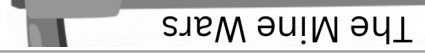


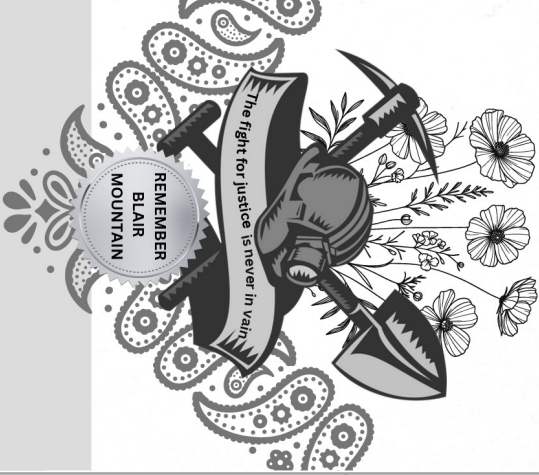


The Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency was much like the Pinkerton Detective Agency, the precursor to the Secret Service.

The early 20th century saw brutal labor disputes in Appalachia, known as the Mine Wars. Miners faced dangerous conditions, low pay, and company exploitation. Coal companies hired private detectives and armed guards to suppress union efforts.



The Mine Wars



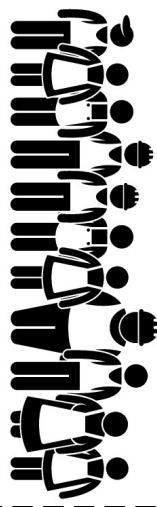
Coven Print

Check out the free library: GovenPrint.com

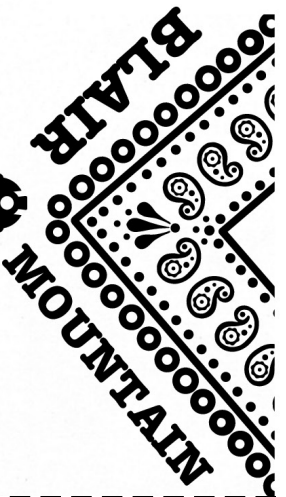


In the town of Matewan, the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum sits at the site of a historic battle which erupted in May of 1920, setting into motion a chain of events that led to the largest armed uprising in the United States since our civil war. For decades after the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain, the stories of the Mine Wars were whispered around kitchen tables and bullied out of textbooks, surviving as a quiet legacy just under the surface of modern Appalachia. The West Virginia Mine Wars Museum preserves and uplifts the voices of the people who lived these stories of sacrifice, violence, and triumph.

Issue 1, Volume 1 The Zine of American History



The Battle Of



A FORGOTTEN UPRISING

BY LMF

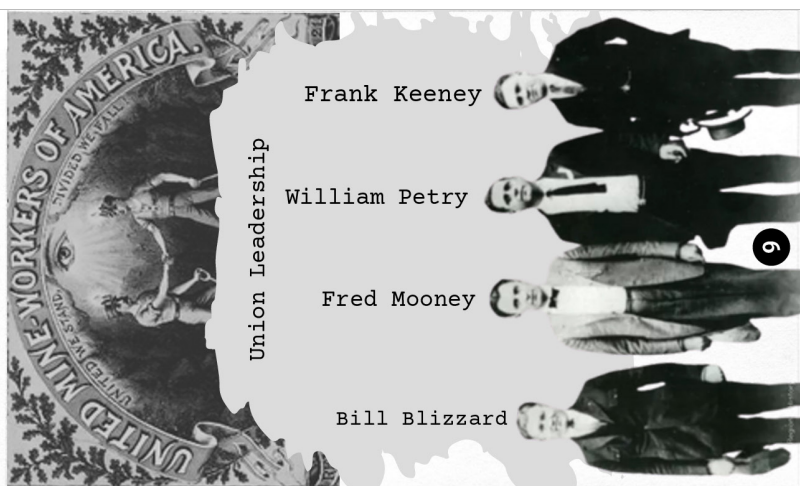


9 warren HARDING

Warren Harding was the 29th president of the United States. Warren hated labor unions. When Labor Unions continued to stand up for workers against their wealthy oligarchs, Warren loved to send in the US Army and National Guard to put down labor risings. He also loved declaring martial law when the striking workers stood their ground. On May 14th, he did just that in the lead up to Blair Mountain. On August 30th, he warned that he would do so again if the labor uprising was not quashed. On September 2nd, the US Army arrived in West Virginia. Many of the miners were veterans and refused to fight their comrades, & surrendered.

THE PRESS

Coal companies controlled the narrative, labeling miners as "radicals" and "outlaws." The media largely ignored their plight. This exemplifies that rather than taking effort to support and change the conditions that the miners were in, authorities would rather pin miners off as dramatizers who weren't experiencing any oppression at all and that their last attempt in changing conditions was a behavior known as "thuggery" or foolish.



Union Leadership

Frank Keeney

William Petry

Fred Mooney

Bill Blizzard

And so it begins...

In August 1921, miners began marching toward Blair Mountain to confront anti-union forces led by Mary Harris "Mother" Jones. They carried rifles, homemade bombs, and a determination to win. The march marked the beginning of the largest armed labor uprising in U.S. history. The first skirmishes occurred on the morning of August 25th. President Warren G. Harding threatened to send federal troops and Army Martin MB-1 Bombers to stop the Union.



The Battle

The miners, armed with rifles, shotguns, and homemade weapons, sought to march south to Mingo County to support striking miners and protest oppressive labor practices, including low wages, dangerous working conditions, and the denial of unionization. Over five days, the battle unfolded across a 15-mile stretch of rugged terrain, with intense gunfights erupting along ridgelines and in the dense Appalachian forests. The miners used guerrilla tactics, while the coal companies' forces, equipped with machine guns and aided by improvised explosives dropped from private planes, held defensive positions.

5



This defeat of the miners and the United Mine Workers was a setback for the labor movement. Their bravery, however, continued to inspire other labor unions and worker's rights activists for generations. Many people were arrested, and union efforts were stifled for years in West Virginia. But hope never died.

10

The Battle of Blair Mountain took place over 5 days in August of 1921, and was part of the greater Mine Wars. This was a pivotal clash between coal miners and corporate forces in West Virginia, as well as the greater labor uprisings of the time. Over 10,000 miners fought for fair wages, better working conditions, and union recognition. This zine explores the history, heroes, and legacy of this forgotten rebellion. It was the largest uprising since the Civil War.



1

14

The Mine Wars
Steve Watkins

The Devil is Here in these Hills
James Green

Coal, Class, and Color
Joe William Trotter, Jr.

When Miners March
William C Blizard

THUNDER IN THE MOUNTAINS
Lon Savage

The Battle of Blair Mountain
Robert Shogan



The Red Neck Army

Miners were dubbed the "Red Neck Army" for their red bandanas.

This was part of the signifier that they were part of the organized miners fighting for their rights. They were a diverse group of people including Black, white, and immigrant miners. Their unity challenged the divide-and-conquer tactics coal companies had used in the past to union bust. But solidarity was clear and present. This is the "Red Neck".

3

Coven Print

The coal industry devastated Appalachia's environment, leaving a legacy of pollution and poverty. The battle was also a fight for the land and its people. To this day, wealthy coal mine owners continue this legacy of harm to the environment, workers, and the coal communities. Many have even defaulted on paying fines for mine safety and miner's black lung benefits.

Environmental Impact

12

MOTHER JONES

7



Mother Jones, born Mary Harris around August 1, 1837, in Cork, Ireland, was a prominent labor and community organizer, activist, and advocate for workers' rights in the United States. After immigrating to North America and enduring personal tragedies, including the loss of her husband and four children to yellow fever, she dedicated her life to fighting for the rights of laborers, particularly coal miners, steelworkers, and child workers. Known for her fiery speeches and fearless organizing, she co-founded the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and became a leading figure in the labor movement, earning the nickname "the most dangerous woman in America" for her efforts. Mother Jones continued her activism well into her later years, leaving a lasting legacy as a champion of social justice and workers' rights until her death on November 30, 1930.

GOOD MOTHER JONES ON MINERS' SORROW
Death of Fighting Mother Jones Removes Thorn from Slides of Strikers

Women were crucial in the battle, providing food, medical care, and moral support to those on strike. They also were organizers, rallying the community to join the strike or provide mutual aid. They also acted as valuable spies, messengers, and strategists.

Miners Hare Woman Spy
An element of romance and mystery was thrown into the industrial war here by the woman spy yesterday who gave information to...

Women and Children Refugee
In District of Columbia, No Train for the Branch and Were Chilled. Many Ladies...

8