³ John H. M. Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea: A Comparative Study of Class Formation in Scotland and the American Midwest, 1830-1924* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans: A History of Assimilation in the Coalfields* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

miners' preservation of Welsh identity while acculturating into American society, makes some of the first explicit connections between colliers' perceptions of manhood and their unique position as skilled artisans.¹⁴ While this emphasis on the role of gender in coal miners' identity formation is a welcome addition to the study, it is still woefully inadequate.

Too often in the historiography of coal mining, gender has been synonymous with women. Gender analysis of coal mining culture has largely revolved around women's role in labor agitation or on the female colliers who began to enter the mines in the twentieth century. Labor organizer Mary Harris "Mother" Jones—with her mop and broom brigades—and Illinois' "Ladies in White"—who agitated in the coal fields to defend their families—embodied colliers' conceptions of militant motherhood outside of the mines.¹⁵ Historians who have explored the dynamics of gender in the mines have largely focused on women who worked in the mines. Whether it was the pioneering women who entered a hyper-masculinized workscape when the mines were opened to women in the 1970s, or their Victorian predecessors in British collieries, these histories have made valuable contributions to women's history.¹⁶ However, these works have done little to problematize the mines as a masculine environment. The historiography has begun to address this in the last few years, notably in edited volumes by Kuntala Lahiri-

¹⁴ Lewis, *Welsh Americans*, 125-126.

¹⁵ For examples, see Elliott J. Gorn, *Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001); Stephane E. Booth, "Ladies in White: Female Activism in the Southern Illinois Coalfields, 1932-1938," in *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?*, ed. John H. M. Laslett (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 371-293.

¹⁶ Marat Moore, *Women in the Mines: Stories of Life and Work* (New York: Twayne, 1996); Angela V. John, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Women Workers at Victorian Coal Mines* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

Dutt, Jaclyn Gier, and Laurie Mercier.¹⁷ This exploration into the role of gender in Stark County's mining community will contribute to this recent scholarship.

Chapter one looks at the role of work and the workscape in shaping coal miners' conceptions of manhood. The structure of the mines and the manner in which they were opened and worked contributed to colliers' independence. The ease with which miners entered the workings affected operators' ability to supervise them, as did the method by which the coal was extracted. Miners' autonomy was a critical component in their masculine identity, as was their skill on the job. The title "practical miner" was an indication of a collier's skill and acceptance among his peers, and it was synonymous with manhood. Practical miners spent years learning their skills and defended their privileges in the face of conflict with the operators and mechanization which deskilled their labors.

In chapter two, this study on collier manhood moves outside of the mines. Beginning with a demographic study on the men who lived and worked in the Massillon region, the second chapter emphasizes the importance of organization and home ownership to the miners' gender ideals. Despite unions' emphasis on work in the mines, coal miners constructed their organizations in the community. These unions and mutual aid societies were based on ideals of cooperation and manly dependence. Unlike most isolated mining communities, Stark County was an open town with diverse employment opportunities and very little company housing. As a result, many colliers in Stark County

¹⁷ Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt, ed. *Gendering the Field: Towards Sustainable Livelihoods for Mining Communities* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2011); Jaclyn J. Gier and Laurie Mercier, eds., *Mining Women: Gender in the Development of a Global Industry, 1670 to 2005* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006).

owned their homes, which contributed to their freedom from operator influence. Home ownership, unachievable for most members of the working class, was an integral part of the miners' manhood.

The home was a key site of identity formation and was central to colliers' conceptions of manhood, but the domestic realm was not a male province. The third chapter moves into the home and highlights women's role in creating and maintaining households. Colliers' wives performed a number of tasks in and around the home, ranging from tending gardens and raising livestock to taking in laundry and putting up boarders. The coal-mining household was built around women's labor. However, this went unacknowledged in official records, hidden in the census designation "keeping house." This chapter highlights the invisible economy and the value colliers and their families placed on women's endeavors.

In chapter four, this study turns back to Stark County's mines, following the women of the community as they ventured into the collieries. Women's notions of militant motherhood were most prominent when they participated in the region's labor struggles. During strikes, colliers' wives walked the picket lines and attacked the scabs brought in by operators to take their husbands' jobs. Mining women manipulated middle-class discomfort with aggressive female behavior to engage in activities that their husbands could not without risking arrest. Women's work did not end at the mine entrance, however. Despite cultural and social proscriptions against women actually working in the mines, in the years surrounding the Massillon War more than a dozen

women entered the mines to work alongside their male relatives. When they did so, they participated in a family labor system as old as the practice of coal mining itself.

Chapter five explores the Massillon War, Stark County's 1876 coal strike, and serves as a case study for the role of gender in the collier community. Miners negotiated with local operators over wages and control using gendered language. Breakdowns in negotiations were closely tied to colliers' conceptions of manhood. Throughout the spring and summer, colliers and their wives attacked scabs, operators, and the militia, and justified the violence based on a man's right to defend his family. State and local authorities responded in kind, adding an attack on the coal miners' skill and manliness to their physical assault. The strike ended in the same manner it began, with the miners' attorney defending their actions based on masculine privilege.

The history of coal mining is a history of gender. Questions of manhood and womanhood among the miners and their families were central to how these men and women lived and worked in the community. In the Massillon War, when Stark County's colliers used gendered language—demanding recognition of their manly rights—it was not a tactic employed to achieve economic goals, it was the goal. When their wives participated in strikes—attacking scabs on the picket lines—they consciously manipulated the operators' discomfort with their militant motherhood. By problematizing gender and its role in the mining community, this study endeavors to restore considerations of manhood and gender in the scholarship of coal-mining to the same level at which the colliers held it themselves.

Chapter 1- Mining Manhood: Constructing a Masculine Identity in the Coal Mines

When John Brophy first entered the mines five days before his twelfth birthday, he was “pleased” and “excited” at the opportunity to help support his family and work “a man’s job as a coal miner.”¹ Though he knew he had a lot to learn before his peers would deem him worthy of the title “practical miner,” he had taken the first steps on his journey. A practical miner was the designation which fellow colliers bestowed on a man who had mastered all aspects of coal mining and was found fit to practice the trade on his own. Brophy learned the craft of mining in the same way his father had before him, passed down from generations of male colliers to their sons and nephews. In working the mines, Brophy—like all who worked underground—depended on his fellow miners for his life and safety. Because of this danger and dependence in the mines, colliers’ respect for one another’s skill was paramount. Brophy noted that falling behind in his work on the coal face would have required a collier to “admit that [other miners] were better men.”² Skill and manhood were synonymous in the coal mines, and the best man was one in whom you could entrust your very life.³ The situation which Brophy described during his early forays into the coal mines was far from extraordinary. Coal mining in the nineteenth century was a manly endeavor, gendered in its forms and traditions, methods of work and training, in its exclusions and exceptions. Gender was central to the American tradition

¹ John Brophy, *A Miner's Life, an Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 36.

² *Ibid.*, 41.

³ Priscilla Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), xxiii.

of mining coal and the term “practical miner” was an indication of both skill and manhood.

Coal mining in the nineteenth century was in the process of transitioning from a family labor system to a masculine form of employment. In the 1870s and 1880s, American colliers—predominantly British transplants—were much closer to, and more comfortable with, the family labor system of the early-nineteenth century than their twentieth-century counterparts. Women’s exclusion from the mines for more than a century, in both custom and law, created a hyper-masculinized “workscape” in the twentieth-century coal mines.⁴ Though the mines were not as masculinized as they would become a century later, American collieries in the late-nineteenth century were still patriarchal. Work in the mines was organized around a masculine identity that recreated elements of the corporate patriarchal household in the authority of the practical miner, as well as in the dependence and interconnectedness of largely autonomous work crews. Manhood was establishing a foothold in the collieries in the nineteenth century. Coal miners created an identity based on a form of masculinity that was uniquely suited to the mine workscape. Colliers gained independence and autonomy through the geology and layout of the mines. They recreated patriarchal authority in their control of apprentices and assistants. Their manhood was bolstered by the exclusion of women from the coal mines. All of these elements combined with the miners’ craft skill,

⁴ In this context, I am using Thomas G. Andrews’ construction of the mine workscape as “a place shaped by the interplay of human labor and natural processes.” Miners created their workscape through their interactions with the environment, technology, fellow colliers, and operators, creating a unique culture based on the intersectionality of class, gender, and race in these environments. For more, see Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 125.

embodying collier manhood, which in turn defined the work itself. Just as colliers shaped the mines with their knowledge, skill, and tools, the structure of the mines and the workings of the industry shaped the men who toiled in their depths.

The Coal Mine Workscape

Coal miners constructed their identities through their interactions with people and places on a daily basis. Living in isolated communities, they developed an understanding of what it meant to be both a miner and a man in a homogenous environment. Spending almost half of their lives hundreds, sometimes thousands of feet underground, with only fellow colliers for company, the coal miners' identities were inextricably linked to their work and the workscape. Histories of coal mining are rife with stories of independence and autonomy and how the work shaped their fiery natures; colliers were militant and prone to labor actions on the job and they were rowdy and hard-drinking when they were off the clock. Carter Goodrich's classic work labeled this phenomenon "the miner's freedom" and tied the miner's independent nature to the physical setting in which he worked.⁵ Goodrich's observations were astute, but they do not sufficiently capture the identity under construction. By focusing exclusively on the class consciousness colliers constructed in the mines, historians have failed to account for the heavily gendered worldview they created and the masculine identity that miners shaped in the darkness of the colliery. While a collier learned to be an independent miner, he also learned how to be a man. The shape of the mine, its layout and the way it was opened, was integral to

⁵ Carter Goodrich, *The Miner's Freedom* (New York: Arno Press, 1977).

creating the independent, practical miner; however, that miner was explicitly male. In order to understand how miners gained this independence and masculine identity through the physical geography of the mine, it is necessary to explore how mines were dug into the ground and, once opened, the manner in which they were worked.

Opening a mine entrance varied in difficulty based on the accessibility of the coal. In the simplest situations, a drift mine could be dug right alongside the coal seam. In many of the major coal regions of the world, the land surrounding mines was hilly and uneven. The strata in which coal seams appeared followed more gradual changes of depth, so that banks of coal were exposed on the surface. In such cases, colliers opened the mine from the lowest possible position on the property, following the seam into a hill, and working gradually upward. This change in elevation functioned as a make-shift pump for the mine, allowing the water that seeped through the rock to drain naturally. Drift mine construction allowed for simple ease of entry and exit, but it had its limitations. If a coal seam branched off in multiple directions, the drift mine was much harder to stabilize and expand than a shaft entry, especially if the coal cut back under the entry. However, drift mines were the easiest type of excavation, or workings, to open and required the smallest startup cost for the operator. An owner-operator could open and work a drift mine with relatively little capital investment, using his own family for miners. Of course, not all geographical regions were amenable to the drift mine.⁶

⁶ *Report of the Geological Survey of Ohio, Volume V, Economic Geology*, (Columbus: G.J. Brand & Co., State Printers, 1884), 225; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 24-26; John H. M. Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea: A Comparative Study of Class Formation in Scotland and the American Midwest, 1830-1924*, *The Working Class in American History*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 95-96; Andrew Roy, *The Coal Mines; Containing a Description of the Various Systems of Working and*

If coal was not visible on the surface, operators had two options for gaining access to a seam. When the seam was located at a depth shallower than 150 feet, a slope mine was the most practical method of entry. Miners would tunnel into the ground at an angle until they met the seam in the depths. Once miners reached the coal seam, the workings were opened much the same as a drift mine. In fact, in their benefits and their limitations, the drift mine and slope mine were nearly identical. Both required a relatively small capital outlay to open and provided for easy access to the coal. Both also faced the same difficulties in expanding if the seam branched too much. Unlike drift mines, however, slope mines required an active pump system to avoid flooding. When the coal was found at a more substantial depth, a slope mine was both inefficient and dangerous, and a shaft mine was the safest alternative.⁷

Shaft mines were used to reach the deepest coal seams, penetrating depths of more than one thousand feet. To reach these deep banks of coal, colliers dug a shaft perpendicular to the ground in a central—and convenient—location, and installed an elevator for access. This method of entry had substantial benefits over both slope and drift mines. Foremost among these advantages was the ability to access multiple seams from one shaft, with tunnels branching off the shaft at multiple depths and in multiple directions. The workings of a shaft mine could be incredibly vast, ranging miles from the entry shaft; thus a single entry could provide access to coal seams that was the equivalent of multiple drift or slope mines. However, such flexibility in accessing coal came at a

Ventilating Mines, Together with a Sketch of the Principal Coal Regions of the Globe, Including Statistics of the Coal Production (Cleveland: Robison, Savage & Co., 1876), 44-46.

⁷ *Economic Geology*, 225; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 24-26; Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 95-96; Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 44-46.

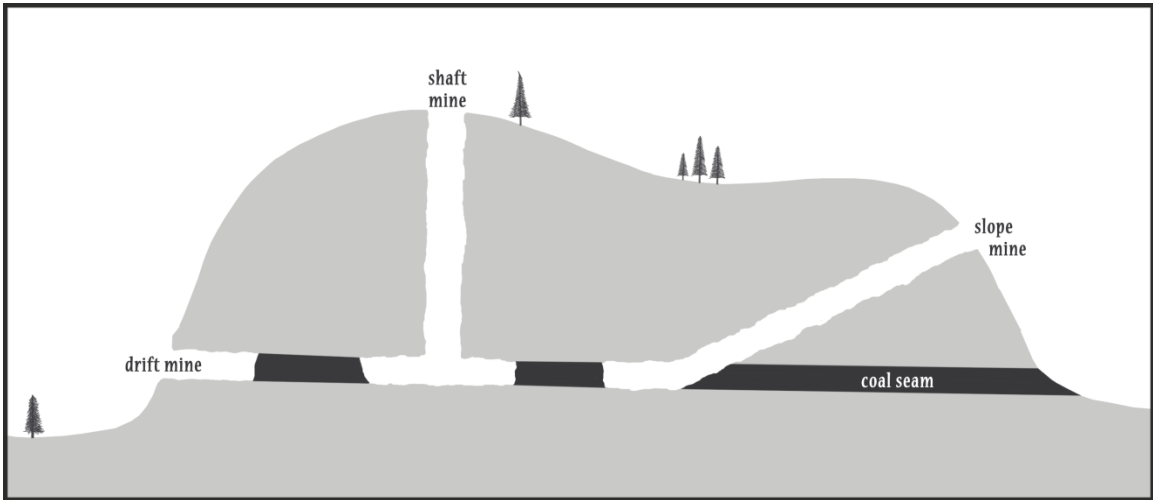


Figure 1-1: Comparison of slope, shaft, drift and mines. Drawn by Rebecca L. Wrenn.

substantial cost. Months of work, hundreds of man-hours in labor, and considerable capital expenditures were required before the first cart of coal would ever see the surface. Complicated systems of elevators, pumps, and furnaces needed to be installed for access, drainage, and ventilation, each requiring additional laborers to install and operate. However, the benefits of a shaft mine far outweighed the added expense. Of course, these barriers to entry ensured that only large operators, or combinations of small ones, could undertake such a massive working.⁸

All three types of mines could be found in Stark County, but shaft mines were the most common method of entry to the Massillon coal seams. In the 1870s, as many as two-thirds of the county's collieries were shaft mines, and their share was never lower than 57 percent. Slope mines accounted for the second most common type of entry. In 1876, five of the county's eighteen mines were slope mines, and an additional slope mine opened the following year. Of the Stark County collieries that reported to the state mine

⁸ *Economic Geology*, 225; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 24-26; Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 95-96; Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 42-48.

inspector, only one was a drift mine. The scarcity of drift mines was most likely due to the relatively flat terrain in the county, which presented fewer opportunities to dig upwards towards a seam. However, the geography of Stark County's mines, like that of every other coal district, had a significant impact on the colliers who worked in their depths.⁹

When an operator opened a mine, the decision to use a shaft or drift entry impacted more than cost or ease of access; it affected colliers' autonomy and control in the workplace. Each type of mine had issues of access which affected a miner's ability to control his time and work. In a drift or slope mine, entering the mine was relatively easy. These entries were dug at a relatively modest pitch and miners could enter by foot. If they were lucky, the miners caught a ride on a mine car to reach their position at the coal face. Such rides were a luxury, though, and most miners walked the entire way. Though the walk could be long, this ease of entry also translated to ease of exit. A collier was free to set his own schedule, packing his tools and walking out of the mine just as easily as he entered. While this freedom gave coal miners a great deal of control over their workday, it came at a price: Superintendents and foremen could enter the mines just as easily and thus visited individual workings frequently. Miners' control over the length of

⁹ Numbers for this section are drawn from reports of the State Mine Inspector. See *First Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1874*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1875), 82; *Second Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1875*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1876), 74; *Third Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1876*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1876), 188; *Fourth Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1877*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1878), 182; *Fifth Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1878*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1879), 32.

their workday was accompanied by increased opportunities for observation and regulation in their workscape.¹⁰

In the shaft mines that dominated the Stark County coal fields, these patterns of supervision and control were reversed. To begin with, miners' ability to enter and exit the shaft mine was significantly curtailed. Rather than walking in and out at their leisure, miners had to utilize an elevator to go up and down the shaft. Long lines often formed at the beginning and end of the day as miners waited their turns, with many an impatient man riding under or on top of the cage.¹¹ This impediment to entering the mine put colliers under the control of a company man who operated the elevator. Although miners typically worked on the "butty" system as independent contractors—individual miners were in charge of their own crew of one or two apprentices—the company man was a wage laborer who reported directly to the mine operator.¹² These company men were the eyes and ears of the operators and their superintendents. Passing through this checkpoint via the elevator, colliers relinquished control over the length of their work day and submitted to a work-discipline reminiscent of the factory floor.¹³ Of course this control was not as comprehensive as in the factory.

¹⁰ David Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880-1922* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 30; Keith Dix, *What's a Coal Miner to Do?: The Mechanization of Coal Mining* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 13; David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 11; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 26.

¹¹ *Report of the Ohio Mining Commission*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, 1872), 9.

¹² Dorothy Schwieder, *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895-1925* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1983), 27; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 15.

What colliers sacrificed at the beginning and end of their day, they gained throughout their shifts. Difficulties entering the mine were not limited to colliers; operators and their representatives experienced the same impediments to accessing the working. Superintendents were lucky to visit an individual collier's work station once per day, and if the mine was large enough, those visits could be even more sporadic.¹⁴ When a supervisor did visit a collier, their interaction was regulated by an unspoken code of manhood. A collier was likely to hear suggestions, not commands, regarding the state of his workscape, out of respect for the miner's technical expertise and his position as an independent collier.¹⁵ For the majority of his day, the practical miner was free from supervision and truly in charge of his own work. The collier's only responsibilities were to their own work and the safety of their fellow miners. This freedom from supervision inside the mines was central to creating the manly notion of independence among colliers. However, the manner of opening a mine was not the only element of the workings which had such a substantial impact on freedom from supervision inside the mines.

Once a mine was opened and the seam reached, there were two basic methods of extracting the coal. In longwall operations, miners worked the coal face along a continuous line in one main tunnel. The room-and-pillar method, where a pair of

¹³ E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present*, no. 38 (1967); Keith Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry: The Hand-Loading Era, 1880-1930* (Morgantown: Institute for Labor Studies, Division of Social and Economic Development, Center for Extension and Continuing Education, West Virginia University, 1977), 49-51.

¹⁴ Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields*, 38.

¹⁵ Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America*, 13-14; Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 41.

miners—typically one practical miner and his assistant—worked their own private coal face, was the most common method practiced in American mines, including those in Stark County. Each of these methods had its own benefits and limitations based on the physical layout of the mine. Colliers and operators were often at odds over which advantages and disadvantages they preferred.

Longwall mining, also called advancing longwall, was by far the most efficient method of removing coal. In longwall operations all colliers worked a single face, advancing through the coal seam in unison. As the coal was removed and the wall advanced, the roof was allowed to collapse behind the miners in a controlled cave in. Colliers combined these remains with shale and debris from the face and built a pack wall four to five feet behind the working. This new wall supported the ceiling and prevented further, uncontrolled collapse of the working face. Miners were assisted in removing coal by geological pressures. The weight of the ceiling on the seam helped to crack the coal once it had been undercut, limiting the amount of explosives needed to free the coal in longwall operations. This process of mining limited waste and resulted in the effective extraction of up to 95 percent of the coal seam. However, efficiency in coal removal came with a cost for both miners and operators.¹⁶

Operators and their representatives reaped numerous benefits from longwall operations. Along with increased efficiency and the profits that followed in its wake,

¹⁶ Descriptions of longwall operations and its efficiency can be found in Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 67, 77-80; *Economic Geology*, 305, 314-316; Schwieder, *Black Diamonds*, 29-32; Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry*, 7-8.

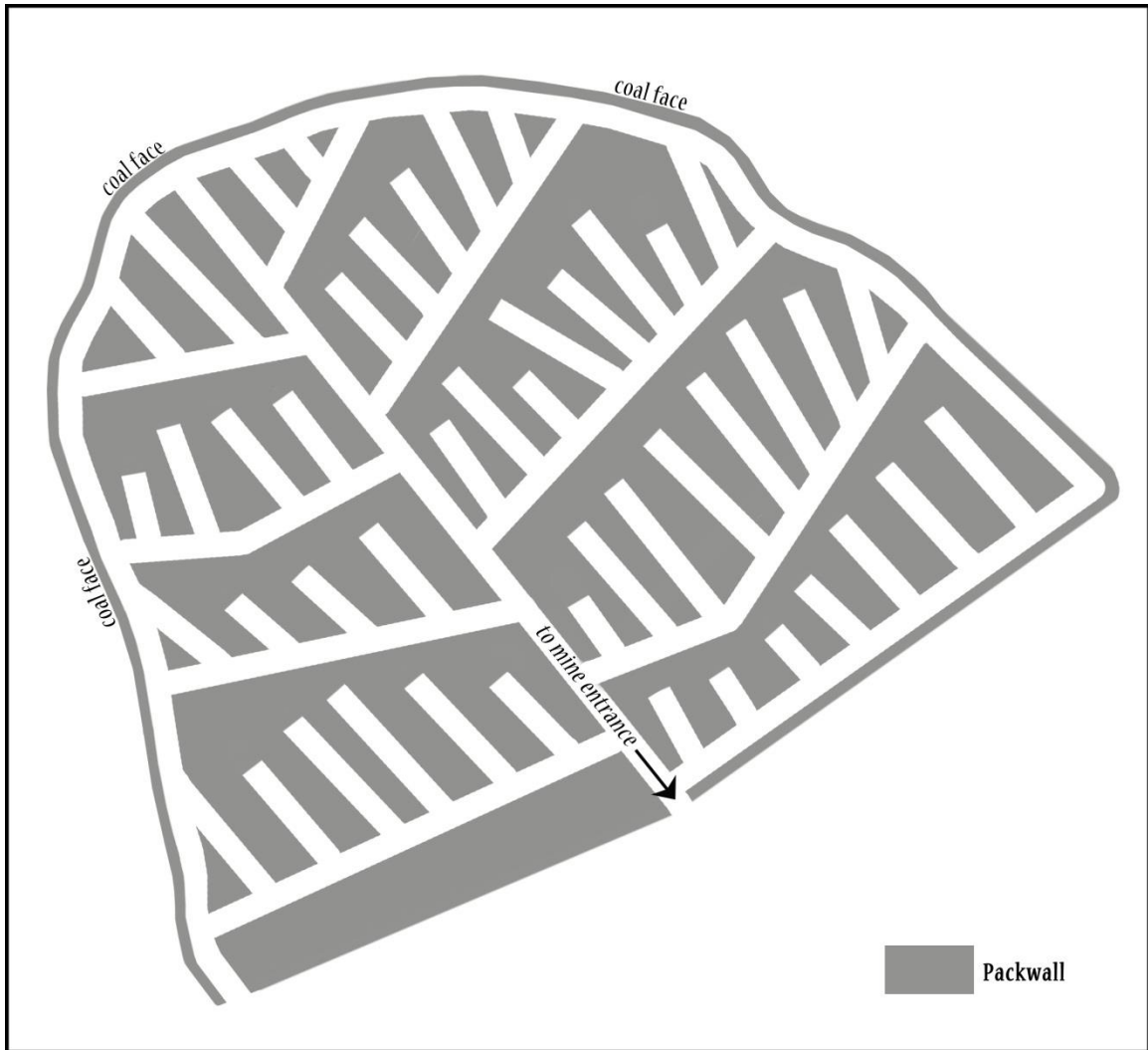


Figure 1-2: Longwall mine layout. Drawn by Rebecca L. Wrenn.

longwall operations also made for “easier supervision.”¹⁷ With work consolidated into a central location, one superintendent could monitor the entire operation with a short walk along the solitary work face. Each collier’s working could be visited repeatedly

¹⁷ D. E. Krebs, "Standard Panel System of Long Wall Mining, Worked Advancing," *Proceedings, West Virginia Coal Mining Institute* (1911): 135. Quoted in Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry*, 7. Though even this ease of supervision could be affected by the type of entry the mine had. Keith Dix, "Mechanization, Workplace Control, and the End of the Hand-Loading Era," in *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?*, ed. John H. M. Laslett (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 168.

throughout the day, ensuring the pace of production stayed on schedule. However, there were advantages in this system for colliers as well. Heightened control came with a significant risk on the part of the operator. In the event of a work stoppage, colliers' bargaining position increased as the strike dragged on. Due to the geological pressures that contributed to extracting coal, longwall operations needed to be worked continuously to prevent the roof from collapsing on the face of the seam.¹⁸ Operators were under a great deal of pressure to return striking colliers to work, lest the roof collapse at the face. Negotiations over pay and work conditions had to be weighed against the possible "cost to reestablish the working face."¹⁹ Despite the ease of supervision and the increased efficiency and profit potential, longwall operations ceded too much power to colliers during labor negotiations for most operators' comfort. Thus room-and-pillar method was the standard in most mines.²⁰

In room-and-pillar mining the colliery was much more stable geologically, but structural integrity came at the cost of efficiency in coal removal. At the base of the shaft or slope, multiple tunnels—called main entries—were dug into the coal seam. Perpendicular to these tunnels, side entries were cut into the coal face and comprised the working face. Side entries were cramped work spaces, rarely more than fifteen feet wide and between four and five feet in height. These tunnels comprised the "rooms" in the

¹⁸ U.S. Coal Commission, *Report, Part III: Bituminous Coal - Detailed Labor and Engineering Studies* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1925), 1871; Schwieder, *Black Diamonds*, 29-31; Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry*, 7-8.

¹⁹ U.S. Coal Commission, *Report, Part III*, 1871.

²⁰ John H. M. Laslett, "British Immigrant Colliers, and the Origins of the Early Development of the Umwa, 1870-1912," in *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?*, ed. John H. M. Laslett (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 34-37.

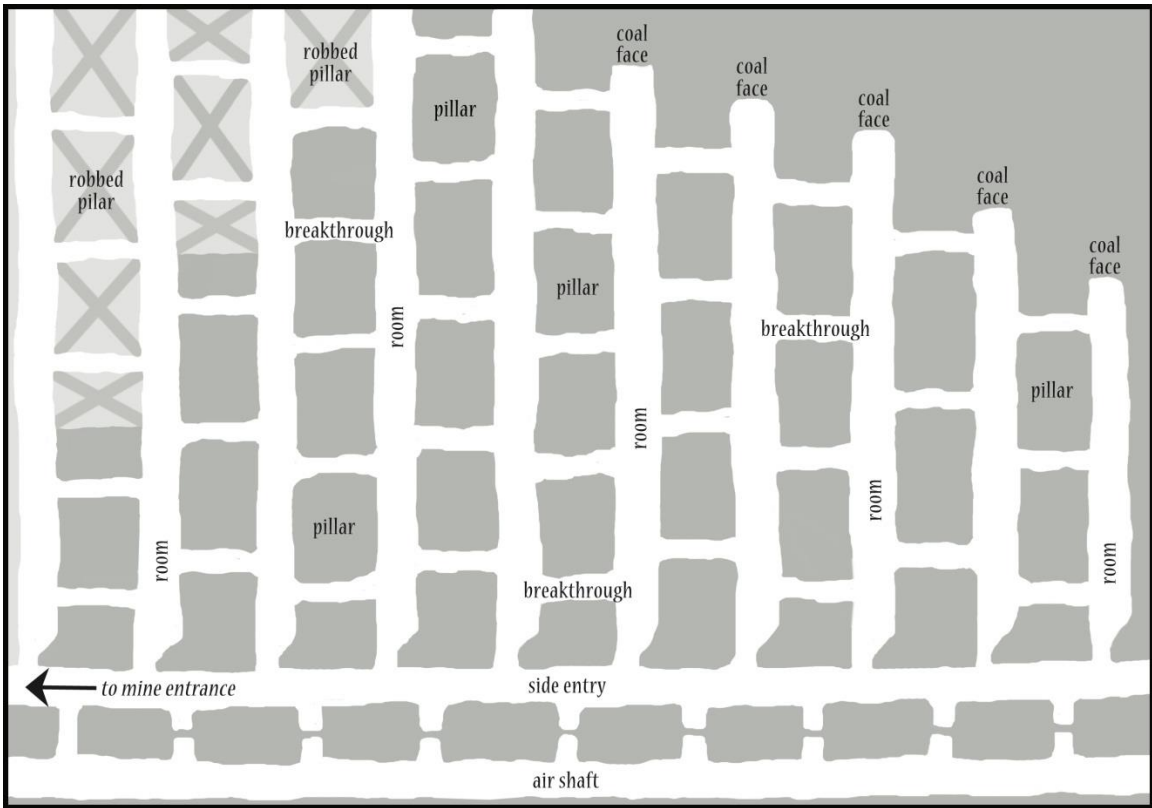


Figure 1-3: Room-and-pillar mine layout. Drawn by Rebecca L. Wrenn.

room-and-pillar system. Individual rooms were connected to one another via six foot wide ventilation tunnels, forming the pillars. The spacing of entry and ventilation tunnels—and therefore the size of the pillars—was determined based on the depth of the mine and the necessity of supporting the additional weight of the strata. In the shallowest mines, the pillars could be as small as 60x15 feet; at depths of 1800 feet, side entries were spaced at least ninety feet apart, and ventilation tunnels more than seventy.²¹ These pillars provided support for the workings until the face was played out, after which time they were “robbed” for their coal. Beginning at the back of the working, coal was extracted from individual pillars until further removal became unsafe and the room

²¹ Calculations of pillars based on depth of the mine taken from a table in *Economic Geology*, 309.

collapsed. Only the most experienced colliers were sent in to “rob the pillars,” but significant portions of each pillar —twenty to thirty percent of the whole—were still lost when the room collapsed. Compared to longwall, this system was incredibly inefficient; however, there were other reasons for its popularity in Stark County and other coal fields.²²

Miners and operators alike benefitted from the room-and-pillar system of laying out the coal mine. Colliers preferred the independence and autonomy which the system helped to facilitate. Individual workings were spread out and provided a considerable amount of privacy for the miners. Unlike longwall operations, mine foremen could not easily supervise individual colliers and rarely visited each room more than once per day. This lack of direct supervision gave the practical miner a level of control over the pace and volume of his work commensurate with the collier’s skill and financial need. When the miner had earned enough, his day came to an end. The collier spent most of their day with only their apprentices or assistants working alongside them. Other than visiting a neighboring room to share lunch with a fellow or chatting with a mule driver bringing a car to be loaded, the practical miner was in charge of all of the work in his room. That solitude had its rewards. Once a miner began working a room, he had informal ownership over the space. If a coal miner took ill or missed work the room would typically be held until his return; though frequent absences could affect the speed with which a miner was assigned a new workspace once his old one had been played out. This

²² Descriptions of room-and-pillar operations can be found in numerous sources. Primary documentation taken from U.S. Coal Commission, *Report, Part III*, 1854-55, 1869-74; *Economic Geology*, 307-313; Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 66-74. Contemporary descriptions taken from Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry*, 6-8; Schwieder, *Black Diamonds*, 28-29.

ability to leave room idle benefitted colliers during short absences, but it left them vulnerable during protracted labor strife.²³

While operators would have preferred the efficiency of longwall operations, the reality of colliers' militancy and propensity to strike made the room-and-pillar system more profitable. Though the system limited the operator's ability to supervise their workforce, they made up for this loss in other ways. Colliers placed a high degree of value on independence, and operators could negotiate these benefits against wage increases.²⁴ Most operators and their superintendents supported this sense of autonomy in the workplace, even when it came at the cost of efficiency and control, because it helped to keep colliers more content at their work site. Though longwall operations were much more efficient, operators relinquished too much power to colliers during strikes. The longer a mine was idle, the more likely the workings would collapse. Room-and-pillar mines were much more stable and could be left idle for weeks at a time. Instead of having to reopen an entire working that had collapsed, room-and-pillar only required the pump to be maintained in order to prevent the mine from flooding.²⁵ With significant strikes in 1873, 1876, and 1880, Stark County's operators were able to weather prolonged walkouts, even when colliers attacked the scabs that were brought in and prevented them

²³ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 41-42; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 60-61.

²⁴ This position has been held up and reevaluated by numerous historians, most notably in Carter Goodrich's classic and Royden Harrison's collected volume. See Goodrich, *The Miner's Freedom*; Royden Harrison, *Independent Collier: The Coal Miner as Archetypal Proletarian Reconsidered* (Hassocks [Eng.]: Harvester Press, 1978).

²⁵ Pumping water was a constant concern in all types of mines. Left un-pumped, mines would fill up quickly and could require extensive work to drain and reopen. Anthony F. C. Wallace, *St. Clair: A Nineteenth-Century Coal Town's Experience with a Disaster-Prone Industry* (New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1987), 36-37.

from entering the mines.²⁶ Of course, while the threat of a strike was always there, the most common cause of mine closure was the cyclical nature of demand for coal. In 1880, Stark County colliers were out of work an average of six months as demand for coal waned and weather prevented entering the mines.²⁷ Room-and-pillar workings gave operators more flexibility in controlling the supply of coal and fixing prices. It also placed miners in a vulnerable position, receiving independence and autonomy in their worksite at the cost of job stability throughout the year; a benefit to their manhood, not their pocketbook.

Manly Independence in the Coal Mines

Colliers associated ideals of masculinity with their levels of independence and skill on the job. While technical expertise and the ability to pass those skills on were common sources of pride and manly identity among all manner of industrial workers, autonomy was much more elusive.²⁸ As contractors working on the butty system, colliers were relatively unsupervised compared to their working-class brethren in factories. As the previous examples of geology and mine layout demonstrate, the average collier was

²⁶ *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 20, 1876; *Canton Repository*, April 21, 1876. When Stark County colliers could not prevent scabs from being brought in, they burned the pump house as an attempt to stop the workings, at considerable cost to the operators. See *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 4, 1876; *Canton Repository*, May 5, 1876; Rutherford B. Hayes to A. T. Wikoff, May 8, 1876, *Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Papers (RBHPP)*, series 5, roll 174, frame 387; and Andrew Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States: From the Development of the Mines to the Close of the Anthracite Strike of 1902 Including a Brief Sketch of Early British Miners*, First Greenwood Reprinting ed. (Columbus, Ohio; Westport, Connecticut: J.L. Trauger Printing Company; Greenwood, 1905; 1970), 172-173.

²⁷ Numbers taken from the Population Schedules for Stark County, Ohio, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*.

²⁸ Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America*, 13-14.

able to work at his own pace and could start and stop at will; he could even take days off when he desired.²⁹ This autonomy was central to the collier's identity and construction of gender roles, a notion of masculinity that bore much closer resemblance to the middle-class ideal of the self-made man than to the subaltern ideals of the working class.

The self-made man was the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity in nineteenth-century America. At its core, this ideal type was based on notions of independence, competition, and, above all, authority. Manly independence entailed a variety of freedoms which middle-class men aspired to—decision making free from influence, the ability to succeed or fail on their own merit—which they tied to republican ideology in gendered terms.³⁰ The cultural impact of fluid social relations as well as a breakdown in familiar relationships of obligation and community bred a culture of competition which the self-made man embraced. These ideas were ingrained in nineteenth-century boys from the earliest ages. From childhood games that constituted middle-class boy culture,

²⁹ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 76.

³⁰ The gendering of republican ideology can be seen in Mark E. Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language, and Patriarchal Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), Ch.1; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 16; Linda Kerber, "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment—an American Perspective," *American Quarterly* 28, no. 2, Special Issue: An American Enlightenment (Summer, 1976): 187. Similar manifestations of explicitly male republicanism can be found in the Southern gentility as well, especially in Lorri Glover, "'Let Us Manufacture Men': Educating Elite Boys in the Early National South," in *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, ed. Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004); Jennifer R. Green, "'Stout Chaps Who Can Bear the Distress': Young Men in Antebellum Military Academies," in *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, ed. Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004). The trend is actually much older, as evidenced in Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979). The fluidity of nineteenth-century social relations, especially as it pertains to middle-class men can be seen in Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 52-63; Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 32.

the educational institutions of middle-class youths, and the job training of young men, the values of competition and domination of one's peers was instilled as a foundation of the masculine ideal.³¹ Competitiveness and independence in the public sphere were cornerstones of the hegemonic ideal of manhood that was espoused by middle-class men. However, it was also incumbent upon their authority over women and subaltern men. As Mary Ryan notes, women's obedience and men's authority remained the norm in the middle-class household, despite the breakdown of the corporate patriarchal economy.³² Similarly, middle-class men sought to exercise influence over other men in the competitive urban environments which composed the public sphere. The self-made man's authority was integral to his independence and competitive nature; authority and influence were the natural reward for the dominant competitor and those who lacked such status were not truly free.³³ Authority, independence, and competition were all key themes in the creation of hegemonic masculinity embodied by the self-made man. However, even among the middle class this norm was difficult to achieve.

Achieving the ideal of the self-made man was a difficult proposition for the majority of middle-class men. Independence and authority, while exercised at home, were often subsumed in the public sphere. Clerks and supervisors who worked in

³¹ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, Ch.2-3; Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York Free Press, 1996), Ch.2; Glover, "Let Us Manufacture Men'."; Green, "Stout Chaps Who Can Bear the Distress." For nineteenth-century education reform and its impact on patriarchy and gender dynamics, see Nancy Beadie, *Education and the Creation of Capital in the Early American Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 66-69.

³² Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 33.

³³ Michael Kimmel explores this theme in detail, especially as he notes that it was fear of being dominated, much more than a desire to dominate, which underlay cultural constructions of manhood. *Manhood in America*, 6.

factories and offices had little control over their daily schedules. Punctuality, obedience, and even deference were common features of the bourgeois workplace, characteristics that had been traditionally perceived as feminine in nature.³⁴ In place of exercising external authority, many middle-class men converted their desire for control inward. Temperance movements, sexual repression, and other forms of moral improvement were some of the endeavors which men of the middling sorts utilized to reassert dominance in a society undergoing upheaval.³⁵ The pressure men felt to reconcile their aspirations of independence and authority with the reality of their daily lives overwhelmed some, resulting in breakdowns and nervous disorders. By the second half of the nineteenth century a medical diagnosis—neurasthenia—accompanied this internal crisis of manhood.³⁶ The very fact that these internal conflicts between hegemonic ideals and lived experiences, even among the social class who espoused the ideals, is indicative of the power that gender norms had on American men. If the middle-class man experienced such difficulties living up to his own ideals, it is no wonder that working-class constructions of manhood often abandoned them entirely.

³⁴ Elliott Gorn notes that men increasingly questioned their virility in endeavors such as clerkships and sales positions, and in the faceless bureaucracies of the corporations which bloomed in the Gilded Age. Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 192.

³⁵ Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 132-142; Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 199-202; Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 120-122; Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 45.

³⁶ For more on neurasthenia see Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 185-193; Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 90-91; John Starrett Hughes, "The Madness of Separate Spheres: Insanity and Masculinity in Victorian Alabama," in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, ed. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 65-66; Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 130-131.

For working-class men, ideals of independence and competition that were integral to the middle-class notion of the self-made man were rarely attainable. Instead these ideals were transformed in ways that more closely reflected their lived experiences. Independence for most workers was no longer a possibility. The journeyman artisan who would one day be his own master was slowly but surely being transformed into a lifelong wage laborer over the course of the nineteenth century.³⁷ In light of these changes to the reality of workers' experience, ideas of manly independence were transformed. Elliott Gorn notes that workingmen's culture often rejected the ideals of self-reliance and independence expressed by the middle and upper classes, instead embracing a notion of manhood based on personal prowess and strength.³⁸ On the job, this required an acknowledgement of the role of supervisors and managers while maintaining a "manly" bearing in the face of authority figures. Industrial workers may have been required to follow orders on the job, but the manner in which those orders were given, received, and interpreted had to conform to workers' perceptions of manliness, giving working men an opportunity to retain their dignity in light of their requisite subservience. Workingmen typically refused orders that failed to comply with these requirements, lest they be perceived as weak or effeminate by their peers; in the mines, superintendents made

³⁷ One of the best works on this transformation of the workplace in the nineteenth century is Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989). See also Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837*, 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 42; Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 40, 57.

³⁸ Gorn, *The Manly Art*, 252.

suggestions out of deference to the practical miner's skill.³⁹ The hegemonic norm of manly self-restraint was also abandoned in leisure activities. Drinking in barrooms, participation and spectatorship at prize fights, as well as attendance at raucous burlesque shows were means through which working-class men expressed their manhood and virility while explicitly rejecting the trappings of self-control and moderation espoused by the middle-class hegemonic norm.⁴⁰ Working-class models of manhood expressed a variety of deviations from the notion of independence inherent in the ideal of the self-made man. Stark County's colliers combined elements of manhood from both the middle-class ideal of the self-made man and their working-class brethren, forming their own unique gender identity.

Unlike their industrial counterparts who steadily lost their status as skilled artisans beginning in the first decades of the nineteenth century, coal miners retained their privileged status as autonomous craftsmen until the close of the century. The central irony of the Industrial Revolution was that it was built on the back of an industry that was

³⁹ Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America*, 13; Mary H. Blewett, "Masculinity and Mobility: The Dilemma of Lancashire Weavers and Spinners in Late-Nineteenth-Century Fall River, Massachusetts," in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, ed. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 177; Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 52.

⁴⁰ For prize fighting and working class culture, see Gorn, *The Manly Art*. Artisan "traditionalism" and its ties to drinking and socializing has been explored in Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980), 54-56. For burlesque and other forms of working-class leisure, see Kathy Lee Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Robert Clyde Allen, *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture*, Cultural Studies of the United States. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). All of these works also express another facet of the relationship between hegemonic and subaltern ideals, specifically the transmission of working-class leisure and culture to the middle and upper classes. From their fascination with prize fighting to the transformation of burlesque and theater to more socially accepted Victorian models, those who espoused the hegemonic norms exhibited an intense fascination with working-class culture.

most successful at staving off the centralization, supervision, and mechanization which stood at the heart of technological progress.⁴¹ Colliers were free from the constant supervision and regimented schedule that factory workers encountered on a daily basis. In Stark County, the combination of shaft entry and room-and-pillar workings which prevailed prevented superintendents from making frequent trips to individual workings. While this lack of supervision was central to colliers' independence and constructions of manhood, it was augmented by the coal miners' ability to supervise others.

Through the "butty" system, colliers not only worked under limited supervision, but also wielded authority and influence over other mine laborers that went well beyond the scope of most members of the working class. Though colliers received monthly pay packets from mine operators, they were not employees earning a wage, but independent contractors paid by for each ton of coal they mined. Coal miners typically worked as a contractor for an owner, or subcontracted with an operator or fellow miner.⁴² This gave colliers incredible flexibility in determining with whom they worked on a daily basis. Colliers hired their own crews, trained their own apprentices, and supervised their employees' work in the mines; any assistants brought in to the collieries were paid out of the miner's own packet.⁴³ Miners exercised a great deal of authority over their apprentices; indeed, the relationship between colliers and their assistants recreated the

⁴¹ Priscilla Long goes even further, arguing that "the industrial revolution emerged from the early coal industry rather than the other way round." Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, xxii.

⁴² Goodrich, *The Miner's Freedom*, 37; A. J. Taylor, "The Sub-Contract System in the British Coal Industry," in *Studies in the Industrial Revolution*, ed. L. S. Presnell (London: University of London [Athone Press], 1960), 216-217; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 15.

⁴³ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 15; Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 51.

familial system of male patriarchy in the mines. In classic feminist studies, patriarchy has been defined as the systems, inside and outside of the home, which enabled male control over women's labor.⁴⁴ However, the benefits men reaped from the system were not limited to their domination of women. Indeed, Michael Kimmel has argued that American working-class men defined their manhood primarily in a homo-social environment of the workplace.⁴⁵ Colliers' control over other men and boys in the mine bolstered their authority and recreated working-class patriarchy at a time when most male workers' authority was limited to the household. Of course, it helped that many of the assistants and apprentices coal miners worked with were their own blood relatives.

Colliers recreated patriarchy in their labor relations because coal mining was largely a hereditary occupation. Indeed, except in the United States, the family labor system was the primary method of mining coal until the 1840s.⁴⁶ Male colliers had a huge incentive to continue working with a system of family labor. When family members worked alongside the collier, no pay had to be expended on an assistant. Prior to women's exclusion—in law in England and in practice in America—coal miners were

⁴⁴ Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," *Capital & Class* 8 (1979): 11; Heidi I. Hartmann, "Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex," *Signs* 1, no. 3 (Spring, 1976): 166; Jane Mark-Lawson and Anne Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'? The Case of Women's Labour in Nineteenth-Century Coalmining," *Social History* 13, no. 2 (May, 1988): 153-158.

⁴⁵ Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 7, 26.

⁴⁶ The decline of the family labor system due to the prohibition on women's employment in European mines and its impact on American miners will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4. For more details, see Jane Humphries, "Protective Legislation, the Capitalist State, and Working-Class Men: The Case of the 1842 Mines Regulation Act," *Feminist Review*, no. 7 (Spring, 1981): 10-11; Mark-Lawson and Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'?", 156; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 20; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 8-9.

largely in favor of women's labor.⁴⁷ From the 1850s onward, when coal mining transitioned to a male-dominated endeavor, colliers preferred a son or nephew as an apprentice for the same reasons. In addition to keeping all pay inside the family unit, the presence of even a young apprentice entitled a collier to an extra turn filling a coal car.⁴⁸ Therefore, when a male coal miner brought his son into the mines he had the opportunity to double his pay. This pattern was evident in Stark County, where as many as one-in-five collier families had multiple generations working in the mines.⁴⁹ Colliers' workplace patriarchy controlled labor in the mines and consolidated family income so effectively because in many cases it was literally parental.⁵⁰ Apprentices, especially family members, were not just hired labor to be controlled; they were the next generation of colliers and imparting knowledge of coal mining was one of the practical miners' most important duties.

Practical Miners, Practical Manhood

While coal miners enjoyed the benefits of autonomy and independence in the mines, all of these manly perquisites were predicated on their skills as a collier. Miners

⁴⁷ Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans: A History of Assimilation in the Coalfields* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 121.

⁴⁸ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 49.

⁴⁹ Numbers from this section drawn from statistical summaries of the Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. In 1870, 55 of the 428 families had multiple generations of miners; in 1880, 180 of the 885 families did. For more details see Chapter 4.

⁵⁰ Humphries, "Protective Legislation," 20. Humphries rightly argues that parental control was important in the mines, but incorrectly asserts that this was different or benign from patriarchy. Patriarchy's power derives from being "naturalized" through its embodiment in the parent-child relationship.

were skilled craftsmen who spent more than a decade learning their trade.⁵¹ Most colliers began their official apprenticeships alongside their fathers or uncles around their twelfth birthday, learning a skill that would define their manhood. John Brophy recalled entering the mines just before his twelfth birthday and the pride he felt when fellow miners predicted that he “might make a good miner”; he linked learning this skill to the knowledge that he was doing “a man’s work.”⁵² Not every collier waited as long as Brophy did to begin his work in the mines. Children as young as six years old worked as trappers, opening and closing the ventilation doors, or driving mules that pulled the coal cars. In Stark County, the youngest miner was five-year-old Nick Mong, but he was not alone; at the time of the 1870 and 1880 censuses, nine more children under the age of ten were working in the mines.⁵³ Though not officially learning the skills of a miner, these children observed the work and interactions between colliers. In the process, young boys—and occasionally girls—were immersed in a work culture which defined what it meant to be a man and a practical miner at the same time.

Prior to being judged a practical miner by their fellows, a collier mastered a multitude of tools and techniques related to his craft. Andrew Roy, a former miner and Ohio’s first State Inspector of Mines, described the coal miner’s mastery of these techniques as both “artful and curious,” beginning with the tools of the trade:

⁵¹ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 15-16.

⁵² Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 50.

⁵³ See Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870 and Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. Nick Mong was the youngest miner in Stark County, listed as working the mines at the age of five (1880 Census, Sugar Creek, Dwelling 13, Family 13) but he was not the only one under the age of ten.

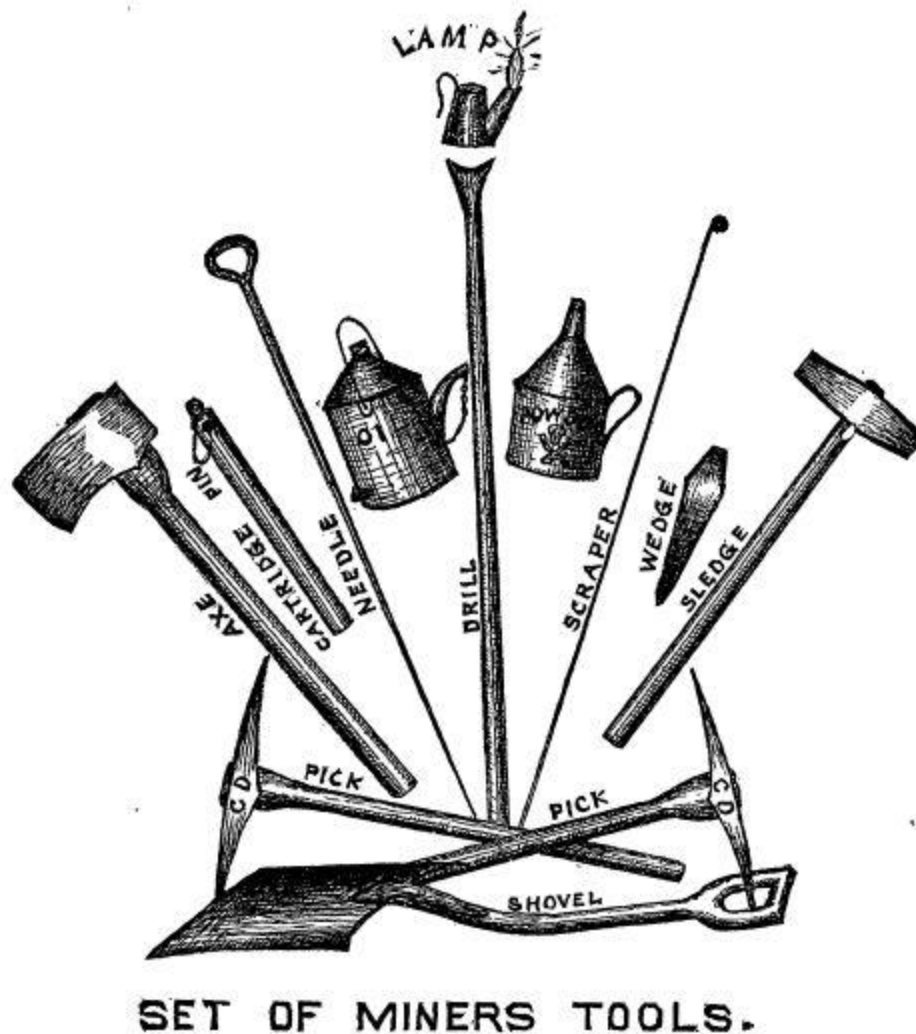


Figure 1-4: The miner's tools. From *Report of the Geological Survey of Ohio, Volume V, Economic Geology*, (Columbus: G.J. Brand & Co., State Printers, 1884), 335.

“The tools of the miner consist of a sledge, 8 to 10 pounds in weight; several steel wedges, 6 to 8 inches long; 3 to 6 picks, from 2 ½ to 3 pounds in weight, with handles 28 to 32 inches in length; a set of drilling tools, to-wit: a drill, a scraper, a needle, and a tamping bar; frequently the drill and tamping bar are made of one piece, one end being used for a drill and the other for a tamper.”⁵⁴

Knowledge and understanding of these tools took years to master and the colliers' lives and livelihoods depended on their skill. The work of digging coal began when the miner

⁵⁴ *Economic Geology*, 335.

used of one or more of the “3 to 6 picks” in his tool kit to undermine the face of the seam. Though the miner started on his feet or knees to begin the process, once the face was undercut more than a few inches the collier moved to his side for the remainder of the work. Working from this cramped position, the most efficient miners could strike more than forty blows per minute, undercutting a twenty foot face at a rate of approximately one foot per hour. Colliers undercut the coal four to five feet, putting supports in place to prevent premature collapse while they were working under the seam. For safety and efficiency, a room was worked with a partner—typically an apprentice, but sometimes another practical miner—who could assist in the work, watch for danger while his partner was in a compromising position, and summon help if necessary. Undercutting was by far the most time consuming and grueling task the miner performed, and it required patience and practice to master.⁵⁵

Physical ability and experience were integral to undercutting the face, but knowledge of the workings and skill in setting explosive charges was also necessary to safely extract the coal. Once the coal was prepped for extraction through undercutting, the miner’s next step was to bore a hole for the blast that would free the coal. Roy noted that considerable skill was required “to give the powder the best possible advantage.”⁵⁶ Collier’s drilled multiple holes along the top of the seam and placed charges into the hole. Miners made their own charges by rolling “a paper cartridge moulded around the pick handle” and filling it with black powder, which they then placed into the hole using the

⁵⁵ Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 62; *Economic Geology*, 335-336.

⁵⁶ *Economic Geology*, 336.

miner's needle.⁵⁷ The needle was left in place while the hole was filled back in with dirt. Dirt was tamped into place and the needle withdrawn, leaving a channel in which the fuse was inserted. When the charge, or shot, was fired, the coal was knocked loose from the seam and the miner and his assistant could begin the back-breaking work of shoveling the freed pieces of coal into a mine car.⁵⁸ Depending on the size of the seam, a collier could remove between three and six tons of coal from the face in a single day.⁵⁹ A skilled miner could make this process look easy, but a tremendous number of variables went into the process of blasting coal from the face.

In order to determine the correct amount of powder to be used, collier's relied on their knowledge of explosives, the coal seam, and the surrounding materials. Too much powder could pulverize the coal, decreasing its value when passed through the tippel (a series of screens which sorted the coal based on its size before it was weighed). If too little powder was used, the coal would not be dislodged and, depending on the frequency with which charges were fired, an entire day of work could be lost. However, it was more than just a day's work which could be lost if a charge was improperly set; the miner's very life depended on their skill with explosives. If the explosive charge misfired, the collier let the working stand idle for a day, "lest he be caught in a delayed explosion."⁶⁰ Provided the charge was prepared, set, and detonated properly, the freed

⁵⁷ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 44.

⁵⁸ *Economic Geology*, 336; Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 44-45; Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry*, 10-11.

⁵⁹ Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 62-63.

⁶⁰ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 44.

coal could then be loaded into cars. Colliers mastered all of these techniques in order to successfully remove coal from the face, without loss of life or limb.

A collier's day typically began with intense physical labor, loading the coal which had been blasted from the face at the end of the previous work day and performing the unpaid "dead work" which made their skilled labor possible. Setting timbers and props for support, running track from the entry to the face, and "tak[ing] up the bottom" to ensure rooms were at least five feet in height so that mine cars could reach the face was a necessary part of mining, but it was called "dead work" because the colliers were rarely compensated for their labor.⁶¹ With rare exceptions, a coal miner's wages depended solely on the amount of coal which made it to the scale. Loading coal was done by hand in the nineteenth-century, shoveled into cars brought as close to the coal face as possible. After the miner finished loading his coal and performed all of the dead work necessary to maintain his room, the cycle began again as the miner undercut a new section.

In the Massillon mines the work of digging coal diverged slightly from the standard presented above. Very little, if any, undercutting was done in the Stark County mines; instead it was primarily "shot from the solid." The coal in this region was "peculiarly adapted to blasting out of the solid wall" and the primary tool used for extraction was black powder rather than the pick.⁶² Miners in the Tuscarawas Valley drilled a single hole diagonally across the face of the coal and filled it with powder. While a face that was undermined required approximately one pound of powder per ton

⁶¹ Ibid., 45-47.

⁶² Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 296.

of coal mined, shooting from the solid required as much as three times that amount. Further, colliers were limited to firing their shots once per day. The State Mine Inspector report for 1874 noted that when the shots were fired at four in the afternoon, “the earth itself shook with the force.”⁶³ The successive charges “resemble a war of artillery” and afterwards the workings were uninhabitable for hours due to the smoke and debris.⁶⁴ While this limited the role of skilled pick mining among Stark County’s colliers, this propensity increased the importance of coal miners’ knowledge of explosives and skill at setting charges.

A collier who mastered all of these skills, as recognized by his peers, was judged not just a practical miner but also a man. Control over this knowledge gave colliers a great deal of power as well. Despite operators’ attempts to supervise the workings, practical miners retained the right to determine who was a “full” man on the job, in part by setting their own apprenticeship periods and work standards.⁶⁵ However, unlike other groups of men in the industrial working class, this was not a final resort for workers to retain control in their industry, but a reflection of the perseverance of skilled labor in the mines. This skill, and by extension colliers’ very manhood, was threatened by the attempted introduction of labor-saving machinery to the mines.

In the late-nineteenth century, coal mining in the United States—and Stark County in particular—had yet to be mechanized, but not for lack of technology. The first mechanical coal-cutting machines in America were built in Ohio. In June 1876, while

⁶³ *First Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector*, 53.

⁶⁴ Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 296.

⁶⁵ Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 51.

twenty-three miners in Stark County were standing trial for assault, riot, and arson, 120 miles away in Columbus, Francis M. Lechner received a patent for the first American coal-cutting machine. However, Lechner's "cutter-bar device" did not become commercially viable until the 1880s, after his patent was bought by the Jeffrey Manufacturing Company. A second type of coal-cutting device, designed around a pneumatic punch, was patented by J.W. Harrison in 1877. The most effective coal-cutting machine, the chain-cutting device, was not available for purchase until 1893, but "within a decade it...dominated the market." Coal-cutting machines were much more efficient than any individual collier, and could perform the work of up to fifteen miners. The lack of undercutting in Stark County's mines limited the impact of these machines on colliers, but it was not the only advancement in coal-mining technology.⁶⁶

While coal-loading was not mechanized until the 1920s, advancements in drilling and explosives were introduced in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The first air-powered drills were used in American coal mines in the 1890s, and by the 1910s drills were electrified.⁶⁷ Where they were introduced, pneumatic drills dramatically reduced the time it took to bore a hole, thereby also undermining the years of training put in by practical miners in learning to properly use the breast augur. Similarly, the premade explosive charges that became more readily available in the late-nineteenth century also threatened skilled labor in the mines. Though these charges made the mines marginally

⁶⁶ Keith Dix has done some of the most detailed work on the mechanization of the coal industry. For more on the introduction and impact of coal-cutting machinery, see Dix, *What's a Coal Miner to Do?*, 29-32; Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry*, 16-18. Quote from Dix, *What's a Coal Miner to Do?*, 32.

⁶⁷ Willard E. Hotchkiss et al., *Mechanization, Employment, and Output Per Man in Bituminous-Coal Mining*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Works Projects Administration, 1939), 20.

safer by decreasing the number of misfires, they also required less training to use and thus made scabbing in the mines easier.⁶⁸ Colliers opposed these advancements in technology because they undermined the importance of the practical miner's skill and therefore constituted an assault on their very manhood.

Miners were not alone in linking their opposition to labor-saving machinery to an assault on their manhood. Trade associations and collective action often focused on gendered hierarchies of labor in their disputes with management, reflecting fears of being deskilled by labor-saving machinery.⁶⁹ Negotiations between male workers and factory owners often resulted in the creation of new gender hierarchies. Women and children were relegated to unskilled, low-paid positions, while men retained access to the higher-skilled jobs. While bolstering workers' identity as men, gender hierarchies also served to undermine the cause of labor by creating multiple tiers of the working-class which could be played against one another. Aspirations of working-class men for independence and status as a self-made men prevented a wide variety of collective actions on the part of the working class. As Mike Davis notes, distractions ranging from sexism to nativism hindered the development of a coherent political force among the working class in

⁶⁸ On explosives skills, and the dangers of mishandling among unskilled workers, see Price Van Meter Fishback, "The Miner's Work Environment: Safety and Company Towns in the Early 1900s," in *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?*, ed. John H. M. Laslett (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 202-203; Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 135.

⁶⁹ This topic has shown up in a variety of works. See Herbert George Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Knopf, 1976), 12; Mary H. Blewett, *Men, Women, and Work: A Study of Class, Gender, and Protest in the New England Shoe Industry, 1780-1910*, *The Working Class in American History*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 213-214; Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, 118; Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia*, 22.

America.⁷⁰ Indeed, working-class men's belief in the possibility of achieving their own "American Dream" has often undermined the very goals which their collective action sought to accomplish. Trade unionism has been one of the most effective tools for working-class men to express their control in the workplace. However, many times these accomplishments have been hindered or undone entirely by male workers' desire to escape the cycle of wage labor and become their own self-made men.⁷¹

The close relationship between coal miners' skill and manhood only partially explains their hostility to the introduction of labor-saving machinery. Colliers had also seen the impact of mechanization on other industrial workers. As one of the most prolific writers on coal mining in the nineteenth century, Andrew Roy often lamented colliers' opposition to the introduction of coal-cutting machinery and other technology, arguing that the miners' fears were unjustified. Technology, he asserted, would lead to less laborious work and better pay for the miner.⁷² Colliers disagreed with this assessment, and fought to prevent labor-saving machinery from deskilling their work. In countless examples from other industries in the nineteenth century, the introduction of technology led to male workers' fears of being replaced in their manly professions by women and

⁷⁰ Mike Davis, *Prisoners of the American Dream: Politics and Economy in the History of the Us Working Class* (London: Verso, 1986), Ch.1. See also David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London ; New York: Verso, 1991), for numerous examples of how race was used as a distraction from workers' advancement.

⁷¹ One of the most prominent examples of working-class escapism was the free soil movement of labor activist George Henry Evans. For the working class' aspirations towards this form of independence, see Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1970; 1995), 16-17. Also, Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 100. Leaving behind the endless cycle of wage labor is also discussed in Frank Tobias Higbie, *Indispensable Outcasts: Hobo Workers and Community in the American Midwest, 1880-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 13.

⁷² Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 63; *Economic Geology*, 344; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 152.

children. For instance, printers in New York and Philadelphia expressed these fears half-a-century before coal-cutting machinery was first introduced in Ohio, as did New England's shoe makers.⁷³ Industrial workers' most valuable means of protecting their interests and supporting their manly privilege was control over their knowledge and technical expertise. In Bill Haywood and Frank Bohn's analysis of industrial labor in the nineteenth century, workers' skills gave them power by placing the "manager's brains" in "the workman's cap."⁷⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century, skilled workers were stripped of their skill by the introduction of mechanization to their work; all that remained was the workman's cap.

Collieries were the last preserve of the skilled laborer in industrial America. Despite standing at the center of the industrial revolution, coal miners successfully held mechanization at bay for decades. Though first patented in the 1870s, coal-cutting machinery did not make any major inroads for twenty years. Pneumatic drills and prefabricated explosives were introduced in the first decades of the twentieth century. In the 1920s mechanical loaders became common place and the first continuous-mining machines were used a decade later. But in the nineteenth-century, the coal mines were still the domain of the practical miner: skilled, independent, and increasingly masculine. During the last three decades of the century, the practical miner was under siege by advancements in labor-saving machinery. Roy voiced the fears of many of his fellows

⁷³ Printers in these cities expressed concern over loss of their privileged status when women or children took over in newly mechanized trades. *The Workingman's Advocate* (New York), November 21, 1829. For similar examples in the shoe industry, see Blewett, *Men, Women, and Work*, 213-214.

⁷⁴ William D. Haywood and Frank Bohn, *Industrial Socialism* (Chicago: C. H. Kerr, 19--), 25; David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 45-46.

when he noted that in the future, “mining by the pick will have become a lost art.”⁷⁵ Deskilling the mines threatened not only the collier’s livelihood, but his identity as a man. One Massillon miner, Dale Pennman, recalled his own experience opening a mine without the use of steam shovels to dig the shaft, noting with pride the use of “man power” in the work.⁷⁶ Without his skill, was the collier still a practical miner? Was he still a man? While labor-saving machinery called this into question, other developments in the mines settled the matter in the affirmative.

Both skill and manhood were challenged in the mines during the nineteenth century by the threat of mechanization, but collier masculinity was bolstered and the coal mines were explicitly gendered due to restrictions placed on who could and could not work in the depths. In the middle of the nineteenth century, colliers transitioned from working in a family system of labor to one which was dominated by men. In Britain and Belgium, women were excluded from the mines legally in the 1840s.⁷⁷ In North America, legal restrictions came much later. Canadian women did not see official exclusion until the 1890s and American women, specifically those in Ohio, were not

⁷⁵ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 152. Roy was much more optimistic than the average miner, and thought this transition would be beneficial to the collier, lightening their workload and resulting in higher wages. Colliers were less optimistic, noting that despite increased production the work of the collier had not eased. *The Miners’ National Record*, Vol. 1, No. 4, (Cleveland), February, 1875.

⁷⁶ “Interview with Dale Pennman, Massillon Deep Coal Mining 1915 to 1922,” by Ruth Kane (August 10, 1989), Archives of the Massillon Museum.

⁷⁷ The exclusion of women in British and Belgian mines has been covered in many sources. For a brief review, see Alan Heesom, “The Coal Mines Act of 1842, Social Reform, and Social Control,” *The Historical Journal* 24, no. 1 (Mar., 1981); Patricia J. Hilden, “The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform: Women Coal Miners in Belgium, 1840-1914,” *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 2 (Jun., 1991).

prohibited from working the mines until well into the twentieth century.⁷⁸ However, in the U.S., legal exclusion of women from the mines was unnecessary, since social and cultural prohibitions had proven equally effective. Colliers' wives were subject to the same social mores as their middle-class counterparts. Though the lives of coal-mining women bore little resemblance to the middle-class ideal, the ideology of domesticity and abhorrence of women's work outside the home was just as proscriptive.⁷⁹ The methods and mechanisms of this exclusion, as well as its impact on women's work in the mines, will be discussed in Chapter 4. Independence and skill could be undermined, however, women's banishment from the mines, *de facto* and *de jure*, gendered coal-mining as explicitly masculine, in a way that could not be compromised.

When women stopped working in the mines, colliers transitioned from a family labor system to one dependent on a family wage. This shift devalued women's work because it was outside of the capitalist labor market and made women reliant on men's

⁷⁸ For Canada, see Nancy M. Forestell, "The Miner's Wife: Working-Class Femininity in a Masculine Context, 1920-1950," in *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada*, ed. Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, and Nancy M. Forestell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 141. Ohio laws restricting women's work in the mines came in multiple stages, beginning in 1913 and updated in the state legal code through 1946. See *Laws of Ohio, 103*, (Springfield, OH: The Springfield Publishing Company, 1913), 912; *Laws of Ohio, 108- Part 1*, (Springfield, OH: The Springfield Publishing Company, 1919), 540-541; *Opinions of the Attorney General, Ohio*, vol. 3 (Cleveland: The Consolidated Press and Printing Co., 1934), 1955-1957; William Herbert Page, *Page's Ohio General Code, Annotated*, vol. 1, Cincinnati (Anderson Company 1946), 686.

⁷⁹ Cultural prescriptions of domesticity and work among the middle-class have been explored in numerous instances. See Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*; Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer, 1966); Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" In New England, 1780-1835*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977; 1997); Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). For the impact of these ideologies on working-class women and colliers' wives, see Anna Sale, "Sisters in Coal: A History of Women in the West Virginia Mines," *Goldenseal* 33, no. 1 (2007): 13; Angela V. John, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Women Workers at Victorian Coal Mines* (London: Croom Helm, 1980); Humphries, "Protective Legislation."; Hilden, "The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform."

wages for survival in mining communities.⁸⁰ In her classic work on patriarchal control, Heidi Hartman argued that the foundations of patriarchy rested on “men’s control over women’s labor.”⁸¹ Excluding women was the ultimate form of control over their labor and colliers benefited from this exclusion in much the same way white workers reaped the rewards of racial segregation. Instead of DuBois’s “wages of whiteness,” male coal miners earned “wages of manliness,” which they traded for independence, pay increases, and social benefits.⁸²

The exclusion of women from working in the collieries gendered all activities in the coal mines because they were predicated on an artificially-constructed dependence of women in coal-mining communities. When male colliers negotiated for increased wages, it was within a system that artificially installed them as their family’s sole breadwinner. When they protested the living conditions in company housing or prices in the company store, they exhibited their ultimate control over even women’s domestic sphere. When they demanded the right to appoint their own foremen or hire a checkweighman to verify the accuracy of the scales, their demands were based on a workplace patriarchy that replaced the family labor system. All negotiations between coal miners and operators—whether over wages, workers’ control in the mines, or living conditions in company

⁸⁰ Mark-Lawson and Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'?", 154; Michèle Barrett and Mary McIntosh, "The 'Family Wage': Some Problems for Socialists and Feminists," *Capital & Class*, no. 11 (Summer, 1980): 59. For the devaluing of housework see Boydston, *Home and Work*, 74.

⁸¹ Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage," 11.

⁸² For the wages of whiteness, see W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880*, First Free Press ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1935:1992), 700; Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*. On trading women’s labor and wages for financial and other benefits, see Hartmann, "Capitalism," 166; Mark-Lawson and Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'?", 169.

towns—were inherently gendered because they were based on the subjugation and exclusion of women.

The reality of colliers' and their wives' lived experience in the Stark County mines was not as neat or as constrained. Some women continued to work in the mines intermittently, though they did so within the family labor system. Women's domestic production, though devalued in a wage economy, was central to family survival and often of greater value than their husband's wages. However, colliers continued to equate their role in the community and in the mines with their identity as skilled miners and as men. The central role of gender in coal-mining communities did not begin or end at the mine entrance.

Chapter 2- Community Ties: Organizing Manhood Outside of the Home

Coal mining was a masculine profession. The nature of the work, the structure of the mines, and the lack of supervision fostered an independent spirit among the men who worked in the depths of Stark County's mines. Colliers based their identities and their manhood on both their skill on the job and their ability to control their work. Boys in the mines learned to be men under the tutelage of their fathers and brothers, immersed in collier work culture at the coal face. A collier's control over his room and the apprentices and assistances who worked alongside him reinforced workscape patriarchy, bolstering their manly identity. These same factors of skill, independence, and control were equally important to the miner's identity when he left the mines. Outside of the colliery, Stark County's coal miners constructed a notion of manhood based on their relationships in the community.

In the Massillon region, a diverse set of relationships outside of the mines contributed to colliers' unique form of manhood. Despite the high premium which coal miners placed on their sense of independence in their workscape, they were also dependent on one another for their lives and livelihood. In the mines practical miners depended on their fellows, trusting that their skill and craft knowledge would not put a brother miner at risk. Outside of the mines, dependence was integral to maintaining collier families and providing a unified voice in their negotiations with operators. Unions and mutual-aid societies in Stark County facilitated miners in supporting their families and maintaining their position as heads-of-household. Colliers' dependence on their comrades helped them to maintain their independence from operators and their

representatives. However, these relationships were not the only factors at play in the community contributing to colliers' manly ideals.

Stark County's miners had much more freedom than their counterparts in other mining communities due to the lack of company towns in the region. Colliers in the mining townships of Massillon, Perry, and North Lawrence were not required to live in company housing; indeed, many of the county's miners owned their own homes. Living in open towns, they were also not beholden to the "scrip system," which would have forced them to purchase from company-owned stores. Miners negotiated these issues of dependence and independence in gendered terms, tying manhood to union membership and household status. Whether it was inside or outside of the mines, in the home or in the community, organizing their fellow miners or establishing their homes, manhood was central to the way colliers constructed their identity.

Stark County's Colliers: Demography and Change in the 1870s

Before exploring the central role that gender played in the lives of Stark County's colliers, it is necessary to first establish some background on the men who lived and worked in the Massillon coal region. Coal miners in the county were a diverse group, reflecting the changes that were taking place in the nation as a whole during the turbulent decade of the 1870s. Immigration was central to building America's industrial working class and Stark County provides a glimpse into working-class culture in their patterns of nativity. Herbert Gutman noted that the continual influx of immigrants was a foundation of working-class culture, while David Montgomery has argued that the typical worker of

the second half of the nineteenth century was likely to be foreign born.¹ A look at the nativity of the colliers of Massillon and its surrounding areas in 1870 and 1880 manifests both of these trends. Stark County's coal miners were predominantly immigrants, but native-born miners remained a significant minority. Furthermore, the regions' colliers were, like other industrial workers in the nineteenth century, overwhelmingly male.² Both gender and nativity were important in constructing what it meant to be a practical miner living in a mining community.

Uncovering these trends in Stark County highlights the importance of scrutinizing the government sources on which historical analysis is often based. According to the published summaries of the United States Census, coal mining grew rapidly in Ohio from 1840 to 1870, and then underwent a sharp decline by 1880. The number of census respondents who identified themselves as miners peaked in 1870 at 12,501, of whom 6,776 were native born. Ten years later the census enumerated only 5,575 miners in the state, and the number of native born had fallen to a remarkable 41.³ This represents a 65 percent drop in the number of miners and a decrease in native born worker's share of the

¹ Herbert George Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Knopf, 1976), 69; David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 65.

² As the last chapter illustrated, coal mining was in the process of transitioning from a family labor system to one dominated by men. However, county and federal records indicate that as many as a dozen women mined coal in Stark County during the nineteenth century. Stark County Collier Database and *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, V. 1 – 4. Female colliers in Stark County will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 4.

³ Department of the Interior Census Office, *Ninth Census, United States. 1870, V. 3: Industry and Wealth* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 748, 764; Department of the Interior Census Office, *Tenth Census, United States. 1880, V. 1: Population* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 735.

<i>Birth place (Categories)</i>	<i>1870 Total</i>	<i>1870 %</i>	<i>1880 Total</i>	<i>1880 %</i>	<i>Increase</i>
U.S. (Native Born)	165	27.3	460	34.9	+2.78
- Ohio	126	20.8	354	26.9	+2.81
- Pennsylvania	26	4.3	68	5.2	+2.61
U.K.	277	45.8	530	40.2	+1.91
- England	96	15.9	194	14.7	+2.02
- Ireland ⁴	44	7.3	68	5.2	+1.55
- Scotland	48	7.9	76	5.8	+1.58
- Wales	89	14.7	192	14.6	+2.16
Germany⁵	134	22.1	246	18.7	+1.84
- Prussia	67	11.1	140	10.6	+2.09
Other	29	4.8	82	6.2	+2.83
Totals	605		1318		+2.18

Figure 2-1: Stark County colliers by nativity in 1870 and 1880. From Stark County Population Schedules, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Washington, D.C., 1872) and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Washington, D.C., 1883)

mine labor force from more than 54 percent to a mere .7 percent. The vast majority of this work was taken over by miners hailing from Great Britain. While there were only 3,249 English, Welsh, and Scots working Ohio mines in 1870, the 1880 census counted 5,047 (more than 90 percent of the entirety of Ohio's miners).⁶ Of course, these published summaries of the federal census represent Ohio as a whole and do not provide any specific details on Stark County's colliers.

⁴ Although an independent republic today, Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century.

⁵ For the purpose of this category, all miners claiming origin in the states that would eventually form the German Confederation are included.

⁶ Census Office, *Tenth Census, United States. 1880, V. 1: Population*, 735.

Nativity patterns among Stark County's colliers highlight some of the trends expressed in the published statewide summaries, as well as significant divergences. As table 2-1 illustrates, Stark County saw significant growth in coal mining during the 1870s. In 1870, 605 miners toiled in the depths of the Massillon's workings; by 1880, the total number of colliers had more than doubled to 1318. This growth represents an increase of 118 percent over the course of the decade. While this growth is significant and a majority of the region's miners were foreign born, data from the population schedules in Stark County contradicts much of the information compiled in the statistical summaries. The most striking divergence between the Ohio summaries and the Stark County population schedules is in the number of native-born miners. In 1880, 460 of the county's colliers were native born, a far cry from the 41 indicated in the published figures for the whole state. Instead of the sharp fall suggested by the census summaries, native-born miners saw a dramatic increase between 1870 and 1880. As a group, colliers born in the United States increased by 178 percent while those born in Ohio grew an additional three percent. These native miners grew from 27.3 percent of the county's colliers to 34.9, but they still remained a minority.⁷

Though the percentage of foreign miners fell in the 1870s, Stark County's coal mines were still worked primarily by European colliers. Immigrants from the German states were a significant minority among the county's colliers, with Prussians representing the largest group. The number of Prussian miners more than doubled,

⁷ Numbers for this section were compiled in a database of colliers and their families taken from the Stark County Population Schedules, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Washington, D.C., 1872) and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Washington, D.C., 1883). Hereafter referred to as Stark County Collier Database.

though they remained consistent at approximately 11 percent of the county's colliers. The largest group of miners in the county hailed from the United Kingdom. English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh miners constituted more than 40 percent of colliers in the Massillon region in 1880. Though this represented a drop of more than five percent from 1870, in real numbers, these miners increased from 277 to 530 by the end of the decade. Miners from Wales saw the largest increase in the county, narrowly trailing the county average indicated in table 2-1. As Ronald L. Lewis has noted, Welsh miners often relocated en masse, settling in cultural enclaves which preserved their ethnic identities.⁸ The coal region around Canton and Massillon, in Stark County, was a prime region for Welsh immigration after 1870. Although some groups of European miners in the county grew over the course of the decade, their numbers were so small that even a large percentage increase represented only a small number of miners. For example, French miners increased at a rate equal to that of Ohio-born miners—118 percent—but with just 45 colliers in 1880, they constituted only 3.4 percent of the county's colliers.⁹ Even when their share of the mining population declining in relation to native born miners, there was an increase in the raw number of European miners. It was this European tradition of mining that was transmitted through multiple generations of coal miners.

Stark County's American-born colliers increased throughout the 1870s, however, their ties to European mining traditions were in no way diminished. As John Bodnar has argued, what one did in their homeland largely defined the work they performed when

⁸ Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans: A History of Assimilation in the Coalfields* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 92.

⁹ Stark County Collier Database.

they joined the industrial working class in America.¹⁰ This pattern was evident in the coal mines as well, where British and German miners left their native lands to continue working in collieries when they reached America. Mine work was a family tradition, almost a hereditary occupation in its transmission of craft skill from one generation to the next.¹¹ Stark County's colliers highlighted this pattern as did most other coal communities. In 1880, more than twenty percent of mining households in the county had multiple generations of colliers.¹² Even though native-born colliers were on the rise, the number of first generation Americans grew even faster. In 1870, only 76 of the American-born coal miners in Stark County had foreign-born parents; ten years later that number had grown to 283. This was an increase from 46 to 61 percent of native-born colliers.¹³ The sons of English, Welsh, and Prussian coal miners contributed to the overall growth in native colliers, while continuing the influence of European traditions in the mines. It is clear from looking at the census that Stark County's colliers were overwhelmingly male and predominantly foreign born; however, nativity was not the only demographic statistic vital to understanding Massillon's coal miners.

Coal mining was a life-long career and Stark County's colliers ranged in age from early childhood to octogenarian. Most colliers began their work in the mines at an early

¹⁰ John E. Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 142.

¹¹ Priscilla Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 14, 71.

¹² Of 885 collier households in 1880, 180 had multiple generations living in the same house. Stark County Collier Database.

¹³ Stark County Collier Database.

age—around their twelfth birthday—and Stark County was no exception.¹⁴ While most boys entered the mines in their early teens, sometimes family circumstances forced them in sooner. At eight years old, Mary E. McBride was the youngest child working Stark County's mines in 1870; ten years later, Nick Mong was the youngest at five.¹⁵ Practical miners continued their labors well into their golden years, working in the mines until they were physically unable to continue the grueling work. Nearly ten percent of Stark County's colliers were over the age of sixty and the oldest, David Bollinger, was eighty at the time of the 1870 census.¹⁶ The majority of Massillon's colliers did not fall into either extreme of youth or age. More than seventy percent of the men who worked in the mines were between the ages of twenty and sixty, with a median age of thirty.¹⁷ By that age, a practical miner in Stark County would have spent almost two decades working the coal face; he could expect to spend at least three more before he put down his tools for the last time. In the process of spending half-a-century in the mines, colliers accumulated responsibilities in their homes as well.

¹⁴ Child labor in the mines has been explored in many works, including John Brophy, *A Miner's Life, an Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 36; Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 100; Dorothy Schwieder, *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895-1925* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1983), 38-39; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 71.

¹⁵ Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Perry Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 302, Family 295) and Sugar Creek Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 13, Family 13).

¹⁶ In 1870, 56 miners were over 60; that number rose to 130 in 1880. Stark County Collier Database. David Bollinger can be found in Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Osnaburg Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 146, Family 149).

¹⁷ Seventy-four percent of the county's miners were between the ages of twenty and sixty in 1870. That number fell to 71.4 percent in 1880. Stark County Collier Database.

Coal mining was a hereditary occupation because coal miners in Stark County were family men. More than half of the county's colliers were married and an equal number had children. In 1870, 356 coal miners had children living in their homes; while five of these men were widowers, the remainder were married. At the end of the decade, the number of married men had more than doubled to 744, and another fourteen widowers were raising children on their own. Twenty percent of collier households had multiple generations living in them and these colliers transmitted practical mining—as both a profession and a gender ideal—to the children in their homes. Marriage and fatherhood contributed to how the practical miner lived and established a household in the Stark County mining community.¹⁸

Demographics are not all-inclusive, but they do paint a portrait of Stark County's archetypical miner. With some exceptions, a miner in the Massillon region was a man. He was foreign born, coming from a British mining tradition learned in England or Wales. Even if he was born in the United States, a Stark County collier was likely a first generation American. The miner was young—around thirty years old—and would work in the coal mines for decades. He was also married and had children whom he would eventually bring in to the mines to work alongside him. Each of these factors—age, children, marriage, and nativity—had a significant influence on colliers' construction of a manly ideal in Stark County's coal-mining community.

¹⁸ Numbers for this are taken from the Stark County Collier Database. In 1870, 356 colliers had children and 351 of them were married at the time of the census. Ten years later those numbers had risen to 758 and 744, respectively. Of the 428 distinct collier households in 1870, 55 had multiple generations of miners living under the same roof. In 1880, Stark County's colliers lived in 885 distinct households, with 180 of them housing more than one generation.

Unions and Organization: Manly Dependence in the Collier Community

Histories of trade unions are among the oldest works of labor history. In his 1922 classic on trade unionism, Selig Perlman looked at unions initiating coal strikes in the bituminous and anthracite coal regions as the entire scope of coal mining in labor history.¹⁹ While the historians that followed in Perlman's wake added works on labor leaders and union organization, it was not until the 1960s that historians began serious inquiries into organization and unions as an expression of working-class culture.²⁰ Expanding the scope and meaning of labor organizing in Stark County is central to understanding collier culture. Unions, mutual aid societies, and other forms of organized labor straddled the boundaries between the mines and the community. Though they were nominally organized for protection from and negotiations with operators and their representatives, the origin and impact of union efforts was felt more tangibly in the community than in the mines. Union meetings and organizing took place after work and labor negotiations, while primarily focused on working conditions and pay, affected far more than just the men in the mines. Labor demands expressed the values and desires of the men in the community and were structured in gendered terms.

¹⁹ Selig Perlman, *A History of Trade Unionism in the United States* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1922), 130-136, 167-170.

²⁰ For examples of old labor history on unions and labor leaders, see Edward A. Wieck, *The American Miners' Association: A Record of the Origin of Coal Miners' Unions in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1940); Carter Goodrich, *The Miner's Freedom: A Study of the Working Life in a Changing Industry* (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1925); Edward Pinkowski, *John Siney: The Miners' Martyr* (Philadelphia: Sunshine Press, 1963). Early looks into working-class culture among coal miners include Katherine A. Harvey, *The Best-Dressed Miners: Life and Labor in the Maryland Coal Region, 1835-1910* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969); Harold W. Aurand, *From the Molly Maguires to the United Mine Workers: The Social Ecology of an Industrial Union 1869-1897* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1971).

Stark County colliers had a tradition of labor activism learned in the coal fields of the United Kingdom. English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh men form the largest group of colliers in the region, and when they settled in Massillon they were not new to the trade. They brought with them a tradition of mutualism and labor organization that made the region a hotbed of collier militancy in the 1870s. Many of these colliers were inspired in their fight by the successes of a giant in the British labor movement. Alexander “Sandy” Macdonald was a labor legend in the United Kingdom, leading the nation’s largest union of coal miners and serving as their voice in Parliament after his election to the House of Commons in 1874.²¹ Though multiple labor unions were influential in organizing in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the 1870s two groups had the largest impact. One of these was influenced by Macdonald’s own Miners’ National Association, adopting its message as well as its name.

The American incarnation of the Miners’ National Association was organized in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1873 with significant input from colliers who were influential in Stark County’s coal mines. When he attended the Youngstown convention as a delegate, Andrew Roy was a local miner from Church Hill. He was well respected throughout the state and the following year he was appointed as the state’s first inspector of mines. Though he did not work the Stark County mines as a practical miner, Roy spent a great deal of time in the workings around Massillon, inspecting them as a representative of the governor. His fellow delegate, John Pollock, was a resident of North Lawrence who had

²¹ Wieck, *The American Miners' Association*, 28; Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 106, 112; John H. M. Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea: A Comparative Study of Class Formation in Scotland and the American Midwest, 1830-1924* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 33-35. Macdonald’s name is alternately spelled McDonald and MacDonald.

worked in multiple mines in the county and served as an officer in the county miners' organization.²² Both men had worked together in support of Ohio's colliers. The year before they helped to form a national union of coal miners in Youngstown, the two men served as the miners' delegates to the capital in Columbus, lobbying the legislature to pass the Miners' Bill. Though the committee considering the bill heavily favored the operators, Roy authored the minority report to the legislative commission's findings.²³ Both of these men had substantial influence in the Ohio colliers' labor movement, but not due to any special qualities they possessed.

Roy and Pollock were excellent representatives for the men of Stark County because they were not just mouthpieces for a union; they were practical miners. Like most of the men who mined coal in the Massillon region, Roy and Pollock first began mining as young men, in Scotland and Ireland, respectively.²⁴ Roy came to America with his family at the age of sixteen, while Pollock arrived in his twenties. Both entered the mines alongside their fathers at an early age, learning their skills in the same craft tradition that had been handed down for generations. At the time of the Youngstown convention, both men were in their thirties, with wives and children who depended on

²² *Report of the Ohio Mining Commission*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, 1872), 129.

²³ Andrew Roy and John Pollock, *Report of Messrs. Roy and Pollock, Miners' Committee to Columbus, to Urge the Passage by the Legislature, of the Miners' Bill, for the Ventilation and Inspection of Coal Mines* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1872); *Report of the Ohio Mining Commission*, Part III.

²⁴ Roy's biographical details can be found in Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio, Volume I* (Cincinnati: C. J. Krehbiel & Co., 1902), 110. Pollock related his own experiences to the Ohio Coal Commission in *Report of the Ohio Mining Commission*, 129.

them for support.²⁵ When these men spoke for their fellow colliers, they understood the experiences of their compatriots because they had lived them.

Though the organization was short lived, the Miners' National Association set the framework for Stark County's colliers to negotiate with operators throughout the 1870s. In 1875, the union's president, John Siney, was put on trial for conspiracy charges related to a strike in Pennsylvania.²⁶ The trial spelled the beginning of the end of the M.N.A. Though Siney was acquitted, his codefendant, union organizer Xingo Parks, was convicted and sentenced to a year in the Western State Penitentiary.²⁷ The drama surrounding the trial was a serious blow to the morale of union members. Coupled with multiple strikes throughout coal fields represented by the union which drained their finances, the M.N.A. disbanded in 1876 as the troubles in Massillon reached their peak.²⁸ Prior to the union's demise, Siney traveled throughout the coal regions promoting the virtues of arbitration between colliers and operators as a means of avoiding strikes. Though he was rebuffed in his attempts by most operators in the Massillon region, he found a willing partner in Mark Hanna.

Mark Hanna was one of the richest coal operators in the region, but was widely considered a friend to labor. According to Andrew Roy, "the workingmen of the United

²⁵ Andrew Roy's age and family statistics can be found in Populations Schedules of Trumbull County, Ohio, Church Hill Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 329, Family 384); Pollock can be found in Stark County, North Lawrence Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 248, Family 250).

²⁶ The Clearfield Trial is discussed in detail in Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 154-178.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 175-176.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 179.

States never had a more consistent, better or truer friend than Mark Hanna.”²⁹ John McBride, a Massillon miner and future president of the United Mine Workers of America agreed. Noting his willingness to work with the miners of the district, McBride believed that Hanna had “treated more freely and fully with the miners’ unions than” his fellow operators in the Massillon region.³⁰ When Siney went to Cleveland in 1874, Hanna was the only coal operator who would meet with the union president. After assurances that union members would abide by arbitration even if the decision was in favor of the operators, Hanna replied that he would support the union’s arbitration policy and encourage his fellow operators to do so as well.³¹ Of course, this was a gentlemen’s agreement, not a formalized arrangement between the union and operators. It was this arbitration agreement, an understanding between the union and Hanna, that characterized labor relations in Stark County in the years preceding the Massillon War.

Arbitration was designed to level the playing field between colliers and operators and it was gendered in its construction and application. At the core of arbitration was coal miners’ desire for operators to recognize the value of their skills in the colliery and their rights to their job. The traditional view of colliers’ labor militancy has been that these concerns were based on issues of class and workers’ control; however colliers’ own

²⁹ Andrew Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States: From the Development of the Mines to the Close of the Anthracite Strike of 1902 Including a Brief Sketch of Early British Miners*, First Greenwood Reprinting ed. (Columbus, Ohio; Westport, Connecticut: J.L. Trauger Printing Company; Greenwood, 1905; 1970), 164.

³⁰ *The Old Man and His Men: The Cordial Friendship between Senator Hanna and His Employees: A Proud Record of Fair Treatment and Constant Friendliness Illustrated by the Recent St. Railway Strike in Cleveland*, (Cleveland: Press of Ward & Shaw, 1897). Original quote from an editorial in the *Columbus Record*, February 25, 1897.

³¹ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 164.

words illustrate an alternative explanation.³² In an early attempt at arbitration by Siney in 1871, Pennsylvania miner James Kealy made clear that manhood and arbitration went hand-in-hand. Describing the arbitration meeting, Kealy noted that colliers “met [operators] as men.”³³ He was explicit in connecting the equality of colliers and operators on the board of arbitration to a recognition of manly rights. Coal-miners’ participation in the board was conditional on operators’ treatment of colliers as “gentlemen and...equals.”³⁴ Colliers’ willingness to sit down at the table, and the terms in which they negotiated, were predicated on colliers’ gender ideals and their notions of manhood.

While unionization and arbitration had clear economic goals in pay and benefits, the language that colliers used to discuss these economic issues was gendered. Colliers spoke and wrote in a language of masculinity because this was the issue being negotiated in labor disputes. The primacy of gender is indicated in Kealy’s threat to walk away from the board of arbitration if operators would not treat colliers as men. Standing up to operators was the duty of all true men in mining communities, but it was not without its tradeoffs.³⁵ In Stark County, colliers placed issues of workers’ control in terms of manly rights and placed a premium on them to the detriment of wage increases. The right to

³² Montgomery’s look at skill and workers control in the workplace argues that this desire for independence could trump economic concerns. Laslett finds that colliers gave similar weight to determining skill among their fellow miners David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 13-14; Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 51.

³³ Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 79.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *The Miners' National Record*, Cleveland, (April 1875), 97.

appoint a check-weighman—a man hired by the miners to verify the weight of their coal cars at the company scales—highlighted this issue. Massillon’s coal miners viewed the presence of a check-weighman as a "privilege" that had been hard-won from the area’s operators.³⁶ In their negotiations with Mark Hanna in the years preceding the Massillon War, colliers agreed to work at reduced wages based on the acknowledgement that their control and independence was more valuable.³⁷ Editors of the official publication of the M.N.A., *The Miners’ National Record*, made the connection between unionism and manliness more explicit. Lamenting a group of colliers who withdrew from the union rather than maintain their strike, the editors asked, “How is this for manhood?”³⁸ Quitting the union and betraying their fellow colliers made these miners less than men in the eyes of their comrades. Of course, the discourse revolving around collier manhood was not just a matter of semantics for miners’ unions in the Massillon coal fields.

Stark County’s unions not only provided colliers with manly independence in the mines; they provided safety and security for collier families. As noted previously, the county’s coal miners were family men and more than half of them were married with children.³⁹ Since women’s exclusion from the mines enforced at least the appearance of a single-wage family structure, collier families were heavily dependent on the husband’s labor. Colliers’ concerns regarding the protection of their families were expressed in the

³⁶ *The Miners’ National Record*, Cleveland (February 1875), 54.

³⁷ Herbert Croly, *Marcus Alonzo Hanna: His Life and Work* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1912), 92.

³⁸ *The Miners’ National Record*, Cleveland (May 1875), 122.

³⁹ Stark County Collier Database.

constitutions and by-laws of the organizations they formed. In the Massillon region, when colliers formed the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association of the Tuscarawas Valley in 1872, protecting their families was the primary goal of their organization. The M.L.B.A. was a system of death and disability insurance and provided four dollars per week to a member in good standing who was unable to work.⁴⁰ While this was well below the monthly average of 38 dollars for a collier hewing coal in the mines, when combined with a wife's earnings, it was enough to keep a family in a home.⁴¹ Colliers banded together to form these organizations in order to support their families, but this support was predicated on the practical miners' notions of gender.

The benefits from Stark County's mutual aid societies were dispensed conditionally, illustrating the central role of gender in the organization. The M.L.B.A. extended benefits to both the collier and his wife, but those benefits were gendered. While a miner's widow would receive thirty dollars in the event of her husband's death, a widowed collier received only twenty.⁴² Though women's work was an integral part of family survival in coal communities, their lives were valued less than that of their husbands. While the discrepancy in death benefits was most likely due to the collier's

⁴⁰ *Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules of Order of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association of the Tuscarawas Valley, Ohio*, (Hubbard, Ohio: Miners' Journal Print, 18--), 12. Date of publication is unknown, but the M.L.B.A. was active in the Tuscarawas Valley from 1872 through 1875.

⁴¹ Average monthly incomes of Stark County colliers from *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1877*, (Columbus: Nevins & Meyers, State Printers, 1878), 136-138; *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1878*, (Columbus: Nevins & Meyers, State Printers, 1879), 53; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1879*, (Columbus: Nevins & Meyers, State Printers, 1880), 74. Family income will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

⁴² *Constitution of the M.L.B.A.*, 12-13.

status as a member of the organization, it also illustrates a gender imbalance that did not reflect the reality of women's contributions to the collier community. In order to receive these benefits, colliers needed to demonstrate their responsibility and manhood. Not only did a collier need to be a member in good standing for at least six months, a miner or his widow would receive no benefits if the death or disability occurred through "suicide, dueling, or any outrageous conduct of his own."⁴³ Colliers undertook a life of danger inside the mines in order to support their families. Frivolous behavior that put their family at risk would not be rewarded. Practical miners embraced their manhood and their obligations as family men when they organized unions and aid societies.

Forming unions and joining benevolent aid societies allowed colliers to protect their children, not just in the home, but in the mines as well. When colliers created unions and benevolent mutual aid societies, they were not just improving conditions for themselves. They were investing in the future and making the mines and the community a better place for the next generation of miners. This was not entirely altruistic; colliers had a personal interest in the colliers who followed them into the mines. Coal mining was not just a profession, but a craft skill passed down through generations of colliers. As previously noted, in the 1870s, between thirteen and twenty percent of Stark County's collier households had more than one generation of miners living in them.⁴⁴ When coal miners formed unions to improve conditions in the mines or formed insurance

⁴³ Ibid., 11-12. Quote from Article X, Section 8.

⁴⁴ Stark County Collier Database.

cooperatives to protect their families, they were making an investment in their own children. Protecting miners and protecting their families was one in the same.

Colliers constructed a manly identity predicated on their independence, both in and outside of the mines; but their autonomy was built on their dependence on fellow coal miners. In the mines, they depended on one another for their very lives. Practical miners relied on their skill to protect their fellows from unsafe practices, and trusted that their counterparts would do nothing that could bring down the mine on top of them. Outside of the mines, dependence on their fellow miners protected the livelihood of their families as well. Unions protected wages and working conditions, while mutual aid societies provided insurance in the event of a disaster. Colliers bolstered their independence from operators and outside influence through these mechanisms of dependence and mutual obligation in the mines and in the community.⁴⁵ However, not all of Stark County's colliers' ideals of manly independence were predicated on such notions.

A King in his Castle

In the nineteenth century, the home took on new meaning in the American psyche. As the United States transitioned from an agrarian society to one based on industry and a market economy, a new middle class developed to meet the demands of an industrial society. While the self-made man emerged as an independent, republican, self-

⁴⁵ Even Ohio coal operator Mark Hanna argued that unions were necessary for the new industrial society, noting that large corporations made it "impossible for each individual to receive such close consideration at the hands of his employer as in earlier days might have been accorded." Mark Hanna, *His Book* (Boston: The Chapple Publishing Co., Ltd., 1904), 37.

sufficient entrepreneur devoted to the public sphere of business, his female counterpart cultivated a warm enclave of respite. The true woman embodied domesticity and motherhood, and the home that she created was changed both emotionally and physically. New rooms and commodities gave the home significance as a symbol and as a location to display the fruits of middle-class consumption. Women's increased role in the home came at the expense of their continued exclusion from politics and commerce. Instead of wielding power and authority, women were tasked with influencing their husbands and children by modeling moral behavior in the home. Of course, this influence had limits. Even the middle-class home was a patriarchal establishment, and women's ability to persuade their husbands ended with the patriarch's decision. By the late-nineteenth century, these ideals were firmly entrenched. While this new formulation of the home and middle-class gender norms was powerful in its ability to proscribe behavior, it was an ideal that was difficult to achieve even by the class with whom it was so closely associated. For the working class, this type of life was even more difficult to achieve, but just as powerfully prescriptive.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The creation of the middle class and new gender ideals has been explored in numerous works. For the development of the middle class, see Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). On the self-made man, see E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993); Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York Free Press, 1996); Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). On women's influence in and outside the home, Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer, 1966); Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" In New England, 1780-1835*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977; 1997); Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: From Banners to Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Anne M. Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism: New York and Boston, 1797-1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Nancy A. Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change:*

Working-class men and women were also strongly influenced by the nineteenth-century ideal of the home. As working-class men lost power in the workplace, the home became the last refuge for working-class patriarchy. Like their middle-class counterparts, industrial workers still wielded authority within the walls of their own home. However, even this last refuge of patriarchal power was under threat. In cities, upper- and middle-class women from reform and benevolent societies inserted themselves into working-class homes in order to uplift the workers, enforcing their own class standards on those who wished to receive their aid.⁴⁷ Though many working-class women worked outside the home as well, they still sought to maintain their homes as a refuge in much the same way as their middle-class counterparts. Of course, this “plebian cult of domesticity” was modified to meet the realities of life for the industrial working-class, and included a system of shared responsibility and community among working-class families.⁴⁸ As Christine Stansell points out, working-class men and women did not seek to fully emulate middle-class domesticity, but “sought working-class dignity” in their homes.⁴⁹ In either case, whether the home was a middle-class refuge or the domestic sphere of working-class men, it was a symbol of autonomy and power for the man of the house.

Rochester, New York, 1822-1872 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984). For the definitive work on the creation of the new home and consumerism, see Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

⁴⁷ Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism*, 195; Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 35.

⁴⁸ Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 249.

⁴⁹ Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*, Illini Books ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982; 1987), 138.

In coal-mining communities, the collier home embodied elements of both middle- and working-class households, but the practical miner's independence and patriarchal authority in the home could be subject to numerous outside influences. Collier independence could be limited in the household depending on whether or not the community was an open or company town. Most coal-mining communities in America were located in isolated regions with little else in close proximity. Due to this relative isolation, coal mining was often the only source of paid labor in the community, which gave operators immense control over their workers' lives both in and outside of the mines. The isolation and homogenous employment in mining communities also gave male colliers a status of sole breadwinner, much like their middle-class counterparts.⁵⁰ Though women's unpaid contributions to the household could be as substantial as their husbands'—and much more regular—the devaluation of unpaid labor gave male heads-of-household social capital as family patriarchs.⁵¹ Operators and their representatives wielded a great deal of power over the collier household when their employees lived in a company town. Company housing was subject to inspections and intrusions by supervisors who could monitor all activities in the town.⁵² Operators could take even more drastic measures in the event of a strike. In 1872, operators in Ohio's Mahoning

⁵⁰ Wally Seccombe, "Patriarchy Stabilized: The Construction of the Male Breadwinner Wage Norm in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Social History* 11, no. 1 (Jan., 1986): 54; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 43; Lewis, *Welsh Americans*, 123-126.

⁵¹ Women's work in and outside of the home will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

⁵² The intrusion of owners and supervisors into domestic life in factory towns has been discussed in a variety of works. For examples prior to the Civil War, see Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), Ch.10; Jonathan Prude, *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1810-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), Part III. An excellent postwar example would be Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor*, 283-286.

Valley attempted to break a strike by throwing the colliers and their families out of their company homes.⁵³ While the home remained the last refuge of patriarchy for much of the industrial working class, in a company town even this benefit was compromised. Closed towns limited collier independence, but housing was not the only element of control available to operators in remote mining communities.

In the closed communities that often comprised coal-mining towns, operators' ownership of the company store was a source of substantial profits and gave them incredible control over the miners who labored in the collieries. Due to the remote locations of most mining communities, operators were often the only source of staple goods, household items, and other sundries. Company stores had a monopoly on work supplies as well, providing lamp oil, blasting powder, and other tools of the trade to their captive consumer base. In many communities, the store was the most profitable part of the mining operation. One operator noted that his competitors who ran stores were more competitive because they were able to sell their coal at cost and extract all of their profits from their store operations.⁵⁴ Operators had an incentive to increase their customer base, whether there was work for the men or not. Andrew Roy observed that the mines of the Hocking Valley region in Ohio were "overcrowded with miners" who operators had brought in "for the sake of the store trade."⁵⁵ The operators' monopoly in the stores was a profit source that exploited the men and women who lived in the mining community.

⁵³ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 136.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 240.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 231.

Even when demand and prices for coal lagged, operators in company towns still reaped huge earnings from their stores. Whether a collier was working regularly or not, his family still needed to eat. With no income and only one store in the community, store credit was the only thing standing between the collier family and starvation. Even when work was regular, miners in Stark County were typically paid only once per month.⁵⁶ In order to survive between pay periods, even the most frugal of colliers could find himself in debt to the company store. In his autobiography, John Brophy recalled that most miners survived “payday to payday,” only barely keeping pace with their growing debt at the company store.⁵⁷ After purchasing supplies for the mines and provisioning their home, miners worked primarily to pay back their tab at the store. Though operators charged no interest on the colliers’ debt, built-in markups on their products resulted in substantial profits.⁵⁸ Coal miners in company towns could easily become trapped in a cycle of debt-peonage that kept them tied to an individual community. When store credit was combined with the truck system, where colliers were paid in company scrip rather than cash, colliers could truly “owe their souls to the company store.”⁵⁹

While company towns, high-priced stores, and operators paying in scrip were the norm in many mining districts, the Massillon region was anything but ordinary. Fortunately for Stark County’s colliers, the area was home to more industries than just

⁵⁶ *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 129.

⁵⁷ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 35.

⁵⁸ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 78-79; Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 35, 62.

⁵⁹ A common reference among colliers, made famous in the Merle Travis’s 1946 song, *Sixteen Tons*.

coal mining. In the late nineteenth century, Massillon coal was highly sought after for the high temperature at which it burned and for its usefulness in manufacturing.⁶⁰ While coal was the dominant industry during the last decades of the century, the district was also known for growing wheat, mining limestone, and manufacturing steel and glass. Even at the peak of the coal boom in Massillon, manufacturing was on the rise. When Joseph C. Corns opened his Iron Rolling Mill in 1880, he helped to launch Massillon as a center of the steel industry.⁶¹ Corns was not alone in diversifying the city's industrial output. The following year, Reed & Co. began manufacturing beer bottles and other drinking implements in the Massillon Glass Works.⁶² In the twentieth century, glass and steel surpassed coal in economic importance for the region. This transition from mining to manufacturing spurred a population growth to meet the demands for labor in the first two decades of the twentieth century, nearly doubling the town's population.⁶³ This economic diversity was a boon for the miners who worked in the region's collieries.

In an open community, Stark County's colliers benefited from the lack of company control in their townships. In remote, closed mining towns dominated by the

⁶⁰ *Report of the Geological Survey of Ohio, Volume V, Economic Geology*, (Columbus: G.J. Brand & Co., State Printers, 1884), 777-780.

⁶¹ Margy Vogt, *Massillon: Reflections of a Community* (Massillon, OH: Margy Vogt, 2009), 136-137.

⁶² Dick Roller, "Massillon, Oh Historical Notes," (Massillon, Ohio: Massillon Museum, 1996).

⁶³ Ruth Kane, *Wheat, Glass, Stone and Steel: The Story of Massillon* (Massillon, OH: Massillon Bicentennial-Sesquicentennial Committee, 1976), 119; Vogt, *Massillon*, 137. Coal declined so quickly in the region that by the time I began this project in 2005, most residents I contacted did not realize there had been coal mines in the area. This was illustrated to comic effect when the Stark County Archivist turned down my initial requests to view records from the miners' trials in 1876. It took several minutes of conversation to realize that the archivist had no knowledge of Massillon's coal-mining history and assumed I was asking to view the records of "minors."

coal operator, miners' families had no other employment options. In the Massillon region, colliers' children were not so limited. The local steel industry gave miners an opportunity to break the cycle of hereditary coal mining. Thomas Lloyd, Jr., the son of a Welsh miner from Alliance Township chose not to work in the mines, instead finding employment in one of the city's rolling mills.⁶⁴ Lloyd was not alone in forsaking the mines. Reese Jones also worked in steel, while Jesse Varner and Charles Gardner, Jr., found employment in a flour mill and a paper mill, respectively.⁶⁵ Massillon's colliers had family members working in professions ranging from tailoring to marble cutting, and this diversity limited the ability of operators to control their miners' lives. Employment opportunities in the community were not the only way in which Massillon colliers evaded the influence of the operators; open towns also brought open stores.

Miners in the Tuscarawas Valley region were free from the extortionate rates and control which came with a company store. Massillon's operators paid their colliers in cash and did not operate a single store in Stark County. Indeed, many of the stores used by the miners were operated by former miners or those with close ties to the community. Thomas Lister's grocery store in Lawrence Township was situated in the heart of the county's coal mining district and Lister extended credit to more than eighty colliers.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Alliance Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 750, Family 778).

⁶⁵ Jones, Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Lexington Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 2, Family 2); Varner, Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Alliance Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 185, Family 211); Gardner, Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Massillon Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 58, Family 70).

After his death, his grocery became even more closely linked to the mines. Lister's widow, Jeanette, married an English miner, Isaac Sandworth and continued to operate the grocery along with her children.⁶⁷ Though his connection was through his wife, Sandworth was not the only collier with an interest in groceries. John Pollock, the Stark County miner who had helped form the Miners' National Union, had left the mines for good by the end of the century. After a political appointment as the local mail agent for the county, Pollock ended his days running a grocery for the miners in Lawrence.⁶⁸ Though it was still possible to go into debt with private store owners—as evidenced by Lister's probate records—credit extended to miners by local grocers could actually bring the community closer together. With more than \$9000 in credit extended to local colliers when he died in 1876, Thomas Lister, like many of his fellow grocers, had a vested interest in seeing the collier community protected during a strike.⁶⁹ Regardless, divorcing credit debt from the employer-employee relationship was its own kind of freedom. John Brophy could have been expressing the sentiments of many Massillon colliers when he noted that living in an open town conveyed a palpable sense of “relief from the weight of

⁶⁶ Estate of Thomas Lister, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1457); Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Lawrence Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 121, Family 153).

⁶⁷ Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, North Lawrence, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 288, Family 300).

⁶⁸ Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, North Lawrence, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 248, Family 250); *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900* (Dwelling 309, Family 325); Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 302.

⁶⁹ Estate of Thomas Lister, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1457). Colliers in Stark County owed Lister's store \$9103.63 when he died on February 14, 1876, just six weeks before miners walked out and the Massillon War began.

company control over our lives through monopoly of housing and stores.”⁷⁰ Of course, this freedom paled in comparison to the independence and manly rights which came from home ownership.

Whether it was attainable or not, Thomas Jefferson’s agrarian ideal tying land ownership to freedom was a powerful influence on the American working classes. As early as the 1830s, America’s labor radicals had been arguing that land ownership was the only way for workers to escape “wage slavery.”⁷¹ When this opportunity presented itself, many colliers left the coal mines in order to till the land. Roy noted that coal miners on the American frontier in Iowa and Wisconsin left the mines for “the broad expanse of prairie and the manly independence” which land ownership conveyed.⁷² Land ownership was explicitly tied to ideas of manhood in the community, just as heading a household defined what it “was to be a man.”⁷³ In Stark County, colliers did not need to leave the mines in order to achieve this “manly independence.”

Coal miners in the Massillon region owned homes in great numbers and found great benefit from this arrangement. Stark County was an open mining community and few miners lived in any form of company housing. In the years following the Massillon

⁷⁰ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 69.

⁷¹ Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, 335-343. Among the earliest proponents of the labor movement, men like George Henry Evans, publisher of the *Workingman's Advocate*, included land reform as one of the central topics in his newspaper. The banner of his earliest papers read, “all adults [were entitled] to equal property.” *The Workingman's Advocate* (New York City), November 7, 1829.

⁷² Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 51-52. A nostalgic view of land ownership in America was often the impetus for collier migration from Scotland and other European mining regions. See Alan Campbell and Fred Reid, “The Independent Collier in Scotland,” in *Independent Collier: The Coal Miner as Archetypal Proletarian Reconsidered*, ed. Royden Harrison (Hassocks [Eng.]: Harvester Press, 1978), 66-67.

⁷³ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 11.

War—when the Ohio Bureau of Labor Statistics began compiling data—the number of coal miners living in company housing was minimal. In 1877, the first year of the Bureau’s surveys, no colliers reported living in company housing. However that number may have been skewed by the small sample size.⁷⁴ The following year, six mines employing a total of 974 miners responded to the Bureau, providing a much better picture. Eleven percent of the miners (109) reported living in company housing, most of them working in just one colliery. An almost equal number of colliers—101, or just over ten percent—owned their own homes.⁷⁵ The numbers of miners owning their homes and living in company housing were roughly even, but this does not convey the entire story. Roughly eighty percent of the colliers rented housing from landlords unaffiliated with the mines, created a mining community where almost ninety percent of the employees were not under the constant surveillance and control of the mine operator. In most major mining regions of the state, including Mahoning and Athens counties, the number of colliers living in company housing ranged from 24 to 44%. Only Meigs and Trumbull Counties had fewer colliers than Stark County’s eleven percent renting their lodgings from operators.⁷⁶ The relatively small percentage of company housing in Stark County gave local colliers a degree of freedom unavailable in many of the state’s other mining regions.

⁷⁴ *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 135, 137. Surveys were sent out to sixteen of the county’s collieries, but only eight returned the forms.

⁷⁵ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 45-46. Of the 109 miners living in company housing, 103 worked in just one mine.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

Home ownership and renting from independent landlords also provided the region's colliers with a degree of safety during strikes not enjoyed by those who lived in company housing. One tactic favored by operators during a strike was to evict colliers from company housing to put pressure on union members. In an 1872 strike in the Mahoning Valley—a region with a higher number of colliers in company housing—colliers and their wives fought with operators agents who evicted them in the midst of the labor unrest.⁷⁷ As John Laslett illustrated in his comparative study of Scottish miners, home ownership among colliers prevented this tactic.⁷⁸ Company housing also stymied self-sufficiency among the miners. Many colliers who lived in homes from which they could be unceremoniously evicted during a strike were unwilling to invest in gardens or fencing for livestock. Most viewed these expenditures on company housing in the same light as dead-work in the mines.⁷⁹ In contrast, Stark County's home-owning colliers invested significantly in farming and livestock.⁸⁰ Home ownership among colliers bolstered their manly independence and gave them a measure of security and self-sufficiency during strikes. However, it was not without its risks.

Colliers who invested their life's savings into homes and property risked losing everything in the event of a strike or economic downturn. In the halcyon days before the Panic of 1873, many colliers in the county had purchased homes. After the economy turned, some of the men found themselves in trouble. A Massillon collier noted that

⁷⁷ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 136.

⁷⁸ Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 44.

⁷⁹ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 59.

⁸⁰ See Chapter 4 for more details.

while many of the miners had bought homes “when times were better,” they were now in danger of losing them all “because of debts they were unable to pay.”⁸¹ Just before the Massillon War kicked off in 1876, many colliers found themselves in this situation. Anthony Oster, a French miner living in Massillon had done well during the years when the regions miners were among the highest paid in the state; by 1870 he owned \$2500 in real estate.⁸² Six years later, his circumstances had taken a turn for the worse. Three months before the region’s miners went on strike, Oster’s land in Perry Township was sold at auction by the county to cover his unpaid taxes. Oster lost 6.25 acres valued at \$160 because he was unable to pay less than four dollars in taxes.⁸³ Though he recovered some of his losses over the next decade, he never found the same level of financial success he had achieved prior to the strike. When Oster died in 1885 his estate was valued at barely \$500 and it was only through the efforts of his son, William, that only a portion of his land was sold off to pay the family’s debts.⁸⁴ Oster was not the only collier who found himself in such dire straits.

In January 1876, at the beginning of the county’s coal strike, 128 people were in the process of losing their property due to delinquent taxes, and many of them were miners. Charles Hale, Joseph Uhlman, and Theodore Fulton were in similar financial difficulties. Fulton, like Oster, stood to lose three acres of land in Lawrence for a tax bill

⁸¹ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 61.

⁸² Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Massillon City Ward 3, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 200, Family 198).

⁸³ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), January 6, 1876.

⁸⁴ Estate of Anthony Oster, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #2602); *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, V. 2-133.

of \$4.81. Uhlman and Hale owed much more significant debts to the county. Hale, an English collier who had bought enough land to run a sizable farm, stood to lose two lots totaling more than fifteen acres. His land, valued at almost one thousand dollars, had almost twenty dollars in back taxes. Uhlman had a much smaller lot of one acre in Massillon's 3rd Ward, but owed the largest tax bill among the county's colliers at \$25.74.⁸⁵ Many of Stark County's colliers were, like Oster, Uhlman, Hale, and Fulton, in danger of losing their land at a time when the miners were most vulnerable. In the process they lost not just their homes, but their independence and manhood as well.

Gender was central to the construction of identity in Stark County's coal-mining community. While colliers constructed their own unique ideal of manhood based on dependence and mutual obligation in crafting their unions, their linkage of home and manliness was much more traditional. Patriarchal privilege earned through their status as heads-of-household was much closer to the middle-class, hegemonic ideal of manhood in nineteenth-century America. Home ownership gave the Massillon region's colliers a status and, to quote Roy, a "manly independence" which few among the working classes could hope to achieve. However, while colliers placed great value on the freedom of home ownership and the role it played in their identities as men, collier households were more complex than a simple patriarchal relationship might suggest. A coal miners' masculine identity may have been shaped by his status as the head of the household, but

⁸⁵ Uhlman, Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Massillon City Ward 3, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 197, Family 195); Uhlman, Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Canton, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 409, Family 422); Fulton, Populations Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Lawrence Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 214, Family 215); *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), January 6, 1876.

the collier home, and its survival, was much more closely tied to the woman inside than the man in the mine.

Chapter 3- “Keeping House”: Women, Work, and the Coal-Mining Household

In 1870, Assistant Marshals charged with the task of conducting the decennial census were given a new set of instructions regarding the enumeration of women. Rather than leaving their occupations blank, women who worked in the home would receive one of two designations, house-keeper or keeping house, based on their relationship to the wage economy:

The term ‘house-keeper’ will be reserved for such persons as receive distinct *wages* or *salary* for their service. Women keeping house for their own families or for themselves, without any gainful occupation, will be entered as ‘keeping house.’ Grown daughters assisting them will be reported without occupation.¹

Historians and feminist scholars have noted that these designations have “devalued women’s unpaid work” and effectively hid it from view.² In Stark County, this designation was taken even further. Among the wives of colliers, “keeping house” was used to designate all family matriarchs regardless of other sources of paid labor. “Keeping house” reflected a middle-class view of womanhood, one that ranked motherhood and domesticity over paid labor contributions to the family. In the Stark County mines, the census designation “keeping house” hid a wide range of women’s activities, paid and unpaid, at home and in the community. However, this work was central to collier families’ existence. Their work, though rendered invisible to census

¹ Department of the Interior Census Office, *Ninth Census, United States. 1870. Instructions to Assistant Marshals* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870), 14.

² Quote is taken from Nancy Folbre and Marjorie Abel, “Women's Work and Women's Households: Gender Bias in the U.S. Census,” *Social Research* 56, no. 3 (Fall, 1989): 547. See also Philip N. Cohen, “The Gendered Division of Labor: “Keeping House” And Occupational Segregation in the United States,” *Gender and Society* 18, no. 2 (Apr., 2004): 242-243. See also Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 74. Boydston argues, correctly, that “gender and economic organization have never existed separately” and that only by looking at housework as a distinctly gendered activity can we understand why it was devalued in the nineteenth century.

takers and labor statisticians, should not be overlooked; miner's certainly did not underestimate the value of a good wife. In the coal-mining region of Stark County, "keeping house" encompassed activities well beyond the middle-class domestic sphere.

A good wife was a coal miner's greatest asset, more valuable than his picks and augers, or even his skill. After all, colliers only mined coal and brought home their pay; women converted that pay into a livelihood for the family. They provided for their family's subsistence, cooking and cleaning, raising livestock and tending gardens. As household managers, wives held the family's purse strings and supplemented their husbands' incomes by taking in boarders and running their own businesses, both legal and illegal. Their biological contributions are not to be underestimated, either. Women bore and raised the next generation of colliers, providing sons to work in the mines and daughters to help in the home. Not every household matriarch worked with a husband's income for their family's support. Coal mining was a dangerous profession, widowing many of the women of Stark County at an early age. Widows often had to double their workload, managing household economies without a husband's income. The contributions of colliers' wives and widows were not only significant in impact and scope, they were central to the daily survival of mining households. Mining communities may have been developed around men's labor in the coal mines, but it was women's work which made survival possible.

Coal mining was more than an occupation in Stark County and other mining communities. It not only determined work patterns, but established the shape and structure of the households and people who lived and worked in the region. As Patricia

Hilden noted in her study of Belgian coal miners, whether or not they ever set foot inside of a mine, coal “shaped the lives of all the inhabitants, male and female, of coal villages and towns.”³ Coal encompassed a lifestyle and a culture that the men and women of Stark County embraced, one which delineated the acceptable limits of masculine and feminine behavior in the household and the community. Women managed the household, ensuring the daily survival of their families, but their work was circumscribed by their husband’s profession. Women’s work was vast and varied in the mining communities. They provided both material and emotional support for their collier husbands and sons. Their work could potentially provide more income and benefits to the collier family than the irregular work of the colliers. Though they exercised considerable influence in their communities, the fact remains that collier households were explicitly patriarchal. The coal-mining household was built and maintained through the collier’s control of the female labor in his family.⁴ Whether real or imagined, it is within the framework of the male-breadwinning, patriarchal household that female labor must be examined.

Miner’s wives labored under a unique set of limitations and expectations which shaped the collier household, the most notable of which was their exclusion from the mines. Beginning in the 1840s, most Western European nations started questioning the propriety of female mine labor and many passed laws which banned women from

³ Patricia J. Hilden, "The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform: Women Coal Miners in Belgium, 1840-1914," *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 2 (Jun., 1991): 418-419.

⁴ Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," *Capital & Class* 8 (1979): 11. In this seminal work, Hartman notes that “the material base upon which patriarchy rests lies most fundamentally in men’s control over women’s labor power.”

working inside of the mines.⁵ Though legal restraints were not passed in the United States until much later, social stigma against women's work and an abundant male labor pool served to recreate the ban against female mine labor in American collieries. Women's labor inside the mines, both its limitations and the exceptions which Stark County colliers made to the ban, will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. However, it is important to note that this exclusion had a dramatic impact on the shape of the collier household.

Women's exclusion from the mines fundamentally altered the family labor system in the coal mines and the collier household, replacing the sexual division of labor in the mines with a patriarchal division of labor in the home. When entire families worked side-by-side in the mines, work was divided by sex with adult males performing skilled work and women and children working in a support capacity. The male collier was rewarded in this family labor system, collecting the wages of the entire family. After women's exclusion from subterranean work, colliers no longer had a monopoly on their mine wages, as they were forced to hire non-family members to assist them in their work. However, that is not to say that they relinquished control over the labor of their wives and children. The collier household came to revolve around what Heidi Hartmann has referred to as the "patriarchal division of labor, in which men benefited from women's labor...retain[ing] the personal services of their wives, as women became primarily

⁵ Britain passed the Mines and Collieries Act in 1842, banning women from underground mining while Belgium debated the issue for more than four decades. See Jane Humphries, "Protective Legislation, the Capitalist State, and Working-Class Men: The Case of the 1842 Mines Regulation Act," *Feminist Review*, no. 7 (Spring, 1981); Alan Heesom, "The Coal Mines Act of 1842, Social Reform, and Social Control," *The Historical Journal* 24, no. 1 (Mar., 1981); Hilden, "The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform."

‘housewives.’”⁶ While colliers’ control over family labor was maintained throughout this transition, the method of that control and the structure of the household were altered.

With their exclusion from the mines, women’s role in the collier household was increasingly defined by their housework, much like their middle-class counterparts. Unlike other working-class women, colliers’ wives were limited in their job opportunities. Collieries were typically established in isolated regions and the mines were the only employer for miles. Few wives were able to find employment outside the home, and most women instead focused on managing their domestic economy.⁷ Of course, even when they worked in the mines, women were still responsible for housework. Exclusion from other forms of paid labor only made their work invisible; it did not lighten their burden. In the case of collier’s wives, the infrequency of outside work may have actually been a boon. As Michèle Barrett and Mary McIntosh have noted in their work on the family wage, “housework and childcare...were indeed heavy and time-consuming tasks and it was, in many ways, a fortunate woman whose husband earned enough to enable her to do this work in the day-time rather than after a day’s paid work.”⁸ It is important to note here that women’s labor was not rendered invisible

⁶ Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework," *Signs* 6, no. 3 (Spring, 1981): 374. The process by which this change came about in the family is discussed more fully in Heidi I. Hartmann, "Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex," *Signs* 1, no. 3 (Spring, 1976): 137-69.

⁷ Grace Palladino, *Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-68* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 60; John Brophy, *A Miner's Life, an Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 21. Palladino argues that the controlled labor markets of isolated coal communities limited employment opportunities for women. Brophy’s own experience support this, as he notes that his mother was able to bring in extra income only by working in the homes of the coal mine superintendents and foremen.

because it took place in the home; household labor was invisible because women performed it. It was “a gendered *definition* of labor” that has hidden women’s work, but it did not affect the importance of this work in maintaining the family.⁹

Patriarchal control of women’s labor had a long history among coal miners. In the Stark County mines, this practice combined European traditions and American ideals. The American tradition of craft mining was derived primarily from British customs and practices. Thousands of Scottish, English, Welsh, and Irish coal miners made the journey to the United States and they occupied numerous positions throughout the Stark County mines. They brought with them centuries of tradition regarding collier households, traditions which they blended with American ideals of republicanism and the family. Miners and their families created households and ideals of gender roles shaped by a complex combination of European craft traditions and American hegemonic ideals of appropriate feminine behavior. However, these roles were not as predicated on a hyper-masculinized colliers exercising their “miner’s freedom.” In fact, their concepts of collier manhood and womanhood left quite a bit of room for flexible interpretations that included not just authority and influence for women, but real power in managing the household.

⁸ Michèle Barrett and Mary McIntosh, "The 'Family Wage': Some Problems for Socialists and Feminists," *Capital & Class*, no. 11 (Summer, 1980): 55.

⁹ Boydston, *Home and Work*, 18, 55. Boydston argues that after the revolution, changing perceptions of housework impacted the recognition of housework, not the nature or value of the work itself.

The Collier's Wife

In his biography of Mary “Mother” Jones, Elliot Gorn captured an important element of womanhood around the mines when he noted that miners were “accustomed to outspoken, physically tough wives and mothers.”¹⁰ His estimation of miners’ wives stemmed from the prevalent belief that life in the mining regions was tough, and it took a special kind of woman to endure the harsh life of a collier’s wife. The life of a miner’s wife was indeed difficult. Along with the daily tasks of “keeping house”—cooking, cleaning, household management, tending gardens, even raising livestock—colliers’ wives found ways to contribute to family incomes in conditions that were not amicable to their ability to work outside of the home. As noted previously, most coal mines were often developed in frontier settings and the company towns that built up around them offered limited employment opportunities for women. However, the Massillon region was not as isolated as other coal towns, and colliers’ wives took advantage of the opportunity. While it has been argued that nineteenth-century miners were a prideful lot who felt deep shame at the prospect of their wives working outside of the home, the reality of life in the coal banks was that women’s work was necessary, contributing between ¼ and ½ of the family income.¹¹ Adding to the work and stress of maintaining the home was the knowledge that every morning that their husbands and sons left for

¹⁰ Elliott J. Gorn, *Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 228.

¹¹ Wally Secombe, "Patriarchy Stabilized: The Construction of the Male Breadwinner Wage Norm in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Social History* 11, no. 1 (Jan., 1986): 54; Priscilla Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 43. See also, Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans: A History of Assimilation in the Coalfields* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 123-126.

work could be the last time they were seen.¹² Indeed, the stress of being a miner's wife was so tough that many daughters chose not to marry, remaining single rather than continuing the cycle of creating new mining families.¹³ Marrying a collier was not for the faint of heart, as it required women to accept both the role and responsibilities of an active wife and mother who contributed significant material benefits to the household.

The miner's wife was an important figure in the collier community, one who carried the family on her back. However, some historians have argued that women's role was dual edged, symbolizing both power and subjugation. In her explorations of the Welsh mining communities, Rosemary Jones argued that the Welsh Mam "was the embodiment of female virtue and power" but also "exemplified the subordinate position of women" in the coal community.¹⁴ Looking at Canadian gold miners, Nancy M. Forestell reached a similar conclusion. Forestell concluded that, though the miner's wife "signified economic dependence," this identity made "visible some elements of their household contributions."¹⁵ However, these evaluations of women's role in mining communities overestimate a portrayal of victimhood that fails to capture the central role of women's work in the home and the community. Collier's wives in Stark County were

¹² John H. M. Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea: A Comparative Study of Class Formation in Scotland and the American Midwest, 1830-1924* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 40.

¹³ Priscilla Long notes that most coal towns had large groups of women who chose spinsterhood over the "drudgery and toil" of being a miner's wife. Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 42.

¹⁴ Rosemary Jones, "Sociability, Solidarity, and Social Exclusion: Women's Activism in the South Wales Coalfield, Ca. 1830 to 1939," in *Mining Women: Gender in the Development of a Global Industry, 1670 to 2005*, ed. Jaclyn J. Gier and Laurie Mercier (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 97.

¹⁵ Nancy M. Forestell, "The Miner's Wife: Working-Class Femininity in a Masculine Context, 1920-1950," in *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada*, ed. Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, and Nancy M. Forestell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 157.

certainly not their husband's political or social equals, but their work and endeavors were not limited to emotional support. Women contributed domestic labor, household management, and often earned incomes that were more significant, and more reliable, than their spouses. "Keeping house" encompassed a wide array of women's work in and around the household, all of which ensured the survival of the collier family in the Massillon region.

Women performed a variety of tasks, in and around the home, that were necessary for the day-to-day maintenance of the family. However, even the daily tasks of cleaning and cooking were made more difficult by the exigencies of life in coal communities.¹⁶ The pervasiveness of coal dust dramatically increased the scope of cleaning tasks. Colliers clothing was permeated with coal dust, as well as soot and grease, turning laundry into "an all-week affair."¹⁷ Without modern niceties like indoor plumbing and automatic washing machines, the labor of washing was an arduous and grueling task.

If the tools of their trade were any indication, Stark County wives were near-overwhelmed with the task of washing in their daily lives. While two washtubs were the minimum required to perform the task—one for washing and one for rinsing—the sheer volume of laundry in coal-mining households often necessitated more. Ellen Murray of Lawrence, Ohio, wife of Scottish collier James, used five washtubs that were put to use

¹⁶ For a discussion of the difficulties encountered by miners wives and the added burden of maintaining a household in a coal mining community, see John Benson, *British Coalminers in the Nineteenth Century: A Social History* (New York: Homes and Meier, 1980), Ch.5. See also Mildred A. Beik, *The Miners of Windber: The Struggles of New Immigrants for Unionization, 1890s-1930s* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), Ch.4. Forestell notes that the daily lives of women were almost entirely consumed by the labors of housekeeping and childcare. Forestell, "The Miner's Wife," 144.

¹⁷ Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 97.

not only for her family's soiled clothes but for the three boarders who shared their home.¹⁸ Boarders alone, however, would not account for the number of wash tubs owned by the Murray family. Many families of this size made due with only two washtubs. It is more likely that, with no sons old enough to work in the mines alongside their father, Ellen and her older daughters (Sarah, 16, and Elisabeth, 13) took in additional laundry work to supplement the family income. Such work would have been a significant contribution to the family income.

Bathing was a similarly grueling chore in the collier household. Work in the mines was filthy and the men and boys left the mines covered in the debris of their toils. Mildred Beik, in her exploration of the Windber miners, found that bathing after a day's work in the collieries was ritualistic.¹⁹ Every day on their return from the mines, wash water had to be hauled to the kitchens and heated for each miner. Wives and children assisted in the bathing process, an arduous task with multiple family members working in the mines. Even as late as 1925, this task was still done manually in most coal communities.²⁰ Keeping the house clean was a demanding task in the coal fields, complicated by the coal dust that accumulated more quickly than the washing could be done.

¹⁸ Data is drawn from summaries of probate court records of 45 miners who died between 1860 and 1900. Stark County Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton Ohio. Details of the Murray family's possessions come from the estate of James Murray (case 2421). See also Population Schedules of Lawrence, Ohio in the 1880 Census (Family 323, Dwelling 309.)

¹⁹ Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 97-99.

²⁰ Women's Bureau U.S. Department of Labor, *Home Environment and Employment Opportunities of Women in Coal Mine Workers' Families*, Bulletin No. 45 (Washington, D.C.1925), 17.

Although cleaning was a never-ending labor in coal towns, it was still a task that could be accomplished and, to some degree, completed, if only for the day. Water would be heated, clothing scrubbed, rinsed, and hung out to dry, and for a brief moment the task was done. Cooking for the family and preparing meals was not as limited in scope. Instead it required a complex arrangement of chores that is best described as household management. The actual cooking and service of meals, whether eaten at home or out of a pail in the mine, was the culmination of days—sometimes months—of labor on the part of colliers' wives.

The Hand that Holds the Purse Strings

Women's most important task in household management was controlling the purse strings of the family income. In his autobiography of life in the coal mines, John Brophy noted with pride that it was only through his "mother's rigidly economical management of what income we received" that the family was kept from "debt slavery."²¹ Like most working-class women, colliers' wives worked diligently to stretch the meager incomes which their families earned. Historians of working-class women have argued that one of the most difficult challenges facing laboring families was negotiating a cash economy with limited cash.²² In the Tuscarawas Valley, colliers' wives endeavored to supplement the family's support, spending as little money as

²¹ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 47.

²² For explorations of working-class women's difficulties in maintaining the family in a cash economy, see Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*, Illini Books ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982; 1987), 11-12; Boydston, *Home and Work*, 108. Stansell notes the importance of supplementing family incomes through gardening and barter, while Boydston highlights the role of budgeting the family's limited incomes.

possible and bringing in their own when it could be earned. Of course, in order to stretch a family's finances, there had to be an income. This task was complicated by influences beyond women's control.

Though women were responsible for managing the household economy, the primary income for most families was provided by their husbands. Colliers often made a public show of turning over their pay packets to their wives on their doorsteps.²³ Doing so indicated that the collier was a trustworthy man who provided for his family. However, not every dime of the miners' pay remained in the pay envelope during the trek from the mine to the home. As in most mining communities, drinking was a common drain on the paycheck.²⁴ The night after pay-day was often accentuated by increased fighting in the community. Therefore, it would be best to qualify women's control over the family finances by acknowledging that their management of the household economy was circumscribed by "the allowance her husband made over to her."²⁵ However, this was not the only drain on the collier's income with which wives had to contend.

According to early reports from Ohio's Bureau of Labor Statistics, Stark County colliers were among the highest paid in the state. Colliers in the county mines consistently earned an average of ten cents more per ton of coal mined, netting sixty cents per ton in 1877.²⁶ However, this did not translate to higher overall wages due to a

²³ Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 40-41; Lewis, *Welsh Americans*, 126-127.

²⁴ For discussions of drinking and its drain on wages as well as increased fighting, see Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 174-175; Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 25-26.

²⁵ Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 41.

number of factors. The foremost reason for lowered wages in the Massillon region was due to extended periods of downtime. Stark County mines ran fewer days than those in many other counties, ranging between 190 and 220 days of operation in 1878.²⁷ Despite higher wages per ton, the lack of consistent work—four to five months without employment in some instances—was a significant drain on the colliers’ income. In the first three years of the Bureau’s reporting, colliers in the Massillon region earned between \$32 and \$38 per month, on average, placing them well below the monthly earnings of miners in Summit and Athens counties who often earned more than \$40 per month.²⁸

Lag time and closures in the mines were not the only drag on miners’ family income. Stark County colliers also had to pay the cost of mining supplies such as blasting powder and lamp oil, as well as fees towards the maintenance of tools. In his report to the state geological survey, Andrew Roy noted that miners in the Tuscarawas Valley used more explosives than any other miners in the state.²⁹ On average, colliers spent between ten and fifteen percent of their gross income on supplies and maintenance. The cost of powder, as well as fees paid to the company blacksmith to keep the colliers’

²⁶ *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1877*, (Columbus: Nevins & Meyers, State Printers, 1878), 136-138.

²⁷ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1878*, (Columbus: Nevins & Meyers, State Printers, 1879), 45. The return from 1878 was both detailed and indicative of averages for the first few years of the Bureau’s reports on mining.

²⁸ *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 136-138; *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 53; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1879*, (Columbus: Nevins & Meyers, State Printers, 1880), 74.

²⁹ *Report of the Geological Survey of Ohio, Volume V, Economic Geology*, (Columbus: G.J. Brand & Co., State Printers, 1884), 356. Due to the density of the rock below the coal seam, undercutting in the Massillon region was difficult. Therefore most of the coal was “shot from the solid.” See *Second Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1875*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1876), 33.

picks and augurs sharp, could range between \$3.50 and \$6.00 per month in deductions.³⁰ In the end, miners' wives had significantly less money to feed their families on than their husbands' gross earnings would indicate.

Expenses ran high in coal mining communities. Although the miners of the Massillon region were spared the exorbitant prices of company stores, women still had to run an efficient household economy to remain out of debt. Housing was not the largest expenditure in the mining household, but it was consistent. Although a significant group of miners in Stark County owned their own homes, the majority of miners were renting. Between property taxes and promissory notes or rent, most miners made payments between three and five dollars per month for housing.³¹ Food was the most significant source of family expenditures. In 1879, groceries, meat, and vegetables were more than fifty-five percent of mining families' expenses; the following year one Stark County family reported almost seventy percent of their income went to food.³² As one miner recalled, "it was only by the most rigid economy and sobriety" that his family was able to survive.³³

Not every family was as successful at staying out of debt. Mine families regularly spent more than the collier earned annually. Returns to the Bureau of Labor's surveys in 1880 were typical of miners' finances, noting that Stark County colliers spent an average

³⁰ *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 137; *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 53; *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 74.

³¹ *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 137.

³² *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 87. See also *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Made to the General Assembly of Ohio, for the Year 1880*, (Columbus: G. J. Brand & Co., State Printers, 1881), 148.

³³ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 61.

of twelve percent more than they took home.³⁴ Much of this came from debts to local grocers. Massillon operators paid their miners only monthly; in order to survive between pay periods many families used credit to buy food and other sundries. Thomas Lister's grocery in Lawrence Township catered to the region's colliers. When Lister's estate went into probate in 1876—at the beginning of the Massillon War—eighty-two colliers had credit accounts with the grocer ranging between \$1.14 and \$500.82; the average account was more than \$111.³⁵ Mining families' debts were a huge drain to both their finances and their morale. In a company town, indebtedness to the store threatened a miner's independence making it more difficult to change jobs. In Stark County, where many colliers owned their own homes, too much debt could risk the very symbol of their independence outside of the mines, their property. One Massillon miner lamented that there were “a great many honest, industrious men here” whose “earnings [were] being lost because of debts they [were] unable to pay.”³⁶ In order to avoid such debts, or at least to ameliorate their effects, women found ways to supplement the families' earnings.

Labor statistics only measured the male-dominated wage economy and ignored the invisible one which comprised women's contributions to the family. If mining income was the sole source of revenue for collier families, they would consistently be trapped in a perpetual state of debt slavery. Women contributed to the family economy in ways that prevented this cycle from beginning. When possible, they avoided

³⁴ *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 142-143, 148.

³⁵ Estate of Thomas Lister, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1457)

³⁶ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 61.

participating in the cash economy by tending gardens and raising their own livestock. In this manner they supplemented their family's support. Not all expenditures could be avoided, however. When mine incomes failed to meet family needs, the wives of Stark County colliers earned their own incomes by selling surpluses as well as services. Taking in boarders was the most common means of augmenting the family income, but it was not the only method. Without women's endeavors in "keeping house," collier families would not have survived.

Family Production

One way colliers' wives increased their families' food supplies was by producing it themselves. Gardening and raising livestock were common activities in mining towns. When John Brophy's family first moved from England to the bituminous coal fields of Pennsylvania, he recalled the hardship that his family and relatives endured during work shortages. It was only through his uncle's skill as a gardener, not to mention the cow, pigs, and chickens the family raised, that they were able to make it through lean times.³⁷ Given how tight money was in the communities, especially when mines shut down to two or three days of work per week, every additional contribution to the family's food supply helped. One Windber manager recalled that colliers would not "have made it without having that [gardens and animals]."³⁸ Although gardens were tended by the entire family, women performed the bulk of the work. Colliers and their sons worked long

³⁷ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 20.

³⁸ Quoted in Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 100.

hours in the mines, leaving their wives and daughters to take care of the garden. In his interviews with West Virginia miners, David Alan Corbin noted that “one miner boasted that his wife and daughter ‘worked harder in the fields than any man ever did.’”³⁹

Women’s participation in taking care of the family plots, as well as tending to livestock, was central to the families’ ability to survive. Of special note is the fact that this work, women’s work, was acknowledged by both miners and people in the community.

Despite its invisibility from census and labor statistics, women’s work in the yards and gardens was clearly visible to their families and their neighbors.

Massillon’s colliers were especially in need of this assistance due to the frequency of work shortages in the region. In 1878 even the most productive mines in the county operated only 260 days; the average was a much lower 193.4 days out of the year.⁴⁰ Two years later, with a major strike in the region, Stark County colliers were out of work for a considerably longer period. Out of 1276 miners, only 273 worked throughout the year. The remaining coal miners were out of work an average of six months.⁴¹ During such times, with no wages from the mines, women’s work in the gardens and tending animals was the primary source of sustenance. While returns to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1879 raised some concerns regarding Stark County miners’ willingness to raise livestock and tend gardens, this seems to have been limited to the few miners who rented company housing. Miners in company housing feared investing in gardens and fencing to contain

³⁹ David Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880-1922* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 33.

⁴⁰ *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 45.

⁴¹ Numbers taken from the Stark County Collier Database.

animals when they could be evicted during strikes; it was seen as another form of “dead work” for which they would not be paid.⁴² However, many miners owned their own property in Massillon and were less transient than in other regions. Having deeper roots in the community, they also tended to invest more in their “gardens” and owned a wide variety of animals.

“Garden” is a bit of a misnomer when referring to the extent of cultivation which Stark County miners undertook. While they surely tended small plots of vegetables and herbs close to their homes, some of the colliers invested more substantially. In the case of John Sonnhalter, a Prussian miner, the family garden was a modest fifteen acres of farmland. While Sonnhalter and his two oldest sons worked in the mines, his wife and remaining children (two daughters and five sons ranging from one month to 15 years old) raised three acres of oats, and six acres apiece of corn and wheat.⁴³ Sonnhalter’s investment was at the upper end of collier cultivation, but it was not completely out of the norm. Indeed, colliers invested substantial time and interest in tending their gardens. Most miners had some degree of literacy and inventories of their book collections indicate a wide range of works on agriculture and crop management. In the case of Ohio-born miner George Miller, the only literature beyond school books that the family owned consisted of agricultural reports.⁴⁴ Gardening and tending to their crops was a significant

⁴² *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 59.

⁴³ Estate of John Sonnhalter, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1053) See also population schedules for Tuscarawas Township in the *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 365, Family 387)

⁴⁴ Estate of George Miller, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #546)

source of food for colliers, one that sustained them through tough times and helped prevent them from falling into debt slavery. As such, it required an investment in both time and research.

Women's work did not end when the crops were brought in from the field. Almost as important as raising crops was processing and preparing the fruits of their labors. While men and boys helped tend gardens in their spare time, it was women's responsibility to preserve the food so that it could be maintained for a substantial amount of time. Henry Brandt's estate was typical of most Stark County miners, and indicated a wide range of equipment for processing fruits and grains, as well as animal products. Cases of jars and other canning equipment for preserving fruits, along with multiple cider barrels and milk crocks indicate the extensive labors that Mary Brandt and her daughters undertook to feed their family.⁴⁵ The labor that women performed in the late fall made its way into colliers' dinner pails for months to come.

Coal miners' wives in the Massillon region also raised numerous animals that helped to alleviate the cost of food that would otherwise have to be purchased. Of colliers whose estates went into probate, almost fifty percent of the families owned at least one animal for food. Colliers kept a wide variety of cows and chickens, as well as pigs and sheep.⁴⁶ Cows and chickens provided renewable foods in the form of milk and eggs. At 1877 prices in Massillon, a dozen eggs raised at home saved the collier family

⁴⁵ Estate of Henry Brandt, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1829) See also population schedules for Tuscarawas Township in the *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 246, Family 253) Family name listed as Brand in the census.

⁴⁶ Data on livestock is drawn from summaries of probate court records of 45 miners who died between 1860 and 1900. Stark County Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton Ohio.

12.5 cents. Most wives also churned their own butter from milk fat, saving 18 cents per pound compared to store prices.⁴⁷ Pigs, however, were by far the most common animal owned in collier families. Sixty four percent of colliers maintained swine, raising an average of three pigs per household. While pigs were not a reusable food source, they were a substantial supply of meat for the family. Sheep, on the other hand provided both food and a renewable source of wool cloth that helped offset the high cost of clothing.⁴⁸ By raising livestock, both for food and for their byproducts, colliers' wives made a substantial contribution to the family economy. However, it was not their only contribution.

While producing their own food helped to alleviate the costs of supporting their families, women also found ways to increase the family income. Selling surplus vegetables and eggs generated some revenue, but boarding was the most common means by which women earned income. Of course, money that women earned from housing boarders was invisible to a market economy. Women who kept boarders in mining communities maintained traditional domestic roles and appeared in census roles as "keeping house." However, even women who worked outside of the home often retained this designation. Women's work was a significant part of the family economy, even that which was hidden from census takers and statisticians.

⁴⁷ 1877 prices in Massillon are taken from *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 146. From the probate court data above, butter churns were common in collier households, including ninety percent of those homes who also owned a cow.

⁴⁸ Clothing could consume as much as twenty-five percent of a family's income according to *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 54. Wool shorn from a collier family's sheep could help offset this. While not as prevalent as sewing machines, several collier families did own their own spinning wheels and looms to process wool into cloth.

Boarding

When it comes to women's incomes, boarding was one of the most important institutions in the mining community. According to a Department of Labor survey in the 1920s, boarding had long been the primary source of income for women in mining communities, a trend that prevailed in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁹ The income women earned through boarding was not insignificant, either. In her study of Iowa coal mining, Dorothy Schwieder found that women could earn almost as much as their husbands. At a rate of \$2.00 per week for services, a wife could earn \$8.00 per month keeping a single boarder in the home.⁵⁰ Though Schwieder's numbers were compiled regarding miners in 1914, the median monthly income of the coal miners (approximately \$38.83) was almost identical to that earned in Massillon forty years earlier. In this way, a woman who kept four boarders or more could match or exceed her husband's income from the mines. Stark County mining families did not keep boarders in the frequency or number of other communities overall, but among particular ethnic groups boarding was a significant source of income.

Figure 3-1 illustrates the breakdown of boarding patterns among Stark County families headed by colliers. German miners were the least likely to keep boarders in the Massillon region, while the majority of boarders were kept by miners from the British Isles.⁵¹ American-born miners were statistically average in the number of boarders they

⁴⁹ U.S. Department of Labor, *Home Environment*, 37-39.

⁵⁰ Dorothy Schwieder, *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895-1925* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1983), 99.

Region of Origin	Number of Families	Number of Boarders	% Families with Boarders	Average per Family with Boarders
British Isles	172	45	16	1.67
U.S.A.	68	15	12	1.88
Other European	18	7	11	3.50
Germany	97	9	5	1.67
Total	359	76	12	1.81

Figure 3-1: Mining families and their boarders, Stark County, 1870. From Stark County Population Schedules, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Washington, D.C., 1872).

kept, while the remaining category of Other European—including French and Swiss miners, primarily—have a skewed average number of boarders due to their low numbers. An in-depth look at British miners will provide a better understanding of the importance of boarding to some ethnic groups.

Figure 3-2 breaks down boarding rates among British miners by their individual countries of origin. Among British colliers, Welsh households were the most likely to keep boarders. More than one quarter of Welsh families had boarders in their homes, most of them fellow miners. With an average of two miners boarding in each of these homes, the wives of Welsh miners contributed an additional fifty percent to their family’s income. Over the next decade, Welsh miners saw the greatest increase in the number of households. Though the percentage of boarders fell, Welsh families still kept boarders

⁵¹ “Germany” designates the modern boundaries as miners in 1870 designated states such as Prussia, Bavaria, Baden, etc. as their nationality. British miners include English, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish.

Country of Origin	Number of Families	Number of Boarders	% Families with Boarders	Average per Family with Boarders
Wales	42	22	26	2.00
Scotland	31	7	16	1.40
England	64	12	14	1.33
Ireland	35	4	5	2.00

Figure 3-2: British mining families and their boarders, Stark County, 1870. From Stark County Population Schedules, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Washington, D.C., 1872).

well above the county averages.⁵² On average, the wives of British miners who took in boarders contributed an additional 42% to the household's wages. Boarding represented a major financial contribution which, unlike the miners' income, was consistent throughout the year.

Boarding was not only a significant source of income for collier families, it also helped to reproduce cultural values and maintain the single men among the mine labor force. Single miners, as well as fathers and sons traveling to support their families, found a little slice of home in the boardinghouse.⁵³ Along with observing the expected roles of mining women, boarding miners also learned about the importance of mutualism and community in mining regions. Among the Slovak miners of Windber, boarders learned about the union as well as mining news throughout the region.⁵⁴ Boarding also played an important role in Americanizing the immigrant workforce. Stark County families

⁵² By 1880, the number of Welsh families headed by miners had tripled. Although the percentage of households that kept boarders dropped to 14%, Welsh families almost twice as likely as other ethnic groups to board. Stark County Population Schedules, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Washington, D.C., 1883)

⁵³ Brophy's description of Granny O'Brien recalls the hominess of the boardinghouse, even as she comforted the young miner during a bout of homesickness. See Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 61.

⁵⁴ Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 92-93.

primarily took in boarders from their own ethnic background, and used the venue to share observations on American (and especially mining) culture.⁵⁵ Boarding transmitted a wide variety of cultural values in the mining regions, but none of these were more important than illuminating appropriate feminine behavior.

Although women earned a substantial income from boarders, they were also a significant source of additional work. Women's labor was the basis of this community institution, in the same "way that the mines were based on male labor."⁵⁶ Women cooked and cleaned—filling dinner pails and heating bath water at the end of the day—providing for boarders in the same manner as their own families. In Stark County, boarders added an average of 1.81 additional mouths to feed and sets of clothing to wash.⁵⁷ Not all of the extra people that colliers' wives took care of paid their way, however. Extended family members, ranging from siblings and grandparents to cousins and in-laws, lived in many collier households. In 1880, eighty families had extended family members living with them, more than the total number who kept boarders. Eleven of these families had both boarders and extended family.⁵⁸ Whether paid or unpaid, boarders and extended family represented a significant increase in the amount of work that colliers' wives performed.

⁵⁵ Stark County Population Schedules, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Washington, D.C., 1872); *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Washington, D.C., 1883). For observations on boarding and Americanization, see Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 20; Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 90-93; Lewis, *Welsh Americans*, 4.

⁵⁶ Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 90.

⁵⁷ See table 1, data from *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870*

⁵⁸ Stark County Population Schedules, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870*; *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. For a discussion of extended family in nineteenth-century coal communities, see Anthony F. C. Wallace, *St. Clair: A Nineteenth-Century Coal Town's Experience with a Disaster-Prone Industry* (New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1987), 148-154.

Generations of Colliers, New and Lost

Not all of women's contributions to the family economy were financial. In fact, the most significant contribution which wives contributed to the household economy was biological and cultural. Colliers' wives bore the children who would become the next generation of coal miners and miners' wives, continuing both the traditions of mining culture as well as ensuring the economic stability of the generations. Children—young boys under the age of twelve and daughters of all ages—worked around the home, helping their mothers to tend gardens, raise livestock, and assisting in the never-ending cleaning. These chores helped to significantly lighten the burden of colliers wives. At the same time, by observing and participating in the collier household, boys and girls learned the expected gender roles in the coal-mining community. Just as boys learned mining culture and masculine behavior at the coal face, so too did all children learn of collier womanhood in the home and the community.⁵⁹

Children in collier families grew up with a keen understanding of their mother's contributions and a great deal of expectations to meet those standards. The sons of colliers expected their future wives to be as strong and assertive as their own mothers. For daughters this was a tremendous burden. Passing on collier culture to the next generation required a life of sacrifice, one in which the family's very existence depended on the unending labor of the wife. Not every daughter was willing to accept this burden.

⁵⁹ Beik, *The Miners of Windber*, 103; Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 36-37; Mary Murphy, *Mining Cultures: Men, Women, and Leisure in Butte, 1914-41* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 107-108. Beik notes the central role of women in creating the next generation of miners. Brophy's accounts of his first time in the mines illustrate the lessons in manhood and collier culture which he learned, while Murphy argues that both boys and girls learned gender roles in the collier communities in a wide variety of places, including the home.

As Priscilla Long has noted, every coal town possessed a group of women who chose to remain single rather than marry a collier.⁶⁰ However, they were not the majority of women in coal communities. The majority of colliers' daughters did stay in the coal regions, married miners, and had children of their own. Daughters were expected to work and raise the next generation of colliers; sons were only expected to work.

Next to their own income earning abilities, the most significant source of additional income which women contributed to the family was in bearing sons who would one day work in the mines. Though some boys entered the mines as young as five and six years old, most did not work in the collieries until they were between the ages of ten and fourteen.⁶¹ The youngest boys most likely worked as trappers—opening and closing the doors which directed the mine's ventilation—for pennies a day. However, older boys who entered the mines could add a significant amount of income to their households. Laborers were typically paid one third of the collier's income.⁶² Even the smallest boys who entered the mines with their fathers in order to help shovel coal were able to reclaim that income for the family. In this way it was possible to increase the collier's income by fifty percent. However, older or stronger boys could do even more,

⁶⁰ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 42.

⁶¹ See Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. Nick Mong was the youngest miner in Stark County, listed as working the mines at the age of five (1880 Census, Sugar Creek, Dwelling 13, Family 13) but he was not the only one under the age of ten. Most of the boys who entered the mines did so around their twelfth birthday. John Brophy recalled his own entry to the mines at this time with pride, noting the manly contribution that he was making to the family. Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 36.

⁶² "From Rees and Sarah Phillips," in *The Welsh in America: Letters from Immigrants*, ed. Alan Conway (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961), 185. See also Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 60.

earning the collier an extra “turn” on the car rotation.⁶³ Collier’s were assigned cars in a very specific order, so the opportunity for a second car in the rotation could double the miner’s income. As older sons were judged to be “practical miners,” they could work their own rooms, taking in additional siblings to assist. The more sons a family had the more income the family as a whole was able to produce. For this reason, it was exceedingly common for collier families to have multiple generations working in the mines.

Multiple generations of miners were common in Stark County’s collier families, and the numbers grew between 1870 and 1880. At the time of the 1870 census, there were 428 families with at least one member who mined coal. Fifty-five of these families—just shy of thirteen percent—had multiple generations working in the mines. While this indicates approximately one-in-eight families had multiple generations working in the mines, in 1870 Stark County was a relatively new mining community. Nine percent of Stark County’s mining families were young couples who had no children, while another fourteen percent had only one offspring that was under the age of ten. Although not all childless families would have had sons, and there was no guarantee that those sons would enter the mines, there was significant growth in multigenerational mining families by the 1880 census. The number of families with one or no children remained relatively steady between decades at thirteen and ten percent, respectively.

⁶³ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 49. Brophy’s father was able to earn an extra turn when he entered the mines at the age of 12. His father had to work twice as hard to make up for Brophy’s small stature. All of this income was kept in the family.

However, of 885 collier families, 180 had multiple generations of colliers. This indicates a leap to over twenty percent, or one in five families.⁶⁴

The family of Catharine and John Fashbaugh highlights the growth of multiple generations in the mines. By 1870, Catharine Fashbaugh was the mother of six children ranging between two and fifteen years of age. Her husband, John, was a Prussian immigrant and the only member of the family to mine coal. Their oldest son, Phillip never entered the mines of Stark County despite being of the appropriate age. Instead, at the age of fifteen, Phillip was still attending school. This is most likely an indication of the family's preference and the financial stability of the early 1870s. Just ten years later, after two major strikes in the region and several years of economic panics, Fashbaugh's family had become one of many with multiple generations of miners. Twenty-year old John and eighteen-year old William had joined their father in the mines. Children also provided support for the parents of mining families in their old age. While William had started his own family and been promoted to foreman, John remained with his parents well into his forties. When the elder Fashbaugh died of miner's dropsy in 1905, the younger John still lived at home, contributing to his parents' support.⁶⁵ Coal mining was a family tradition which helped to maintain and support the generations both culturally

⁶⁴ Numbers from this section drawn from statistical summaries of the population schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*.

⁶⁵ Data on the Fashbaugh family through the years taken from the following sources: Population schedules of Jackson Township, Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 9, Family 9); *Ibid.*, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 5, Family 5); *Ibid.*, *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900* (Dwelling 201, Family 205 and Dwelling 202, Family 206); *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, Vol. 4, Page 82.

and financially. Women's labor—literally and figuratively—was central to this cultural transmission.

The Fashbaugh family was typical in the Stark County mines, but it was not the only model for the collier household. Coal mining was a dangerous occupation and not every miner lived to old age like John Fashbaugh. Explosions, cave-ins, cart accidents, and a myriad of health concerns could end a miner's life long before he reached old age. It was not uncommon for mining families to lack multiple generations working in the colliery due to such a calamity. With only limited death benefits from mutual aid societies, one in twenty collier families were left with no means of support other than that which the widow could accomplish.⁶⁶ In 1870, four percent of collier households were headed by women, while in 1880 that number had grown to five percent. While some mining families were headed by women due to abandonment, in Stark County widows headed all of the families without a male breadwinner.⁶⁷ Women's work in the Tuscarawas Valley, as in other mining regions, was vast in scope and central to the survival of collier families. Even without a husband, women still had to maintain this workload to support their families. Whether through abandonment or death, without a

⁶⁶ The Tuscarawas Valley was organized under several unions and benevolent societies during the 1860s and 1870s, including the American Miners' Association, The Workingman's Benevolent Association, and the Miners' National Association. Despite this, death benefits were typically one time payments and of limited value. Edward Pinkowski, *John Siney: The Miners' Martyr* (Philadelphia: Sunshine Press, 1963), 100-101, 105; Edward A. Wieck, *The American Miners' Association: A Record of the Origin of Coal Miners' Unions in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1940), 68-73.

⁶⁷ Nancy M. Forestell, "All That Glitters Is Not Gold: The Gendered Dimensions of Work, Family and Community Life in the Northern Ontario Goldmining Town of Timmins, 1909-1950" (University of Toronto, 1993), Ch. 4. Forestell notes the high rate of abandonment in mining towns, causing hardship in addition to death and disability.

male income, women's work—and that of their children—was increased to make up for the lost income.

Widows in the Massillon coal region only rarely sought outside employment; instead they replaced the lost income in the same manner they had when their husbands lived. Taking in boarders and sending sons into the mines were the most common ways that Stark County widows earned an income. In 1870, sixteen percent of women who headed collier households took in boarders, a number that fell to just shy of ten percent in 1880. The rate at which widows kept boarders in their homes was not significantly different from that of households headed by men (see Figure 3-1). However, those widows who took in boarders did so in much greater numbers than other families. In 1870, the average widow keeping boarders took in 3.3 additional people into their home; ten years later, those families kept an average of two boarders.⁶⁸ Keeping boarders in the numbers which they did provided widows with the opportunity to completely replace their husband's income. As noted previously, each boarder earned the widow approximately \$2.00 per week. Though she did have to provide food for the boarder, unlike her husband's income, none of this revenue had to be spent on supplies or repairing tools. Despite the income that boarding could generate, it was not the most popular means of support among widows.

The collier household survived on the family wage, with or without a husband working in the mines. The majority of widow-led households did not keep boarders.

⁶⁸ See Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. In 1870, eighteen collier households were headed by women, three of which kept a total of ten boarders. Ten years later, widows headed 43 households, with four of them keeping eight boarders.

Instead the family's primary income came from sons—or sons-in-law—who mined coal. In fact, collier families headed by women had a higher average number of miners than those with a male head-of-household. In the decades surrounding the Massillon War, collier households headed by men averaged 1.4 to 1.5 miners per household. Those headed by women sent between 1.6 and 1.8 miners to the coal banks.⁶⁹ Among widows, boarding seems to have been a last resort for those who did not have children or had children too young to work in the mines. Only two widows—Mary Witt and Eliza Doyle—did both, keeping boarders and sending their sons into the mines.⁷⁰ Most widows were more like Rosanna Morris, keeping boarders when her children were young, then relying on the support of her son and son-in-law in later years. Morris's husband Theodore was a miner who died sometime after the 1861, leaving her with three young children. In 1870, Morris kept five boarders, four of them miners, in her home in Lawrence Township. Keeping this many boarders, allowed her to support her children without remarriage. Earning up to ten dollars per week keeping boarders, Morris would have made substantially more than a miner. By 1880, Morris's circumstances had changed dramatically. She was still a widow, and in fact never remarried, but now the only miners living in her home were family. At nineteen, her only son John was old enough to work in the mines. Stephen Evans, Morris's son-in-law, also worked in the

⁶⁹ Ibid. In 1870, the average for all families was 1.4 miners while widow households sent 1.6 to the mines. In 1880, these numbers had grown to 1.5 and 1.8 respectively.

⁷⁰ Population schedules of Jackson Township, Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 274, Family 273); Perry Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 64, Family 64).

mines while living in Rosanna's home with his wife Clarinda.⁷¹ This family income was preferable to that earned by taking in boarders. Of course not all widows remained single for the remainder of their lives.

A widow was an extremely valuable commodity in the mining community and most women who lost their husbands rarely remained single for long. Despite high mortality rates in the mines, less than five percent of households were headed by widows. Given the scope and value of the work which women performed in the household and the mining community at large, young widows attracted any number of suitors among single miners. Marrying a widow not only gave a miner access to her labor in the home, but if he was lucky it also brought him stepsons who could work alongside him in the mine. Such was the case of James Cooney who, when he married the widow Ann Kennedy in 1875, gained the services of a wife experienced in household management and three stepsons who had been mining coal for more than five years. Ann Kennedy's first husband, John, died in 1871 due to consumption, one of many lung ailments common among miners. Though Ann was left with five children to support, ranging in age from fourteen to two, she was not without support. Her three oldest sons—John, Thomas, and Luke—were already working in the mines. Cooney was ten years Ann's junior and had no children of his own. When they married, the thirty-four year old collier not only

⁷¹ Details on Rosanna Morris (listed as Rosan in the 1860 and 1880 census) found in population schedules of Lawrence Township, Stark County, Ohio, *Eighth Census of the United States: 1860* (Dwelling 46, Family 46); *Ibid.*, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 52, Family 65); *Ibid.*, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 691, Family 704); Tuscarawas Township, *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900* (Dwelling 201, Family 205 and Dwelling 72, Family 72). There are no details on Theodore Morris's death, but Rosanna is listed as a widow by 1870. In 1900 she is no longer listed as the head-of-household, instead living with the family of her daughter and son-in-law, Clarinda and Stephen Evans.

gained the skills and services of a housewife; the additional income from his three stepsons' mining endeavors would more than likely have quadrupled his income. Ann Kennedy married Cooney exactly four years after the death of her first husband.⁷² Given the substantial benefits a collier appropriated by marrying a suitable widow, it is no wonder that so few of them remained single.

Women's labor was the key to maintaining a family in coal-mining communities like Stark County. For the male collier who lost a spouse, the need to replace the lost services and labor of a wife was even more critical. Less than two percent of collier households were headed by male colliers alone, largely due to the rapidity with which colliers remarried. Thomas McBride spent less than two years as a widower after the death of his wife Bridget. With seven children under the age of eighteen, McBride married another collier widow, Jane Peterson, in 1864. Though Jane brought three children of her own to the family, the benefits of having a wife to manage the household economy far outweighed any drains on the family income. McBride gained the services of a skilled miner's wife while Peterson was able to support her family without having to take in boarders. By 1870 the family's income was augmented by the labor of three of Thomas's children in the mines as well as that of Jane's son, Thomas Peterson.⁷³ The marriage of McBride and Peterson provided substantial benefits to both families, and

⁷² Marriage information from Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #8-352M). Family composition taken from population schedules for Lawrence Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 29, Family 39) and Lawrence, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 768, Family 784). See also *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, Vol. 1, Page 68, Microfilm edition.

⁷³ Population Schedules, Franklin Township, Summit County, Ohio, *Eighth Census of the United States: 1860* (Dwelling 464, Family 458); Perry Township, Stark County, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 302, Family 295); Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #6-38MA).

illustrates the value of women's labor in mining communities; labor without which no family could survive in mining communities.

“Keeping House” Outside the Home: The Cases of Jeanette Sandworth and Elizabeth Perry

“Keeping house” rendered a wide variety of women's work invisible in the Massillon region. This single census designation hid intensive labor tied up in household management and keeping boarders, tending gardens and raising livestock. Even those women who headed their own households were classified under this label. “Keeping house” was supposed to be reserved for those wives who earned no wages, but its actual use was more insidious. Despite evidence that women brought in income from a variety of sources, only one collier's wife out of more than 1100 families was designated in the census with an occupation other than “keeping house.” Louisa Minser, listed as a tailoress in the 1880 census, was unique in her designation, but not in her situation.⁷⁴ Minser was not the only collier's wife to work outside of the home. By looking at the examples of Jeanette Sandworth and Elizabeth Perry, it is possible to determine the extent of work which women performed outside of the home as well as to explore the extralegal measures which some families undertook to ensure their survival.

⁷⁴ Population Schedules of Waynesburg, Stark County, Ohio, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 60, Family 62).

Jeanette (Brown Lister) Sandworth

Collier's wives ran a wide range of business ventures, but few were as successful as Jeanette Sandworth. The wife of an English miner, Isaac, Sandworth ran a grocery store in Lawrence, Ohio, dealing almost exclusively with other colliers. She also owned ten plots of land throughout the township of North Lawrence, five of which included tenant housing. In 1881, Sandworth's property was valued at more than \$2200. Local miners were in debt to her grocery for \$9103.63 and she continued to generate monthly rents and sales. However, in the 1880 census she remained unremarkable from her fellow wives. Her occupation was simply "keeping house."⁷⁵

Sandworth earned her money the old-fashioned way, through inheritance.

Jeanette Brown was born in Scotland and move to Lawrence sometime before her she turned seventeen. Given the number of Scottish miners who moved into the region, she was most likely a collier's daughter. She first appeared in county records when she married Thomas Lister on May 20, 1860. Within the couple's first four years of marriage they moved to Illinois, but returned to Lawrence by 1866. Due to the couple's mobility during their first decade of marriage, Lister was, in all probability, a miner himself. By 1870, however, Thomas Lister had left the mines and opened a grocery catering to his collier brethren. Situated in a neighborhood surrounded by colliers, mine workers, and superintendents at the coal banks, Lister's grocery was a resounding success. Though he

⁷⁵ Data compiled from census and probate documents. See Estate of Thomas Lister, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1457). Also case #s 5-219M and 9-159MB for marriage information. Population schedules for Lawrence Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 121, Family 153) and North Lawrence, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 288, Family 300). Jeanette's name is alternately spelled as Jannet, Jennett, and Jennie throughout these various documents.

left the mines behind, Lister died a miner's death, succumbing to a lung fever on February 14, 1876; he left everything to his wife.⁷⁶

Jeanette Lister was one of the most desirable widows in Stark County's mining community and she did not stay single for long. Only thirty-three years old at the time of her husband's death, she was almost two decades younger than the widows who did not remarry.⁷⁷ Along with her youth, she owned substantial property and ran a vibrant business. Unlike many other widows, Jeanette had no pressing financial need to remarry quickly. Though she had four children between the ages of three and thirteen, like most collier families, they contributed to the family economy with all but the youngest helping to run the family grocery. Lister headed her own household for just over three years. In June, 1879 she married an English collier named Isaac Sandworth and gave birth to a daughter, Clara, nine months later.

Jeanette inherited a great deal of wealth and property from her first husband, but she appears to have been an able manager in her own right. Lister's estate spent five years in probate, during which time all of the property was sold to settle debts. Despite limited cash resources, Jeanette was successful in reacquiring all of this land. By the time she remarried in 1879, Jeanette had reclaimed all of the property that her first

⁷⁶ The Lister's had three children in the 1860s. Alexander was born in Illinois in 1864, while Margaret and Jennie were born in Ohio in 1866 and 1869, respectively. Their fourth child, Cora, was born in 1873. Population schedules, Lawrence Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 121, Family 153) See also *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, Vol. 1, Page 166, Microfilm edition. Though his only census listing was as a grocer, his English heritage, movement between coal regions in Ohio and Illinois, as well as his death from lung ailments indicates a high likelihood that Thomas Lister spent time in the mines. Most boys entered the mines between the ages of 10 and 14. Lister was 39 in 1870 and could have spent as much as twenty years as a collier before becoming a grocer.

⁷⁷ Of 18 collier widows in the 1870 census, the average age was 53.5 years. In 1880 the 43 widows had an average age of 51.8.

husband had possessed at the time of his death. Jeanette's role as an effective household manager and business woman is indicated by the disposition of this property upon her marriage to Sandworth. One year after their marriage, Isaac was still working as a collier, indeed he had been out of work for only two months the entire year. Jeanette, on the other hand, had two occupational designations: "Keeping house" and "retail grocer."⁷⁸ That "keeping house" was her primary designation is an indication of the importance of that role in the minds of middle-class enumerators. Despite being one of the wealthiest woman in the township, the occupation through which she earned that income was secondary to her role in the family. Jeanette Sandworth was an enterprising businesswoman who preserved her first husband's legacy and passed on a great deal of wealth to her children, but as a collier's wife she was simply "keeping house." Further, the experiences of Jeanette Sandworth illustrate the desirability of widows in the coal-mining communities.

Elizabeth (Anna) Perry

Not every woman who ran a business was as successful as Jeanette Sandworth, nor were their business ventures as legal. Indeed, in the case of Elizabeth Perry, "keeping house" hid both the work and the notoriety of her domestic endeavors. Between 1871 and 1876, Welsh miner John Perry and his wife Elizabeth were indicted five times on charges ranging from selling liquor to keeping a house of ill fame. The Perrys had no

⁷⁸ Retail grocer was actually listed on the line below Jannet, but it is unlikely that her 3 month old daughter, Clara, was running the business. Alexander, her oldest son, was listed as "helps in store." Population Schedules, North Lawrence, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 288, Family 300)

children to assist in earning a family income, so their efforts to support themselves had to be more creative. In doing so, Elizabeth and her husband were tapping into a well-documented market of miners and drinking.

Whether deserved or not, colliers had a well-known reputation for their love of spirits. In his study of Scottish miners, Laslett noted that the day after pay day was often an informal holiday due to the number of miners who were unable to work because of hangovers.⁷⁹ John Brophy's recollections from his days in the Urey coal camp supported this conclusion. Come pay day, the younger miners would drink beer or high-alcohol patent medicines and "howl off their wild spirits in the open air."⁸⁰ In Stark County, miners such as John Barnes and William Norman got involved in selling liquor. While the county was not completely dry, it was illegal to sell spirits without the proper license.⁸¹ However, no miner or spouse was indicted as often as John and Elizabeth Perry.

The Perrys's first indictment on alcohol-related charges was also their most punitive. In 1871, life-long teetotaler William McKinley was the Stark County District Attorney and he was cracking down on unlicensed liquor establishments. The Perrys had found a way to supplement John's income as a collier by turning their home in Canton into a make-shift tavern. John Perry was brought to court and pleaded guilty to "keeping rooms for the sale of liquor" on March 27, 1871. He was fined fifty dollars and required

⁷⁹ Laslett, *Colliers across the Sea*, 25-26.

⁸⁰ Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 34.

⁸¹ For indictments against John Barnes and William Norman, see "Stark County Courthouse, Appearance Docket 1," (Stark County Archives: Canton, Ohio), 28, 30-31. Indeed, most indictments for liquor violations were for failing to have the proper license, not for the sale itself.

to provide a nuisance bond of \$1000 that would be forfeited if he was indicted again within the year. The 1871 charge was the only time that John was charged without his wife; it was also the only time that he would appear in court, despite four more indictments in the next five years.⁸² When the nuisance bond expired, the Perrys returned to selling alcohol in order to supplement John's income as a collier.

In 1874 and 1876, Stark County prosecutors charged John and Elizabeth Perry with numerous counts related to misuse of their Canton home. However, it was only Elizabeth Perry who made appearances to answer for their crimes. In both years, Elizabeth appeared in court to answer charges of selling liquor to a minor. Fortunately for her, McKinley was no longer the prosecutor. In her first appearance for these charges in 1874, Elizabeth pleaded guilty and paid a fine of \$10; two years later her trial went to a jury who found her not guilty. In May 1876, Elizabeth also faced additional charges of keeping rooms for the sale of liquor and keeping a house of ill fame. Neither of these charges were prosecuted, possibly due to their coinciding with the high profile cases of arson and riot during the Massillon War.⁸³

The extralegal endeavors of Elizabeth Perry are notable for several reasons. Foremost among these is the content of the charges. While many people were charged with alcohol-related offenses in Stark County, Elizabeth Perry is the only one who was also indicted for running a brothel out of her home. Another aspect of considerable

⁸² Ibid., "Stark County Courthouse, Appearance Docket Q-2," (Stark County Archives: Canton, Ohio), 316; "Stark County Courthouse, Journal C-2," (Stark County Archives: Canton, Ohio), 451. See also Population Schedules, Canton, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 205, Family 209)

⁸³ Ibid., "Stark County Courthouse, Appearance Docket 1," 94, 194-195. See also "Stark County Courthouse, Journal E-2," 154, 181, 244, 260; "Stark County Courthouse, Journal F-2," 472, 520, 531, 611, 613; "Stark County Courthouse Journal H-2," 177.

interest in these charges is that, though John was indicted alongside his wife, he did not appear in court, nor was he ever prosecuted for his failure to appear. All charges against John were left off the court docket shortly after his wife paid fines or received her jury verdict. Taken together, the content of the charges and the lack of prosecution against her husband, the charges against Elizabeth Perry highlight aspects of gender relations in coal mining communities. Despite charges against him, John was not compelled to appear in court alongside his wife. Though his absence was documented, he was not removed from the mines where he continued to work as a collier. Elizabeth was the only defendant held accountable for these charges, despite the fact that the crimes took place in a residence owned by her husband. All of this indicates that, though the court recognized Elizabeth as the primary party responsible for criminal actions, her illegal income was earned in a family economy. The letter of the law necessitated the indictment of her husband, but the spirit of the law was satisfied when only Elizabeth answered the charges. In these criminal complaints, it is possible to see how ideals and reality often conflicted and how social and gender norms could be fluid when it came to “keeping house.” Elizabeth Perry was hardly a model of middle-class domesticity, yet her actions were well within the norm for collier womanhood. Her extralegal activities may have garnered the attention of the courts, but it also allowed her to provide for her family when her husband’s income faltered.

“Keeping house” may have started as a census designation, but in many ways it defined how gender was done in the Stark County mines. Colliers and their wives constructed ideals of appropriate women’s roles based on their lived experiences, not on

hegemonic norms or arguments for an essential womanhood put forth by a middle class that also fell short of these standards. The invisible work women performed in the coal mining community was central to collier families' survival. Household management, raising livestock, and tending gardens all helped to stretch the miner's wages, both in between pay days and during the long stretches of down time that were so common in the coal mines. Every penny a woman saved in producing her family's own food and clothing helped keep the collier out of debt to local merchants. Women's labor in keeping boarders was also a significant boost to the household economy, providing a stable, consistent source of income that maintained the family when the mines were slack. Bearing children and raising the next generation of miners provided continuity in the community and ensured that collier families' ideals of gender and work relationships would endure.

Of course not every woman in collier communities limited their housekeeping to "traditional" pursuits. Despite geographical and cultural limitations which prescribed the appropriate types of work available to women, collier's wives found ways to support their families outside of "keeping house." Louisa Minser's work as a tailor, Jeanette Sandworth's grocery, and Elizabeth Perry's "house of ill fame" were just a few examples. As we will see in the next chapter, women were active outside of the home as well. Colliers' wives defended their homes and families on the picket line, participating in strikes alongside their husbands. Some even entered the collieries, mining coal in Stark County more than one hundred years before women "officially" entered the mines. Still, these women worked within ideals of gender that were accepted in coal-mining

communities. Stark County's collier-households may have developed their ideas of gender based on men's endeavors in mines, but they lived and died by the work of their women.

Chapter 4- Women in the Stark County Mines

It is clear from looking at the extent of activities which went into “keeping house” that women’s work in coal-mining communities was not limited to the confines of their homes. While much of their labors did take place in the household, as evidenced by the work of women like Jeanette Sandworth and Elizabeth Perry, the barriers which separated work in and out of the home were minimal and, in some cases, non-existent. Women were clearly engaged in significant activities, both social and economic, which were central to the survival of mining families. As the last chapter illustrated, much of this was hidden from official records by the census designation “keeping house.” However, not all of women’s activities in coal-mining communities were performed so close to home; Stark County colliers’ wives were also active in and around the coal mines. Women’s efforts around the coal mines took two forms, some of which were well documented. When women participated in the strikes of their husbands, fathers, and brothers, whether staffing picket lines or attacking scabs, their efforts were noted, both in the local press and in national labor publications. Other facets of women’s work, especially their labors in the mines themselves, have been much more difficult to uncover. Social stigmas against women’s work outside of the home, as well as recording bias of middle-class observers rendered female coal miners invisible, obfuscating their presence in the historical record. Whether their efforts at the mines were visible or not, women’s contributions in the coal-mining community of Stark County did not end at their doorsteps.

Uncovering the history of women in the coal mines during the nineteenth century is a challenging endeavor, hindered by a lack of records as well as a distinct set of historical biases. Housework, the topic of the previous chapter, has been recognized as a legitimate historical subject for more than three decades. These studies have highlighted the value of household endeavors, which had been overlooked by historians because they were outside of the wage-labor economy and the public sphere.¹ The same treatment has not been applied to women's work in the mines, nor to their activities during strikes in the nineteenth century. Instead, women's activities in the twentieth century have influenced the historiography, largely ahistorically. When women entered strikes, historians have argued that they did so in defiance of contemporary gender norms. Like their middle-class counterparts who took to the streets to advocate for the vote in order to protect their households, colliers wives defended their traditional roles when they went to the mines, "keeping house" beyond the boundaries of their homes. Further, historians have asserted that women who worked inside the mines did so in a hyper-masculinized environment, one that was hostile to their presence. This view is actually an amalgam of nineteenth-century middle-class opposition to women's work in the mines and the workplace hostility aimed at female miners in the 1970s. Historical interpretations of

¹ Heidi Hartmann's classic work explored the role of housework and its place in conflicted relationships of power. Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework," *Signs* 6, no. 3 (Spring 1981). Of course, the most important work that served to reevaluate the significance of housework is Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). Other works have highlighted the difficulties in uncovering women's work due to historical biases, although in the past decades, these biases have been addressed by historians. See Nancy Folbre and Marjorie Abel, "Women's Work and Women's Households: Gender Bias in the U.S. Census," *Social Research* 56, no. 3 (Fall, 1989); Philip N. Cohen, "The Gendered Division of Labor: "Keeping House" And Occupational Segregation in the United States," *Gender and Society* 18, no. 2 (Apr., 2004).

colliers' wives on the picket lines and women in the coal mines have been influenced by the experiences of twentieth-century coal communities.

In Stark County, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the reality of both situations—women in the collieries and on the picket lines—was much more complex. Collier notions of womanhood diverged in significant ways from middle-class ideals. Instead of challenging norms by participating in strikes, women's strike activities were an integral part of constructing gender in the community. Women's work in the mines has been similarly misinterpreted. In the late-nineteenth century, women who worked in the coal mines were rare. However, when they did enter the mines women did not encounter a hostile environment; they participated in an older system of mine work, a family labor tradition that had ended just decades earlier. This chapter will explore these themes, highlighting the way female gender roles were "done" in Stark County's coal-mining community and how women's activities in and around the mines fit into collier's notions of "appropriate" behavior.²

His Strike, Her Fight: Women on the Picket Lines

Women's participation in the strikes of their husbands, fathers, and sons, has become central to the lore of the coal mines. In times of labor unrest, women left the safety of their homes, their domestic sphere, to walk picket lines, either beside or in place of their husbands. As working-class women, these colliers' wives were protecting their

² See Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman, "Doing Gender," *Gender and Society* 1, no. 2 (Jun., 1987): 106; Francine M. Deutsch, "Undoing Gender," *Gender and Society* 21, no. 1 (Feb., 2007): 125-127 for a discussion of "doing gender."

homes, in much the same ways that middle-class reformers argued for suffrage in order to protect their homes and their “sphere.” In testimony before Congress in 1912, suffrage advocates noted that women could not end their efforts at the doorstep, for in order “to have a clean house it is necessary to have clean streets. To have clean streets it is necessary to elect a clean mayor.”³ These same arguments were made by Mother Jones in her justification of women’s participation in strikes in America’s coal regions. She asked, ““Why should a woman be out talking about miners’ affairs?’ Why shouldn’t she? Who has a better right? Has she not given you birth? Has she not raised you and cared for you? Has she not struggled for you?”⁴ The sacrifices that miners’ wives made, the labor and toil which they endured, and the hardships that they suffered to provide for their families had given them a right to participate in affairs which middle-class commentators considered to be beyond their purview. This has been the narrative of women’s participation in the strikes: in times of hardship and duress, women could slip the bonds of their sphere in order to protect that which was traditionally theirs, the home. In order to justify their excursions into “the affairs of men,” miners’ wives couched their explanations in terms of middle-class domesticity and motherhood.

Historians have examined this pattern in great detail in their explorations of twentieth-century miners. In her study of the Brookside Coal Strike of 1973-74 in Harlan

³ Address of Hon. Edward T. Taylor, Representative at Large of the State of Colorado, on Equal Suffrage in Colorado "Woman Suffrage Serial No. 2: Hearings before the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, Sixty-Second Congress- Second Session," (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1912), 33.

⁴ Quoted in Priscilla Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 157; Elliott J. Gorn, *Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 87. Original source material from Marry Harris Jones, *The Speeches and Writings of Mother Jones*, ed. Edward M. Steel (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 3-4.

County, Kentucky, Sally Ward Maggard noted that when women participated by helping to organize and walking the picket lines, they did “things they had not only never done before but also had never dreamed of doing.”⁵ Men were considered the primary breadwinners in this community, and women got involved only to protect their families when court injunctions prevented their husbands from picketing.⁶ The women of the Brookside Coal Strike were also careful about maintaining their femininity, ensuring that walking the picket line did not challenge their place in the home. A woman’s participation was contingent on the presumption that she behaved in a manner that allowed her to “meet the expectations of her role inside her family unit.”⁷ By returning home between shifts on the picket line to feed and take care of their children and husbands, colliers’ wives maintained the gender ideals of the male breadwinner and housewife.

Historians of twentieth-century strikes have argued that when women walked the picket lines and challenged strikebreakers, they were making a conscious decision to violate internalized notions about gender, based on the exigencies of the situation. For example, Susan Miller argued that women in the 1984 Islington coal strike had been “taught to be weak and passive,” and that it took exceptional courage for them to withstand the “threats, abuse, violence, and intimidation” which they received while

⁵ Sally Ward Maggard, "Women's Participation in the Brookside Coal Strike: Militance, Class, and Gender in Appalachia," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 9, no. 3 (1987): 16.

⁶ *Ibid.*: 17.

⁷ *Ibid.*: 19-20.

walking the picket line.⁸ Women participated in the strikes only in the midst of extenuating circumstances. Most often, women involved themselves in the strike when male colliers were explicitly prohibited from striking.⁹ In both the Brookside and Islington strikes, women did not join the strike until legal sanctions prevented the participation of their husbands. The same was true of the 1989 Pittston Coal Strike in Lebanon, Virginia. When the Pittston Coal Group “sought a court injunction against mass picketing,” women and retired miners took the place of the colliers who were prohibited from participating.¹⁰ In these extreme circumstances, women made the decision to share the burdens of the strike only when their husbands were incapable of continuing. At the same time, they struggled to maintain their womanhood while performing masculine tasks. It was this same view of women’s strike participation that was portrayed in the 1954 movie, *Salt of the Earth*. The blacklisted film illustrated the power of these conflicts on families as the wives of striking zinc miners took the place of their husbands on the lines.¹¹ These twentieth-century examples have had a powerful impact on analyses of nineteenth-century working-class women.

⁸ Susan Miller, "The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us': Women's Role in the Coal Dispute," *Journal of Law and Society* 12, no. 3 (Winter, 1985): 359.

⁹ Maggard, "Women's Participation in the Brookside Coal Strike," 17; Miller, "The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us," 359. See also Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 83. Shifflett highlights the gender division of labor and notes that the 1943 strike in Concho, West Virginia allowed women to walk the picket lines and set up food tents when injunctions prevented their men from joining in strike activities.

¹⁰ Karen Beckwith, "Collective Identities of Class and Gender: Working-Class Women in the Pittston Coal Strike," *Political Psychology* 19, no. 1 (Mar., 1998): 147.

¹¹ *Salt of the Earth*, dir. by Herbert J. Biberman (1954; Independent Productions / International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, 2011 Internet) <http://www.archive.org/details/salt_of_the_earth>

The examples cited above have at their core a presumption of working-class men as sole breadwinners for the household, while women maintained the home, a position that fails to adequately reflect the lived experience of nineteenth-century colliers and their families. The stay-at-home mom was a twentieth-century ideal for the American working class, one that expanded as increased standards of living helped to create a blue-collar middle class.¹² Unfortunately, some scholars have attempted to apply similar analyses to nineteenth-century women's participation in strikes. This approach fails to acknowledge is that nineteenth-century coal miners were well aware of the contributions women made and the importance of their work. As the previous chapter demonstrated, women's work in and around the home was significant and constituted a substantial economic boost for the household. While most historians recognize this expanded role of women in mining communities, too often they attribute women's participation in strikes as anomalous in an assumption of working-class women's domesticity. In fact, the strike activities of collier's wives were an integral part of their conceptions of womanhood. It was only in their interactions with middle-class reformers that the necessity to justify their actions emerged.

Over the last two decades, historians have made a number of investigations into the role of women in the collier family economy and the gendered division of labor, as well as into the role of wives in the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century's labor disputes. What they have argued is that women's participation in strikes was an

¹² Mignon Duffy, "Doing the Dirty Work: Gender, Race, and Reproductive Labor in Historical Perspective," *Gender and Society* 21, no. 3 (Jun., 2007): 314. As Duffy points out, this phenomenon was primarily middle-class, and excludes the reality of working women among African-Americans, immigrants, and the poor.

important part of the events, but that it was most influential in how it challenged prevailing gender norms. In her study of the miners of Windeber, Pennsylvania, Mildred Allen Beik argued that the region's strikes would have failed without the support of women, but that their participation on picket lines was only effective against scabs because it challenged "the very notions of manhood that underlay the miners' family economy."¹³ In looking at the conflicts of western miners with the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., Priscilla Long has found similar patterns of behavior. Miners' wives attacked mine guards in Hastings and a priest in Segundo who expressed sympathy with the company. Long notes that, in these instances, "the women's traditional female roles did not translate into passive behavior."¹⁴ The problem with this analysis is the assumption that colliers' wives accepted a "traditional female role" that did not involve violence and militancy during periods of strike.

The most famous woman in the coal fields, Mother Jones, utilized women's militancy in order to prevent strikebreakers from taking union-colliers' jobs. Telling the men to stay home, she "organized an army of women" bearing mops and brooms to keep scabs from stealing union jobs in Arnot, Pennsylvania in 1900.¹⁵ Mother Jones attempted to find common ground between the working-class wives of colliers and the hegemonic ideals of middle-class Americans by equating militancy and motherhood. However, as Elliott Gorn noted in his biography of the most dangerous woman in America,

¹³ Mildred A. Beik, *The Miners of Windber: The Struggles of New Immigrants for Unionization, 1890s-1930s* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 105-106.

¹⁴ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 227-228.

¹⁵ Mary Harris Jones, *Autobiography of Mother Jones*, ed. Mary Field Parton (Chicago: C.H. Kerr & Company, 1925), 33-36.

reconciling these ideas was a double-edged sword. The same middle- and upper-class men who recognized and accepted her claims to essential motherhood were prone to dismiss her radicalism because it did not fit their own gender ideals.¹⁶ Jones was not the only labor activist who struggled to justify women's strike activities, as outsiders often marveled at the fierceness of colliers' wives. In regards to the priest who was attacked in the mining town of Segundo, organizers for the United Mine Workers of America "declared that the incident had 'outraged decency and brought odium on the conduct of the strike.'"¹⁷ Attempts to gain sympathy from outsiders by marrying working-class militancy to ideals of motherhood rarely succeeded, as even labor activists disparaged the gendered behaviors that were the norm in mining communities.

Neither of these interpretations adequately capture the role collier women played on the picket lines during coal strikes in the nineteenth century. Just as historians' own biases, formed in their observations of twentieth-century miners' wives, have been incorrectly applied, so too have the estimations of the miners' middle- and upper-class contemporaries been overvalued. Managers, operators, and journalists expressed their opinions on women's actions against blacklegs based on their own sense of propriety and the obligations of gender. Even those comments by such paragons of labor as Mother Jones bore closer resemblance to middle-class norms, reflecting the larger community she appealed to rather than the constituency which she represented. As the UMWA's

¹⁶ Gorn, *Mother Jones*, 228. Indeed, the response of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co. was to establish "adult education" in order to change the behavior of miners and their wives and render it more amenable to middle-class sensibilities. These forms of "corporate paternalism" are explored in great detail in Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), Ch. 6.

¹⁷ Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 227.

reaction to the events in Segundo demonstrates, national representatives of the miners' unions were often just as timid, concerned that the colliers' version of militant motherhood would alienate supporters outside of the mining communities. The wives and daughters of coal miners acted in accordance with a distinctly collier-based notion of womanhood. Therefore, in order to understand how that ideal was lived in Stark County, and other mining regions, it is necessary to look to the source. It is the reaction of the miners, and the lack of reaction, which is of greater use in understanding women's place in the strike.

In looking at women's actions during coal strikes and the way in which gender roles influenced strike activities, it is necessary to begin with a question: If women's militancy was so shocking, so abnormal, then why was it so prevalent? In countless cases of labor difficulties in the coal fields, women repeatedly appeared on the picket lines. Further, women's actions against company security, organized militia, police, and blacklegs or scabs, illustrated a pattern that is common rather than extraordinary. The prevalence of strike behavior indicates colliers' wives acceptance of and participation in a gender system that encouraged militancy in labor struggles. Temma Kaplan labeled this class of behavior as "female consciousness, recognition of what a particular class, culture, and historical period expect from women."¹⁸ She noted that recognizing and accepting these gender roles entailed rights and responsibilities that served as a "motive force" in social interactions. Women participated in strikes in aggressive, vocal, and militant ways, because it was expected of them based on their understanding of gender

¹⁸ Temma Kaplan, "Female Consciousness and Collective Action: The Case of Barcelona, 1910-1918," *Signs* 7, no. 3 (Spring, 1982): 545.

roles in collier communities. Walking the picket lines, attacking scabs, and challenging police were as much a part of women's gender role in mining communities as managing the family economy and taking care of their homes.

Outside of interaction with middle-class supporters, the response of colliers and their communities indicates their level of acceptance of women's militancy and participation in strike activities. In Massillon, colliers' wives took up a prominent role in the 1876 coal strike with little acknowledgement from male miners and no discussion of "traditional roles." While mine operators initiated the first attacks of the Massillon War with draconian wage cuts to miners, the first acts of physical violence came at the hands of the miners' wives. On April 1, the same day the miners went on strike, operators brought in scabs to work the mines and began constructing temporary housing for the new men. Miners and their wives refused to allow the new men to continue building the shanties and attacked the blacklegs, "their wives hurling stones and other missiles at the men."¹⁹ What is remarkable about the event is not that it occurred, but that the women's participation drew so little reaction in the community. Aside from one brief report in *The Canton Repository*, the presence and activities of the women received no mention. *The Stark County Democrat* noted the violence that occurred with no mention of the women and instead focused on the deputizing of an emergency constabulary to aid the sheriff in the event of further conflicts.²⁰ Nor did women's militancy receive much interest in the national labor publications. *The Workingman's Advocate*, out of Chicago, reported that

¹⁹ *The Canton Repository* (Ohio), April 7, 1876.

²⁰ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH) April 13, 1876.

the Stark County miners were on strike, but did not acknowledge the extent of the troubles.²¹ Even *The National Labor Tribune*, the official voice of the National Miner's Association, did not mention the women. Reporting that "violence was resorted to at one of the banks of the Valley," the editors urged prudence with no mention of female activities.²² While the lack of mention by most everyone who reported on the events could be due to a devaluing of women's contributions on the part of journalists and editors, the same relative silence on the part of the miners who were present speaks to the commonness of the events.

Had colliers rejected the role that women played in strikes, their disapproval should have been pronounced in their own summaries of the events. Instead, there is a conspicuous silence on these matters. In his history of coal mining, Andrew Roy, a practical miner and Ohio's first official Inspector of Mines, devoted almost an entire chapter to the six-month conflict, but did not even mention the events of April 1. Instead, he focused on the male colliers who rioted two weeks later.²³ While this could be an oversight in his recollection of events, Roy does not ignore or give short shrift to the roles of women throughout his text. In describing a strike in the Mahoning Valley district of Ohio three years earlier, Roy noted with approval the activities of miners' wives who "threw pepper on their stoves" to prevent constables from expelling them from company

²¹ The strike was only mentioned in one issue of the paper during the month of April. *The Workman's Advocate* (Chicago, IL) April 1, 1876.

²² *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh, PA) April 1, 1876.

²³ Andrew Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States: From the Development of the Mines to the Close of the Anthracite Strike of 1902 Including a Brief Sketch of Early British Miners*, First Greenwood Reprinting ed. (Columbus, Ohio; Westport, Connecticut: J.L. Trauger Printing Company; Greenwood, 1905; 1970), 170-173.

housing.²⁴ That is not to say that he approved of all women's activities around the mines. As we shall see, Roy was very explicit in his condemnation of women's labor *inside* the mines, commending the British Parliament for "wiping out the disgrace of female labor" in 1842.²⁵ While Roy did lament the use of violence in general, he did not specify the activities of women as a source of special reprimand.²⁶ His vociferous disapproval of women's work in the mines, along with his tacit endorsement of their participation in the strikes, is a significant indication of how women's militancy fit into colliers' notions of gender roles.

Roy was not the only miner to observe women's strike behavior with silence. The Tuscarawas correspondents to *The National Labor Tribune*, local colliers who reported anonymously as "a miner," or with numerical pen-names like "93" or "99," illuminated most every aspect of the strike. While their reports touched on the violence and martial law in the area, as well as the murder of one miner, the issue of women's role in the hostilities was never broached.²⁷ Grace Palladino observed similar reactions among miners regarding their wives' militancy in her investigation of Pennsylvania colliers' resistance to the Civil War draft. When a draft enroller visited the town of Archibald in 1862, the wives and daughters of Irish colliers attacked the official and his assistants, hurling missiles at the men and attempting to remove one man's pants. A local reporter

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 136.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁶ *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh, PA), April 29, 1876.

²⁷ See reports from *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh, PA), April 1, 1876, as well as from May 13 and May 20.

for the *Luzerne Union* noted that “none of the men of this place interfered,” except for an attempt to negotiate the enroller’s surrender.²⁸ Male colliers’ silence, both in print and in deed, highlights the notion of implied consent which historian Linda Kerber has found in political obligations. Miners endorsed their wives activities through their “failure to refuse” women’s help and their “continued acceptance” of women’s militancy.²⁹ Failure to act on the part of male colliers indicated support as valid as if they had voiced it aloud. Further, wives’ actions, and colliers’ inaction served an additional purpose, pitting miners’ acceptance of female militancy against outsiders’ discomfort with aggressive womanhood.

Colliers and their wives utilized outsiders’ distress to their advantage, making it one of the most valuable weapons in their arsenal during a strike. When women formed picket lines or attacked scabs or guards, the reaction from authorities was often timid due to their aversions towards public violence against women, especially in comparison to that encountered by male colliers. Mother Jones relied on this sense of unease with militant motherhood when she organized her mop and broom brigades in 1900 and when she led women’s marches against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company in 1913 and 1914. In one instance, Jones helped the women of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, to avoid prosecution for assaulting scabs when she told them to bring their children with them to

²⁸ Grace Palladino, *Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-68* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 100-101. Quote is taken from Palladino, with the original appearing in *The Luzerne Union*, October 1, 1862.

²⁹ Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 8.

the courtroom.³⁰ By highlighting “traditional” motherhood over colliers’ more militant variety—roles that court officials found more comfortable—the women were, at least partially, immunized from the harshest punishments the court could dole out. This is why women’s participation in strikes was so effective for colliers. Collier womanhood set outsiders on edge, challenging middle-class ideals of womanhood by simultaneously embodying a familiar persona of motherhood and a fierce model of female aggression,. However, it is important to remember that, while colliers manipulated middle-class discomfort with female aggression, such behavior was intrinsic to their own construction of appropriate gender roles.

Though both men and women in collier communities took advantage of the discomfort women’s aggressive behavior caused, this tactic was best employed when men stayed out of the picture completely. Leaving violence to women gave coal operators and government representatives no target on whom they would feel comfortable taking out their aggressions. As Palladino’s look at the Archibald Riots demonstrates, men rarely interceded when women became violent; in the heat of the moment they negotiated rather than risk confrontation. When the draft agent returned the following week, his military escort acted preemptively by arresting women who had previously resisted.³¹ By removing these women before they could be a source of disorder in the miners’ acts of civil disobedience, the authorities had a free hand to act in the region. Such tactics were effective, for the most part. Colliers’ wives and daughters

³⁰ Jones, *Autobiography of Mother Jones*, 145-147.

³¹ Palladino, *Another Civil War*, 101.

acted in ways that their husbands and fathers could not, at least not without harsh reprisals. Incidents like the Ludlow Massacre, where women and children were targeted, were the exception in this pattern and raised massive public outcry.³² The rarity of such responses, and the backlash against them, highlights the effectiveness of women's operations in strikes.

In Stark County, consecutive events in the Massillon War showcase the differences in how women and men were treated on the picket lines. Both colliers and their wives initiated violent conflicts with blacklegs in the early days of the strike, with significantly different outcomes. As previously mentioned, when operators brought in scabs to work the mines on April 1, 1876, dozens of women met the new men at the train tracks. When the blacklegs began to settle in, building housing for a protracted strike, the women grew violent and attacked the scabs, driving them into the mines. While officials did respond to the women's antagonism—Stark County Sheriff J. P. Rauch and his deputies were dispatched to quell the violence and disperse the crowds—what is remarkable about the event is what did not happen. Police assaulted no women on the picket lines, used no force to break up the crowd, and arrested not a single participant;

³² The Ludlow Massacre in Colorado, 1914, has been one of the most studied attacks on coal miners in the past century, in part because of the two women and eleven children who were killed during the battle. Similar attacks on male colliers have received far less treatment. The events in Colorado have received superb treatment in classic works such as Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*; Howard M. Gitelman, *Legacy of the Ludlow Massacre: A Chapter in American Industrial Relations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988). However, the last decade has seen renewed interest in the events, including such outstanding monographs as David A. Wolff, *Industrializing the Rockies: Growth, Competition, and Turmoil in the Coalfields of Colorado and Wyoming, 1868-1914* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003); Scott Martelle, *Blood Passion: The Ludlow Massacre and Class War in the American West* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007); Andrews, *Killing for Coal*.

their response was passive, waiting for the women to disband on their own.³³ However, like in Archibald, Sheriff Rauch took measures to prevent a recurrence of these events. On April 11, Rauch swore in thirteen new deputies to help him protect scabs from striking miners and their wives.³⁴ Though they did act to prevent further violence, state and local authorities' reaction was tepid in comparison to their reprisals against male colliers who attacked blacklegs.

Coal operators and supervisors, as well as local and state authorities, responded to strike activities in varying degrees based on the gender of those on the picket line. Nearly two weeks after women's attack on scabs in Massillon a second group of blacklegs was brought in to work the Warmington Mine. The initial reaction on the picket line was similar to the first day of the strike, with one substantial difference; this time, it was male colliers and not their wives who fought to prevent the scabs from taking their place at the mine. From the moment miners gathered outside of the Warmington shaft on the morning of April 14, the operator's response was significantly different. George Warmington sent a telegram to Rutherford B. Hayes and demanded assistance from the Ohio governor with the "threatening and troublesome" miners.³⁵ Warmington's

³³ Reports of the events on April 1 can be found in both local and national papers. See *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 6, 1876; *Canton Repository*, April 7, 1876; and *National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh, PA), April 8, 1876. Only the *Canton Repository* mentioned women as participants. Stark County court records show no arrests for any of the women who attacked the blacklegs. Stark County Courthouse Appearance Docket 1, pp. 184-187, Stark County Archives, Canton, Ohio.

³⁴ *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 13, 1876.

³⁵ George Warmington to Rutherford B. Hayes, April 14, 1876, *Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Papers (RBHPP)*, microfilm, series 4, roll 35, frame 829. Hayes's response to Warmington was especially prompt, dispatching his own telegram ordering the county sheriff to investigate and, if necessary, respond "promptly." The events which lead up to the Massillon War, including the conflict around the Warmington Shaft will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

approach to dealing with the miners, appealing to the governor himself for intervention, indicates the operators' willingness to escalate when dealing with male colliers. When miners charged the gates to prevent blacklegs from entering the mine, Warmington drew a pistol and threatened to shoot any man who approached. His actions only served to anger the miners who beat him nearly to death and shot his superintendent, Rinehart Keller, in the leg.³⁶ At the end of the day, cooler heads prevailed among the striking men and no further injuries were inflicted; by the time the Sheriff arrived the miners had dispersed and the wounded had been sent for treatment. Though the conflicts began in almost identical circumstances, the events of the 1st and 14th were separated by two weeks and two genders.

Gender was central to negotiating labor conflicts in the Stark County coal fields and, as the events of April 1876 illustrate, the sex of those on the field trumped both the degree and presence of violence in determining the response of operators and authorities. Despite the fact that women initiated violence in their conflicts with blacklegs, the official response was measured.³⁷ Though the wives and daughters of colliers threw rocks and other missiles at the scabs as they approached the mines, they faced no retaliation, either physical or legal. Neither the mine operators, the scabs they brought in, nor the sheriff and his deputies were inclined towards aggression when confronted with violent women. Male colliers were not treated so mercifully; indeed the response of mine

³⁶ *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 20, 1876; *Canton Repository*, April 21, 1876. Andrew Roy wrote one of the most complete histories of the events leading up to the Massillon War. For more, see Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 171-172.

³⁷ In this instance I am specifically referring to physical violence. It can, and should, be argued that the operators' attempts to cut the miners pay at a time when coal was selling at record prices, thereby depriving their families of support, was in itself the initial act of violence in the strike.

owners only exacerbated the situation. When colliers met scabs at the Warmington Mine on April 14, they did not attack but merely blocked the path in order to prevent the blacklegs from working. Warmington's response, demanding support from the governor and threatening to shoot the miners, increased hostility and was directly responsible for the violence that followed. In the wake of the riot at the Warmington shaft more than twenty men were arrested and one killed, setting off six months of martial law in the region. As these events highlight, the gender of those who challenged scabs was more important than the level of violence in determining the response of either operators or authorities.

Women's violent and aggressive behavior in strikes challenged middle-class norms and served as an effective deterrent to retaliation. When used properly, women's participation in coal strikes was one of the most valuable weapons in the collier community's arsenal. However, it could not be used with too much frequency, lest familiarity lead to contempt. It was the infrequency of female aggression, and the discomfort which it caused outside of the coal-mining population, that rendered such tactics so successful. Collier men and women were comfortable with these endeavors and accepted an active, militant form of womanhood both in and outside of the home. When colliers went on strike, it was not just the miners who were affected. The whole community was on strike and women's violent participation was merely the most visible example of collier womanhood.

Thus far, this chapter has argued that the violence and militancy of women during strikes was not a violation of gender norms among coal miners, but was in fact an

extension of the work which women did in keeping house. Walking picket lines and taunting or attacking scabs was just one end of a spectrum that included behaviors ranging from tending gardens and keeping boarders to selling liquor and running grocery stores. However, strike activities were not the only examples of women's endeavors around the mines, nor was it the most controversial. The vast majority of women's work in coal-mining communities remained invisible, none more so than when colliers' wives and daughters joined their men in the pits.

Female Colliers: Women's Work *Inside* the Mines

According to the United States government, women did not enter underground mining until four decades ago. The Rockefeller Report on *The American Coal Miner* notes that, "prior to 1973, government records show no women miners."³⁸ If "government records" includes either the federal census or Ohio state death records, that statement is false. While the numbers are small, the fact is that some women in the Massillon mining region appear to have mined coal more than one hundred years before such work was officially acknowledged by the government. In Stark County population schedules for 1870 and 1880, enumerators listed four people with both a sex of "female" and a profession of "coal miner." Despite their presence on population schedules, they remain conspicuously absent from the published summaries.³⁹ Stark County death

³⁸ President's Commission on Coal., *The American Coal Miner: A Report on Community and Living Conditions in the Coalfields* (Washington: The Commission, 1980), 191.

³⁹ Summaries in the 1870 and 1880 census list the number of miners in the state of Ohio, but fail to note the presence of any women in mining. See Department of the Interior Census Office, *Ninth Census, United States. 1870, V. 3: Industry and Wealth* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 748,

records are even more revealing of this disparity, identifying another dozen women who, at the time of their deaths, were occupied as miners.⁴⁰ In total, between 1870 and 1900, government records indicate that as many as fifteen women worked in the mines in Stark County alone. Their invisibility from government records, however, is not a sign of the challenge these women presented to existing gender norms, but an indication of the prevalence of an older, pre-industrial notion of family labor that persisted in the coal mines.

In the 1970s, when American women first entered the coal mines en masse, they encountered a hostile environment in a hyper-masculinized work place. Hazing and practical jokes were one of the primary ways in which male colliers reacted to the presence of women. When Annie Rocha entered the mines in 1976, her male coworkers took to messing with her lunch until she retaliated by dumping their lunches on to the coal feeder.⁴¹ Only when female miners reacted to their tormentors in kind did they begin to earn respect, or at least a reprieve. Of course not all of the tribulations that women endured in the mines were of such a “jocular” nature. Female laborers were harassed by male coworkers and supervisors, both physically and sexually. Women who entered the mines in the 1970s had to be constantly on guard against supervisors who sought to take license against them in the dark confines of the colliery. Despite

764; Department of the Interior Census Office, *Tenth Census, United States. 1880, V. 1: Population* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 735.

⁴⁰ *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, Microfilm, Stark County Public Library (Canton, Ohio).

⁴¹ Dona G. Gearhart, "Coal Mining Women in the West: The Realities of Difference in an Extreme Environment," *Journal of the West* 37, no. 1 (1998): 62-63; Laurie Mercier, "Bordering on Equality: Women Miners in North America," in *Gendering the Field: Towards Sustainable Livelihoods for Mining Communities*, ed. Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2011), 36-38.

government mandates requiring women to be hired, once employed they had to defend themselves from their lascivious coworkers, both legally and physically.⁴² Dona Gearhart, a former miner turned historian, has argued that what these women encountered in the mines was a “male culture carefully constructed over centuries.”⁴³ It was indeed a “male culture” which they encountered, however not one nearly so old as either the miners or historians have argued.

The sex-segregated system of female exclusion from the mines was a relatively recent introduction in the history of coal mining. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, most coal throughout the industrializing world was mined using a system of family labor that depended on the contributions of both women and children in the subterranean depths. Prior to 1842, when Parliament passed the Mines and Collieries Act, coal mining in the United Kingdom was accomplished in this manner. Scottish bondmen, hereditary serfs placed in permanent servitude, worked the first British coal mines. The work was so dangerous that no freeman would go into the mines voluntarily. In order to ensure the continued production of coal the Scottish Parliament enacted a law which made all colliers “bondmen for life.”⁴⁴ Such acts ensured that coal-mining was not only a hereditary occupation in the British Isles, but that entire families worked side-by-side in their subterranean endeavors. Men and women may have worked together in the

⁴² Accounts such as this are almost too numerous to list, however Rita Miller’s experiences in a Kentucky coal mine is pretty typical. After repeated harassment by her supervisor, she eventually initiated a class-action lawsuit to stop the constant sexual advances. See Marat Moore, *Women in the Mines: Stories of Life and Work* (New York: Twayne, 1996), 167-180. Annie Rocha took matters into her own hands, literally; when taunted with crude innuendos, she responded by smashing the offender in the face with a shovel, breaking his hard hat and lamp in the process. Gearhart, “Coal Mining Women in the West,” 63.

⁴³ Gearhart, “Coal Mining Women in the West,” 62.

⁴⁴ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 16.

mines, but that certainly did not mean they were equals in the workplace. Even in these early British mines, there was a hierarchical based sexual division of labor. Male colliers occupied the skilled positions as hewers. They undercut the face of the coal and also performed the drilling and blasting that removed the coal from the bedrock. Only in extenuating circumstances did women perform this skilled work. Instead they were primarily employed by their husbands and sons as haulers, shoveling the coal into packs and carrying it on their backs to the scales outside.⁴⁵ All work in the early British mines was performed in this family labor configuration, blending the lines between work and household authority. Adult male colliers controlled all aspects of their family's labor, supervising their wives and children in the mines and exercising monopoly power over the family's wages. As Mark-Lawson and Witz have argued, it was this reproduction of familial patterns of control in the workplace that gave the family labor system its power.⁴⁶ In the same way that patterns of control in the home were naturalized by gender, so too were they reconstructed in the mines.

Middle-class reformers were outraged by the conditions they observed in the mines. With the passage of the Mines and Collieries Act of 1842, this pattern of family labor in the coal mines was brought to an end in Britain. Women's work was a question of moral reform for the politicians who took up the cause. Children who toiled in the

⁴⁵ Jane Humphries, "Protective Legislation, the Capitalist State, and Working-Class Men: The Case of the 1842 Mines Regulation Act," *Feminist Review*, no. 7 (Spring, 1981): 10-11; Jane Mark-Lawson and Anne Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'? The Case of Women's Labour in Nineteenth-Century Coalmining," *Social History* 13, no. 2 (May, 1988): 156; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 20; Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 8-9. Humphries notes that only widows in the most extreme circumstances worked the face of the mines and that hewing was primarily the province of adult males. Roy's description of female haulers is indicative of the outrage of middle-class reformers who saw women and girls dressed as men and worked like beasts of burden in their underground toils.

⁴⁶ Mark-Lawson and Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'?", 158.

dark, “and who sometimes never [saw] the surface at all” and women who “dressed like boys” and were “hitched to the mine car” like beasts of burden were abhorrent to the reformers Victorian sensibilities.⁴⁷ The impact of industrialization on the working class challenged emerging middle-class norms of the Victorian period.⁴⁸ The British were not the only Europeans swept up in the frenzy of reform. Patricia Hilden has found similar conditions in Belgium, where “bourgeois reformers” argued that “‘moral’ women belonged only in their ‘proper’ domestic sphere.”⁴⁹ Reshaping the gender of workers in the coal mines was an ubiquitous endeavor in Western countries, bearing close ties to the development of a middle class. However, these actions were rarely supported by the miners themselves. In Britain, miners refuted the claims of reformers that women’s work in the mines made them unfit homemakers, asserting the competency of their wives, even when it did not meet the standards of bourgeois critics. Colliers also opposed the reforms for financial reasons as the new laws forced them to change from a centuries’ old system of family labor on the promise of a family wage which never emerged.⁵⁰ Despite the

⁴⁷ Quotes taken from Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 12, 20. Roy also noted that the commission wiped “out the disgrace of female labor in British coal mines.”(30) This process, he argued, “gradually but surely raised the craft from the lowest depth of degradation and ignorance to a plane of respectability and intelligence unsurpassed by any class of workingmen.” (28)

⁴⁸ Alan Heesom, “The Coal Mines Act of 1842, Social Reform, and Social Control,” *The Historical Journal* 24, no. 1 (Mar., 1981): 74-75; Angela V. John, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Women Workers at Victorian Coal Mines* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 48-49; Carletta Savage, “Re-Gendering Coal: Female Miners and Male Supervisors,” *Appalachian Journal* 27, no. 3 (Spring, 2000): 233. Numerous historians have found that the exclusion of women from underground mining was led by middle-class reformers. Heesom has noted that churchmen played a significant role, questioning the “decency” of male and females working so close in the dark. John finds that the leading reformer, Lord Ashley, was moved by the oppression and corruption of the “poor girls themselves.”

⁴⁹ Patricia J. Hilden, “The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform: Women Coal Miners in Belgium, 1840-1914,” *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 2 (Jun., 1991): 412.

miners' opposition, reformers were ultimately successful in their endeavors. Beginning in the 1840s, most Western European countries prohibited women from working underground in the coal mines. It was this Western European, primarily British, tradition of collier life that was transported to America.

As the last chapter has illustrated, this exclusion had a profound effect on the collier household, reshaping it after 1842. Colliers created an appearance of domesticity which, at least superficially, mimicked middle-class, hegemonic ideals due to external influences which prohibited women's work in the mines and limited their opportunities for other forms of outside employment. In the second-half of the nineteenth century, the collier household was organized around the ideal of a single-income male breadwinner and a female responsible for management of the home. However, this household structure was only skin deep. Women performed a wide variety of tasks—both in and out of the home—that were at odds with middle-class ideals. They also earned incomes through diverse means and supported their husbands during strikes, on and off the picket lines. Women's household management, or "keeping house," was the difference between life and death for collier families. Despite similarities in the form of collier households in Europe and America, the manner in which women's exclusion from the mines was maintained was quite different.

⁵⁰ Mark-Lawson and Witz, "From 'Family Labour' to 'Family Wage'?", 156; Humphries, "Protective Legislation," 16-18. Humphries noted that W. R. Wood, a sub-commissioner on the 1842 Parliamentary investigation, argued that female employment had left women bereft of "the most ordinary and necessary knowledge of domestic management and family economy" and were unable to provide "the common comforts of a home." (17) Mark-Lawson and Witz note that, despite the claims of reformers, colliers were adamant that their wives were good housekeepers.

Collier families in America were organized much like their European counterparts, despite the fact that few, if any, legal sanctions against women's work were enacted. In Ohio, there were no laws against women working in coal mines until well into the twentieth century. The first restriction placed on female mine workers was not put into the Ohio General Code until 1913 and it was limited in scope. Senate Bill 18 limited employment options only for women under the age of twenty-one, restricting them from working not just in the mines, but from any job at a colliery outside of office work.⁵¹ It was not until 1919 that women were officially banned from working in coal mines when section 1008 of the Ohio General Code was amended by House Bill No. 362. Repealing the previous law, this new revision removed the age qualifications from the restriction and expanded the professions from which women were excluded. Along with the existing prohibitions against women's work in mines and quarries, the new law added a ban on female employment in venues frequented predominantly by men such as "shoe shining parlors, bowling alleys, pool rooms, [and] bar rooms" as well as from any job that required the worker to lift "weights over twenty-five pounds."⁵² The primary goal of these laws was to protect women's morality and preserve jobs for men. Only one modification was made to the law before the mines were fully opened in 1973, and that exception allowed women who owned mines to work their own claims. Only women

⁵¹ *Laws of Ohio, 103*, (Springfield, OH: The Springfield Publishing Company, 1913), 912. In fact, section 13007-6 was more of a throwaway in a bill which was primarily written to end child labor in the state. This in itself is telling of the view which labor reformers had regarding women's work in the mines, that it was included with that of children.

⁵² *Laws of Ohio, 108- Part 1*, (Springfield, OH: The Springfield Publishing Company, 1919), 540-541.

“under a contract of hire” would remain barred from employment.⁵³ Through these laws, the women of Ohio were prevented from mining coal for less than sixty years, but there were other factors which restricted women from entering the mines even in the nineteenth century.

Despite the lack of legal constraints, in the 1870s the traditions and mores of Stark County colliers bore a closer resemblance to that of the previous generation of British miners than to the boundary-breaking women who entered the mines a century later. There was good reason for this similarity as a substantial, and vocal, contingent of miners in the county had immigrated from Britain. In 1870, almost half of the families headed by a miner were British. Of Stark County’s 359 mining households, 172 of them were headed by miners born in Britain. A decade later, the number of British mining families in the region had more than doubled with 349 households headed by a miner from England, Scotland, Wales, or Ireland. The total number of mining households had grown similarly by 1880. Though British households dropped from 47.9% to 45.9% of mining families, they remained the largest ethnic group in the mining community. When these British colliers moved to America, they brought with them not just tools and knowledge of mining, but centuries of tradition. They recreated their culture in America’s isolated mining communities and, even without legal sanctions, women were

⁵³ This was not an official change but a clarification of the existing law by the attorney general who ruled that section 1008-1 was “intended to prohibit the hiring of women to work in the mines.” Female mine owners could not be prohibited under such a rule because “it would be impossible for the owner or operator to employ herself.” *Opinions of the Attorney General, Ohio*, vol. 3 (Cleveland: The Consolidated Press and Printing Co., 1934), 1955-1957. For details of the law itself, see William Herbert Page, *Page's Ohio General Code, Annotated*, vol. 1 (Cincinnati: Anderson Company, 1946), 686.

still excluded from mining. Of course, this tradition of women's exclusion was a relatively recent introduction into the miners' culture.⁵⁴

Stark County's British coal miners were not very far removed from working alongside their wives and sisters in the mines. In the 1870s, British émigrés were only two generations removed from the passage of the Mines and Collieries Act, a reform supported primarily by the middle class.⁵⁵ These colliers would have been very familiar with women in the coal mines; indeed many of them had likely worked with female relatives during their early years. In 1880, Stark County's British colliers spanned more than six decades, from the youngest, eleven-year-old Corven Massop, to seventy-five year old Thomas James.⁵⁶ The oldest of these miners would have grown up working alongside their sisters and mothers in the mines, while the youngest would have heard tales of these endeavors. The median age of British colliers in the region was thirty-six; forty when the sample is narrowed down to include only heads-of-household. These ages equally skirt the thirty-eight years that had passed since the passage of Britain's ban on female labor, meaning that almost half of the Stark County's British-born coal miners had been born at a time when women still worked in the mines. Given the early ages at which most miners first went to work in the collieries, it is likely that nearly a quarter of

⁵⁴ Numbers from this section are compiled from the population schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. In 1870, mining families with a British head-of-household numbered 172 out of 359 families (47.9%). In 1880, British-headed households grew to 349, though total families had increased to 767 (45.9%). For the purpose of this summary, British includes miners who indicated their nativity as England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales. See Appendix A for details.

⁵⁵ Heesom, "The Coal Mines Act of 1842, Social Reform, and Social Control," 74-75; John, *By the Sweat of Their Brow*, 48-49; Savage, "Re-Gendering Coal," 233.

⁵⁶ Massop and James can be found in Population Schedule, Lawrence Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 264, Family 269) and (Dwelling 776, Family 792), respectively.

Stark County's British miners had worked alongside their sisters and mothers.⁵⁷ Even those who had not experienced female labor in the mines first hand would have heard stories about the endeavors, and not all of these tales would have been tainted by middle-class reformers' views of women's work. As late as the 1890s, John Brophy recalled hearing his grandmother speak with great pride of her days in the mines, and the great burdens she carried helping to support her family.⁵⁸ British colliers' traditions were not hostile to women in the mines, indeed they were nostalgic. However, British coal-mining culture was not the only influence on Stark County colliers.

In the United States, colliers and their families found that they needed no laws to curtail women's access to the coal mines; the pervasiveness of American middle-class gender conventions in the late-nineteenth century was a sufficient barrier to entry on its own. Cultural proscriptions about gender, especially those relating to motherhood were incredibly powerful, even on those who could not live up to their ideals. Colliers contended with middle-class notions of gender, both manhood and womanhood, which were predicated on male control of women's productive labor and embodied in the ideology of the Separate Spheres and True Womanhood.⁵⁹ Hegemonic gender norms and

⁵⁷ In the 1880 census, Stark County was home to 459 British miners, 216 of whom were 38 years of age or older. Thus, 47% of British miners were born before, or in the same year, that women were officially banned from coal mining in Britain. Among miners who were heads-of-household, that percentage soars to 60%. Long notes that boys entered the British mines as early as six, a trend that five-year-old Nick Mong (1880 Census, Sugar Creek, Dwelling 13, Family 13) shows was still evident in Stark County. If so, 108 (23.5%) of British miners would have been old enough to have entered the mines before the 1842 law passed. Even when the more common age of twelve is factored in, there are still 64 miners (13.9%) who most likely would have worked alongside women. Long, *Where the Sun Never Shines*, 15-16.

⁵⁸ John Brophy, *A Miner's Life, an Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 4.

their incumbent ideologies painted the collier household in their own image, drawing parallels between the male breadwinners and female domesticity. As the last chapter has illustrated, these allusions were only skin deep. The reality of women's work in collier families went well beyond middle-class domesticity and included a broad range of income-earning activities both inside and outside the home. Stark County's British colliers were at a crossroads in their comfort with women's mine labor. Two generations was enough time to create a liminal space where the female collier could be both a working-class tradition and a middle-class abomination simultaneously. Among native-born colliers, these conflicts would have been even more pronounced. The conventions of the middle-class rendered these actions invisible, hidden in the census designation "keeping house," but among colliers, women's work was acknowledged as being central to the family's survival. A similar pattern was evident in women's work in the mines and in the reaction of the community and outside observers.

Despite social and cultural bans on women's work as colliers, women in Stark County still found work in the coal mines. A close examination of population schedules

⁵⁹ For comparative ideas of nineteenth-century middle-class womanhood see Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Nancy A. Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: From Banners to Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Anne M. Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism: New York and Boston, 1797-1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002). Some classic works on "True Womanhood," and the "Separate Spheres" still retain enormous influence on the field; see Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer, 1966); Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" In New England, 1780-1835*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977; 1997). Earlier notions of womanhood with tremendous impact on the nineteenth century include "Republican Motherhood." See Linda Kerber, "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment-an American Perspective," *American Quarterly* 28, no. 2, Special Issue: An American Enlightenment (Summer, 1976); Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800*, 1st ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980).

from the federal censuses for 1870 and 1880 finds four residents of the county— Mary E. McBride, Francis Cassidy, Marion Flockhart, and Florence Louisa Brahm—listed as female with an occupation of “coal miner.”⁶⁰ Thirteen more women join the list of female miners when the Stark County Death Records are examined.⁶¹ Of course, not all of the women listed in these records were miners. Due to transcription errors and poor record keeping, some of the women who appear in the census and death records can be eliminated after further examination. Probate records show that one of the miners, Francis Cassidy, was actually a man who was incorrectly marked in the census.⁶² Another female miner who appears can be eliminated based on a probable transcription error. Marion Flockhart was seventeen years old at the time of the 1880 census and is noted as a coal miner alongside her father and her fifteen-year-old brother, George. Her older brother, David, was listed with no occupation, nor was he noted as having any injuries that barred him from employment in the mines. The family listed no boarders or extended family living with them who would have contributed to their support.⁶³ Given these circumstances—a healthy brother and a lack of boarders—it is unlikely that they

⁶⁰ McBride and Cassidy can be found in the 1870 census for Stark County. Population Schedule, Perry Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 302, Family 295) and Lawrence Township, (Dwelling 3, Family 6), respectively. Cassidy’s last name is misspelled “Cassady” in the population schedule. Flockhart and Brahm appear as miners in the 1880 census. Flockhart: Population Schedule, Perry Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 70, Family 70). Brahm: Population Schedule, Bethlehem Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 21, Family 21).

⁶¹ *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908, Vol. 1-4*, Microfilm, Stark County Public Library (Canton, Ohio).

⁶² Estate of Francis Cassidy, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #4521)

⁶³ Population Schedule, Perry Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 70, Family 70).

were in the dire financial straits that would have necessitated sending their oldest daughter to the mines. Marion's name appears in between that of her brothers and, given the family's circumstances, it is likely that the enumerator, John Arnold, wrote the occupation information for David on the wrong line. Of the thirteen women listed in the county's death records, two more can be eliminated based on their ages. While some children began working the mines as trappers as early as five, eleven-month-old Minnie Bowing and four-month-old Leona E. Edwards were too young to walk, let alone hew coal.⁶⁴ In the end, county and federal records indicate ten women who mined coal in Stark County in the nineteenth century, some more than a century before their "official" entry into the occupation.⁶⁵ With their obvious presence in the mines, it is remarkable that female colliers have remained hidden in the nineteenth century. This invisibility in the historical record can largely be attributed to the influence of middle-class gender ideals.

America's dominant gender paradigm, that of the middle class, was ideologically and materially opposed to women's work in the mines. Middle-class men expressed great discomfort with women's work outside of the home, often couched in terms of protecting women's virtue. Fears of sexual depravity among female workers were rampant in reform movements, especially in those involving coal mining.⁶⁶ It was for

⁶⁴ *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, Vol-pg. 2-22, 3-136.

⁶⁵ Three more women, Mary F. Brandt, Mary Evans, and Mary Evans (a common Welsh name in the mining community) have been removed from this study as their appearance in records that would confirm their presence in the mines does not take place until the twentieth century. See *Early Ohio Death Records, 1867-1908*, Vol-pg. 4-12, 4-70.

women's own protection that middle-class reformers fought to bar them from the collieries where there was minimal supervision and no sex segregation. Poor relief throughout the nineteenth century focused on reformers imposing their own ideals of domesticity on the working class and fears that work culture would masculinize women.⁶⁷ Women who led reform movements were fighting their own battles to participate in the public sphere and challenged the gender ideals of their own class in the process. Working-class women who labored and shared recreation space with men threatened to harm the progress that middle-class women were making as well. Both men and women of the middle class were opposed to the presence of female colliers. Of course this discomfort was based on an abstract idea of women's work in the collieries; how they dealt with the reality was quite different.

Proximity appears to have been the most important variable in how the middle-class—and those who aspired to join it—reacted to the women who worked in the Stark County mines. The farther removed an individual was from the coal mines, the less likely they were to acknowledge women's work in the coal mines. The most glaring example of removing female colliers from the record took place not in Stark County, but in Washington D.C. Despite the presence of multiple female coal miners in the

⁶⁶ Classic works on middle-class reform have highlighted the central role of prostitution in the first reform movements. See Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 117-121; Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*, Illini Books ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982; 1987), 191; Kathy Lee Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 66. This fear was even more pronounced in the movements to get women out of the coal mines. John, *By the Sweat of Their Brow*, 99; Hilden, "The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform," 412-413; Humphries, "Protective Legislation," 26-28.

⁶⁷ Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*, 14-17, 34-35; Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, 165. See also Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism*, 195; Hilden, "The Rhetoric and Iconography of Reform," 412.

population schedules, the summaries compiled by the Census Office list all miners in the state as male.⁶⁸ Bureaucrats and statisticians in the capital, far removed from the daily lives of colliers, ignored the data on individual population schedules when it failed to conform to their own notions of appropriate female labor. The same could not be said of those members of the middle class who lived and worked in the same community as the miners. Charles H. Tinkler, John S. Arnold, and Alfred J. Rider had no qualms marking women as coal miners when they served as census enumerators for the ninth and tenth censuses. Tinkler and Arnold were both residents of Massillon and would have interacted with colliers on a daily basis, especially Arnold who operated a grocery in the 1870s before becoming an insurance agent. Each of these men were firmly established in the county's middle class. Arnold and Rider, a harness maker in Bethlehem Township, both owned substantial property in mining communities, valued at \$2000 and \$500, respectively.⁶⁹ Living in the same communities as the female miners they recorded in the census and interacting with them regularly eased any discomfort over notions of appropriate female behavior, especially in light of the exigencies which drove these women into the mines. The same was true of the Stark County coroners who, when they

⁶⁸ Census Office, *Ninth Census, United States. 1870, V. 3: Industry and Wealth*, 748, 764; Census Office, *Tenth Census, United States. 1880, V. 1: Population*, 735. This is not the only error in the compiled summaries. As Chapter 2 has illustrated, the 1880 census indicates that only 41 native-born Americans are employed in Ohio's mines, but Stark County alone has more than 349 miners born in Ohio alone. The only way to be sure about any data from the census is to look at the population schedules themselves.

⁶⁹ For Charles H. Tinkler, see Stark County Population Schedule, Massillon, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 451, Family 492). John S. Arnold: Population Schedule, Massillon, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 121, Family 126), *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 212, Family 223). Alfred J. Rider: Population Schedule, Bethlehem Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 368, Family 362), *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 1, Family 1). Rider is listed as A. J. Rider in the 1880, which is also how he signed the population schedules on which he was the enumerator.

recorded the deaths and occupations of those who passed through their office, recorded the presence of thirteen female colliers. When ideology was confronted with reality, familiarity led to acceptance.

Colliers also exhibited a similar pattern of distance leading to discomfort with women's work in the mines, especially among those who had left the mines and joined the middle class. Andrew Roy had spent almost three decades in the mines when he was appointed as the first State Inspector of Mines for Ohio by Governor William Allen in 1874. A lifelong miner, he was raised in a collier culture that embraced a strong role for women in mining communities. Even after years out of the mines, he still expressed solidarity and approval for women who participated in strikes activities alongside their husbands.⁷⁰ However, his support for militant motherhood in defense of the home did not extend inside the mines. Roy reserved a particular vitriol for women's work in the mines, referring to it as a "disgrace" and a "shameful practice", one that had been wiped out in England and never taken root in America.⁷¹ Despite the fact that multiple women worked the mines of Stark County during his tenure as Chief Inspector, neither Roy nor his deputies recorded a single instance of women working in the mines. In his general remarks in the first two annual reports, Roy made note of some of the failures in Ohio mining laws, making note of the continued presence of young boys under the age of twelve in the mines. Though this topic had regularly been tied to women in the mines,

⁷⁰ When Roy wrote his seminal work on the mines in 1905, he applauded the women who resisted being thrown out of company housing during a strike. Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 136.

⁷¹ Ibid., 30; Andrew Roy, *The Coal Mines; Containing a Description of the Various Systems of Working and Ventilating Mines, Together with a Sketch of the Principal Coal Regions of the Globe, Including Statistics of the Coal Production* (Cleveland: Robison, Savage & Co., 1876), 32.

Roy made no mention of their presence in his condemnation.⁷² Lack of familiarity with the region could explain the absence of Stark County's mining women, but Roy was no stranger to the region. In 1876 alone, the year of the Massillon War, Roy made half-a-dozen trips to Stark County and spent a full thirty days inspecting the mines of Massillon, Jackson, and North Lawrence.⁷³ Even in the observations of colliers turned inspectors, women in the mines were rendered invisible.

While there are numerous possibilities for women's invisibility in these reports, circumstances support intentional exclusion rather than oversight. Multiple factors could have had an influence on women's disappearance from the records of the state mine inspectors. It is entirely possible that women could have hidden themselves away from inspectors when they visited the region. However, with no laws against their work in the mines, there was no material reason for them to hide. Sheer numbers were also working against the inspectors. In 1870, there were 605 coal miners in Stark County; ten years later that number had more than doubled to 1312.⁷⁴ The ten women identified in the census and death records could have been missed in such a crowd. While each of these reasons could explain female colliers' absence from the inspectors' records, mining

⁷² Female colliers are not mentioned in any of the reports made by Roy up to his resignation in 1884. However, in the first years he makes specific note of the continued presence of young boys in the mines. *First Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1874*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1875), 69; *Second Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1875*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1876), 37. Women's work in the mines has often been linked to child labor, as evidenced by the first laws passed restricting women's mine labor.

⁷³ *Third Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1876*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1876), 190-191.

⁷⁴ Number of miners compiled from the population schedules of Stark County, Ohio, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* and *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. See Appendix A for details.

communities were close knit and some word of women's work should have reached the inspectors. Given Roy's abhorrence of women's work in the English and Belgian coal mines, it is more likely that American middle-class ideas of appropriate gender roles influenced women's absence from the records. Mine inspectors intentionally overlooked women's work in the mines out of shame over the continuation of what Roy considered a disgraceful practice. Acknowledging female miners would have returned the craft to "the lowest depth of degradation and ignorance."⁷⁵

Male colliers who worked the mines on a daily basis were not as opposed to female colliers as their brethren who had moved into the middle-class bureaucracy, and with good reason; they benefited financially when their wives and daughters worked in the mines. Carlotta Savage noted that one Pennsylvania miner worked alongside four of his daughters, eventually earning enough to purchase his own mine.⁷⁶ The miner and the reporter from *Black Diamond* reacted to the girls' work in very different ways, reflecting the familiar pattern of proximity and discomfort. While the miner spoke of his daughters' work matter-of-factly, the reporter described the women as "Amazons."⁷⁷ In doing so, the reporter distanced the women who worked in the mines from the normative gender roles of middle-class America by portraying them as mythological creatures. Female colliers were a foreign other to the reporter, not just from middle-class women, but also from collier women who merely kept house. The coal miners who benefited

⁷⁵ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 28.

⁷⁶ Savage, "Re-Gendering Coal," 233-234. Original report from *Black Diamond*, 11 (14 September 1895)

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*: 234.

from women's labor expressed no such distancing. However, just because women's work in the mines was accepted within the collier community does not mean it was encouraged.

In the late-nineteenth century, female coal miners were an exception rather than the norm in the Stark County collieries. The primary motivating factor in women's entry into mine work was the financial need of their families. Most of the women who worked the mines in the Massillon region had recently undergone dramatic changes that affected their economic stability. When the appropriately-named Catharine Miner died in 1881, she had only entered the mines within the last year. The previous year had been a tough one for Stark County's coal miners, with a prolonged strike that kept colliers in the Miner family out of work for seven months. Though four of Catharine's sons—ranging in age from twelve to sixteen—worked in the mines with their father, the family took in no boarders whose income could have helped to maintain the family during a prolonged strike.⁷⁸ Her work in the mines would have prevented her husband from having to hire another assistant and kept her share within the family. The circumstances surrounding Catharine Miner's death cannot be confirmed due to the absence of any mention in the local newspapers, it is possible that Miner could have discovered just how dangerous work in the collieries could be when she died of “confinement” on March 21, 1881.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Population Schedule, Jackson Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 9, Family 9). *Early Ohio Death Records*, Vol. 2, Page 117. Last name misspelled as “Minor” in the 1880 census. Catharine's husband Conrad and their four sons—William, Conrad, Henry, and George—were all occupied as coal miners, though they were out of work for 7 months in the 1879/1880 census year. Catharine is listed as “keeping house,” indicating that she did not begin working in the mines between July 1880 and her death in March 1881.

Mary Oglethorpe appears to have been similarly driven into the mines for financial reasons. Both in their seventies, Mary and her husband William were living with their son, John, in 1880. Despite his advanced age, William was still actively working in the mines. His need to continue working at such an advanced age—he worked until his death in 1895—coupled with a lack of probate records for him or his wife, indicates that the couple had limited finances and owned no property in the county. When Mary died in 1887, the coroner’s record shows that she was working in the mines, most likely alongside her husband, loading the coal William hewed.⁸⁰ For a woman approaching 80 to work inside the mines, the family’s financial situation was dire, indeed. However, financial need was not the only qualifier in women’s mine work.

When women entered the mines they did so in a familiar pattern, working alongside their husbands, fathers, and brothers in a system of family labor. These family connections were a necessary precondition for women to enter the mines. All seven of the female colliers in Stark County who can be identified in the census had male relatives who also mined coal. Along with Catharine Miner and Mary Oglethorpe, four other women were married to colliers. Florence Louisa Brahm, Maria Kettler, Margaret

⁷⁹ The only mention of Miner’s death is found in *Early Ohio Death Records*, Vol. 2, Page 117. Neither *The Massillon Independent*, *The Canton Repository*, nor *The Stark County Democrat* make any mention of her death in the months of March or April 1881, though it occurred in Jackson Township. Miner’s occupation was noted by the coroner as a miner and her cause of death was confinement.

⁸⁰ Population Schedule, Tuscarawas Township, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 33, Family 36). *Early Ohio Death Records*, Vol. 2, Page 133 & Vol. 3, Page 402. Neither Mary nor her husband, William, had any probate records related to their estates in Stark County. When William passed away in 1895 at the age of 94, he was still listed as an active miner. The family name was spelled “Oglethorp” in the 1880 census and William’s last name was spelled “Orglethorpe” in the coroner’s records.

Pickering, and Jane Ann Legg all entered the mines alongside their husbands.⁸¹ The seventh female miner, eight-year-old Mary E. McBride, worked with her father and brothers. The three remaining collier women, though their families cannot be confirmed in census records, most likely had familial connections in the collier community as well. Ann Hindley was born in England and died in the Pigeon Run region of Stark County, a mining community on the south side of Massillon. Catharine Roush and Catherine Youngman were probably from mining families as well, born in the mining communities of Navarre and Chippewa, respectively.⁸² It is unlikely that these women would have remained in mining communities into adulthood, let alone went to work inside the mines, without a continuing relationship with male colliers.

A closer look at one such woman, or girl, to be exact, highlights the pattern of female mine labor in the late-nineteenth century. Mary E. McBride was born into a mining family. Her father Thomas was a miner, as were two of her older brothers, John and Alexander. John would later go on to become the second president of the United Mine Workers of America and president of the American Federation of Labor. Irish by way of England, Mary and her brothers were all born in Ohio coal country. Only eight years old in 1870, she was youngest miner in the county, but only by a year.⁸³ Many young boys entered the mines at an early age, the first step in their journeys towards

⁸¹ All four of these women can be found in the Population Schedules of the *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880*. Brahm: Bethlehem Township, (Dwelling 21, Family 21). Kettler: Lawrence Township, (Dwelling 322, Family 336). Legg: North Lawrence, (Dwelling 270, Family 278). Pickering: North Lawrence, (Dwelling 258, Family 261).

⁸² *Early Ohio Death Records*, Vol. 3, Pages 208, 444, & 634.

⁸³ McBride's family can be found in Population Schedule, Perry Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 302, Family 295). The next youngest coal miner was nine-year-old David Killoway of Lawrence Township (Dwelling 24, Family 33).

becoming practical miners. Though Mary never became a full miner herself, as a child she likely worked as a trapper, opening and closing the ventilation doors in the mine as the coal carts passed. Given the family's circumstances in 1870, the additional income Mary earned would have been sorely needed. The McBride family was in dire straits by the time of the 1870 census. Mary's mother, Bridget, passed away shortly after she was born, as did her brother Thomas. Though her father remarried in 1864, Jane Peterson brought three children of her own into the family. The family income was strained by the departure of three older siblings, Sarah, Edward, and William; without the additional income they provided, the family struggled. What income the family did earn was stretched thin after Sarah's death, when Mary's father took in his granddaughter. Thomas was one of the few Stark County miners who owned his own home, in Perry Township, but when he died in 1874 the family owed \$420 in taxes and to various creditors. The McBride family was sorely in need of the additional income Mary's labor provided.⁸⁴

Mary's work in the mines appears to have been short-lived, a temporary stop gap in a time of financial crisis. By her father's death in 1874, she was no longer listed as a miner, having returned to helping her step-mother around the house. Six years later she married Harry Mort and moved to Toledo, Ohio, where she lived out her remaining years. Widowed less than seven years into her marriage, Mary never had any children; she lived

⁸⁴ Family size and structure reconstructed from census and probate data. Bureau of the Census, *Eighth Census of the United States: 1860* (Washington, D.C., 1864), Population Schedules of Summit County, Franklin Township (Dwelling 464, Family 458); Population Schedule, Stark County, Perry Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 302, Family 295). Estate of Thomas McBride, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #1025). See also case #6-38MA for his Marriage to Jane Peterson.

most of her life with her sister Elizabeth and her brother-in-law, William Haynes.⁸⁵ If she was anything like her predecessors who worked the mines in England, she looked back on her time in the mines with pride, in the work she did and the contribution she made to her family.⁸⁶ Mary never returned to the mines, nor did she appear again in the census with an occupation other than “keeping house.” Her brief sojourn into the darkness of the coal mines occurred at her father and brother’s side and contributed to the household economy. It was not the beginning of a career as a practical miner, nor was it a nascent movement for women’s equality. McBride worked in the mines because it was necessary for her family’s survival. Over the vast majority of coal-mining’s history, it was the absence of women in the mines which was an anomaly, not their presence. When Mary entered the Stark County mines she was participating in a long tradition of family labor, one which had only recently been ended, legally in some countries and by custom in America.

Though the number of documented cases of women working in the Stark County coal mines in the nineteenth century is limited, their very presence indicates a high probability of more such instances. As the examples of McBride, Miner, and Oglethorpe indicate, women’s work in the mines was a temporary occupation during times of crisis. The fact that ten women were working in the mines at the time of their death or during

⁸⁵ Probate Court Records, Case #1025 and 9-323MB. Harry’s funeral took place on January 11, 1887. *Toledo City Directory, 1887-1888* (Toledo, OH: R. L. Polk and Co., 1888), 131. Mary’s final appearance in the census comes in 1920. As in 1900 and 1910 she lived with her sister and brother-in-law. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920* (Washington, D.C., 1922), Population Schedule for Toledo, Ward 1 (Dwelling 103, Family 114).

⁸⁶ John Brophy recalled family lore about his great-grandmother’s work in the mines and her “pride in her youthful labor.” Brophy, *A Miner’s Life*, 4. This same pattern of pride in their work can be seen in women’s work in factories during the WWI and WWII.

the census is notable because these accounts represent a snapshot in time, not a cumulative record. Not every woman who worked in the mines died while doing so, and the federal census was performed only decennially. It begs the question of how many more women must have worked in the Stark County mines at other times. Lack of documentation makes this a difficult question to answer, but the numbers were undoubtedly much greater.

The circumstances in which women worked inside the Massillon mines illustrates the effectiveness of the social and cultural proscriptions against female colliers. The ten women who mined coal in the nineteenth century shared a similar set of circumstances. All of these women were related to male colliers, and at the time they entered the mines their families were under great financial strain. Even without laws barring them from working the mines, it was only in these exigent circumstances that cultural constraints on appropriate female work were made flexible enough to permit women into the mines. This is why women's work in the coal mines has been rendered invisible for so long. Stark County's mining women were not the boundary-smashing ladies of the twentieth century; they were participating in a work tradition as old as coal mining itself. Family labor was intrinsic to notions of appropriate gender roles for both men and women in the collier community. Lack of comment about women's work in the mines by those closest to them is due to the prevalence and acceptance of their endeavors.

Women's visible work in and around the mines was merely an extension of the invisible work they did in keeping house. Whether it was selling surpluses and cleaning houses, or running a grocery and operating a tavern, women's work mattered to the

miners. When women walked picket lines and attacked blacklegs, they were not acting outside of their prescribed gender roles; they were fulfilling them. The prevalence of women's strike activities, as well as the reaction—or lack thereof—on the part of male colliers, highlights the central role that women's participation played in labor strife. Justifications for women's violence were only offered in apologia to outsiders who balked at collier's notions of appropriate feminine behavior. When viewed in light of women's work in the mines themselves, it is obvious that keeping house held a very different meaning in the coal mines.

Women's work in the mines and on the picket lines was an integral part of the collier family's construction of gender. Though women's actions were often shocking to middle-class observers, their endeavors in and around the mines were firmly placed in collier's notions of patriarchy. In her classic work on Marxism and feminism, Heidi Hartmann noted that patriarchy did "not rest solely on childbearing in the family, but on all the social structures that enable men to control women's labor."⁸⁷ Stark County colliers, both men and women, created and maintained a social structure which placed even such activities as mining coal and fighting scabs on the picket line into acceptable female gender roles. Women's work in the mines did not challenge male dominance in the family. In fact, as the previous two chapters have shown, a wife who could "keep house" effectively, both in the home and the mines, was a collier's most valuable asset.

⁸⁷ Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," *Capital & Class* 8 (1979): 12.

It was the wife who failed to live up to these standards who challenged patriarchy in the mining community by threatening a man's ability to support his family.⁸⁸

Coal mining in the nineteenth century was not hyper-masculinized as it came to be in the twentieth century, but it was certainly patriarchal. On the picket lines, women supported the family economy by ensuring their husbands' jobs and pay. In the mines, they worked within a family labor system that had been the norm in coal mines for centuries. Collier communities constructed gender roles for women which fit the necessities of a difficult existence, and required women to undertake endeavors deemed extraordinary, even abnormal, to outsiders. To those inside the community, these women were wives and mothers, simply "keeping house." Attempts to hide or disguise women's work in order to make it more palatable to the middle class—whether by outside observers, labor organizers, or the miners themselves—did nothing to change its central role in the collier household.

⁸⁸ Gail Bederman also notes the obsession with manliness exhibited by the middle-class in this time period. The experience of these colliers highlights that, while definitions were changing, the constancy of patriarchy was paramount. Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 11.

Chapter 5- The Massillon War

In the spring and summer of 1876, Stark County was a community under siege. Colliers went out on strike at the beginning of April and the conflict between miners and operators turned violent almost immediately. Striking men and their wives fought with scabs and mine personnel in numerous clashes throughout the spring. They engaged in riots, beat mine superintendents and scabs, and even shot one of the mines' foremen. After colliers attacked guards and set the works on fire at four of the region's mines, Governor Rutherford B. Hayes, declared martial law throughout the entire county. Guarding the mines in the region, state militia exchanged gunfire with miners all through the summer. In their attempts to crack down on the miners' leadership, the militia arrested twenty-three men for various crimes and killed one in the process. The trials stretched through the summer as miners were brought before the jury on charges ranging from assault and riot to arson and attempted murder. After the trials concluded and the strike ended, Stark County remained under military rule until well past the November election. The "Massillon War," as local papers dubbed the conflict, highlighted the central role of gender in the collier community.¹

At the core of the conflict between colliers and operators were the same issues of gender that dominated colliers work and community lives. In their conflicts over workplace control and wage cuts, colliers negotiated based on their notions of manhood and did so in gendered terms. Miners in the region formed unions to ensure that operators recognized their rights as men; the mine owners who consented to arbitration

¹ *The Canton Repository*, May 19, 1876, was the first paper to refer to the strike as the "Massillon War."

did so only after receiving assurances that colliers were men of their word. When colliers clashed during the strike, they manipulated gender roles to gain advantage with the mine owners. Under martial law, the state militia who guarded the coal banks taunted the miners, questioning their skill and manhood. The resulting trials were similarly gendered, and were won or lost based on the jurors shared understanding of colliers' manly right to defend their families. Though the strike was triggered by wage cuts, even these negotiations were gendered by the cultural proscriptions against women's work. Stark County's coal miners worked, lived, and organized in a masculinized environment; it only makes sense that they fought their labor wars in the same manner.

The Coal Strike of 1876 and its Causes

The labor troubles in the region began more than a year before the outbreak of violence and were precipitated, as most disputes are, over proposed cuts in wages and issues of workers' control. Miners of the Tuscarawas were represented by the fledgling Miners' National Association. Under the leadership of John Pollock, the miners of the Tuscarawas had been the highest paid of any region in the state, receiving 90 cents per ton—but at the close of 1874, that began to change. Mine operators claimed that the economic depression which resulted from the Panic of 1873 had made such high pay rates untenable and, in December 1874, notified miners that the rate would be reduced to 70 cents per ton.² Colliers exercised multiple avenues of mediation, sending Miners'

² Andrew Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States: From the Development of the Mines to the Close of the Anthracite Strike of 1902 Including a Brief Sketch of Early British Miners*, First Greenwood Reprinting ed. (Columbus, Ohio; Westport, Connecticut: J.L. Trauger Printing Company; Greenwood, 1905; 1970), 168-169; *Third Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the*

National Association president John Siney and local M.N.A. leader John Pollock to negotiate with mine operators in the area. Having already made arrangements with Marcus Alonzo Hanna, the boss of Cleveland, for a system of arbitration, colliers and operators met in Akron on December 17th to resolve their differences. Pollock led the miners' delegation, joined by William Thomson and John Graham; Hanna was in charge of the operators' committee, along with two other mine owners, Loomis and Wagoner. Judge S. J. Andrews, a respected jurist from Cleveland, was chosen by the miners to serve as the umpire.³ Andrews's decision, however, was not in the miners' favor.

Miners and operators in the Tuscarawas avoided a strike through arbitration, but colliers were anything but happy with the outcome. Though they received a cut in the price of mining supplies, such as powder and oil, operators decreased the rate for a ton of coal by nineteen cents. A second meeting was held on January 22, 1875, to negotiate payments for "dead work." Miners were traditionally only paid for the coal they hauled out of the mine; all of their prep was unpaid, or "dead." Operators agreed to compensate colliers for opening new "break-throughs" between existing rooms as well as for timbering the ceiling, provided the weak roof was not caused by negligence on the part of the miner.⁴ Cheaper supplies and pay for dead work were significant accommodations on the part of the operators, but Stark County's colliers felt betrayed by a system of arbitration that resulted in just a one cent improvement over the operators' original offer.

State of Ohio, for the Year 1876, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1876), 105. Also, *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), April 1, 1876.

³ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 168.

⁴ Details of the negotiations and Judge Andrews decisions can be found in *Third Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector*, 105-106.

They were, however, men of their word. The miners continued working under the terms of the arbitration.

The peace achieved through arbitration was not, however, a lasting one. In April, 1875, a non-union mine run by the Crawford Coal Company agreed to raise wages to 80 cents if the miners would forgo the presence of a check-weighman at the scales.⁵ The check-weighman was an individual hired by the colliers to verify the weight of loads and the accuracy of the operator's scale, and he played an integral role in maintaining the coal-miners' rights in dealing with their employers. As both David Montgomery and Bruce Laurie have explored in their work on the subject, worker's control and gendered hierarchies of labor were integral to notions of manhood constructed in the work place.⁶ Hanna conceded that the miners had a legitimate grievance over the Crawford Company's decision to increase their colliers' wages, but asserted that the right to a check-weighman was in the miners' best interest. Check-weighmen were normally chosen by the miners and their association to ensure that the company was not short weighting the carts. Hanna argued that it was unfair of the miners to go back on their word and punish the operators who kept the system of checks and balances in place for the protection of their workers.⁷ Under the threat of a protracted strike, the operators

⁵ *The Miners' National Record*, Cleveland, (April 1875), 97 & (May 1875), 111-112.

⁶ David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 13. Laurie's work hints at some of these elements in his discussion of "traditionalists." Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 10.

⁷ Herbert Croly, *Marcus Alonzo Hanna: His Life and Work* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1912), 92.

gave in, raising the wages throughout the region to the non-union rate of 80 cents.⁸ Unlike the colliers at the Crawford mine, the region's union miners kept their check-weighmen along with the pay increase. Ideals of gender, specifically aspects of the Massillon miners' conceptions of masculine identity, were challenged in their contests with the local operators.

The disputes between miners and operators over wages and the presence of a check-weighman were closely related to notions of collier manhood. Male workers in the nineteenth century frequently forswore wage increases in order to maintain control in the workplace.⁹ Miners in the Tuscarawas Valley were no different and, as one collier noted, the presence of a check-weighman was a "privilege" that had been hard-won from the areas operators.¹⁰ Colliers embraced these ideas of workers' control that bolstered both their independence and manhood on the job. As long as the wage reductions were reasonable and the miners were involved in the negotiations, Stark County colliers agreed to these conditions. This was highlighted when colliers agreed to a further pay cut in August, 1875. Owners began the negotiations by proposing a ten-cent reduction, but compromised at 75 cents.¹¹ Hanna's acceptance of miners' right to such workplace control and of the right of the union to represent collier interests corresponded to the

⁸ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 169; *Third Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector*, 106-107.

⁹ Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America*, 17. Historical examples can be found in labor newspapers throughout the nineteenth century. See *The Workingman's Advocate* (New York), November 21, 1829, for an example of printers forgoing wage increases in order to keep women out of their jobs.

¹⁰ *The Miners' National Record*, Cleveland, (April 1875), 97.

¹¹ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 170.

miners' own belief that negotiations on equal footing were part of a their manly rights.¹² These mutual negotiations broke down completely in March 1876 when operators throughout the region instituted unilateral wage cuts.

Economic concerns cannot be separated from their cultural implications and when the Massillon miners walked out on March 1, 1876 it was as much in defense of their manhood as it was a fight for fair wages. Despite the arbitration agreements in effect between colliers and operators, mine owners made the unilateral decision to cut wages to 65 cents per ton, a 28% cut from the wages miners were receiving two years earlier.¹³ Miners' decision to walk out after these cuts was influenced by a variety of factors, but foremost among them was their absence from the decision-making process. They noted the injustice of wage cuts for miners when coal was selling at a ten-year high—between \$4.00 and \$4.50 per ton—in the Cleveland markets.¹⁴ While some miners tied these inequalities to the labor theory of value—the position that since wealth was created by workers they should share in its bounty—the decision to walk out was not solely based on economic reductionism. Indeed, miners had continued to work through larger pay-cuts so long as they were active participants in the negotiations. It was the operators' exclusion of the miners—in effect depriving them of their independence and control—which led to the strike. Of course, the manner in which the strike unfolded was also indicative of the gender patterns prevalent in the coal-mining community.

¹² Edward Pinkowski, *John Siney: The Miners' Martyr* (Philadelphia: Sunshine Press, 1963), 79.

¹³ *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), April 1, 1876; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 170-171.

¹⁴ *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), May 20, 1876.

After weeks of relative calm, the strike turned violent in the wake of an ultimatum by the operators. Mine owners in the region gave the workers until April 1 to accept the proposed pay cut, at which time, if no agreement had been reached, they would bring in new men from Cleveland to work the mines.¹⁵ With no agreement in sight—and no intention to sit down with colliers and compromise—the operators made good on their word and brought in a group of scabs to reopen the mines. The scabs, or “blacklegs” in the miners’ vernacular, were willing to work at the lower wages and decreased the miners’ chance of success, threatening the miners’ livelihood and the lives of their families. When the blacklegs arrived in the city and began building temporary housing at the coal banks, wives of the striking men appeared in force and refused to allow the work to continue. They attacked the blacklegs, “hurling stones and other missiles at the men.”¹⁶ Given the threat to their families, it was fitting that the miners’ wives were involved in the first reported acts of violence in the strike.

Women’s participation in the first phases of the strike illustrates both the impact of the events on families and the central role of wives in the collier community. Wage negotiations in coal-mining communities were inherently gendered due to women’s exclusion from most other forms of paid work in the region. While some women did work in and around the mines, most of their income contributions to the collier household came from taking in boarders. Since most boarders were miners as well, a prolonged strike in Massillon’s coal mines jeopardized even this income.¹⁷ When Stark County’s

¹⁵ *National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), April 8, 1876.

¹⁶ *The Canton Repository* (Ohio), April 7, 1876.

miners were threatened with a pay cut to 65 cents per ton, their wives felt the financial impact from both ends. Women faced the possibility of losing their husbands' incomes as well as their own. Whether it was taking in boarders or doing laundry, when the mines were shut down women's incomes were also threatened. Their violence during the strike also challenged middle-class, hegemonic ideals of proper gender roles and stymied opposition. Most acts of violence in mine labor disputes were met with swift retaliation by the authorities. Scabs, operators, and even the sheriff and his men, refused to engage the colliers' wives during the altercation at the Warmington shaft on April 1. Although the sheriff requested additional support in the formation of an emergency constabulary, no arrests or other retaliation against the women occurred.¹⁸ The same could not be said two weeks later when their husbands clashed with a second group of blacklegs.

Two weeks into the strike, collier violence peaked at the Warmington shaft in Massillon. On the morning of April 14, the governor's office received an appeal from George Warmington, operator of the Warmington mine: "Our miners are out on strike, have commenced putting in New Men. Old Miners are threatening and troublesome, should necessity compel we want your prompt assistance."¹⁹ The governor responded to the request with due haste, dispatching a copy of it to J. P. Rauch, Stark County's Sheriff, and requesting his immediate investigation. The response was not, however, quick

¹⁷ For more on boarding patterns and women's income, see Chapters 3 and 4.

¹⁸ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH) April 13, 1876; *The Canton Repository* (Ohio), April 7, 1876.

¹⁹ Warmington to Hayes, April 14, 1876, *Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Papers (RBHPP)*, microfilm, series 4, roll 35, frame 829.

enough. The same day that Warmington penned his letter to the governor, he was beaten and nearly killed in a riot that broke out at his mine.

The Warmington mine was a focal point for the striking miners in the month of April. Blacklegs had already been put to work in that shaft and, learning that a second contingent of men from Cleveland would be arriving on the 14th, colliers decided to meet there and prevent the scabs from joining their brethren. Though cool heads among the miners attempted to keep the demonstration peaceful, upon catching sight of the scabs as they came up the road, emotions got the better of them. Andrew Roy described the event, noting that “pandemonium broken loose could not have surpassed the scene.”²⁰ Men on the picket line rushed the mine to prevent the new arrivals from entering, and Warmington and his foreman, Reinhart Keller, attempted to stop the assault. Warmington escalated the conflict when he drew a pistol and threatened to shoot any man who drew closer. Unfortunately for him, the only shooting that occurred was when one of the miners shot Keller as the striking men rushed the operator and his foreman. Warmington and Keller would have been killed had not two miners stepped forward to save them. Bennet Brown and William Ellwood removed the wounded men from the fray at risk of great personal injury. The riot ended as quickly as it had begun, with Brown and Ellwood’s example signaling an end to the eruption. By the time the Sheriff arrived on site, the men had dispersed and the wounded had been taken to the city for medical treatment.²¹

²⁰ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 171.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 171-172; *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 20, 1876; *The Canton Repository*, April 21, 1876.

While colliers may have perpetrated most of the physical violence in the strike during the month of April, it was the operators and their representatives who initiated and escalated the violence. When operators cut wages unilaterally in March, they initiated an attack on the coal-miners' family. Bringing in blacklegs from Cleveland compounded the assault. Colliers viewed the combination of wage cuts and replacement workers as an attack on their ability to support their families. Though no physical blows were exchanged, the combination of pay reductions and scabs threatened to take food from their children and endanger the collier household. It was this indirect assault on their families that precipitated women's attacks on blacklegs at the Warmington shaft on April 1. Two weeks later, colliers met at the Warmington shaft to prevent scabs from taking their jobs. Though the miners rushed the coal bank to keep blacklegs out of the works, Warmington's beating and Keller's shooting only took place after the operator drew a gun and threatened to shoot the colliers. As early as 1906, in the midst of momentous labor disturbances in the Pennsylvania and Colorado coal fields, T. S. Adams noted similar patterns of conflict. He discovered that violence on the part of workers was greatly exaggerated and that the employers created an "atmosphere of...menace" during the strikes.²² Colliers responded with physical violence because institutional menace was a tool that only operators were able to wield. This pattern held true in the Massillon War, which changed from a traditional labor struggle to open conflict after operators escalated in the wake of the Warmington mine riot.

²² T. S. Adams, "Violence in Labor Disputes," *Publications of the American Economic Association* 7, no. 1 (Feb., 1906): 176-180.

Shortly after the events at the Warmington mine, the state sent aid which transformed Massillon and exacerbated the tension between the miners and operators. By the end of the day, Governor Hayes had been contacted by representatives of Rhodes & Co., a company with an interest in the Warmington shaft. Describing their attempts to work the mines with new men and the riot that occurred that morning, Rhodes and Co.'s dispatch appealed to the governor, asking "are we not entitled to, and can we look to the State for protection[?]"²³ The county sheriff joined with private interests in appealing to the state for protection. Rauch was convinced "that no posse which [he] could secure would be able to afford protection" for the residents, nor for their property.²⁴ Governor Hayes promptly dispatched his Adjutant General, A. T. Wikoff, and his Attorney General, J. T. Little, to Massillon; one with the intent of ascertaining the extent of the disturbance, the other with the charge of restoring peace.²⁵ Along with a proclamation ordering the strikers to disperse, Hayes sent a troop of the state militia to aid the Adjutant General and the sheriff in protecting the mines. The presence of an armed militia at the Warmington mines infuriated the miners who now had no way to prevent the mines from being reopened with scab labor. With armed militia guarding the shafts, colliers decided to retaliate against the operator who had, literally, called in the cavalry.

²³ A. E. Lee to Hayes, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 4, roll 35, frame 819. In the note from Hayes's secretary, A. E. Lee, Rhodes is misspelled as Rhoads.

²⁴ *The Canton Repository*, August 25, 1876. The sheriff's appeal to the governor for help was originally penned and posted on April 16, 1876. However, the original does not exist in the papers of the principals and survives only in its reprinted form in the pages of the newspaper. Governor Hayes' response to the appeal exists as a telegram in his presidential papers.

²⁵ Hayes to A.E. Lee, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 313; Hayes to A.T. Wikoff, April 16, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 322.



Figure 5-1: Coal mines involved in the Massillon War. Drawn by Rebecca L. Wrenn.

Rhodes & Co., owned by Mark Hanna, operated four other mines in the area, three of which were part of the Willow Bank Company and one run by Rhodes at Jacob's Shaft. These mines were targeted by the colliers for the next round of attacks. On the night of May 1, while the militia was occupied south of the city, guarding the Warmington mine from further assaults, approximately twenty men moved against the

mines to the north.²⁶ The miners, dressed in costume and with blackened faces, surrounded the four guards on duty and held them captive under an ore cart while they set fire to the four mines, destroying the engine houses and works.²⁷ None of the guards were injured. Whether their dress and disobedience were direct connections or mere coincidence, Stark County's colliers channeled their revolutionary forefathers in a masculine ideology of republicanism.²⁸ The colliers' nocturnal sojourn succeeded in grabbing the attention of the authorities. The attacks on Hanna's mines caused more than \$50,000 in damage and the governor's response was swift.²⁹ One week after the colliers set fire to the mines, Governor Hayes contacted General Wikoff and outlined a policy of overwhelming force in dealing with the Massillon War:

Dear General,

I still feel that there is doubt as to the sufficiency of your force. Be sure to have it ample. If you call out too many men, I will be responsible, but if you fail for want of enough, it will be your fault. It now looks as if this trouble would last a long time. I wish you to make preparations to hold your men in camp at and near Massillon until all danger of lawless violence is at an end; therefore let your arrangements be of a more permanent character; let it be understood that you mean to stay until lawlessness ceases, or is plainly controllable by the civil authorities.

R.B. Hayes³⁰

²⁶ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 4, 1876; *Canton Repository*, May 5, 1876.

²⁷ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 4, 1876; Ruth Kane, *Wheat, Glass, Stone and Steel: The Story of Massillon* (Massillon, OH: Massillon Bicentennial-Sesquicentennial Committee, 1976), 109-110; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 172-173.

²⁸ Mark E. Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language, and Patriarchal Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), Ch.1; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 16.

²⁹ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 4, 1876; *The Canton Repository*, May 5, 1876; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 172-173.

³⁰ Hayes to Wikoff, May 8, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 387.

Hayes made it clear to his militia chief that no further acts of disobedience, civil or otherwise, would be tolerated in Stark County. The threat of laying blame for all of the violence at his Adjutant General's feet assured the militia leader that no amount of force would be considered "too much." However, Hayes's support for overwhelming force in dealing with the colliers was put to the test when the militia assisted the county sheriff and his deputies in rounding up suspects.

After weeks of conflict between operators and colliers, the Massillon War claimed its first and only fatality in the wake of Hayes's command to General Wikoff. According to the local papers, Abram Williams was one of many miners rounded up throughout the county on the night of May 10. Militia men from the Mansfield Blues regiment claimed that Williams resisted arrest and shot him through the groin.³¹ One paper, *The Stark County Democrat*, noted that there were unsubstantiated allegations that Williams had shot one of the soldiers first; the charges proved to be false.³² The local colliers' version of events differed a great deal from the men who shot the fifty-year old miner. In a report to *The National Labor Tribune*, an anonymous miner reported that Williams was shot while "returning home from a neighbor's house." He had no gun on his person and did not resist; indeed, when the militia demanded that he stop and turn himself in, he reportedly leaned against his fence and responded, "All right boys."³³ After being shot, Williams was kept on the ground, mere yards from his home, and neither the deputies nor

³¹ *The Canton Repository*, May 12, 1876. The paper refers to Williams, incorrectly, by the first name of Abraham.

³² *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 11, 1876.

³³ *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), May 20, 1876.

the militia provided any assistance for his wounds. Though their accounts differed, the end result was the same. Abram Williams died of his wounds the following day.

Hayes's command to restore the peace at any cost was a turning point in the county's labor problems. His order to Wikoff led to the death of a miner, when the adjutant general decided to augment the sheriff's deputies with a militia unit in what should have been a routine arrest. In the Massillon War, the militia's actions made it clear that a collier's life was worth less than the property the miners had damaged. The governor's decision that state troops would remain in the area long term exacerbated tensions between striking colliers and the militia. Though no other miners or militiamen were shot during the Massillon War, they continued to exchange fire at the mines. Indeed, the night before Hayes issued his orders to Wikoff, troops guarding the Warmington mine were shot at six times.³⁴ Despite the lack of casualties, the militia remained at the mines and the skirmishes continued throughout the summer. Maintaining the peace came at a very high price.

Troops and Trials: Negotiating Gender in the Aftermath of the Strike

Colliers went on strike during the Massillon War for many of the same reasons countless other workers have walked out: disputes over wages, control, and an equal voice in negotiations. However, these conflicts were negotiated in gendered terms with meetings of "men" asserting their "manly rights." Stark County's coal miners defended their wives and children by protecting their jobs and attacking scabs. Their wives and

³⁴ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 11, 1876.

daughters joined in the conflict as well, ensuring that the Massillon War was both a literal and figurative battle for the survival of collier families. Gender, in the language of the discourse and the nature of the conflicts in the strike, retained its central position even after twenty-three of the miners were arrested on charges ranging from “assault” to “shooting with intent to kill.”³⁵ While the militia troops who guarded the mines mocked colliers’ manliness and their skill on the job, the trials that stretched through the summer were contested in terms of family and a man’s responsibilities. While coal mining was not the hyper-masculinized industry that it would become in the twentieth century, the Massillon War clearly illustrates that notions of manhood were powerful influences in the labor dispute.

Stark County’s coal miners clashed with the state militia from the moment they stepped foot in the district in the middle of April. While the Massillon War was shaped by the physical conflicts between the two groups—ranging from nightly gunfire to the murder of Abram Williams—not all of the fighting in the region was physical. In order to turn public opinion against the colliers, the state militia, politicians, and operators also waged a psychological war against the miners. Militiamen attacked colliers on the basis of their skill, while the operators and their cronies in the state government undermined the strike by questioning the legitimacy of the union. Both tactics were tied to notions of collier manhood.

Members of the state militia were sent to the Massillon region from outside of Stark County and had little understanding or respect for the colliers. For instance, when

³⁵ “Stark County Courthouse, Appearance Docket 1,” (Stark County Archives: Canton, Ohio), 186-189.

Captain Wood of the Mount Vernon guards was brought in to command a regiment at the Silver Creek slope, he had little experience with mining. On May 19, Wood put on a collier's work suit and went into the mine where he loaded more than five tons of coal in barely six hours. An attorney by trade, Wood informed a reporter from *The Stark County Democrat* that he went into the mine because he was bored by the "dull cares of camp life."³⁶ Wood's story undermined the colliers' efforts in the strike and attacked them at the core of their manhood, their skill in the mines. Colliers spent years mastering their trade, learning how to enter a working, undercut the coal, prepare a charge, and blast the coal from the face, all without risking their lives or those of their fellow miners. As John Brophy noted during his first entry into the mines, learning the skills of a practical miner defined what it meant in the collier community to do "a man's work."³⁷ Coal miners defined their manhood by their skill and Wood's claims of prowess were a direct assault on the collier. Of course, the captain's tale was predicated on a number of false suppositions.

When Captain Wood reported on his day's efforts in the Silver Creek slope, his claim called into question the abilities of the striking miners. According to Roy, depending on the thickness of the seam they were working, a skilled collier could remove between three and six tons of coal from the face in a single day.³⁸ Wood had no practical

³⁶ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 25, 1876.

³⁷ John Brophy, *A Miner's Life, an Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 50. For more on coal mining and its links to manhood, see Chapter 1.

³⁸ Andrew Roy, *The Coal Mines; Containing a Description of the Various Systems of Working and Ventilating Mines, Together with a Sketch of the Principal Coal Regions of the Globe, Including Statistics of the Coal Production* (Cleveland: Robison, Savage & Co., 1876), 62-63.

experience in the mines. His claim that, on his first day in the colliery, he “mined five tons and six hundred pounds” in less than half of a collier’s normal work day described a feat of superhuman prowess. Wood’s account could easily question the legitimacy of colliers’ demands; if an untrained attorney was capable of mining twice the coal of even the best practical miner, what right did they have to demand higher wages? Of course, despite his claims, Woods did not actually perform the work of a skilled miner. The work of a practical miner required years of training to properly undercut the face of the coal, drill holes of the appropriate depth, and build explosive charges strong enough to knock the coal loose without damaging the integrity of the mine.³⁹

When Wood put on his collier “costume” to try his hand in the mine, he performed none of the skilled work that defined the practical miner as a man. His “mining” included pulling the previous day’s blasted coal from the room and loading it into the car.⁴⁰ The attorney-turned-militiaman had not touched his hand to either pick or auger, nor had he set any charges. With no knowledge of the actual work and skill required to mine coal, Wood conflated the manual labor of loading coal onto a car with the skilled endeavors of the blackleg miners who had knocked the coal loose the day before. Massillon’s colliers did little undercutting, preferring to “shoot from the solid,” but this did nothing to decrease the amount of skill required in the mines.⁴¹ Instead it

³⁹ *Report of the Geological Survey of Ohio, Volume V, Economic Geology*, (Columbus: G.J. Brand & Co., State Printers, 1884), 335-336; Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 62; Keith Dix, *Work Relations in the Coal Industry: The Hand-Loading Era, 1880-1930* (Morgantown: Institute for Labor Studies, Division of Social and Economic Development, Center for Extension and Continuing Education, West Virginia University, 1977), 10-11; Brophy, *A Miner's Life*, 44-45. See Chapter 1 for more details.

⁴⁰ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 25, 1876.

required a greater degree of skill in both drilling and setting charges that would knock the entire face loose. By mocking colliers' skill, Wood made light of the legitimacy of their demands and questioned the abilities with which the practical miner defined his manhood. His assault on the miners' rights, however, was not the first; it was the culmination of weeks of attacks launched by mine operators and their cronies.

In print and in private, the operators of Stark County and their allies in Ohio's Republican political establishment questioned the miners' claims and the organizations they formed to protect collier interests. The appeals of George Warmington and Mark Hanna were only the tip of the iceberg. Hanna was a major player in the state party establishment, an eventual backer of William McKinley's successful presidential candidacy. In their appeals, both Hanna and Warmington disputed both the ideals of workingmen's rights to their job and dependent manhood colliers espoused in the principles of the Miners' National Union. Colliers built their union based on the ideal that employers and employees would sit down to negotiate as equals, and "as men"; according to one miner, membership and loyalty to the union was synonymous with manhood in the mining community.⁴² Operators and their friends in the state government did not recognize colliers' institutions of manly dependence, nor their right to negotiate. When Hanna wrote to the governor, he noted his rights to appeal "to the State for protection," while his partner demanded the governor's "prompt assistance."⁴³ Over the

⁴¹ Roy, *The Coal Mines*, 296; *First Annual Report of the State Mine Inspector, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1874*, (Columbus: Nevins & Myers, State Printers, 1875), 53-54.

⁴² *The Miners' National Record*, Cleveland, (May 1875), 122;.Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 79.

following weeks, their views were echoed in numerous dispatches, challenging colliers' right to organize and the gendered arguments which lay at the core of their positions.

Official responses to the events in Massillon varied, but were indicative of the operators' and government's disdain for the colliers' union. When Hayes dispatched his attorney and adjutant generals, the governor's orders to General Wikoff commanded him "to keep the peace and protect persons and property."⁴⁴ It was the latter charge which was most notably enforced. The government's position argued that property owners were the only party with a legitimate interest in the mines and dismissed the nascent union's claim to their right of employment. Governor Hayes responded to Warmington's morning dispatch with an assurance that the sheriff would be dispatched to investigate. After the governor was apprised of the riot and violence which the striking men had perpetrated, he assured Rhodes & Co. that senior law enforcement officials would be sent to take charge.⁴⁵ Though the governor was determined to appease the owners, they were not his sole focus at the outset of the Massillon War. In his April 19 proclamation, defending "property owners in the use and possession of their property," was a secondary claim, following his vow "to protect laborers in their right to work."⁴⁶ Unfortunately for the striking workers, the laborers that the governor vowed to protect were the new men brought in by the operators. When the militia arrived in Massillon, they immediately

⁴³ Lee to Hayes, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 4, roll 35, frame 819; Warmington to Hayes, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 4, roll 35, frame 829.

⁴⁴ Hayes to Wikoff, April 16, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 322.

⁴⁵ Hayes to Warmington, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 4, roll 35, frame 829; to A.E. Lee, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 313.

⁴⁶ Governor's Proclamation, April 19, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 328.

occupied the Warmington mine, providing for the safety and security of both the mine and the blacklegs.⁴⁷ In his official response to the riot at the Warmington shaft, Hayes outlined a policy designed to protect the owners' private property, ensure the safety of newly-arrived workers, and restore the peace with the presence of armed guards. The only issue left unresolved was the disposition of the miners and their union; an oversight that was immediately addressed.

In the wake of the assault on George Warmington and Reinhart Keller, Stark County's Republican newspaper echoed the governor's sentiments and addressed the issue of the miners' union. Ignoring Warmington's actions which had exacerbated an already tense situation, editors at *The Canton Repository* laid the blame squarely on the colliers and attacked their right to organize and protect their jobs. On April 21, 1876, an article on the events which had taken place one week earlier at the Warmington mine closed with:

It is time that these miners were taught a lesson they do not seem to know; that their attempt to prevent others from working at any price they may agree to accept is a criminal act, totally unjustifiable, and which cannot and must not be tolerated. If they are not willing to work at the price offered, they have the right to quit, and no one shall disturb them in so doing. But they have *no right* to dictate terms to others. Every such claim must be promptly met, and as promptly put down, if it takes the strong arm of the State to do it. Every person engaged in these mobs should be arrested, put in jail, tried, convicted, and punished to the extent of the law.⁴⁸

The editors condemned the colliers for trying to protect their jobs by preventing scabs from working the mines. However, their accusation that colliers were attempting to

⁴⁷ *Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 27, 1876.

⁴⁸ *The Canton Repository*, April 21, 1876.

“dictate terms” was a claim more accurately leveled at the operators. Colliers only sought an opportunity to sit down with the operators and negotiate the terms of their labor, to be given a seat at the table on equal footing. The strike was instigated not by intractable colliers, but by the unilateral pay cut initiated by the operators. The right of the colliers to organize and defend their position, however, was portrayed as a dangerous “delusion,” one that “should be crushed by the power of the State.”⁴⁹ Much like Hayes’s instructions to Wikoff before the murder of Abram Williams, editors at *The Canton Repository* argued that no level of force was too extreme if it disabused the colliers of their right to organize.

In the days and weeks surrounding Williams’s death, Hayes made clear that the governor’s role in the labor dispute was not just to protect property, but to destroy the miners’ union. While the governor’s instructions to his adjutant general were circumspect in their reason for additional troops—other than assuring Wikoff that the general would be responsible for any failure—his private correspondence was much more direct. In a letter to his old college roommate and Texas state representative, Guy M. Bryan, Hayes lamented the despicable situation in which his state had found itself. Coal miners were “making war on property and labor,” and Hayes asserted that only “a prompt, decided policy” of force would end the threat.⁵⁰ The governor wrote this letter just one day before he commanded Wikoff to employ sufficient force in the region. When Hayes ordered his adjutant general to end “the lawless violence,” he knowingly

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Hayes to Bryan, May 7, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 383.

authorized his representative to use overwhelming violence in response to the strike.⁵¹ Williams's death just two days later did little to dissuade the governor of the righteousness of his cause. One week after the shooting, Hayes wrote to another future president, U.S. congressman James Garfield. He thanked Garfield for supporting his "treatment of the mining riots" and vowed to "crush out the law breakers."⁵² Despite the loss of life in the previous week, Hayes was firm in his commitment to destroy the miners' resistance and any sense of legitimacy for their union. The governor and Rep. Garfield had both been Generals during the Civil War, which surely shaped their views on acceptable losses during a conflict. To the governor, Abram Williams's life was a small price to pay in order to win the Massillon War.

Not every member of the community opposed the miners to the extremes of the governor and his men, though none approved of the violence in the region. Just as the *Repository* illustrated the partisan nature of the conflict by siding with the operators and Republican establishment, the county's Democratic newspaper took a more measured approach. In the pages of *The Stark County Democrat*, editors called for the arrest of those who rioted and set fire to the mine works, but differentiated between the hundreds of colliers residing in the county and the troublemakers who broke the law. While the *Repository* blamed all of the colliers for the attack on the mines at Willow Bank and Jacob's Shaft, the *Democrat* made it clear that only twenty men had been involved in the

⁵¹ Hayes to Wikoff, May 8, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 387.

⁵² Hayes to Garfield, May 17, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 5, roll 174, frame 389.

destruction.⁵³ Even some of the coal miners' staunchest supporters joined in the condemnation of violence in the strike. Andrew Roy, the state mine inspector, noted in several editorials to *The National Labor Tribune*—both before and after the shootings—that when colliers resorted to violence they “opposed the law, not the operators.”⁵⁴ After Hayes won the Republican presidential nomination in June, opposition to government involvement became more pointed. Patrick Burke, a collier and small-scale operator who had vouched for some of the arrested colliers' bonds, made it clear in an interview that the governor's actions had exacerbated the tensions, noting that the soldiers' “business [was] to take human life, rather than to protect.”⁵⁵ Editors at the *Democrat* agreed with the miner's assessment. Hayes's “reckless” use of the state militia was responsible for Williams's death and their presence caused all of the violence and property destruction.⁵⁶ Without government intervention, the colliers and operators could have settled the dispute peacefully. However, the government assault on colliers, the strike, and their right to unionize was not merely an example of class warfare.

Colliers were firm in their conviction that an attack on wages and the Miners' National Union was an assault on their families and their manhood. As previous chapters

⁵³ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), April 13, 1876. For the differing reports based on the partisan allegiance of the papers, see *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 4, 1876; *Canton Repository*, May 5, 1876.

⁵⁴ *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh), April 29 & May 27, 1876.

⁵⁵ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), June 22, 1876. Patrick Burke was listed as a “coal operator” in the 1880 census, but this was due to his 1/7 interest in a small coal lease. Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Massillon, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 81, Family 86); Estate of Philip Gilfoy, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #3123).

⁵⁶ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), July 13, 1876 & August 17, 1876.

have illustrated, the practical miner's conception of manliness was built on a combination of his skill, his ability to organize, and his position in the home. Wood's endeavors in the mines attacked the notion of colliers' skill, while government intervention sought to destroy their ability to negotiate with operators on equal terms. Colliers argued that banding together to negotiate with operators was their right. Burke noted that "when coal operators combine[d] to cut us down to starvation wages, it [was] only natural we should unite and consult to protect ourselves."⁵⁷ However, the assault on collier manhood did not end with preventing miners from organizing or going on strike. Burke also highlighted the impact of wage cuts on the collier family. He agreed with the editor that a strike was a bad thing, but argued that it was not the operators who suffered during labor troubles. Indeed, it was the "miners and their poor wives and children" who were "the greatest sufferers."⁵⁸ By attacking miners on all three of these fronts, operators sought to undermine a collier identity that was based on their notions of manhood. It was these same gendered arguments that miners used to defend themselves when their cases went to trial.

Throughout the summer, the twenty-three colliers arrested in May appeared in court to answer numerous charges stemming from the events at Warmington, Willow Bank, and Jacob's Shaft. They had been arrested on charges ranging from assault and riot, to arson and shooting with intent to kill.⁵⁹ The trials of the Massillon miners dominated the Stark County Courthouse in nearby Canton for more than a month. While

⁵⁷ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), June 22, 1876

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ "Stark County Courthouse, Appearance Docket 1," 186-189.

Stark County voted primarily Democratic in elections, many of county's attorneys had different sympathies.⁶⁰ Combined with public displeasure over the riot and arson cases, the colliers found it very difficult to secure representation. Retired judge George E. Belden volunteered to take the miners' cases and convinced former district attorney, William McKinley to join him.⁶¹ McKinley handled the closing arguments, making an impassioned plea to the jury. He neither excused nor apologized for the behavior of the indicted miners. Instead, McKinley portrayed the men as victims of poverty and desperation, declaring that, had the operators been more understanding of the miners' plight the entire affair could have been avoided.⁶² Compelling the jurors to relate to the miners was a formidable task as most of the colliers' "peers" were from a significantly different social and economic position.

Jurors in the Massillon War trials during the summer of 1876 were substantially wealthier than the men who stood before them. William Oldfield, the jury foreman was a retired blacksmith with more than \$3000 worth of property.⁶³ Oldfield was not alone in possessing property, nor was he even the wealthiest man on the jury. Aaron Lind owned more than \$40,000 in real estate throughout the county, while J. B. Nixon had more than

⁶⁰ Stark County voted Tilden over Hayes in 1876 by a count of 6772 to 6410. McKinley, however, won handily, largely due to having defended the region's miners during the strike. *The Canton Repository*, November 17, 1876.

⁶¹ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 173; H. Wayne Morgan, *William Mckinley and His America*, Revised ed. (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1963; 2003), 41.

⁶² Kane, *Wheat, Glass, Stone and Steel*, 110; Morgan, *William Mckinley*, 41.

⁶³ Juror list, taken from "Stark County Courthouse Journal F-2," (Stark County Archives: Canton, Ohio), 557, 582 & 588, includes Joseph Piero, Hiram Hostetler, John Werstler, George Stanmentz, Ignatius Doll, Ephraim Ernst, Samuel D. Slusser, John Correll, William Oldfield (foreman), George Hershey, J. B. Nixon, and Aaron Lind. Oldfield's biographical data taken from Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Canton, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 80, Family 98).

\$25,000 in land and personal property.⁶⁴ Not everyone on the jury owned such wealth, but most held significantly more property than the colliers standing trial. Samuel Slusser owned less property than his fellow jurors, but was a respected doctor and health officer in the county.⁶⁵ In terms of wealth and position, the jurors were from entirely different socio-economic strata than the miners they judged. They did share a common bond, however, based on their positions as men who stood at the heads of their families.

McKinley's legal strategy was successful because it hinged on the colliers' rights as fathers and men. Despite the gap in wealth and status between the jury and the coal miners, the twelve men in the box and the twenty-three defendants shared a bond. As the heads of their families, members of both groups exercised patriarchal power over their wives and children. Heidi Hartmann notes that the system of patriarchy creates a common bond through which "all men, whatever their rank" occupy a privileged position based on their control of women.⁶⁶ It was this common bond among men that tied society together; regardless of their rank, they all shared in an elevated status that defined their manhood through their position in the household.⁶⁷ McKinley manipulated the emotions of his jury by focusing on these commonalities, and questioning the extent to which jury members would go to protect their own families. Describing a scene in which a gun-

⁶⁴ Nixon: Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Alliance Township, *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870* (Dwelling 772, Family 796) Lind: Canton, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 95, Family 105). See also Estate of Aaron Lind, Probate Court Records, Stark County Public Library, Canton, Ohio (Case #11209).

⁶⁵ Population Schedules of Stark County, Ohio, Canton, *Tenth Census of the United States: 1880* (Dwelling 389, Family 445).

⁶⁶ Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," *Capital & Class* 8 (1979): 11.

⁶⁷ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 11; Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage," 14.

wielding operator brought in men to steal their jobs and take the food from their family's mouths, McKinley challenged the jurors to put themselves in the miners' place. Roy, a witness to the trial, noted that McKinley's argument "brought tears from eyes unused to weeping."⁶⁸ In the trial, attorneys for the defense painted a compelling picture of men driven to the edge to protect their families.

Placing the jurors in the accused miners' shoes proved a successful tactic for the young attorney. All of the charges for assault and arson were vacated when the principal defendant, Louis Snyder, was proven to have been nowhere near the scene of the crime.⁶⁹ Of the remaining charges, only six of the indicted men were convicted on the riot charge. Each of the men was sentenced to only thirty days and a portion of a thirty dollar fine, a light sentence, indeed.⁷⁰ The final charge, the shooting of Reinhart Keller at the Warmington mine, was reduced to shooting with intent to wound. Anthony Moran, the collier convicted of the shooting, received the longest sentence and was ordered to spend two years of hard labor in the state penitentiary.⁷¹ Moran's conviction was surprising, as many in the community had believed him to be innocent of all charges. Mark Hanna reportedly cornered McKinley after the trial and chided the young attorney that "the only possibly innocent man in that whole group...[was] the one you failed to have

⁶⁸ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 173. No transcripts from the trial exist in either the county archives or in the papers of the men involved. The only report on the trial itself comes from the remembrance of Andrew Roy, written almost three decades later.

⁶⁹ *The Canton Repository*, June 16, 1876.

⁷⁰ "Stark County Courthouse Journal F-2," 557, 582 & 588.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 592.

acquitted.”⁷² Given the severity of the charges against the miners, as well as the institutional animus against them, McKinley’s defense was a remarkable success. Of the thirty-three charges leveled at the colliers, seven resulted in a conviction—only one of which carried any serious jail time. While the outcome of the trial was largely in the miners’ favor, the strike itself did not turn out as well.

Legacy of the Massillon War

Despite the acquittal or dismissal of so many of the charges, it was the operators who emerged victorious from the Massillon War. The miners still on strike were cowed by the militia and the severity of the charges brought against their brethren. This pattern of arresting the leadership during a strike was a common tactic that would be repeated throughout other coal regions. In his classic work on the labor wars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Sidney Lens has noted that strategic arrests of the most militant miners succeeded in breaking strikes, even when they resulted in no convictions.⁷³ Stark County colliers’ own union met a similar fate in the wake of John Siney’s indictment for conspiracy due to their organizing in the midst of Pennsylvania’s scare with the Molly Maguires.⁷⁴ The Miners’ National Union was delegitimized and nearly bankrupted in the process. By the middle of June, Massillon’s miners had voted to return to work at the

⁷² Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 149.

⁷³ Sidney Lens, *The Labor Wars: From the Molly Maguires to the Sitdowns* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1973), 115.

⁷⁴ Kevin Kenny, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 178; Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 160-161.

operators' new offer of 60 cents per ton.⁷⁵ Though it was presented in the papers as a compromise deal, it was actually an utter failure for the colliers; they returned to work after more than three months on strike to a wage that was five cents below the pre-strike offer. Not only were the operators able to pay an even lower rate, the damaged mines were reopened just six weeks after they were put to the torch. On the same day that Louis Snyder was cleared of all charges relating to arson, the mines of the Willow Bank run were restored to service.⁷⁶ The miners and their union lost the Massillon War, but the military presence in the county did not diminish.

Though the strike officially ended with the colliers returning to work in June, Stark County remained a militarized zone for more than a year. The majority of the militia was released from duty by the end of the month, however a small contingent remained at the Warmington shaft.⁷⁷ The militia served as a reminder to the county's coal miners that another strike would not be tolerated, though the colliers did not accept the military presence meekly. More than two months after the mines resumed operation state troops were still on duty at the Warmington shaft, and they were still shot at on a nightly basis.⁷⁸ Colliers were not the only members of the community who resented the "foreign occupation" that these militia troops represented. Though one observer noted the "pomp and pride...of glorious war" that the soldiers exhibited, many more called for

⁷⁵ *The Canton Repository*, June 9, 1876; *The National Labor Tribune* (Pittsburgh, PA), June 17, 1876.

⁷⁶ *The Canton Repository*, June 16, 1876.

⁷⁷ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), June 29, 1876.

⁷⁸ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), August 17, 1876.

the formation of local militias to replace the intruders with a local force.⁷⁹ This issue, at least, was non-partisan. The *Repository* also supported the endeavor, noting that it was a “shame that so populous and rich a county” had to call in outside help to quell the riots and lawlessness.⁸⁰ In the calls for a local militia, newspapers echoed the same gendered arguments that colliers had used in starting the strike: a manly right to defend their homes. Fears of collier militancy continued the next year when, during the national railroad strike in 1877, a local detachment of the militia from Alliance was activated and encamped at the fairgrounds “until they receive[d] orders to move or [were] dismissed.”⁸¹ The county was peaceful during the Great Uprising, most likely due to the presence of an armed reminder.

The Massillon War left a legacy beyond just the miners’ defeat and a militarized community; in the case of one operator, it changed the way he did business. Hanna had always been much more accommodating in his dealings with workers than were his Gilded Age counterparts. At the outset of the dispute over mining wages in the Tuscarawas, Hanna was the lone progressive voice among mine operators. Almost two years before the events in Massillon, Siney, approached local operators on behalf of the Miners’ National Association asking them to agree to submit any future disputes to an impartial arbitrator. Mark Hanna was the only owner who did not dismiss the union out-of-hand and, after receiving assurances that the miners would return to work even if the decision was not in their favor, he affirmed his support of the union and arbitration for

⁷⁹ *The Stark County Democrat* (Canton, OH), May 11, 1876 & May 18, 1876.

⁸⁰ *The Canton Repository*, May 26, 1876

⁸¹ *The Canton Repository*, August 3, 1877.

future disputes.⁸² Despite the breakdown between operators and miners in the Tuscarawas, Hanna remained true to the ideal of listening to workers' grievances. At the height of the conflict, Hanna settled a labor dispute between his company and Cleveland dock workers; Hanna personally met with the striking workers on the dock and the strike ended peacefully.⁸³ Though he had settled previous strikes with arbitration and understanding, the outbreak of violence altered Hanna's approach in Massillon.

Violence and lawlessness in the Tuscarawas strike affected Hanna deeply, altering his tactics first one way, then another. Arbitration and fair-dealing had been his preferred method of dealing with the strikers' grievances during initial stages of the Massillon unrest, a policy which he stuck with even after the first acts of lawlessness occurred on April 1. His commitment changed after the miners began to riot at the Warmington mine on the 14th. Hanna was frightened by the extent of the violence that occurred there, with his partner, George Warmington, and their supervisor, Reinhart Keller, almost killed by rioting miners. His dispatch to the governor contained an impassioned plea for protection.⁸⁴ If fear of further violence had motivated Hanna to call upon the state for aid, the assistance that he received swung him even more adamantly back to his original stance. Before the militia arrived, there had been violence and the threat of bodily harm; in their wake, his property was set ablaze and state troops had shot and killed one of his

⁸² Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 164; Pinkowski, *John Siney*, 146.

⁸³ Croly, *Marcus Alonzo Hanna*, 85; Francis Russell, *The President Makers: From Mark Hanna to Joseph P. Kennedy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), 2.

⁸⁴ Hanna's original plea to the governor for aid has been lost to time, but it was transcribed in a note to Rutherford B. Hayes from his private secretary, A.E. Lee. Lee to Hayes, April 14, 1876, *RBHPP*, series 4, roll 35, frame 819.

miners. Mark Hanna's son later recalled that after Williams's shooting, his father swore in front of him for the first time, yelling, "God damn militia, anyhow!"⁸⁵ He backed those sentiments with a firmer commitment to collective bargaining in his future business relations.

Hanna's relations with labor and unions in the wake of the Massillon strike were a sharp contrast to the behavior of his contemporaries. Despite the owners' overwhelming victory, with work resumed at wages well below the pre-strike offer, Hanna referred to the events in Massillon as a great failure on his part.⁸⁶ Towards the end of his life, Hanna asserted that "the relation between labor and capital" was the most important issue of the day and the events in Massillon had convinced him that an adjustment in that relationship was needed.⁸⁷ Collective bargaining and unions were the only ways for workingmen to receive their just compensation in the hyper-industrial world. Capital, according to Hanna, was far too used to dictating its own terms, and individual workers could hardly get a fair deal in a company that employed thousands of men.⁸⁸ While managers like Henry Clay Frick of Carnegie Steel were busy declaring war on the unions, Hanna was interested in promoting a "spirit of cooperation" between business owners and workers associations.⁸⁹ Not content to espouse empty ideals, Hanna actively worked to bring together these competing interests. In the Civic Federation, Hanna worked with union

⁸⁵ Thomas Beer, *Hanna* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929), 78.

⁸⁶ Croly, *Marcus Alonzo Hanna*, 89; Beer, *Hanna*, 80.

⁸⁷ Mark Hanna, *His Book* (Boston: The Chapple Publishing Co., Ltd., 1904), 30-32.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

leaders and business magnates in an effort to avoid future strikes. In 1900 alone, his intervention prevented a walkout of almost 150,000 men in the anthracite coal fields, and elicited a ten percent pay raise for the miners from none other than J.P. Morgan himself.⁹⁰ Though he was materially successful in the Massillon strike, Hanna successfully avoided similar labor disputes in the future. After the Massillon War, his commitment to collective bargaining and fair-dealing between the forces of labor and capital became his hallmark.

Hanna framed his support for workingmen's rights in the same terms the colliers used: equality, unity, and manhood. He noted that the men who worked with their hands and their heads were "partners in toil who ought to be partners in the profits of that toil."⁹¹ In his efforts running the reelection campaign of William McKinley in 1900, Hanna put his reputation to the test, arguing that he would leave the Senate if "any man who ever worked for [him] in any capacity can truthfully say that [Hanna] had ever knowingly done him a wrong or an injustice."⁹² He would have found little disagreement among the miners. Two decades after the Massillon War, John McBride, a local collier who participated in the strike and would later become the president of the United Mine Workers of America argued that Hanna had "treated more freely and fully with the miners' unions than" his fellow operators in the Massillon region.⁹³ The state mine

⁹⁰ Lens, *The Labor Wars*, 137.

⁹¹ Hanna, *His Book*, 36.

⁹² Croly, *Marcus Alonzo Hanna*, 339.

⁹³ *The Old Man and His Men: The Cordial Friendship between Senator Hanna and His Employees: A Proud Record of Fair Treatment and Constant Friendliness Illustrated by the Recent St.*

inspector, Andrew Roy agreed, noting in 1906 that “the workingmen of the United States never had a more consistent, better or truer friend than Mark Hanna.”⁹⁴ Though colliers retaliated against his mines after the militia arrived, in his business dealings, Hanna embodied many of the same ideals of fairness, equality, and manly dependence around which Stark County’s coal miners had built their union and their community.

The Massillon War was a singular event in Stark County’s coal-mining history, but it highlighted the central role that gender played in the collier community. Colliers constructed their ideals of manhood based on their skill as practical miners, their roles in the mining household and the community, and in the unions they formed. Labor relations in the Massillon region reached a tipping point when those ideals of manliness and independence were challenged. For more than a year, colliers dealt with wage cuts in an amicable manner when operators agreed to sit down with them as men. When the miners went out on strike, it was not the wage cuts that initiated the labor action, but the unilateral decision on the part of the operators. The owners of Stark County’s coal mines had, in effect, denied the colliers rights as men and as equals in the negotiation. When the strike turned violent, it again followed patterns of gender constructed in the collier community. By bringing in scabs, operators threatened to take food from the mouths of the miners’ children. Given the dominant role that women played in the coal-mining household, it was only natural that they led the charge in resisting the importation of blacklegs into the mines.

Railway Strike in Cleveland, (Cleveland: Press of Ward & Shaw, 1897). Original quote from an editorial in the *Columbus Record*, February 25, 1897.

⁹⁴ Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, 164.

Stark County's colliers contested questions of wages and worker control in gendered terms because these social and cultural considerations took precedence over the purely economic considerations of class warfare. They accepted pay cuts when they were not accompanied by a challenge to their manhood, and resisted when their roles as men and miners was undermined. The Massillon War began on gendered terms and ended in the same way. When the indicted colliers were acquitted of charges, it was not because they were innocent of the crimes, but because they were men who had done what any man would do under similar circumstances. In order to understand the conflicts in Stark County and other coal-mining communities, the role of gender cannot be underestimated. Colliers constructed more than homes and unions in the community, and they mined more than coal in the depths of the earth.

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