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WYOMING COAL AND ITS PLACE IN THE AMERICAN WEST

By

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ABSTRACT

WYOMING COAL AND ITS PLACE IN THE AMERICAN WEST

By

Levi Christopher Stephens

To define the American West is a daunting task for any scholar. Ideas of the American West permeate around its location, development, continuity and historical reference in time. The purpose of *Wyoming Coal and Its Place in the American West* is to identify the role assumed by Wyoming coal production concerning the American West. To better understand the contributions of Wyoming coal, three aspects will addressed; 1) Wyoming's territorial and state development, 2) the maturation and comparison of coal and other industries in Wyoming, and 3) defining the degree of impact coal played concerning Wyoming and the American West. Specifically, this examination will survey the early years of Wyoming history (1850-1910) and inspect the development of Wyoming and to determine what role coal extraction played pertaining to the inception of the territory and later the state, especially in politics and economics. Furthermore, other institutions pertinent to Wyoming including pastoral, agrarian, and the railroad industries are discussed with respect to the development of each within the state and are compared concurrently with the development of coal mining in a chronological fashion. Lastly, the relationship between coal mining and other Wyoming industries is used to determine the levels of conformity, adaptation, and deviation of American West Historiography and the state's relationship with the west.

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Settlement of the western United States has been widely researched and analyzed concerning patterns, stages of development, evolution, and influence. Overarching questions concerning the exact location of the west and the relationships derived from the influence of American society on the west, or the influence of the west on American culture rarely yield definitive conclusions. The previous three prompts have restricted an exact, clear interpretation of the history of regions that the United States branched out to during the second half of the 19th century. The introduction of Richard Etulain's *Beyond the Missouri* offers that an adherence to one avenue of western historiography (Turnerian or New Western) creates a narrowness of content interpretation. Without attention being paid to both vantages of historical relationships, a clear vision of the historical past will not be achieved due to differing perspectives of understanding.[1] One determining fact that is agreed upon concerning the relationship between western location and influence is that maps depicting the United States have had to be redrawn because of western expansion; alas the redrafting of maps does not include changes in ethnic or national identity. The establishment of how the west came forth has a myriad of possibilities. Clear understandings of western American history reveal a struggle to determine a salient genesis as to when the vague term American West became incorporated into the American vocabulary.

A wide range of arguments concerning the beginning and the end of the west exists. One idea is that the west has always been the west without defined borders. Another proposes that The United States created the west from systematic border extensions beginning with the Louisiana Purchase (1803), and then chronologically followed by The Anglo American Convention of 1818, Adams–Onís Treaty (1819), Texas Annexation (1845), The Oregon Treaty (1846), Mexican Cession (1848), and the Gadsden Purchase (1853). Additionally, the question regarding American border expansion of where, or when, the American west began and ended is debatable. Donald Worster contends that the west was a continual process of pioneer settlement moving ever forward with the opening of new regions.[2] Concerning the closure of the west, Historians Fredrick Jackson Turner and Walter Prescott Webb assert that the American West closed with the census of 1890[3] or the decline of prices for rangeland products including barbwire and stock sales in the same year.[4] Is the American West no longer worthy of its title? A second struggle arises concerning the use of continual border expansion and the three previous writers. Simply, if the American West is a continual process of frontier settlement, it is the human element rather than new frontiers created by the extension of borders. With regards to a final location of the west, should further discussion pertaining to the history of American western borders include examples of Alaska, Hawaii, and other American Pacific plunges? Aside from border and frontier arguments, another contention concerning the establishment of the west relies on American occupation of frontier lands away from established populations.

Occupation of land is inherently different from the creation of atlas lines. Wallace Stegner can assist with a further definition of occupation's creation of the west. Within *A*

Sense of Place Stegner offers that place is not a place until people have been born, lived, experienced and shaped the area as an individual, families, and communities for more than one generation.[5] Stegner differs from the border authors on the frontier and closure aspect of the American West. Explicitly, the border authors conclude that the American West had ended because the frontier had become populated, while Stegner adheres that the west continued because of a cyclical permanent settlement, which created an identity. If occupation determines the establishment of a land's identity, how or when was the west created? From the early excursions of Lewis and Clark and Zebulon Pike, did the United States occupy the west? If settlement and not exploration was the crux of occupation, early fur trading centers, Mormon pioneers, religious ministries similar to the Whitman Mission, and the coastal settlement of California then signal early American occupation of the west. The occupation of frontier land, as Webb's *The Great Frontier* argued, would drastically alter the larger metropolis society from the sudden rush of new land wealth and create business booms in major population centers.[6] The *Boom Hypothesis* may be able to generally explain a land's original identity as per the example of European colonialism; however, can Webb's theory be applied to a region that experienced evolutionary booms due to consumer needs stemming from the population center? Or more importantly, did economic opportunities pull the population to the frontier? Additionally, the *Boom Hypothesis* does not account for a mutual relationship between the metropolis and the frontier. The answer to the aforementioned query regarding a frontier response to the needs of the metropolis is muddled at best because the response is solely determined in a case-by-case basis, especially concerning Wyoming.

The establishment of the American West described by the three previous differing schools of thought occasionally work in lockstep, but are polarizing in other instances when depicting the various histories of the American West. All three theories can be used as a filter to establish a basic understanding of western expansion cases; however, even in unison, none can adequately explain the full history in the case of Wyoming. Specifically, with regard to the first school of thought concerning location and relationship, Wyoming was not specifically molded to resemble the east. While the state's territorial and state frameworks are inherently granted to be American, very early on Wyoming's relationship with the United States was demonstrated to be a two way street. While the wealth and goods from Wyoming were used by the east, Wyoming itself pushed ardently to protect and maintain its interests via cattle and coal to further cement a local market of self-sufficiency. With neither side of the relationship succumbing to the other, equilibrium was established between the west and the east resulting from the duel flow of currency.

With regard to location, the first two schools of thought support one another due to Wyoming's delayed territorial status and subsequent statehood. All bordering states had received statehood prior to Wyoming, albeit Idaho preceded Wyoming by only seven days. Due to previously established bordering states, the borders of Wyoming were predetermined, resulting in Wyoming merely filling a void rather than extending the western frontier. Also, due to the nature and time of when Wyoming was created, settlement or occupation had already happened in further western territories. Because settlement already surrounded Wyoming upon its inception, is Wyoming part of the expanding western frontier? According to the border school of thought, Wyoming's finite and default geographical location would negate its novelty as a state in the American West.

The occupation school of thought would brand early Wyoming as a natural resource center for the benefit of trappers and fur traders. The history of Wyoming will depict a story of several booms (trapping, trading, railroads, cattle, and extraction) that would each alter the state's story. Moreover, a lack of uniform one-way economic flow depicts the equal relationship between Wyoming and the United States as a clear example negating the Boom Hypothesis. Lastly, the three criterion can be used to delineate the opening of a conversation concerning Wyoming history because of its known boundaries. Moreover, these theories can be used to discern the existence of a relationship between America and Wyoming; the extent of such a coupling is debatable. Due to the missing quantifiable evidence to sufficiently categorize Wyoming within the confines of western historiography, further investigation is needed to understand its history.

Wyoming is an enigmatic case that struggles to fit cleanly within common definitions or cycles of development that have been previously established by western annalists. Historically speaking, the economic cycles of Wyoming are inherently linked to revolutions of boom and bust. Early Wyoming experienced the five major booms of 1) trapper exploration and pelt extraction (1810s/1850s), 2) service, guide, and military posts for migrants (1850s/1860s), 3) coal mining and railroad investment (late-1860's/early-1890s) 4) ranching in the Cattlemen's Commonwealth (late-1860s/mid-1880s), and 5) coal mining and production (late-1880s/early-1890s and again in the late-1890s/1920s). Each of the five booms would alter many aspects of Wyoming life and yet end due to production costs eventually surpassing the income garnered from the labor, excluding coal extraction.

During each of the five booms, Wyoming's coal mining industry production varied, yet continued to increase long-term. While the amount of production fluctuated because of the industry's dependence on available technology, number of laborers, local infrastructure development, and national consumption rates, it should be made clear that because of coal, other avenues of commercial success were first enticed to travel to Wyoming. Moreover, the story of Wyoming should add extraction as a third ecological mode to Worster's duel modes of the west (pastoral and hydraulic) because of its social impact, competed against the ranch and farm, and the cultural values it has imprinted on the state.[7] While financial booms unrelated to coal occurred in Wyoming, coal extraction consistently employed, produced, and grew during each of the other industries' economic high-water times and continued after their subsequent crashes.

The arc of early Wyoming economics (1860-1920) was far more dependent on the consistency of coal extraction over the booms in the four other industries. While each boom clearly marked an economic upswing for the region, coal provided stability. Prior to the arrival of the railroads, trappers and trading posts used coal as a resource. Soon afterward, coal caused the government and railroad companies to invest in Wyoming, which also stimulated further migration to the area. The investment was for the construction of the first Transcontinental Railroad and its route had been selected to pass through southern Wyoming due to the abundance of coal deposits found within the region. Other industries, most importantly ranching, grew prosperous in Wyoming after the original investment in mining. It is held that during the trapping and trading post booms, coal was a staple product for those laboring in the Wyoming market place and thereafter led the railroads and ranchers to Wyoming. From coal's stewardship, the railroads and stockmen experienced booms of their own. During the third and fourth economic flurries, coal industries would again consistently produce a product with increasing production and value for the Wyoming economy.

It is important to note the distinction of Wyoming coal mining versus cattle ranching development. Coal lured the railroads and stock raisers to the southern portions of Wyoming and propelled greater exploratory searches for more pockets of the mineral. Thus upon many more discoveries, further settlement followed suit in the central, northern, and eastern portions of the state. Contrariwise, cattle ranching grew after the railroads chose to switch back above the northern 41st parallel and below the 45th parallel. While the establishment pattern of ranches in Wyoming mirrored railroad expansion, cattle arrived because of a need from the railroad and coal companies. Essentially, the presence of coal fueled Wyoming railroad ventures and ranching followed the rail lines.

Throughout Wyoming's early economic development, it has benefitted from investments from the federal government, railroad monopolies, cattle ranching enterprises, and extraction companies. While the first three financiers were routinely intertwined with local policy, Wyoming extraction (coal specifically) was virtually untouched by local government regulation until 1890, despite its consistent production and steady growth. Conversely, members of the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association heavily influenced the Wyoming political theatre. For a span of roughly 15 years, Wyoming was known as the Cattlemen's Commonwealth. Many legislative maneuvers in Cheyenne were executed strictly in favor of stockmen interests. It would be reasonable to assume that if Wyoming were strictly a range-favoring territory/state, the local bureaucracy would pass legislation to manage and harness the spoils of coal extraction as a subordinate to ranchland economics. Surprisingly, a severance tax on coal extraction was discussed at the capitol building on several occasions during the early historical period, but it was never passed for fear of the industry leaving the state. The cattlemen protected the permanence of the coal industry in Wyoming with no severance tax. Lastly, the only extraction legislation passed in early Wyoming was for greater safety and labor laws favoring the miners. Because of mining favoritism, political protection, arrival of the railroads, and the local prairie's national influence on the cattle industry, a change of thought regarding western expansion and its relationship with Wyoming is warranted.

Within Bernard Devoto's *The West: A Plundered Province,* he offers that the civilization of the west occurred when the frontiersmen allied with the Industrial Revolution to procure resources to be sent to the east. Moreover, settlement was not able to occur until technologies such as barbed wire, the steel plow, machines, and consumer need made their way west. He further contends that the west was settled with a business plan to move currency from the west to the east.[8] During the trapping boom, Wyoming certainly could be classified within Devoto's colonial slavery model of economics due to the removal of natural products in the west (pelts) which were then shipped to the east for profit by trappers and manufacturers, whom did not permanently reside in the west. However, during the subsequent booms, a shift occurred in Wyoming that delineated the state away from colonial servitude. The establishment of permanent outposts during the guide boom and the political wrangling of the Cattlemen's Commonwealth protecting Wyoming's economic interests marked an alteration away from DeVoto's claims.

Essentially, the interests of stockmen in Wyoming (particularly in the 1870s) successfully regulated and impacted the activities of eastern ranchers and isolated the use of Wyoming's grasslands for local stockmen. Or by the very least, when outsiders grazed they would do so under Wyoming's rules. Simply, Wyoming was not solely governed by outside forces; rather, Wyoming's interests began to reach past its own borders to effect change in other portions of the United States, specifically concerning quarantine laws.

Influence stemming from Wyoming to the metropolis was not limited to bovine activities; moreover, coal mining in Wyoming is another example of the state deviating away from DeVoto's model. Concerning coal mining and DeVoto, Wyoming had a product that pulled industries, populations, and businesses from the east to Wyoming. Even while under the direct control of the railroads, Wyoming coal established a permanence regarding settlement in the west. While mining towns first sprang forth in southern Wyoming, later, similar towns emerged in the central and northern reaches of the state. While company-mining towns were the gold standard for a time, they quickly gave way to independent, economically expanding, and enduring settlements. These small population centers would garner financial successes from extraction, ranching, and service industry businesses. Although these living situations were small, they still demonstrate Wyoming's complete breakaway from DeVoto because of their self-sufficiency. Specifically, Wyoming's divergence from DeVoto's colonial theory can be exemplified with three specific situations.

The first departure from DeVoto concerns the mutual relationship between the metropolis and Wyoming. Early trappers would remove natural products from Wyoming and return to the east with their profits. The coal-mining model of extraction replaced the previous archetype depicted by trappers. While laborers themselves may have ventured into western mineshafts with short-term ambitions similar to the first boom enterprisers, the establishment of enduring mining towns in Wyoming signaled that the eastern harvesting of Wyoming would not continue. While the success of a mining town (some were not) rested on the amount and quality of coal that was produced, many company towns built communities and remained fixtures of Wyoming. The investment to maintain permanence in Wyoming reached its crescendo after the Federal Government invested to rebuild the living quarters of Chinese miners at Rock Springs after the Chinese Massacre. The government from the metropolis invested in the maintenance and assurance that coal mining in Rock Springs would continue. Although Wyoming coal was removed and sent to buyers across the continent, investment from the east traveled to Wyoming (the antithesis of DeVoto's theory). The flow of finance was now expressly stated as a partnership, not servitude. Because coal had garnered such support from the federal government, currency and goods flowed from the metropolis to the frontier and vice versa. The purpose of coal again being placed ahead of the railroads or cattle as the leader of Wyoming's development is based on investment. Eastern financing into other Wyoming industries was not nearly to the same extent as it was for coal.

The Wyoming cattle industry fell to hardship during and after the winter between 1886 and 1887. During the winter months, the price of cattle declined because of the poor quality of beef arriving to the market. Ranching attempted to save itself by nationalizing, and much to the chagrin of the industry, its experiment failed. The federal government could have invested in the stock industry to raise cattle prices, which would ensure that Wyoming cattle would survive and sell at a high price. The government chose to not massage the cattle price market nor artificially inflate cattle values. The extent of no action for the cattle industry compared to direct coal investment determines the alpha from the beta concerning the economic relationship between Wyoming and the United States pertaining to DeVoto. Coal production was viewed as essential for The United States, while cattle were not.

A second comparison of Wyoming coal moving away from DeVoto was the failure of the railroads. From the collapse of the railroads during the Panic of 1893, the former monopolies were broken apart and sold off piece by piece. The government did not interject to preserve the giants in their current condition. As cattle and the railroads wallowed in financial ruin, coal production survived and expanded. These legs of economic support for Wyoming all played large parts in the development of the state; however, the relationship each had with the Federal Government portrays which industry created the equal relationship with the metropolis, and which others could be categorized under DeVoto's theories. According to DeVoto, currency from colonial servitude flowed in one direction as was the case for range stock and the railroads. On the other hand, in contrast to these two local institutions, coal mining in Wyoming received direct injections from the government to ensure that coal production would continue. While Wyoming may not have been under the thumb of colonial servitude for a long period of time, several aspects of the state were replicas of the major population centers of The United States.

Regarding this relationship of east and west, Earl Pomeroy contended that the American settlement process was not a true colonial system analogous to those of European empires. Citizens of the west were thoroughly caught up in the nature of capital politics.[9] Wyoming's election results of 1894 depict a large adherence to the national political scene. The Cattlemen's Commonwealth had fallen out of bed with the populous of Wyoming two years earlier in 1892. Republicans had lost to major Democrat victories at the polls for the first time. The reason for the victories was because local voters staunchly favored mining rights, specifically focused on Bimetallism. Wyoming was economically struggling in the early 1890s and a silver standard would produce more currency (to what value was debatable) to circulate and be more readily available. Between the elections of 1892 and 1894, the railroads also failed, causing further financial struggles for Wyoming. The Republican Party (which had always heavily relied on range politics) shifted its platform away from ranching and to mining because of local backing. While the national silverite movement was defeated with Democrat William Jennings Bryan losing the Presidential Election of 1896, Wyoming locals supported the idea due to hopes of finding silver and the coal industry's support of the silver movement. The Republican election victories chosen by the Wyoming citizens in 1894 demonstrate the connection between local struggles and national political interests, although from different sides of the aisle. Once more, in *The West and New Nations in Other Continents,* Pomeroy offers that territories of the American West are not comparable to the "new nations" of the evolving "Third World". His thoughts describe that the former sought mainly to continue while the latter sought liberation from their pasts.[10] Wyoming was not breaking away from a colonial past, nor is an anti-colonial past argued at this juncture; rather, by 1894 Wyoming did stand in equality with the east because of the dual trade relationship and the west's involvement with the political dealings of the larger Union. While adherence to national politics falls in line with Pomeroy, the oddity of

Wyoming's economic history also does not depart from the author's western development perspective.

Wyoming's economic development specifically supports Pomeroy's imitation theory. Within *Toward a Reorientation of Western History,* Pomeroy contends that the westerner has been fundamentally imitator rather than innovator, and not merely in the obvious sense that his culture was Western European rather than aboriginal.[11] The notion of imitator and the west does fit Wyoming. To further establish economic prosperity, Wyomingites pursued an investment in cattle as a local source of continued revenue. This attempt was to further establish permanence within its borders, rather than expanded wealth elsewhere. It was widely considered during the Grant administration that Wyoming was incapable of survival because of an unfriendly agricultural environment. Notions concerning development during the 19th century placed the yeoman farmer as the backbone of local development. Wyoming's environment could not yield such a paradise filled with beans, corn, tomatoes, tobacco, sugarcane, or peaches as in the east. The grasslands would, however, offer space and nutrients for cattle to graze.

Concurrent with range stock, Wyoming coal mining further buttresses the Pomeroy theory. While coal extraction had a much longer gestation period than ranching regarding boom cycles, the Territorial and early State history of Wyoming demonstrated three distinct characteristics favoring Pomeroy. The first was again the fear of coal mining closures, the second was the political shift, and thirdly, successful American miners came to Wyoming. Each action portrayed an example of Wyoming attempting to endorse local production for economic gain. Fears of coalmine closures later teamed with pro-coal platforms further solidify Pomeroy, because mining closures had been previously witnessed in West Virginia and Pennsylvania and were to be avoided at all costs. Concerning the arrival of successful American miners to Wyoming, a long list of notables and undesirables stemming from the coalfields of Missouri, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, old 49ers from California, and overseas laborers from Europe and Asia all came to Wyoming to apply their extraction knowledge in the virgin mineshafts of Wyoming. Mimicking other major production and service centers, Wyoming had found two local niches to develop in cattle ranching and coal mining that fit into the greater national development of the United States. Essentially, the two aforementioned Wyoming products had an active consumer market and previously used techniques were implemented to harvest either crop, which highlight the qualities of imitation to characterize the development of the west rather than individualism and inventiveness.[12] While several aspects of Wyoming's economics were created by imitation, the development of these successes still struggles to find an appropriate definition.

The development of any society follows stages of evolution and the writhe concerning Wyoming is historian Ray Billington's standardized zonal pattern thesis. Billington attempted to define Turner's frontier thesis while avoiding generalization by casting western expansion in ridged terms of a "consistent" and "standardized zonal pattern".[13] Billington delineated six zones in the pattern of the frontier theory. The zones in succession are 1) fur traders, 2) cattlemen, 3) when conditions were favorable, miners, 4) pioneer farming, 5) equipped farming, and 6) urban development.[14] While true, the first zone of Anglo settlement in Wyoming was trappers; the second zone was clearly trading posts established to service migration routes. Billington contends that trappers and traders fall under the same closed local economic system, while Wyoming's traders were established to do business with emigrants passing through the state. From the first phase on, Wyoming may possess some of the same qualities as Billington describes, alas the timeline of establishment is not in unison with Wyoming's development.

The third zone in Wyoming was created by the railroads and was guided by coal. Quickly following the miners and the locomotives was the creation of the fourth zone with the arrival of the cattlemen (thanks to the sustenance needs of mining and railroad communities). Billington argues range stock would spread after the trappers; however, concerning Wyoming, the chronological arrival of miners, railroads, and then cattle is more applicable. While all three industries concluded at the same destination in a very short time from one another, Billington's zone pattern simply does not apply. Secondly, due to the close proximity of appearance for all three, clear delineated zones are also very difficult to discern in Wyoming in contrast to Billington. The final zones of development for Wyoming also differ from pattern development.

Wyoming's fifth zone could equate to pioneer farming as small agricultural endeavors were found in pockets and especially in eastern Wyoming, though equipped farming never truly caught on as a mass economic producer for the state due to environmental restrictions. Finally, Wyoming's sixth zone of development was urbanization, beginning with railroad and coal mining towns. To summarize the unique zonal pattern of development of Wyoming would be as follows: 1) trappers, 2) traders, 3) miners and railroads, 4) cattlemen, 5) pioneer farming, and 6) urban development. The aforementioned Wyoming pattern of development was first seen along the Union Pacific in southern Wyoming between the 1850s and 1860s, and then duplicated in northern Wyoming along the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad in the 1890s. Aside from developmental patterns, the relationship between Wyoming and Billington is simply a square peg attempting to fit in a round hole.

A second error regarding Wyoming concerns the effect of indigenous peoples and their role on Anglo expansion in Billington's writings depicting western expansion. Billington briefly and vaguely addresses Native Americans and other indigenous peoples born and residing in the west prior to the Anglo arrival. Patricia Limerick commented on Billington's omission, as the paradigm of the westward-moving frontier was a white-centered paradigm.[15] This is a concerning issue that needs to be addressed. The presence of Native Americans in Wyoming greatly impacted western expansion. The 1851 and 1868 Treaties of Fort Laramie protected Native American land rights and delayed Anglo advancement into northern Wyoming for a period of time. While the land agreements with the Native Americans did not remain permanent, the American government in 1868 restricted expansion into the northern reaches of the state for roughly ten years. Specifically, the Big Horn Basin was not populated with ranchers until 1879 and the Freemont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad (The Wyoming Central Line) did not travel into central Wyoming until the early 1880s. Despite efforts to invade various northern portions of the state, settlers were not allowed to occupy Native American lands as per the enforcement of the Federal Government. Wyoming's relationship with Native Americans is one aspect of the region's history that cannot be brushed aside.

Clearly at this crossing it is understood that western theories can only partially cover aspects of Wyoming's history accurately. The use of western theorists can only serve as a foundation to determine the proper explanation of Wyoming's past. Without the ideas of Billington, would a clear definition of Wyoming's staged development be explained? It would be difficult to discern without the penned thoughts of Pomeroy and DeVoto that while the economic and governmental structures of early Wyoming were laced with imitation of the east, Wyoming was momentarily a colony and then liberated due to reciprocal currency flow. Simply, because of coal mining sometimes coupled with and other times opposed to range cattle, the unique history of Wyoming departs from much of the commonly held western American historiographical theories to paint an independent self-portrait.

The five different economic booms that governed Wyoming history, as previously stated, include fur trappers, trading and guide posts for migration, mining and railroads, Cattlemen's Commonwealth, and the coal extraction boom. While during the initial boom coal did not lead the way for early frontier fur trappers, the mineral was used as a resource. It was during the second boom of trading posts that emigrants and explorers noted the plethora of coal found in Wyoming, which spurred conversations that a national highway should certainly travel through southern Wyoming. As the planning of the transcontinental railroad progressed in the late 1850s and early 1860s, it was firmly established that the route of the western road should travel through Wyoming. It was reasoned that the establishment of a transcontinental railroad would act as a connection for the major economic centers of the west including the gold fields of California, the silver loads of Nevada, and the coalmines of Wyoming.

As construction of the railroad arrived in southern Wyoming, new enterprises and urban centers began to emerge. Cities including Rawlins, Rock Springs, Carbon, and Almy grew because of their rich coal reserves close by and of their placement as depots along the Transcontinental Railroad. Other small urban establishments including

Cheyenne and Laramie grew due to being situated along the national highway and housing the cattle industry that had followed construction crews. The rapid expansion of ranching created a third economic support for Wyoming. Conjoined lobbying by the three economic legs worked to create the Wyoming Territory. Although coal was not a stand-alone industry, the railroad owned and shipped the product; nevertheless, coal mining was an intricate financial venture for the railroads. So much so that if it had not been for coal mining, the Transcontinental Railroad would not have passed through Wyoming. Juxtaposed to the dependency of coal, had the railroads not traveled through Wyoming, the subsequent cattle craze certainly would have been delayed or possibly would have never happened. Regardless of these hypothetical possibilities, Wyoming did receive Territorial status, and the 1870s gave way to the birth of the Cattlemen's Commonwealth.

Just after the granting of territorial status, coal mining was under the watchful eye of the railroads. The Territory of Wyoming split into two counties thanks to mining success at South Pass City. Further mining success continued in Wyoming during the 1870s, and then it began to stand apart from the railroads because of financial frauds committed by the monopolies which lead to congressional inquires. While coal slowly began to separate itself from the railroads, the stockmen of Wyoming also began to organize. Simultaneously during the same decade, the Cattlemen's Commonwealth came into full swing in Cheyenne and throughout southern Wyoming. Cattle prices jumped in the late 1870s and coal production increased while steadily maintaining its value. Rounding the bend into the 1880s, coal gradually increased production and the Eden of the cattle kingdom would not last.

The first major blow against the range stock industry would come from the winter of 1886-1887. While often branded as the "great die off", the true problem from that winter was the substandard quality of cattle arriving to the market, decreasing the value of beef. During the same years as the cattle freeze, riots, violence, dissention, and safety disasters lead to the Wyoming government intervening in coal mining industry practices to establish labor and safety regulations backed by state enforcement. Like the Cattlemen's Commonwealth, the Wyoming government officially recognized the mining industry, establishing an equal footing between the two separate economic entities. In attempts to gain a lead on coal and end the post winter recession, the Cattlemen would try to mimic the assembly of other national monopolies, but to no avail.

Conversely, a second wealth cycle was established based entirely on linking several coal pockets in northern Wyoming. During the final years of the Commonwealth, ranching fell out of favor with the Wyoming public because of low cattle prices and was firmly put to bed thanks to the Johnson County War. Because of the violence in northern Wyoming, resident voters gave control of the state government to the Democrats for the first time. Following the Republican defeat, the railroads also financially failed during the Panic of 1893. In two short years, two of Wyoming's three financial institutions had faltered. Republicans ended their twenty-year support of the range and fully endorsed a platform of mining and Bimetallism during the elections of 1894. After sweeping Republican wins, output from the extraction industry would spike in Wyoming. Coal tonnage production would reach unparalleled heights and substantial pockets of oil were also discovered during the late 1890s.

The history of Wyoming's economic cycles did not conclude at the dawn of the 20th century. Southern Wyoming coal would continue to lead the state's extraction output through World War I. Oil and other mining opportunities such as the Sheridan and WyoDak mines would place Wyoming as a leading extraction state for most of the 20th century. For this particular text, Wyoming's extraction history during and after World War I will not be addressed. The purpose for this exclusion is that the examination of differing boom cycles in early Wyoming history offers greater insight into the historical development of Wyoming culture. This work will offer the premise as to why Wyoming is so strongly associated with ranching while coal mining and extraction provided for the opportunities of the range.

Chapter 1:

The Guiding Light of Coal and Wyoming's Introduction to Boom and Bust

The lure to experience the west is the calling card of contemporary Wyoming tourism. This advertisement has enticed generations of onlookers to visually witness a romanticized past in the multifaceted image of the Cowboy State. From the nightly summer shootout reenactments of Buffalo Bill Cody outside the Irma Hotel in Cody, to the Cheyenne Gunslingers combating Indians, or the throngs of high school mascots including the wranglers, doggers, longhorns, buckaroos, herders, or the punchers--all idolize the western experience of Wyoming. This embellishment of rider, horse, and gun ignores other elements that drive the economy and culture of Wyoming. Rather, mineral extraction and the cycle of boom and bust has been the alpha to ranching's omega. Institutions such as the Cattlemen's, Sheep Grower's, and later Stockmen's Association have all wielded power and influence in Cheyenne only to lose it. The railroads too have sat on the throne of the territory for a time only to fade away. The one constant source of wealth and political power has been extraction. The birth of the raw commodities industry is credited to trapping, however, very quickly, mineral resources comprising of coal, briefly gold, oil, and later uranium would take the gavel of authority within the state.

Silence and wind through the grass are typical visions of the southern and eastern plains of Wyoming. The most well-known and visible symbol of the state for locals is simply referred to as the Steamboat (outsiders reference it as Wyoming's Saddle Bronc and Rider). The iconic emblem is speculated to pay homage to the Nebraska born, Wyoming resident Clayton Danks riding Steamboat (the most ferocious bucker CFD had ever seen) to the 1909 Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo Championship.[1] The state aligns itself with images of the cowboy. Tales of vast acreages, self-reliance, and constant isolation have been the calling card of building residents of the Indian Paintbrush state to be dubbed country strong.

The rugged, wind-swept environment and remoteness of the region have kept the state's population small. Wyoming remains the least populated state of the United States. Although prairie and grasslands are often referenced when describing the region, mountains and basins are scattered throughout the tenth largest state (square mileage) in the union. Highlands including the Big Horns, Medicine Bow, Wind River, Bear Tooth, and Snowy Range Mountains team with the Tongue-Powder River, Wind River, and Cheyenne-Belle Fourche River Basins to separate the people of Wyoming from one another and the rest of the country.[2] Due to distances between people/communities, self-sufficiency grew as a focal point of pride for Wyomingites. Maintenance of that independence is predicated on a multitude of factors needing consideration especially the terrain and weather (not to exclude others), of which do not always cooperate to procure adequate growing seasons.

Wyoming's short growing season generally is correlated within isolated pocket areas that receive the most moisture. In the mountains, precipitation levels ranging from 20 to 40 inches per year can be found, but adequate temperatures over an extended period are in short supply. However, an area such as Green River, which is found in the southwestern portion of the state, receives a scant 8.9 inches. At lower elevations, adequate growing days are prevalent for crop cultivation and yet consistent moisture is a rarity. Lack of appropriate temperatures, moisture, and the wind, only the eastern plains are suitable enough for dry land farming.[3] Attempts to farm in Wyoming have always produced mixed results beginning in the mid to late 1800s. The Cowboy State is rich with other resources and her goods have been used domestically and for profit outside local boundaries as a constant practice for the duration of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Exploiting its resources for profit has drawn waves of immigrants to Wyoming for over two hundred years. The first appearance of easterners within what would be the modern borders of Wyoming would be fur trappers and traders in the early 1800s. Plans of a journey to Wyoming to reap riches from fur trapping then to return home wealthy was a common theme amidst pelt trading circles. Due to this genesis of Wyoming migration, two important features merit consideration. 1) Easterners were migrating to Wyoming for the first time and more significantly 2) The cycle of boom and bust based on exploitation of natural resources was introduced. Professor Phil Roberts offers an important comparison: "Striking parallels can be drawn from the fur trade which will help explain the evolution of later industries in Wyoming; including agriculture, cattle, tourism, and especially the mineral industry. Furs were a natural resource-base, the market for the product was virtually non-existent within the state, and it was subject to wild fluctuations in prices depending on international trends." [4] He asserts that contemporary Wyoming mimics its early commercial days as a colonial economy. Author Liza J. Nichols would echo the thoughts of Roberts by illustrating Wyoming's colonial economic status as "Wyoming has always been characterized as a colonial economy; stuck in the endless struggle to achieve economic equilibrium with obstacles including a lack of domestic markets, skilled labor, high labor costs, adequate water supply, and an unfavorable climate."[5] Coupling national/international specific market demands with a low labor population is a trait commonly found in colonial economies and Wyoming specifically. Exporting raw products such as fur, coal, gold, and oil to support foreign interests (nationally or internationally) with the lure of a successful financial return to those willing to labor in the remote vastness of the west was (and possibly is) the continual ebb and flow of Wyoming's colonial economy. This trend does not completely differ from other colonial economies including British North America before the American Revolution, but then again, the original exported products as well as others since are not manually cultivated, rather, they are commodities naturally produced by the region.

The use of Wyoming's natural wealth in foreign locations would be commonplace for trappers and extend to other demanded market resources through the contemporary era. Moreover, searches for one raw commodity could/did lead to the discovery of alternative natural materials that could also be exported. The trapping of pelts would lead to the discovery of travel routes. Adventuring in search of travel routes would assist the discovery of coal. Seeking coal would illuminate the unearthing of iron, gold, and oil. Wyoming began its domino experience event thanks to accounts of adventuring trappers reporting the existence of coal in the west.

Early trappers were the first Anglo-Americans to write about the presence of coal in Wyoming. No specific archeological evidence links Native Americans to extracting coal in Wyoming, however in North Dakota, traces of lignite coal have been found in

400-year-old fire hearths that have been unearthed.[6] While early reports did speculate coal was present, throngs of miners and speculators did not immediately flock to the area of the supposed mineral wealth. While mining was not an enterprise during the early histories of the Wyoming Basin, the sequence of boom and bust was already introduced.

These early reports providing the existence of coal in Wyoming did not greatly attract miners and settlers even though the resources were present unlike the coal regions of the Allegheny and Appalachian Mountains. Labor and a means of transporting the coal to market were the crucially lacking ingredients to ignite Wyoming's coal industry in the early 19th century. Later, the Union Pacific Railroad would tap into the local market for Wyoming coal and outsource its stock, both as a fuel source for its own fleet of steam locomotives and as a means for transporting coal to western and Midwestern cities.[7] Prior to the arrival of the locomotive, coal would receive a slight kick-start due to a three-way intersection of the expansion of the fur trade, migration, and the American Military during the early to mid-1800s.

Early fur trading in Wyoming was not a fruitful venture. The localities of markets for furs were too distant for consistent travel except for an annual yearly return for the huntsman with pelts in-tow to the markets of civilization. The difficulties of extended travel from Wyoming back to civilization and then return to the west cut into prime fur trapping seasons. That began to change when former Missouri lead miner William Ashley set out to expedite this process. In 1824, Ashley advertised in the *Missouri Republican* his need for "a few enterprising young men", a few answered the advertisement, most notably James Bridger.[8] Ashley set out on a western expedition to create the Rocky Mountain Fur Company (also known as Ashley's Hundred). Ashley's idea, with the help of other notable mountain men including Jedediah Smith, William and Milton Sublette, and Kit Carson was to establish trade fairs (rendezvous) within the Green River Valley that would hopefully rival the Hudson Bay Company and John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company.[9] Over the next five years the 'Ashley Beaver' became widely known among fur dealers as the finest skins in the market and it made the founders of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trading Company a fortune operating chiefly within modern Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah.[10]

The purpose of the first Wyoming fur trade rendezvous was to offer mountain men the chance to focus on trapping while relying on supplies acquired from the annual mid-summer company sponsored trade fair.[11] For a window of ten to fifteen years, the rendezvous system in Wyoming was functionally lucrative, although it would eventually give way to permanent trading ventures and further developed settlement. The popularity of the rendezvous system would soon grow to yearly fairs held at differing locations including: Willow Valley (modern Pinedale), Sweet Lake, Popo-Agie-Pierres Hole, Green River, Hams Fork, and Wind River alternating sites between 1825 and 1840. To increase their profits, western entrepreneurs envisioned plans for permanent trading posts to maximize constant trade amongst those living and laboring in the west. These blueprints were laid during the boom time of the pelt trading industry and those within the trade would be subject to local market conditions and the influx of goods imported into the developing basin.

The natural boom and bust cycle of market conditions for extracted goods is a volatile situation. Natural commodities are subject to normal market fluctuations in price and demand. They also are controlled by artificial price regulations such as Ashley's

Rocky Mountain Fur Company setting their beaver pelt marker at three dollars per pound. The company's speculation of the value of pelt prices were based on St. Louis market costs, charges for transportation and supplies, and a small profit. Trappers were not pleased with such arrangements because the average pelt would weigh fewer than one and a half pounds and thus the trapper would earn five dollars per pelt. Meanwhile, other goods such as coffee (two dollars per pound), gunpowder (two dollars per pound), buttons and fishhooks (one and half dollars per dozen) were too exorbitantly priced for purchase versus the value of the income made by the mountain men's furs.[12] To the chagrin of the outdoorsmen, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company was the only outfit in the Green River area, so the trappers would have to barter with the high cost of doing business with the company. This is a second point in which early trapping foreshadowed the pitfalls awaiting future extraction enterprises (coal and oil) due to the setting of prices and cost for workhands dealing with wares offered by corporate mining company stores. Nevertheless, the boom would not last long and economic stresses between trappers and the rendezvous system would sharply decline in the 1830s because of the fading beaver pelt market and the bust portion of the cycle would commence.[13]

Normal market fluctuations were the culprit for declining beaver pelt prices by the late 1830s. Men's hat fashions in Europe had turned from beaver to other materials and the price for felts dipped. But, more importantly, plans for permanent points of sale for supplies in the west were already under weigh. In 1834, William Sublette ported at the confluence of the Laramie and North Platte Rivers to establish a trading post where he could cache supplies for later trading. The post was originally branded Fort William, later changed to Fort John on the Laramie, and then shorted to Fort Laramie. This trading outpost would be the first permanent Anglo-American settlement in Wyoming and its creation was credited to the economic competition of the fur trade.[14] After the collapse of the fur market, trading outposts continued to spring forth because cavalcades would still be traveling through Wyoming to get to the territories of California and Oregon. The early economic histories of trading posts would mimic early trapping rendezvous because a good or service would be offered at a price. This period was not another boom; rather it would lay the exploratory frameworks for the next boom.

Men such as Jim Bridger used their acquired knowledge of the territory to act as guides through the Rocky Mountains for western travelers following trails to somewhere else. More supply stations along the trail would be built for emigrants, similar to Sublette's Fort John for adventurers to refit their supply cache. Fort Bridger would be built in 1841-42 and would grow to become a key supply stopping point along the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails stretching across southern Wyoming in just a few years.[15] It was the trader and trapper whom established the routes of travel, which were/are, and will always be, the avenues of commerce in the west. The guides were the 'pathfinders' of the West and not the later official government explorers after 1840. The routes and commodities within Wyoming were already known and had been known for a decade.[16] As travelers navigated southern Wyoming along the Overland Trail they would take notice of the geological offerings of the region.

Coal deposits in Wyoming were of mention along the Oregon Trail around Deer Creek (present day Glenrock) by traveler Joel Palmer. John C. Fremont during his expedition wrote of coal deposits along the Overland Trail in southern portions of the state (a stretch from present day Rock River to Evanston). South of Evanston (future route of the Transcontinental Railroad), coal was shallow mined to provide fuel for Fort Bridger's blacksmith shop along the Mormon Trail (migratory trail from Fort Bridger to modern Salt Lake City), which was operational from 1859-1890, after which the land was returned to public domain.[17]

Blacksmiths were commonly found at these supply stations to support the needs of wary travelers concerning iron tools, tack or to shoe horses, and repair wagons and other equipment. Along the Overland Trail, named for the Overland Stage Line Company, stage stations were placed seven to seventeen miles apart. Many of these stations used coal for heat and to stoke the fires of the coal forge at the local blacksmith shop. Fort Fraeb and later Fort Halleck (built west of Fort Laramie) was established at the north end of Elk Mountain (present Carbon County) to provide protection for travelers from Indian attacks along the Overland Trail also had a smithing outlet. To obtain the fuel necessary to heat and work, small surface pit mines were dug around visible open seams of coal; the mineral was removed and then taken to the fort.[18] The product extracted from the Wyoming ground was not transported away from the region; it was used only locally and thus a new local market was created for another Wyoming product, coal.

As the number of migrants increased across southern Wyoming, so did encounters with Native Americans, traveler illnesses, and other calamites that befell those passing through. By 1849, in response to pleas from the multitudes immigrating to the Oregon Territory, the American Federal Government purchased Fort Laramie for $4,000 dollars. Three cavalry companies and Company G of the 6th Infantry were stationed in southern Wyoming.[19] Ten years later, Fort Bridger (which had been purchased by Brigham Young for $8,000 dollars from Bridger) became occupied by the US military during the Utah expedition and was never relinquished.[20] Several other trading posts in Wyoming would be converted in the same fashion including Fort Bonneville (1836) and Fort Casper (1858) to accompany the nearly 350,000 people migrating across the area bound for California, Oregon, and Utah between 1841-1860.[21]

The trekker influx would elevate business revenues for western guides and the use of coal. Horses or oxen pulling wagons would accompany each party traveling west. Certainly, shoeing, repairs, or tools would be needed during the westward journey. Furthermore, the presence of the American Military would add a self-contained local market. Military and trading posts would now experience a local boom cycle of two revenue streams: 1) emigrants and 2) residents. People enclosed by and traveling through Wyoming became aware of the usefulness of the migrant trails for traveling and the potential worth of Wyoming's coal. Easterners also began to express interest for a highway west. The local market boom had been affirmed by three situations 1) the creation of staging stations, 2) emigrant use of services at the posts, and 3) military presence and investment to create a small and yet stable local economy that would experience greater expansion due in large part to renewed attention from the east.

The public desire for a highway west began during the heyday of the rendezvous system and would later be championed by the government after the decline of the fur trade. A writer for the *Emigrant,* a weekly newspaper hailing from Ann Arbor, Michigan published an editorial in the issue of February 6, 1832 (allegedly penned by the broadsheet's publisher Judge S. W. Dexter) outlined a project stretching from New York to Lake Erie and then to the south shore of Lake Michigan. Then from present Chicago, the venture would cross the Mississippi, follow the Missouri and cut across the Platte River to the Rocky Mountains.[22] Expanding the argument posed in the *Emigrant*, Dr. Samuel Bancroft Barlow (physician from Granville, Massachusetts) drafted a plan for a Pacific Railroad.

Bancroft assumed the railroad would sweep 3,000 miles across the continent. The doctor asserted construction would be priced at $10,000 per mile and concluded that the total cost would be an estimated at $30,000,000. The author recommended that the country's economy could withstand such a project because the annual service of the national debt was at the time ranging from twelve to thirteen million dollars. The government would need to devote three years to surveying and estimates while concurrently liquidating the national debt to make the plan feasible.[23] Those whom were knowledgeable of the untapped resources of the west echoed the projections of those in the east.

Reverend Samuel Parker, a missionary who had been associated with Dr. Marcus Whitman (founder of the Whitman Mission to the Cayuse Indians which would develop into a trading post along the Oregon Trail near current Walla Walla, Washington) wrote in his text *The Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains* (1835) that there would be no difficulty constructing a railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.[24] After reviewing Parker's endeavors, Willis Gaylord Clark would proclaim in the *Knickerbocker Magazine* (June, 1838) that a great chain of communication would yet be made, with links of iron. The mountains of coal, vast meadow seas, the fields of salt, the mighty forests, stores of magnesia, and crystalized lakes of valuable salts were not formed to be unemployed and wasted.[25] The riches foretold by the poet pushed easterners to seek their fortunes beyond the horizon.

Immigrants traveling west were in search of financial successes and the few Wyoming residents were profiting from services (guiding, lodging, blacksmithing etc.) offered there. Jim Bridger would tender "I have established a small fort with a blacksmith shop and a supply of iron in the road of emigrants, on Black's Fork of the Green River. They are generally well supplied with money, but by the time they get here they are in want of all kinds of supplies".[26] Easterners wanted expansion for greater economic prosperity byway of western goods arriving in eastern markets i.e. furs traveling to St. Louis markets. While the federal government would convert trading posts to military forts, it also was searching for a means to increase the revenue stream flowing towards Washington in the form of minerals and metals.[27]

After the Panic of 1837, certain camps within the American government emphasized a renewed vigor regarding the possession of large supplies of precious metals to be used as currency. These members of congress would be branded "hard-money men". It was their belief that paper money not backed by gold was unsafe practice and metal coin should be used extensively regarding government affairs. Many felt that the condition of the deposit banks were desperately inadequate to the slightest pressure applied on their vaults in the ordinary course of business, much less be able to meet the government drafts approaching nearly forty million with the States.[28] Thus, members congress such as Thomas Hart Benton (Senator from Missouri) began to push for the government to acquire large sums of coin made from metals, which also corresponded with the Executive Order of President Andrew Jackson's Specie Circular two years earlier.[29] Precious metals in Wyoming (or in the west by in-large) were not highly stressed, but Wyoming coal was developing at a local level slowly and western gold/silver strikes in the next few years would alter this train of thought.

Men like Senator Benton did see value of expanding westward even though adequate perceptions of what could be offered by the west were not yet realized. The Bentonities would believe that commercially, Oregon offered greater economic advantages over any equal portion of the Atlantic States. Oregon's chief customers would be Eastern Asiatic countries whom were thought to be more profitable to trade with and less dangerous to quarrel with. Moreover, the coastlines of Asia were perceived to have greater freedom from European maritime influence and the American navy would grow to become the Pacific nautical power.[30] Hence a need to travel through the west was deemed to be the most beneficial product before arriving at the American Pacific coastline. While Wyoming has never contributed greatly to precious metal mining, her coal deposits would prove to be invaluable. Musings in the 1830-40s would often discuss the possibilities of precious metal mining in the west and they did include Wyoming as it was unknown if the Basin could produce such goods. Nevertheless, it was a fact, that at the very least, Wyoming coal could play a large part transporting precious metals and other tradable goods to the east.

To encourage international trade, national hard-money men urged congress to construct an Overland road to west coast ports that would trade with markets in Asian and India. The American road connecting the east to the west was also thought to be valuable for it would populate the barren middle country for defense purposes.[31] Senator Benton would promote the benefits of defense based on already existing rail lines of the east by offering "Now troops can come from the center of Missouri in about sixty hours (when summoned by electric telegraph) to most any point on the Atlantic Coast. The railroad and the electric telegraph have opened a new era in defensive war, and especially for the U.S., superseding old ideas, and depriving invasion of all alarm.[32] While Benton doubted if the west could secure gold or if enough gold and silver even existed to carry on all commerce of the world, the west was thought to be beneficial regarding the influence of defense and currency flow to the northeast.[33] Members of Congress representing the west (and other notable westerners including Jim Bridger) often dined at the Benton house discussing that the time for action had arrived for the west. A plan for an exploratory expedition was conceived and small government appropriations were secured for the mission. The assignment was officially declared to explore the country between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, while in reality it was intended by its promoters to be "an aid of and auxiliary to Oregon emigration."[34] In 1842, John C. Fremont was selected to lead the exploration.

Born on January 21, 1813, in Savannah, Georgia and later educated at the College of Charleston, Fremont was married to Jessie Benton Fremont (1841), the daughter of Senator Benton. With the Senator's constant lobbying behind the scenes, Fremont, a second lieutenant in the Corps of Topographical Engineers was awarded a series of official assignments to explore, survey, and map the wilderness of the west.[35] It was held that only the stoutest of hearts would survive the Oregon Trail and that for the rest it was simply too forbidding. Proponents for western expansion wanted to address this tenuous state of immigration affairs.

Hoping to encourage greater development west, Senator Benton and others realized settlers sorely needed a map or guidebook manual, one, which pioneers could follow, mile by mile and stage by stage.[36] Wide spread government expansion into the west was not in vogue at the capital, hence increased travelers would need to generate the requirement of greater government presence in the west. Aside from "hard money" congressmen, members of the legislature including Daniel Webster were against expanding west. Webster would denounce a transcontinental mail route heading out of Independence, Missouri and ending at the Columbia River by lamenting to President Van Buren that what use did the country have with the vast, worthless area populated by savages and wild beasts, endowed with unusable impenetrable deserts and mountains and he would not vote "one cent from the public treasury" to place the Pacific coast one inch closer to Boston. [37] Therefore, a public generated need for greater government involvement in west would have to be undertaken and thus was the task of John Freemont.

For his first expedition, in the summer of 1842, Fremont's mission was to map and describe the general course of the Oregon Trail to South Pass found in the mountains of present-day Wyoming.[38] The routes and goods Freemont found in 1842 as per his mission notes penned while at Fort Platte (located between the Platte and Laramie rivers)[39] had already been quietly discussed in small circles (trappers, guides, trading post operators, and small pockets of expeditionary wonderers), but was opened nationally when his first expedition report was presented to congress.

The Oregon Trail was a new wagon road that branched off from the Santa Fe Trail in Kansas (wagon caravans began to divert in the early to mid-1830s) and worked its way northwest over the Rockies to Oregon. The territory was jointly occupied by the US and Great Britain. American emigrant parties were enticed by reports of fertile land in Oregon's Willamette Valley, which caused a migration upturn to the northwest. While Americans were tempted to travel to the northwest, Bentonites felt strongly about placing as many settlers as possible to develop the area as an American propriety. In effect, the more Americans living in the Oregon country increased the chances of a favorable American border when the eventual official boundary would be drawn as it was with land negotiations in the Oregon Treaty of 1846.[40] It was Freemont's responsibility to draft an accurate guide to ease some of the hard ships of the Oregon Trail.

Freemont's report of his first expedition was published, read aloud by Senator Benton to congress, and stated that the middle district stretching from the Cascade Range to nearly the base of the Rocky Mountains has its own peculiar features, and many being as picturesque as useful including: snow-capped mountains, hot and warm streams, mineral waters of many varieties, salt in solid and fluid state, salt lakes, hot springs, wood, coal, and iron.[41] Reading the congressional offerings of Freemont in 1842 lends a harkening to the previous works of Willis Gaylord Clark in 1838 discussing raw materials of the west were not intended to lie idle. These two authors (one from the government and the other from the populous) mention the same attributes that will shape the history of Wyoming economics. These two writings symbolize a meeting of the wants of the people in the east with those of the government. Fremont's narrative of his expedition did precisely what Senator Benton envisioned it would. It touched off a wave of new wagon caravans filled with hopeful emigrants, many of whom held his report in their hands as they traveled the rutted trail. From the new firestorm in the east, trading posts, guides, and military men in the west would see increased adventurers, new western revenue, and the elevated use of local natural commodities. "Fremont's First" was a huge success and due to its triumph a second mission was assigned the following summer. The second mission was to describe the latter half of the Oregon Trail, from South Pass to the Columbia River (present Oregon and Washington).[42]

During Fremont's second expedition he made notes of coal found in the Wyoming Basin. "Coal made its appearance occasionally in the hills during the afternoon and was displayed in rabbit burrows in a kind of gap through which we passed over some hills as we descended to make our encampment."[43] The location of his observation would become the future site of the Cumberland mining camp and present day Kemmerer, Wyoming. While this report is credited as the first time coal deposits had been reported in Wyoming, William Gaylord Clark nevertheless had already written of western coal in 1838 and it was already in use by trading post blacksmiths at Fort William and Fort Bridger in 1842.

After the fruits of Freemont's report became public, congress still did not feel the riches of the west would outweigh the wealth that would be reaped from a highway connecting the west to the east. Specifically, Senator Benton did not expect the small settlements along the Pacific to play an integral part in the U. S. economic theatre. Nevertheless, he did feel that a friendship should be sought between the coasts.[44] Fellow Bentonite and editor of the *Missouri Argus,* future Colorado Territorial Governor William Gilpin would clarify the enclave's ideas that the United States needed colonies on Pacific Coast to trade with Asia's high civilizations.[45] Moreover, the railroads could ensure a possible kinship of interest between the separated regions.[46] The feelings of Senator

Benton were not held singularly, rather these thoughts were held by many western expansion-thinking members of congress.

These Bentonites believed they spoke for the farmer, artisan, laborer, and other frontier communities that shared unhappy experiences with the vagaries of shifting credit and declining paper money and thus hard currency with trade would be the only remedy.[47] Arizona State Professor Thomas L. Karnes discerns the philosophies of Bentonites as supporting the laborer and the immigrant. Moreover, growers and stockholders were to remain equal so long as the state served to guard against privilege. In some sense, it was the point of view of a states' rights southerner, but it was at heart, more of a response to the needs of the less privileged westerner.[48] Although the senator was a slaveholder from Missouri, his voting record in the late 1840s affirms his stance as a western advocate rather than a southern supporter. Senator Benton stood against slavery's extension into the territories in the fall of 1849 at the Missouri capital, Jefferson City. Senator Benton would announce himself at heart an opponent of slavery and was opposed to extending it to any region where it did not already exist.[49] The beliefs of those that haled from the Senator's camp believed their vision of the railroad would create commerce from exported trade and would bring greater hard currency back to the U.S. Concurrently, the small frontier communities would prosper thanks to elevated travel through the west, as it had previously from wagon trains. Thus, this hypothesis would grant the distinction between possible future mining endeavors and the priority use of Wyoming coal.

The use of coal (fuel for trains) would increase the haulage of goods, materials, and revenues to the east. While the possibilities of finding precious metals in the west was simply that, a possibility. Valuable metals (gold, silver, and copper) would be found in the west in a short time; nonetheless, in the early 1840s coal was the only guarantee for congress in the west. With Freemont's now complete congressional report at the ready, a steady trickle of western migrants would be guided by mountain men, as was hoped for by Benton. In short order an unexpected influx of peoples would be propelled to relocate west which would in turn push the federal government to establish an even greater presence in the west which would begin with Oregon wolf meetings asking for a provisional government in 1843, culminating with the government's recognition of Oregon becoming a territory 1849,[50] and most importantly the subsequent issuance of federal contracts for delivering freight/mail and the use of congressional subsidies to build or improve wagon roads to improve frontier transportation.[51]

Doctor and Businessman Hartwell Carver and American Merchant Asa Whitney each drafted similar (both plans would travel from Lake Michigan, over South Pass and on to Oregon) but distinct plans to support the undertakings of western migration and the beliefs of congressional hard-money men from 1845-1851. Whitney, whose business dealings made him well known to politicians, outlined a memorial to The House of Representatives and the Senate asking for a railroad to run from Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Columbia River. The total cost was estimated to be $65,000,000 and would be defrayed by the sale of public lands to colonists who would build the railroad and then settle on the land. A sixty-mile wide strip of land would be granted to the settler; the railroad and the land would be his property and the federal government would control the operations of the line.[52] Congress did not act upon Whitney's draft. Over the next four years, Whitney proffered four subsequent proposals for western railroad maturation via land grants and public funding. Congress would not reward the New Yorker's endeavors, even Senator Benton would vote against Whitney's ideas. It is understandable why the Senator (a supporter of a western highway) would vote against Whitney. Whitney's railroad plan would not include St Louis, Missouri, which Senator Benton wanted to maintain as a key hub for settlers.[53] Benton had witnessed the benefits of Mexican silver bestowed upon Missouri thanks to her involvement with the Santa Fe Trail and certainly would not want to waste a new opportunity such as a Transcontinental Railroad.[54] The two men would agree on the use of the Wyoming portion of the route. As Congress casually debated early ideas of the direction of the railroad, their attention would soon be drawn to focus thanks to new developments in the west.

Two new peoples would emerge on the western landscape in search of new fortunes, the Mormons relocating to the Utah Territory in 1847 and miners headed to the Sutter's Mill Gold Strike of 1848. The government's response to these new developments would be a parallel structure of acquiring trading posts (Wyoming examples would consist of Fort Laramie and Fort Bridger) and send expeditions with specific goals targeting expansion.

Captain Howard Stansbury was sent from Fort Leavenworth Kansas, to explore/survey the Mormon and Oregon Trails and to speculate/scout possible routes for a Transcontinental Railroad. While traveling through southern Wyoming, Stansbury logged coal sightings near La Bonte Creek (66 miles west of Fort Laramie) and Deer Creek (Modern Glenrock). After the southeastern and south-central region sightings, Capt, Stansbury observed 3-4 feet thick stems of outlying coal shale on July 29th south of Fort Bridger (southwestern Wyoming).[55]

During his return trip, Stansbury would develop his thoughts of western Wyoming and the possibility of a westward highway in his report *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah, Including a Reconnaissance of a New Route Through the Rocky Mountains* with two distinct conclusions. 1) A route they pursued through a pass in the mountains leading to a depression lying between the Park Mountains and South Pass (present day Green River Valley) was viewed as a practicable railroad route. If the line would travel through this area it would assist the establishment of a post route as first brought to light by a letter written by William Gilpin to congress in 1846 stressing the absolute necessity of a transcontinental mail route[56] and would later develop into the route utilized by the Pony Express mail delivery service. Stansbury would further comment that construction of a railway communication across this portion of the continent would be very feasible. 2) The development of possible inexhaustible mineral resources of the coal basin in the Green River Valley was found and at no very distant period, it would go toward lessening the obstacles which at present exist in the settlement of a country so destitute of other fuel.[57] Personally, Stansbury lamented that his belief was that the best route for a road to and through the Salt Lake Valley would be by ascending Black's Fork to Fort Bridger; passing thence to Bear River, and then crossing the Bear River to travel down the valley to a branch of the Weber River and follow it to the main stream which is roughly two miles north of Camass Prairie which would afford a route entirely practicable for a railroad.[58] After the *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah* was published in 1852, the Federal Government began to plan possible routes west, while also acquiring trading posts visited by wagon clad immigrants.

Secretary of War Jefferson Davis believed that a transcontinental railroad provided a solution for the problems felt by the increased number of western settlers versus the topography and the distance between the east and the west. Davis' argument for the railroad rested on three ideas: the Constitution gave the federal government the responsibility for national defense; the federal government owned the territories; the railroads would be constructed on federal property for military purposes and would not discriminate against any citizen or part of the nation. Assuming only one rail line would be constructed, members of congress jockeyed for the position of the eastern terminus for the iron tracks and regional sectionalism divided the legislature. Do to congressional gridlock, the War Department was charged to investigate the likely routes for the railroad.[59] Four years later, Secretary Davis would submit a complete report to congress in 1856 sketching the most feasible routes for a Transcontinental Railroad and recommended southern Route No.5 due to cost, climate, and topography to a riotous congress.[60] An agreement for a westward heading line would not be reached while Davis was in the cabinet and regional differences within the country would propel each member of congress to argue in favor of their preferred route, as there were five options.

Route No.1 would follow the Lewis and Clark Expedition route near the north latitudes of the forty-seventh and forty-ninth parallels commencing at St. Paul and follow across the northern plains along the Missouri River into the northern Rocky Mountains of the United States. It would then cross the future Montana Mountains into eastern Washington and shadow the Columbia River to finally turn northward to Seattle on Puget Sound. A secondary cross-country line ascending the Cascade Mountains to Seattle was also explored. Both routes would be estimated to travel between 1,800-2,000 miles at a cost ranging from $131,000,000-$141,000,000. Two primary reasons were offered against this northern route: 1) The cost was higher than alternative route options and 2) fear of severe winter storms delaying and impleading the locomotive was lobbied. This route would eventually come to fruition as the Northern Pacific Railroad (approved 1864 and completed 1883), but it would not be the chosen route of the First Transcontinental Railroad.[61]

An anecdotal offering regarding the Northern Railway and general western mining pertaining to Montana minerals is that a major gold mining discovery occurred in The Big Sky State between 1862-1864 and a subsequent rush would commence to the western portion of the territory. Similarly, adjacent to the Montana mines, gold was discovered in the central and southern portions of Idaho and southeastern Oregon between 1860-1864. [62] Is it of coincidence that an investigation of a northern Transcontinental Railroad route in 1856 that was ruled not an ideal situation (although publishing's over the last fifteen years called for such a road) and after metals were discovered eight years later (1864) the Northern Pacific Railroad was approved? This nugget of speculation lends credence to the argument of the guarantee of Wyoming Coal revenue versus hearsay of projections for treasures hidden in the west.

Route No. 2 would be inaugurated near the northern latitudes of the forty-first and forty-second parallels. This route would be conceived at either Council Bluffs or Fort Leavenworth. It would travel up the Platte River, then taking the north fork along the Emigrant Trail. When arriving in Wyoming, the railroad would cross South Pass and the Green River, and then ascend the Wasatch Mountains into Salt Lake City. After passing south out of the Great Salt Lake the train would cut through the deserts and mountains of

Utah and Nevada to the Humboldt River. After following the river to Winnemucca, Nevada, the route would cross into northern California by following the Pit River, to the Sacramento River Valley. The final leg of the jaunt followed the Sacramento Valley and on to San Francisco. This route would be the closest to the route followed by the Union and Central Pacific railroads running from Omaha to San Francisco (approved in 1862 and completed 1869).[63] Route No.2 would link two established American financial institutions the gold mines of California and the markets of San Francisco with Wyoming coal as a developing third. The chief antagonist of the second route would be the mining riches of Colorado with gold and coal mining strikes between 1858-1860.

The third route, which was ruled impractical due to construction cost, would run along the thirty-eighth° and thirty-ninth parallels of latitude. The route would begin at the junction of the Kansas Mountains south of the Arkansas River (roughly in the vicinity of Fort Smith, Missouri). With ease, the line would travel west across the plains to the mountains of Colorado and Utah. At this juncture, Indians massacred the surveyors of the Wasatch Mountains and the expedition was not continued. Teaming the violence against the federal agents, the cost of crossing the Rocky Mountains, and the limited technology, Route No.3 was deemed unmanageable.[64] Due to construction cost, avoiding the heart of the Rocky Mountains grew to be of the up most importance and Wyoming coal could still be used by the railroad if the Colorado route was not chosen.

The second southernmost surveyed rail line would also begin at Fort Smith, Arkansas near the thirty-fifth parallel of north latitude. Its pilgrimage would then cross the plains of Oklahoma and northern portions of the Texas Panhandle, and then around the southern end of the Rocky Mountains (generally speaking to Albuquerque and Santa

Fe). The route then traveled across the high plateaus of central New Mexico and Arizona. The rails were to then span through the Mohave Desert and on into Cajon Pass leading to Los Angeles, or though Tehachapi Pass into the San Joaquin Valley and then to San Francisco. Construction costs were estimated at $106,000,000, which would be a notable decrease from the cost of routes one and two. [65] Route four would arrive at San Francisco, but it would not enjoy the gold rich areas of California, or the revenues of the Emigrant Trail (with established staging stations) to Oregon, nor the riches of the Wyoming Basin. Other alternative natural goods and provisions were scarce in frontier southwestern towns as reported by United States Boundary Commissioner John Russell Bartlett during his United States and Mexico boundary surveying expedition from 1850-1853.[66] Similarly to Route No.4, the last of the five surveyed routes also began in Arkansas.

Specifically at Fulton, Arkansas, along the Red River, Route No.5 would travel the interwoven plains and deserts of the Llano Estacado to the Pecos Mountains and then cross the Rio Grande at El Paso. From southern Texas, the train would navigate the mountains and deserts of southern New Mexico and Arizona to the intersection of the Gila and Colorado Rivers at Fort Yuma. Fort Yuma, like her cousins to the north (Fort Halleck and Laramie) was constructed to protect southern emigrants against Indian attacks. The only way to keep the fort adequately supplied was to ship equipment up the Colorado River by shallow draft boats.[67] Hence, the federal fort needed a more efficient mode of supply transportation coming from California.

After entering California, Route No. 5 would fork, one line would travel west to San Diego while the other north through San Gorgonio Pass to Los Angeles. Route No.5

would then mimic the path sought by Route No.4 and voyage to San Francisco by way of the San Joaquin Valley. The route would also miss the gold mines of Sacramento. The expense of No.5 would be the least to build of all of the proposed pathways ranging between $68,000,000 and $90,000,000.[68] The cost of Route No.5 would be more affordable, however the saved money would not squelch gold fever. Comically, during the Bartlett southern expedition in 1852, 25 men from the party came down with gold fever and deserted the exploration at San Diego to join the rush to the Sacramento Valley.[69]

Author Edward S. Wallace would comment on Barlett's topographic boundary missions by offering that the exodus from the slave states to the Pacific Coast was as large as Oregon, the danger of Comanche and Apache Native Americans greater and Francis Parkman never traveled the southern route to record the sights and scenes as he had in his work *The Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky Mountain Life*. Those traveling the southern way would miss the human color and excitement of the goldfields.[70] Unfortunately, southern routes four and five would not be heavily considered for the first Transcontinental Railroad for five reasons: Northern congressmen would not entertain the idea of a major works project to be funded within the slaveholding south and vice versa during the mid to late 1850s because of the crippling effect of American sectionalism and the coming of the Civil War. Revenue from Oregon immigrants along the Overland Trail was already present and permanent posts for trade and military operations were previously established as staging stations and outlined possible swaths through Wyoming and the west. Wyoming coalfields offered guaranteed mineral proceeds, and by 1857 a third major mineral discovery had occurred at Mount

Davidson (western Utah Territory/modern Nevada) by way of the Comstock Lode and it would dash any lasting congressional hopes of a southern Transcontinental Railroad.

Officials in Washington, D. C. and residents of Wyoming were not the only parties plotting a transcontinental railroad. The California Legislature in 1859 held a convention to consider the construction of a railroad route heading east. The representative from Sacramento, Theodore Dehone Judah, was formally appointed as the accredited agent of the convention to convey its outcomes to Washington. Judah was awarded this task principally because of his two earlier works 1) *The Report of the Chief Engineer on the Preliminary Surveys and Future Business of the Sacramento Valley Railroad* (1854) and 2) *A Practical Plan for Building the Pacific Railroad* (1857). Of the two plans, Judah's second is most important due to his urging of a private enterprise to build the highway because he found that "the general government is a house divided against itself; the road cannot be done until the route is defined, and if defined, the opposing interest is powerful enough to defeat it."[71]

Over the next three years, Judah would discuss the Pacific Railroad matter with congress on three different occasions and then return to California to survey a route from Sacramento moving east. The vanguard would settle on a route beginning in San Francisco stemming northeast to the gold mining operations of the Sacramento Valley and then crossing over the Sierra Nevada Mountains to Virginia City and Gold Hill Nevada, which are townships closely located and associated with the Comstock Silver Mine Lode. From the bountiful silver mines the Central train would press on to Salt Lake City. President Lincoln would officially adopt this passage in 1862.[72]

The idea of the Central Pacific to find safe and easy passes upon a straight line of 38 and 39 degrees all the way to California as was first noticed by James Freemont on his fourth expedition in 1848-49 was to link as many revenue interests of the west together as possible.[73] Beginning the line in San Francisco would enable the large trading markets and ports of San Francisco Bay to transport goods east. Moving along the tracks to the Sacramento Valley would increase the transportation of market goods to California's gold mining country and on over into Nevada's silver mining regions. After connecting three major valuable profit hubs of the west, the Central line would then extend into the Salt Lake Valley. Ideas of stemming towards the Oregon trail would not be implemented by the Central Pacific, but the railroad would manage to incorporate four of the five western bounties of the late 1850s: 1) San Francisco markets, 2) California gold, 3) Nevada silver, and 4) Mormon settlement. The end of the line at Salt Lake was a mere 114 miles from Fort Bridger. While the Central Pacific route had connected the gold and industrial centers of California to the silver mines of Nevada and culminated in Salt Lake City, only a short distance was left to connect the Wyoming coalfields, and that would nudge the Union Pacific line even further westward.

To find a way to traverse the Rocky Mountains from the eastern side, the Union Pacific (established from the same legislation that created Judah's Central Pacific in 1862) sent reconnaissance in search of the best possible route. The still organizing company felt that a straight as possible line beginning in Omaha would be the best course of action. In 1862, former Chief Engineer of the Mississippi & Missouri Railroad in Iowa Peter Dey published a report on behalf of the Union Pacific indicating that a route via Denver would not suffice the needs of the railroad. Rather, the less aggressive terrain and availability of products such as iron and coal found encased by the Wyoming Basin due west of Fort Laramie (present day Carbon County) would be far more beneficial.

Surveyor James Evans of the Union Pacific lent his opinion in the firm's annual 1864 report that would buttress the earlier claims of Dey that the presence of coal and timber on the Emigration road had grown increasingly important due to possible material extraction value in later years.[74] The Union Pacific had elected a westward route through Wyoming and President Lincoln affirmed it on July 1, 1862. The Rocky Mountain portion of the line was chosen to travel through the southern portion of the Wyoming Basin because of large amounts of coal deposits (already used by Overland Trail staging stations) reported in the areas of Fort Laramie (eastern Wyoming), Fort Halleck (central Wyoming), and Fort Bridger (western Wyoming), as well as numerous other smaller staging stations enclosed in the region.

The coal of southern Wyoming was instrumental blazing a path from large eastern markets such as Omaha and St. Louis to the market centers of Salt Lake and San Francisco in addition to connecting natural commodity hordes such as Nevada silver and California gold with a developing third western mineral industry in coal. Author and University of Texas Professor Richard Francaviglia would lament that with the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, which was built to connect gold rich California with the rest of the country, the west had been breached. The silver riches of the Nevada hinterlands would be the middleman connecting Wyoming's coal with California and all could be easily tapped.[75] As the final pieces of the coalfield included Transcontinental Railroad were completed, the rich mineral was sighted and documented to be useful in other portions of the western Dakota Territory.

In 1859, Captain William Raynolds was assigned to explore northwest of Fort Laramie and east to west between Fort Pierre, Dakota Territory and the headwaters of the Yellowstone River to scout for possible wagon routes.[76] Much like Stansbury's exertions in southwestern Wyoming ten years earlier, Raynolds noted the discovery of coal found in the central and northern portions of the future state. Raynolds (with guide Jim Bridger) made notice of burning beds of lignite along the Powder River and within his journal the Army explorer would note "the lignite beds found so frequently upon the Powder, Platte, and Yellowstone Rivers, are not coal, though often mistake for it, but are not entirely valueless as fuel. The troops formerly stationed near Platte Bridge would use some of the best variety found for that purpose, and it was quite serviceable."[77] Although lignite (also known as brown coal) is not of the best variety of coal to use, it can be burned as fuel, as was the case for miners and other emigrants following the Bozeman Trail to the gold mines of Montana in 1863.[78]

Raynolds' discovery in the Powder River Basin would eventually become a hot bed for future mining activates in present Wyoming counties Campbell, Natrona, Converse, and Johnson. Coal discoveries during the Raynolds Expedition did not sway Transcontinental Railroad plans by 1859 although early notions considered a possible track to run through the Black Hills. Nor would the resources be utilized after the approval of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The closure of northeastern Wyoming expansion is credited to the Treaty of Laramie in 1868 and it litigated that Native Americans would solely occupy the Powder River Basin and thus a second major railroad would not travel through Wyoming at that time.[79]

It is speculated that had the Treaty of Fort Laramie of 1868 not been negotiated, northeastern Wyoming coal would have played an instrumental part regarding the route chosen for the Great Northern Pacific Railway. The line would still have departed from Duluth, Minnesota and traveled west through the central portion of the Dakota Territory and then it would have diverged from its original track and headed south through the coal fields of northern Wyoming and then return to Montana to avoid the Big Horn Mountain Range and on through to the mining encampments of Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. At best, these speculative assertions are based on two situations: The designed path of the Transcontinental Railroad connected mineral rich sections of the western United States and the expansion of the Utah Northern Railway later connected major mining hubs.

Nevertheless, the coal of southern Wyoming directly steered the course of the Transcontinental Railroad by linking the major mining hubs of the mid-19th century (California Gold, Nevada Silver, and southern Wyoming Coal) to important markets along the Western Coast and Middle West of the US (San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Omaha, and Chicago). By the mid-1860s major mining happenings occurred in western Montana (gold, copper, and coal), southern Idaho (gold), eastern Oregon and Washington (gold). The linkage of precious metal depots found along the Transcontinental and Great Northern Pacific Lines are similar to one another excluding the stoppages in Wyoming for coal. Nonetheless, coal from the excluded region of the Northern line would be in demand to smelt metal ore in the Northern Pacific Railroad territories. Thus, the Northern Pacific did not travel through northeastern Wyoming for coal to complete a territorial circle of early mineral capitals, but cowboy coal would experience an export boom nonetheless.

Coal from the Wyoming would be needed to venture north into the mining districts of Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Large silver and copper strikes occurred in Montana and each lode would be transported to smelters in Utah, Colorado, Omaha, Baltimore, Newark, and Germany. One shipment sent to the Blackhawk, Colorado based Boston and Colorado Smelting Company produced such good results that the company created the Colorado and Montana Smelting Company in 1879 at Butte, Montana. Two years later, the Utah Northern Railway (a subsidiary of the Union Pacific) arrived in Butte with a fresh load of newly mined coal from present Rock Springs, Wyoming to heat the kilns and roasters of the Northern Pacific Railroad Territories.[80] The missing portion of economic progress for the Northern Pacific Railway was an infusion of company coal. Wealthy Northern financier Jay Cooke could do very little to counter act the measures of the Treaty of Fort Laramie 1868 and the coal in northeastern Wyoming would remain dormant, while the southern Wyoming holdings of the Union Pacific would payoff in spades by mining, using, and outsourcing its coal.

Chapter 2:

The Arrival of Challengers to Coal 1868-1870

Before Wyoming coal would arrive to fuel smelters in Utah, Colorado, and Montana in the 1870s and 1880s, the Union Pacific had to lay tracks through the selected railroad route through the Wyoming Territory. Quickly, the Union and Central Pacific Railroads would gain an initial foothold within the coal industry thanks to the Railroad Acts of 1862 and of 1864. Based on information obtained from the American War Department's 1856 western railroad routes survey report, coal was the catalyst that guided the Union Pacific through southern Wyoming as opposed to the other four proposed passages. Opposition posed by the southern states against the central route had been an impassable obstacle for the Davis and then Floyd War Departments from 1856-1860. The argument of the southern states offered that the most cost efficient highway would travel through the southern states into southern California. This route would exclude the wealthy mineral deposits of Nevada, California, and Wyoming, hence the stance taken by the Union favoring the central route. Gridlock concerning the Transcontinental Railroad broke in 1862. The southern states had seceded from the Union and could not oppose President Lincoln as he signed the Railroad Act of 1862 allowing the dual construction of eastern (Central Pacific) and western (Union Pacific) bound communication lines through the heart of the continent.

Thomas Durant, promoter and speculator of the 1853 creation of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Lines, organized the construction efforts of the Union Pacific. The Union Pacific was established as a federally chartered entity, which included five federally appointed directors to its board. However, a private contractor would conduct the construction of the line with government assistance.[1] The Central Pacific on the other hand was created and funded by an investment group known as the "Big Four".

The different financing of the railways was based on population and current infrastructure. The Northeast and Middle West of the United States had roughly 9,000 miles of track laid by 1850 connecting cities and farming communities. These were small locally owned lines with limited travel distance including The Baltimore to Ohio Line, The Tuscumbia Railway, The Red River Railroad, and The Mississippi and Missouri Line.[2] The Union Pacific lacked two key ingredients, organization and funding. The new board of directors for the Union Pacific was designed to manage a new over arching railroad industry encompassing the many small operating railroad branches in the east found primarily in the industrial Northeast and farming communities of the Midwest and to generate investment from private enterprise and the government. Conversely, the Central line was not a large collection of small railroad lines, rather it was operated solely by Theodore Judah and the Sacramento Valley Railroad.[3] Because of the western monopoly, organizing the line would not be a difficult task unlike its eastern counterpart's many small branches. Without the need for government organization, the Central only lacked investment, which would be furnished by local California merchants eager to expand their enterprises.

Leland Stanford would serve as the Central's president leading the "Big Four". Stanford was a California gold rush merchant wholesaler who would also serve as the eighth governor of California (1862-1863) and later in the United States Senate (1885-1893). The position of Vice President was entrusted to Collis Potter Huntington, a Sacramento merchant and partner of Mark Hopkins whom served as the group's Treasurer. The partnership of Huntington and Hopkins would produce The Huntington-Hopkins Company, which dealt with mining supplies, construction hardware, and iron. Charles Crocker another California merchant was awarded the title of Construction Supervisor for the Central Pacific.[4] Each of the "Big Four" served the merchant, mining, or construction industries in some capacity and the creation of a national railroad would further bolster each of their business ventures either during the construction phase or the shipping of goods thereafter the labor had been completed. Creating greater financial prosperity was the purpose of the Transcontinental Railroad and investments for the project would payout largely for merchant investors in need of goods to sell in the west. Moreover, the Railroad Act of 1862 would not bring many new settlers west. The chief amount of capital to be made from the Transcontinental would still be made by the government due to their overall control of grant lands, mineral rights, and initial investment strategy.

The act of 1862 put aside ten alternate sections of land per mile (6400 acres) for every mile of track laid which would be financed by repayable thirty-year government bond loans.[5] The reason for alternating grant lands by the government was to retain power from and to monitor the activities of the railroad. The government, to organize the national railway, and to prevent a monopoly authority in the west created a board of directors for the Union Pacific. Also, by offering federal bonds, the government would hold the first mortgage on the railroad to guarantee repayment. Finally, the original Railroad Act did not assign mineral rights to the railroads. Few investors were compelled to sink money into the Transcontinental Railroad because of the steep requirements stipulated by the federal government, which would be the crux of the struggles for the Central Pacifc. Furthermore, if any of the companies involved in the construction or later shipping failed, investors would not be repaid until the federal government's loans were compensated for their investment first. [6] The two financial powers of Wyoming (government and railroad) jockeyed for the lead position within the region, however neither side would succeed without the other. The government needed the railroad because it would ensure a greater flow of goods, services, business, security, and citizens traveling east to west. The railroads needed government investment to support and unify the short distance small lines of the east to the Sacramento Valley Lines of the west.

To overcome the shortcomings of the first Pacific Railroad Act, two years later, Lincoln signed the Railroad Act of 1864 offering Union Pacific land grants would double to twenty sections per mile and allowed the railroad to sell their own bonds and lands. Moreover, the second act also guaranteed mineral rights to the railroads.[7] Because coal was the instigator for the railroad to travel through Wyoming, it is of little surprise that the government first attempted to restrict mineral rights resources from the railroad and that railroad investment increased after mineral rights were granted to the purveyors of the iron highway.

In all, from both railway acts, the Union Pacific received government loans totaling $27,000,000. The sum of the federal government's investment was enough to cover one-half of the legitimate construction cost of the Transcontinental Railroad. The federal loans (which were paid back) were for thirty years at six per cent interest. The base formula for the investment allowed for $16,000, $32,000, or $48,000 dollars to be spent per mile on construction depending on the labor and materials needed for the terrain. Specifically, the Union Pacific received $16,000 per mile up to a point six miles west of Cheyenne, then $48,000 for the next 150 miles, and finally $32,000 thereafter.[8] The course chosen for the first Transcontinental Railroad would travel through southern Wyoming following the wagon ruts of the Overland Trail that had been voyaged for so many previous years. Ichabod Barlett would reiterate that the final elected path for the railroad was to duplicate the roads for western commerce that have been and always will be the same through Wyoming.[9]

For the first time in American history, a railroad would be built in areas before the region experienced heavy Anglo settlement. From the Railroad Acts, the Union Pacific received a total of 11,141,114 acres of land, of which, 4,582,520 acres were found in Wyoming. Many doubted the railroad would ever repay its debt plus interest to the federal government. Moreover, many within the government were comfortable with this proposition because as a land-grant railroad, the Union Pacific for many years (until the arrangement was terminated by an act of congress in 1946) transported government freight and passengers at reduced rates and continued to be under the watchful eye of the government.[10] It was silently assumed on Capitol Hill that the deal was to carry government stores over long distances at a reduced cost. Essentially, the loans would offer a cost saving endeavor for the government concerning transportation and haulage, but also maintain federal control over the railroads. Plus, it was assumed that new construction for the railroad would also establish new towns and bring new people to the Wyoming Basin.

The route chosen to build the Transcontinental Railroad through Wyoming passed over Cheyenne Pass, through the Laramie plains, and down to Bridger Pass; essentially following the string of previously established trading posts and forts along the Overland Trail. This heading was chosen to travel through Wyoming because of the large coal deposits found within the southern portion of the territory.[11] The construction crews of the Union Pacific brought dozens of towns to Wyoming including: Cheyenne, Laramie City, Benton, Green River, Bryan, and Bear River City. Three of the larger communities Benton, Bryan, and Bear River City survived for a short time (principally until the local mines would give out), albeit communities such as Rawlins, Rock Springs, and Evanston put down strong roots.[12] Cheyenne in particular received a monumental push from the railroad and by Mother Nature.

An orderly procession of town creation across Wyoming, resembling beads strung one after the other, as the tracks traveled west would be a logical assumption of the pattern of settlement along rail line. On the contrary, new towns arose simultaneously, owing partly to how work gangs were spread out (in succession of surveyors, engineers, tracklayers, and finally the train), to the speed of construction advancement, and to land sales of speculative entrepreneurs.[13] In 1867, reconnaissance parties were sent ahead of the railroad construction workers entering the Wyoming Basin to survey and establish the best possible navigational points for the tracks of the railroad in the Laramie Mountains.

General Grenville M. Dodge was the chief engineer of the Union Pacific and while traveling along the North Platte River through "Goshen Hole" country he and his men ascended the summit of Cheyenne Pass. As the group pressed onward, Native Americans ambushed the survey party along a tributary of Crow Creek. Dodge recounted the tail as when the Native Americans were between the men and the trains the Union Pacific officers immediately headed to the ridgeline to signal for the cavalry. It was not until nearly dark that Dodge lead his men down the ridge to discover that the path he chose headed down to the plains without a break. The General would then turn to his guide and say, "if we saved our scalps I believe we had found the crossing of the Black Hills (now known as the Laramie Mountains)."[14] The natural bridge over the Laramie Mountains would be known as the "gangplank". It was at Crow Creek crossing that General Dodge and his men set up camp and began plotting the establishment of two towns, one on each side of the Laramie Range (Cheyenne and Laramie).[15] Professor Wallace D. Farnham however, has stripped the gangplank discovery of its romantic embroidery by directing attention to Dodge's diary, in which Farnham asserts that no mention of Native Americans is present, but only signs of Native American activity was noted on the day of the gangplank discovery was found.[16] Nevertheless, the accounts of General Dodge's Native American encounter may vary, but the Union Pacific General Engineer did locate the future town sites of Rawlins, Laramie, and Cheyenne.

Quick on the heels of the General's natural bridge discovery were six men and three women: Mr. and Mrs. James Masterson, Mr. and Mrs. John Bachtold, Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, James R. Whitehead, Thomas E. McLeland, and Robert Beers. The town site east of the gangplank was surveyed to be four miles square, with blocks, lots, streets and alleys. James R. Whitehead established an office for the sale of Union Pacific lots each costing $150 apiece. By August of 1867, new people were arriving daily to the new

Dakota Territory city (Cheyenne) and a citizen's committee drafted a city charter, elected city councilmen, a police magistrate, marshal, and placed Whitehead as the city's attorney. In September, the city's attorney would team with an attorney from Ohio, W.W. Corlett. Corlett would be the new prosecuting attorney while Whitehead remained as the city's attorney. Corlett would pen the text *The Founding of Cheyenne* and in it he would describe his arrival to Cheyenne as witnessing five to six hundred people scattered around the prairie living mostly under wagons or in tents. The two attorneys would share an office, which was a tent, and Corlett would lament that he too slept under a wagon for two to three months.[17]

Shortly after Corlett's arrival, the city made mostly of tents would feel the first breath of the yearly Wyoming winter wind accompanied by a few snowflakes. The former University of Wyoming Professor T.A. Larson described the situation: "The snowflakes suggested that it was time for more substantial shelters. Any man who could drive a nail could get plenty of work. Ninety per cent of the homes and stores were built of pine lumber, but adobe, stone, brick, grout and concrete were all used."[18] While immigration and local commerce expanded in Cheyenne over the winter of 1867, the inclement situation postponed the Union Pacific as well.

For six months during the winter of 1867, Cheyenne was an end-of-track community. Due to the delay, Cheyenne boomed to a populous of 6,000 people and became the largest city by far in the Dakota Territory. New immigrant arrivals were not transfixed on Cheyenne itself; rather, they were heading to other destinations and simply could not travel further west. These transients in the meantime were in need of food, drink, and clothing before they moved on and local Cheyenne businesses surged during the winter furlough. However, a year and half after the winter of 1867, a special census was conducted in May of 1869, and it demonstrated that the city of Cheyenne had shrunk to only 2,305 residents.[19] During the short boom of Cheyenne's early history, merchants and entertainers would fulfill the needs of those passing through and would reap favorable economic rewards.

The entertainers of Cheyenne were greatly rewarded and shunned for their services offered in the young town. General Dodge in 1867 had said that Cheyenne would become the Magic City of the High Plains. However, by 1868 Cheyenne had grown to be known simply as Hell on Wheels. The editor of the *Cheyenne Leader* N.A. Baker would plead that the "Seventeenth Street hurdy gurdy dance halls made the city well supplied of bawdy houses filled with buxom Teuton girls that would trip with a light fantastic toe, leading them to sweat and stink in turns. If ever was a city on the face of this sinful sphere, that village would be ours…don't afflict us with any more."[20] The locals of Cheyenne were divided on the principles of the Cheyenne entertainment scene, but money was to be made in the young booming town.

Local bar owner James McDaniel, who was also known as the "Barnum of the West", first offered a free museum to his bar patrons in 1867. From his first year success the barkeep added a live theatre in 1868. Not to be outdone from his previous two years of good fortune, McDaniel in 1869 would add a zoo to his nightlife spectacle. For his own amusement, McDaniel would also play the tune of *Listen to the Mocking Bird* with his bagpipes each night at the corner of Seventeenth and Pioneer Street. To the fright of the local foul and complaints of the townsfolk, the Cheyenne City Council declared the highland tunes a nuisance in January of 1868. However, during this same stretch of time, people traveling to the newly opened Sweetwater mines were also beginning to fill the streets of Cheyenne waiting to travel west. To the delight of shop owners, these visitors would need to be well equipped and outfitted for the days ahead, even if it meant that their departure would signal a downturn in the population and revenue stream of Cheyenne when the weather warmed.[21]

The first town established by coal in the Wyoming territory was Carbon (named for its coal mines), which was built in 1868. Carbon sat as the halfway point between the modern cities of Laramie and Rawlins. The town's inception was rooted to take advantage of the local coal obtained by the railroad as part of the second land grant passage made by the US government (mineral rights granted by the Railroad Act of 1864). While to coal lands were owned by the railroad, parties outside of the Union Pacific Company initially operated the mines of Carbon.

In 1868, "Thomas Wardell, William Hinton, Michael Quely, and others entered into an agreement with railroad authorities which permitted them to open and develop mines on lands granted to the railroad by the government". This first mining company took the name of The Wyoming Coal and Mining Company, which also opened mines at Rock Springs and Almy (Southwestern Uinta County, Wyoming).[22] Other industries soon visited Carbon and thus new rivals would soon challenge the pedestal of coal.

Carbon does owe its creation to coal; however, the town never completely became a singularly run coal company town. There was enough private enterprise and other mining endeavors to prevent the occurrence of a monopoly.[23] Iron mining would make its debut around Carbon during the same period with ore strikes at Bradley and Laramie Peaks. Three problems would exist for the local iron fields to grow: 1) The deposits were located at least thirty miles away from the Transcontinental Railroad in 1868 (which was not yet completed) 2) The Denver Pacific Railway connecting Cheyenne to Denver would not be built until 1870, and most importantly 3) the first iron and steel mill west of St. Louis would be the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company which would not be built until 1881 in Pueblo, Colorado.[24] Coal would be extremely serviceable for the residents of Carbon and seven mines would eventually be opened and the town would flourish between 1868-1900 that is until the mines would give out.[25] Similarly to the troublesome living conditions in Cheyenne, the residents of Carbon would experience the pitfalls of living in start-up towns.

The living conditions at Carbon were primitive at best. Water was not directly available in the town; hence it had to be hauled in from the nearby Medicine Bow River. Tank cars would be filled, then travel into the town, and dump the water into board-lined cisterns. The water was free, however the haulage service was not. Ranchers and Cowboys were also attracted to Carbon due to the town's amenities. Relations however would not always be positive. Outlined later within this text the old adage of "when a cowboy stands at a bar with his hand on his pistol and sees a dirty full of smoke miner, a shooting is bound to happen" would encapsulate later histories of Wyoming.[26] Ranchers and cowboys would begin to migrate to southern Wyoming because they too were enticed by the possible financial gains of the west, especially the grasslands present in Wyoming and the favorable locations of railroad depots. As the tracks for the Union Pacific steamed west, other work camps would explode into small communities.

By September of 1868, coal mining had begun in Rock Springs.[27] Much like William Ashley sixty years earlier, Missouri miner and coal properties manager Thomas

Wardell set out to Wyoming to earn his fortune. Wardell negotiated with the Union Pacific to lease its land grant coal lands for 15 years. The agreement would grant the Missourian the contract to prospect for coal, open and operate mines, and to sell the railroad all the coal it needed.[28] The sale of coal from Wardell to the railroad would be on a sliding scale ranging from six dollars a ton for two years, five dollars a ton for the next three years, four dollars a ton for the next four years, and three dollars a ton for the final six years to complete the life of the contract. In addition, Wardell would receive a twenty-five percent rebate on all coal shipped by the Union Pacific to all other customers. The railroad would pay high process costs for its own land grant coal to a company it did not directly control, the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company. Furthermore, the profits from Wardell's mining company would not be forwarded on to the Union Pacific; rather it would go to Wardell's mining company's shareholders. After negotiations were finalized with the Union Pacific, Wardell would leave the operations of his Bevier, Missouri Hewarth mines No.1, No.2. and No.3 to his partners as he set out to build the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company. Wardell would first enterprise in Carbon and then move on to Rock Springs.[29]

When Thomas Wardell left Carbon and traveled to western Wyoming in 1868, he set about opening the No.1 mine at Rock Springs. The No.1 mine would become one of the largest and profitable coalmines of the west. Rock Springs coal was considered to be of the highest quality found along the Union Pacific mainline. The *Wyoming Tribune* reported on December 11, 1868 that Wardell's coalmine was a great success. Twenty or thirty miners were constantly employed and an excellent quality of coal was being produced in large quantities. The newsprint would follow-up its first story with a second proclaiming that productive mines along the Bitter Creek Valley, Black Butte, Van Dyk, Blair, Point of Rocks, and Hallville all were active in the Rock Springs area. Hallville in particular was highlighted to have produced 100 carloads of coal a week and all were headed towards Omaha.[30] Mimicking the early housing troubles of Cheyenne and water shortages in Carbon, the environment of Rock Springs would not produce a welcoming environment to establish permanent housing for miners and entrepreneurs.

From its inception, Rock Springs was known as a "one horse town". The brand was very fitting due to only one horse and wagon resided in the town and the local mining company owned it. The wagon was used by many to deliver goods to customers, haul freight from the railroad depot, and as a hearse for funerals. The first schoolhouse had the largest room in town, which was also used for town meetings, dances, religious services, and regular school.[31] Because of the scarcity of wood and other construction materials, lumber and other goods would be taxied in by the railroad. Many early miners could not afford lumber and would build dugout homes. These poorly ventilated homes would be troublesome due to the probability of roof cave-ins and animals entering the home.[32]

The second mercantile store to open in Rock Springs was a "dug-out" near the old town bridge and was operated by a man known only as "Molasses Johnson" (rumor had it that the business owner lived primarily on molasses and crackers).[33] Johnson's store would be of no match to Thomas Wardell. While selling coal to the railroads the mine operator attempted to create a horizontal monopoly within the southwestern region of Wyoming establishing company stores in Carbon, Rock Springs, and Evanston. The Wyoming Coal and Mining Company would possess the three largest mercantile store buildings in southern Wyoming for a time. Wardell's merchant business would be operational until it was eventually sold in 1875 to the Beckwith and Quinn Company based out of Evanston, Wyoming.[34]

As the tracks of the Union Pacific turned south from Rock Springs and headed towards old Fort Bridger, the Union Pacific surveyed for the optimum route for the railroad. Mimicking General Dodge, Major Laurence of the Union Pacific Engineering Corps performed reconnaissance by sending two men named Mears and Shaffer to prospect for a southern route and coal. Elizabeth Stone notes that the two men located coal and created adjoining mining claims about three miles north of Evanston. In August of the same year, Shaffer would sell his southern facing claim to Laurence, while Mears would form a partnership with the Major, Milton Orr, James, and Joseph Noonan. The fellowship would be known as The Bear River Coal Company. The first coal produced from these Union Pacific Uinta mines would emerge from the No.2 mine in September of 1868.[35] Because of the large quantities of quality coal speculated and found in southwestern Wyoming, The Bear River Coal Company was neither the only mining operation nor the only railroad in the area looking for black pay dirt.

In early 1869, the Bear River Coal Company consolidated with another small extraction enterprise, the Rocky Mountain Coal Company. The Rocky Mountain Company President Henry Simmons operated the mining venture out of Separation, Wyoming with James T. Almy serving as his clerk. In 1870, the newly consolidated companies moved their headquarters to a new mining camp entitled Almy (named after the company clerk) and reincorporated under the new title of The Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron Company. The new company would operate under the Union Pacific contracts awarded earlier to Major Laurence from his previous enterprise the Bear River Coal Company.[36] The Union Pacific appeared to be strengthening their position within the southern Wyoming coal business until the Central Pacific began to aggressively explore Wyoming.

After reincorporation, the new Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron Company created a board of directors in January of 1870 and its members included C.A. Henry, Fox Diefendorf, and Jonathan A. Wilde. The corporation would build a wye on the main road from Evanston to the mine. In June, Diefendorf would travel to San Francisco and sell controlling interest of the company to Clark Crocker and David C. Colton, both of whom were large stockholders in the Central Pacific.[37] From their purchase, the Central Pacific Railroad had created an inroad into the rich coalfields of Wyoming. As the Golden Spike was driven into the ground of Promontory Point in 1869 commemorating the connecting of the eastern and western seaboards, coal-mining ventures and the railroads in southwestern Wyoming would compete with one another.

From Diefendorf's sale, the Union Pacific would no longer hold a monopoly on Wyoming coal. The Central Pacific Railroad Company now controlled the Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron Company. The "Big Four" on the west coast would operate the railroad after Judah's explorations of the Sacramento Valley in 1859. The Central's desire for Wyoming was to have a steady supply of coal available for their west coast line that connected the mineral wealthy regions of the west together (California gold, Nevada silver, and Wyoming Coal). In reaction to the Central Pacific's maneuvering, The Union Pacific established mines operated by the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company six miles south of Almy on their own land grant sections.

Like a checkerboard, the Transcontinental Railroad was supplied with coal in southwestern Wyoming on alternating government grant sections between the Union and Central Pacific Railroads. The Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron Company supplied coal to the west via the Central Pacific Railroad and the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company supplied coal to the east by means of the Union Pacific. Although the coal was of high quality, the Union Pacific mines closed in 1900 and the Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron Mines discontinued operation in 1914.[38] There was good reason for the two railroads to converge in southwestern Wyoming, obviously the large coal deposits would interest the railroads, but, the natural amenities surrounding Almy had the possibility to attract far more miners because of the other natural commodities found in the area were far more attractive than the limited resources of her sisters Rock Springs or Carbon.

Because Almy was situated next to the Bear River Valley, wood and water was readily available for miners and others to use. By 1870, mining companies in the area invested in the production of uniform homes using quaking aspen logs chinked with mud. Following the completed construction of the homes, the structures would then be white washed inside and out. The homes were not lavishly built nor designed and some residents would complain that the wind would whip right through the walls. However, compared to wagons, tents, and dugouts, the aspen log homes were not the worst of ideas for a start-up community.[39] The development of these constructed houses would begin further settlement of southwestern Wyoming and thus entice more emigrants to the west.

Due to the rich lands surrounding Almy, some miners attempted to stack homestead claims. While the men went to the mines, the women were left to milk and brand cows, tend gardens, and mow hay. These homesteads did not offer better housing;

however, they did afford an opportunity to produce one's own food, which would improve the lifestyle of the miners and their families.[40] Thus, from the forests and organization of the railroad came forth the introduction of company housing to team with mining company stores in the Wyoming coalfields. Continued settlement of these mining regions would establish an internal market concerning housing and living amenities. The small local market was necessary to be present to furnish the needs of the national coal market. Ergo, the coast-to-coast rail line was in need of coal and for coal to be produced, workers were needed to mine the commodity. Because of company housing and stores both being created; small market infrastructure was fashioned to support national interest and another boom cycle commenced in Wyoming.

Wyoming's early economic story, especially in the late 1860s, is one of creating new/additional incomes to the two furnished by the railroad and the government. Speculations of Wyoming's wealth would push adventurers west looking for riches, however many limitations whether it be technologies or location would hamper the possibilities of many fortunes. Iron was a possibility, however as previously addressed, the known locations of the raw ore in relation with the railroad in 1868 made the product troublesome to garner much investment. A new commodity that will eventually become big business for the Cowboy State, oil would make brief appearances during the coal inspired railroad boom.

The first Anglo written sighting of oil came from Captain Booneville's Expedition to the western portion of the basin in 1833. The explorers collected their findings and deemed it to resemble English Oil Balm. The petroleum was used as an ointment by the weary travelers' and applied to their horses' to sooth their aches and pains on the trail. In 1863, an oil sighting occurred near the Poison Spider River Crossing (near contemporary Casper). The crude had gathered in a spring near the crossing and was gathered and sold to Oregon and Bozeman Trail emigrants as axle grease.

In 1866, settlers John C. Fiere and William A. Carter reported a discovery of a surface oil spring outside of Fort Bridger. For two years the two men accompanied by a small crew would commercially sell the black gold to the Union Pacific. The Carter Wells' crew would skim the oil off of water surfaces and hand dig trenches from which they would scoop the oil out of by hand. The short-lived production cycle of the Carter Wells culminated in 1868 with 150 barrels of crude oil being sold for $5,000 to the railroad to be used for lubricating purposes.[41] Other significant Wyoming oil productions would not be actualized until the late 1890s. Later, at Salt Creek, the oil business exploded. The economic force of black gold in Wyoming was unknown and would have to wait in 1868, but precious metals would emerge for a brief instance.

Rumors of gold in the Wyoming high country first emerged when a Georgian fur trapper laboring for the American Fur Company in the Sweetwater District briefly discovered gold in the Green River area in the early 1840s. In 1860, miners would briefly work the Strawberry Gulch region (west of Carbon and south of Rawlins) with brief success.[42] The largest of gold spun tales by trappers and travelers was of the hidden treasures of South Pass and would attract thousands between the years of 1867-1873.

Fort Bridger Major Noyes Balwin and Captain John F. Skelton hired experienced surveyors and miners John A. James and D.C. Moreland to spend six months surveying the mineral prospects of South Pass. During their six-month investigation the two hired men would find gold on a tributary of Beaver Creek (north of South Pass City) and

Willow Creek, which is the current location of South Pass City. In 1867, Lewis Robinson entered the Salt Lake City offices of Bohm and Mollitor and presented the assayers with 40 ounces of gold dust. He claimed it came from a lode 200 miles north of Salt Lake City. What Robinson was describing was the Carissa Mine. Shortly afterword, the story spread and other small successful mines including Miners Delight, Morning Star, and the Last Chance mines all began to produce small amounts of gold at South Pass.[43] Construction of South Pass City immediately began and gold fever had officially struck Wyoming.

Old Californians, new miners, and others would flock to the small villages of South Pass City, Atlantic City, and Hamilton City in search of golden riches. A hand full of miners were thought to be living in the vicinity of South Pass in 1867 and then between the summers of 1868-1869 it was thought that 2,000 people had migrated to the mountain pass. Each winter, the population would dwindle quickly because of the inhospitable remote environment and then boom with a dwindling effect the following spring. The same special census that reported the declining population of Cheyenne stated that 1,517 people lived in the South Pass Mining area during June and July of 1869. The following year, the regular census of 1870 further demonstrated that South Pass gold fever had diminished to 1,169 residents.

Dr. Samuel Knight (son of Wyoming's first state Geologist Wilbur C. Knight) head of The University of Wyoming Geology Department estimated that roughly $2,00,000 in gold was taken from South Pass between the years of 1867-1873. At the peak of extracted gold production, 12 mills were operating with a total of 161 stamps, but the yielding's from the mines were clearly disappointing compared to other mining endeavors around the country. James Chisholm of the Chicago Tribune observed that western placers in Wyoming in general "would have done better (and they knew it) to remain where they came from".[44] Although the total value of South Pass was less than what was hoped for, it fed the overall general belief of vast mining riches would be found in Wyoming. Brief gold sightings were not solely limited to South Pass City.

Indeed, miners prospected in other areas of Wyoming such as Douglas Creek and Moore's Gulch in the Medicine Bow Mountains. Moreover, traces of riches were reported in the northern and central portions of the state along the tributaries of the Powder River and around the Lost Cabin area of the Bighorn Mountains. None of the aforementioned claims produced riches much to the avail of those whom labored.[45] Rodman Paul explains the brief excitement of Wyoming gold mining and of South Pass as a brief moment before the mines were exhausted. Afterwards, most would travel elsewhere, leaving behind empty cities, unmanned sluice boxes, and a little group of miners working their isolated claims.[46] Gold would not prove to be the answer Wyoming was searching for regarding local generated income. Later, iron, oil, and eventually natural gas would become extremely relevant to state's economic livelihood. While measures of natural resource exploration was being conducted between the years of 1868-1870; the railroad and government would push Wyoming too gain official territory status, with an unlikely new ally.

The Wyoming basin had originally been included within the Dakota Territory. From the Yankton Treaty in 1858, the western border of Minnesota State established the need to create a new territory for organized settlement, hence the creation of the Dakota Territory in 1861.[47] It would not take long for the differences between Dakota and

Wyoming to appear. During Cheyenne's infancy (1867), the city had wanted separation from the Dakota Territory. The Wyoming portion of the territory was not directly linked to its eastern counterpart due to designated Native American lands (Treaty of Fort Laramie 1851) and the Black Hills Mountain range. Prior to 1867, the county seat for the Dakota Territory, including Wyoming, was Yankton. The county seat was located in the far southeastern corner of current South Dakota State. For perspective, if an issue were to be in need of legislative intervention in Rock Springs, it would travel 781 miles by wagon or horseback from the mining camps to Yankton and then return to the Sweetwater region. To accommodate such an exhausting and time consuming ordeal the Dakota legislature attempted to appease Wyoming.

In January of 1867, the Dakota Legislature created Laramie County, which would encompass the entire Wyoming region. The county seat would rest at Fort Sanders (near the modern city of Laramie). While the nearly 3,000 residents of Cheyenne and its outlining communities were happy with the reorganization, the miners of South Pass whom were the third largest population in the future state were dissatisfied. For the residents of South Pass to travel to Cheyenne, a trail to Rock Springs would be the closest outlet to the railroad. However, the mining camps at South Pass were still eighty miles from the Rock Springs railroad depot. Wagon or horseback trail transportation could also be used to traverse the 297 miles to Cheyenne. Either way, the isolation of South Pass warranted legislative attention. One year after the creation of Laramie County, a second county, Carter County (current Sweetwater County) was established, which was also named after Judge W.A. Carter of Fort Bridger. South Pass City would serve as the acting county seat.[48] By 1868, new counties would not appease the needs of those living in the Wyoming region or the legislature of the eastern Dakota Territory.

Notions of a separate Wyoming Territory had been ignored by the national congress on a yearly basis from 1865-1868. Fueled by his mistrust of Southern Reconstruction and of the Mormons, Congressmen James M. Ashley of Ohio proposed Wyoming Territory bills to the United States House of Representatives in 1865 and 1868. Ashley's efforts bookended his fellow Ohioan Congressman William Lawrence's bills regarding Wyoming's possible territory status of 1866 and 1867.[49] The Wyoming population of the Dakota Territory had already outgrown its eastern contemporaries by 1868. T.A. Larson would contend that the farmers and small town folk in eastern Dakota had their own problems, knew little, and cared less about the hell on wheels communities and mining camps of South Pass.[50] N.A. Baker of *The Cheyenne Leader* would weigh in on the matter in October of 1867, by offering that Dakota is a slow coach; and Wyoming travels by steam and does not need to be cumbered.[51] In response to the claimed growing needs of Laramie and Carter county residents, the Dakota legislature did issue a response.

Not to be outdone by the tabloids of the west, Dakota Governor A.J. Faulk rendered in his opening message to the Dakota Legislature in December of 1867 by lamenting that if the efforts of the Dakota legislature did not satisfy the needs of the westerners; the governor did not know of any good reason why Wyoming may not be clothed with all the blessing and protection of a separate organization. Following the Governor's statements, the Dakota representative body voted unanimously to petition the national congress to separate Wyoming from Dakota.[52] Even though the two areas of the Dakota Territory had agreed to part ways, only the federal government could grant new territory status. While the Dakota Legislature had agreed to divide its territory, Wyoming, with the assistance of the Union Pacific, had sent two lobbyists to the federal capital to plead the case for the two western counties of the Dakota Territory.

The first petitioner was Cheyenne Citizens Committee member J.B. Wolf and the second was Doctor Hiram Latham. These two men were a study in contrasts. Wolf was a man with a gift of being long winded as offered by the *Leader* and the *South Pass Miner*. The conversationalist would talk to any and all misfortunate members of congress when the opportunity was presented. Wolf was characterized as that once he commenced to interview a member of Congress; it was absolutely impossible for him to let go of his victim.[53] Whatever attributes the Cheyenne Citizen's Committee member was not; Hiram Latham would be his opposite.

Unlike Wolf, Doctor Latham was seen to have great discretion, be well educated, have good command of language, and could answer questions without using unnecessary words. Prior to his Washington trip, Latham had worked as a surgeon for the Union Pacific and had grown increasingly interested with the possibility of a successful jaunt into the very young Wyoming cattle industry. After his lobbyist trip, Latham would publish a pamphlet entitled *The Guide to the Union Pacific Railroad Lands*, which was also published by the Union Pacific's Land Department. The pamphlet was an attempt to promote the grazing prospects of the basin and was based on interviews with experienced western cattlemen that were conducted by the doctor.[54] The Union Pacific was attempting to attract settlers to buy railroad land grants in the basin region for profit. For Latham's interests to become successful, he would need to convince congress to create the Wyoming Territory.

Shortly after his arrival to the capitol, Latham would send a circular to the Senate claiming 35,000 people currently inhabited Wyoming. He further boasted that by the following year, the territory would be bursting with 60,000 residents. The doctor would further indulge congress by offering that the Dakota Territory is nearly twice the size of any state east of the Mississippi and that the people of Wyoming are practically without government. Any form of law in Wyoming was usurped by vigilance committees and the functions of the courts do not render fear like the violence spread by the hands of self-constituted tribunals as the only manner to dispose of evil. Latham would request on behalf of the people of Wyoming and the Union Pacific that a Senate bill to be levied establishing Territorial Government in Wyoming. Much of Latham's jargon was designed exaggerated disinformation, however it did create the lasting effect he wanted.

Moreover, Doctor Latham continued to offer to congress that "to organize the land would increase permanent improvement efforts in areas that had yet to be surveyed which included the exhaustless mines of gold, silver, and copper with which the territory abounds. Its mountains of iron and thousands of square miles of coal all were within reach of the facilities afforded by the Pacific Railroad."[55] Latham's statements may be an exaggeration concerning population and precious metals, however coal and permanent internal improvement were not. As the Union Pacific progressed westward, notes of the availability of Wyoming grass sowed the seed for Wyoming settlement concerning ranching and the Union Pacific was eager to sell portions of their land due to the high costs of Wardell's coal mining enterprise. Additionally, the coal industry was a driving force with peaks and valleys, consistent economic arrangement was a key for the railroad. The boards of the monorail viewed grasslands and ranching to be more enticing for settlers than the boom and bust of extraction, hence the friendship between locomotives and pastoral settlers. From the railroad's push in congress, Wyoming would be granted territorial status.

After Latham's circular was acknowledged by congress in late July of 1868, the United States House of Representatives passed a proposed Wyoming Territory Bill, which was subsequently signed by President Johnson.[56] The two primary forces within the Wyoming economy had teamed with the unlikely new source of ranching speculation to procure Territory status. The solidification of settlement was the goal of the Union Pacific and the railroad deemed homesteading and ranching would procure the best results. While mining was slowly generating momentum as the third economic power within the territory, excitement swept through Wyomingites regarding their new Territory status and a new economic challenger would begin to rise and challenge coal.

Like the evolving mining industry, ranching in Wyoming began slowly with the trappers. William Sublette brought five cattle (including one milk cow) to the 1830 Wind River rendezvous. During the 1840s and 1850s thousands of cattle were driven along the Oregon-California-Utah Trails. Trader Seth E. Ward wintered a few hundred-work cattle on Chugwater Creek in 1852-53. It was also rumored that the Mormon colony of Fort Supply (near Fort Bridge) kept livestock. Alexander Majors wintered his work cattle in Wyoming after delivering more than 50 tons of government stores and beef to feed the soldiers of Fort Laramie in late November of 1854. Majors would recount his situation in the *Cheyenne Sun* on April 15, 1884 by offering that upon his delivery he decided to turn his sore-footed animals out on the range instead of turning them around and drive them back to Missouri. Majors would return to the Wyoming plains the following spring to find his animals in the "finest working condition" and henceforth would winter his animals on the same grounds for the following ten years. He claimed to lose no more than one-half of one percent of his animals, which culminated in his claims to have started the first Wyoming breeding herd in 1862.[57] Much like the meager beginnings of other Wyoming industries, initial reports of ranching vary and are often disputed as to whom was the first to commence grazing activities within the territory.

Other pioneering ranchers in Wyoming include John Myers of Evanston, Wyoming, the brothers John and Edward Creighton, and Nelson Story. The Union Pacific Station Agent of Evanston, Wyoming John Myers is mentioned for his early ranching efforts as being credited as the first to apply for water rights and to establish a ranch in the Bear River drainage in 1857. Myers' "character nine" or "Yoke 9" brand is identified as being the oldest brand in Wyoming.[58] The brothers Creighton offered a bid to design and construct the Western Union Telegraph Line in 1861. It was noted in *The Pole Creek Crossing* by Loren Avey that the brothers would push cattle herds from western Nebraska to western Wyoming to accompany the telegraph construction crews starting in 1861.[59] Later, these two men would eventually build the Bay State Livestock Company in Western Nebraska as well. Alder Gulch (near Virginia City, Montana) miner and storekeeper Nelson Story drove the first herd of Texas Longhorns (600 head of cattle) from Fort Worth Texas through Wyoming to the Gallatin Valley in Montana in 1866. The use of Wyoming was fortuitous for Story because of the large amounts of grass in the region was not populated nor was it regulated.[60] Whomever credit is due regarding being the first to ranch in Wyoming; it is a fact that once the Transcontinental Railroad arrived in Wyoming, ranching became a small, but very lucrative business.

Colorado miner John Wesley Iliff whom had traveled from Ohio to Colorado in 1859 in search of riches would exchange his mining dreams for the retail business and opened a market in Denver. The shop owner would barter his groceries, clothing, and supplies for livestock from immigrants arriving to Colorado. Iliff would then rest his newly acquired cattle along the South Platte River in northeastern Colorado resembling the beef enterprise of Alexander Majors at Fort Laramie. By 1868, Iliff would again imitate another cattle enterprise; this time it would be the Creighton's cattle production traveling alongside construction crews of the Union Pacific Western Telegraph Line. Iliff was contracted to supply beef to the Union Pacific Railroad construction crews. Thus, to fulfill his order with the Union Pacific, Iliff would operate a large ranch just south of Cheyenne and smaller outfits west, all following construction crews as they progressed their way across Wyoming.[61] Following Iliff's lead, the Creighton brothers in conjunction with Charley Hutton would build a ranch on the Laramie Plains housing 3,000 Texas cattle.[62] The cattlemen of the late 1860s witnessed the demand for beef in the east and west to very profitable.

Professor Samuel Western notes that if there was an accidental angle to Wyoming's beef boom, it was its geography. For example, the fact that railroad surveyors decided to route the Union Pacific through Cheyenne, not Denver, was very influential in establishing the Wyoming cattle industry. Western would further explain that the American cattle industry was divided by the Civil War. During the conflict, the demand for beef in the East and the Midwest increased, while the Confederacy was separated from her largest beef producing state (Texas) in 1863 thanks to Union control of the Mississippi River and thus southern consumption decreased. Because of the limited consumption of Texas cattle, the herds of the Lone Star State would see a surplus balloon. Ergo, the price of Texas bread cattle would plummet. By 1865, a steer sold in Massachusetts would go for $85.00 per head, while in Texas the going rate was only $9.46.[63]

The *Cheyenne Leader* proclaimed on May, 1, 1867, that grass in Wyoming was abundant, good water was everywhere, and a cattle operator might incur a hit of two to three percent in winter losses which would still be cheaper than buying hay for feed.[64] Rancher John Clay concurred with N.A. Baker regarding the benefits of range stock. The Wyoming Cattleman Clay would state that it cost roughly $1.50 to raise a range steer and at the point of sale in a noncompetitive market the bovine would sell for $23.00. During peak times, cattle would sell for $60.00 per head.[65] Current and new investors would begin to push for more cattle in Wyoming. By May of 1870, wholesale prices for cattle reached $6.47 per hundredweight (an 850-pound steer would sell for $55). Cattle ventures by the Lathrams, Iliffs, Charley Hutton, Joseph Carey, and F.E. Warren established the Wyoming Stock Growers Association in 1872 and the group was centered in Cheyenne.[66] In the late 1870s and 1880s the members of this association would rise to become a very powerful political faction, most notably Carey and Warren. Joseph Carey would become the U.S. District Attorney for Wyoming and soon thereafter the U.S. Associate Justice to the Supreme Court of Wyoming. Warren would serve two none consecutive terms as Wyoming Territorial governor. Authors Samuel Western and T.A. Larson differ greatly regarding the number of cattle found in Wyoming in 1870 with Western reporting a head count of 60,000 near Cheyenne[67] and Larson offering that the assessment roll of the Wyoming Territory in 1870 listed 8,143 cattle living the region.[68]

Nevertheless, the foundation of exponential growth of ranching in Wyoming was put into play between 1868-1870; other pasturage endeavors however would not be enlisted with the same fervor.

The sheep herding industry will play a major role with the decline of Wyoming's cattle industry in the 1890s; however, from 1868-1870 the demand for sheep was very low. High demand for wool (uniforms, blankets, etc.) during the Civil War led to high prices and encouraged sheep production worldwide. The global supply of wool increased more than a third between 1860-1870 with the largest margins of increase coming early within the decade. As reported by Chester Whitney Wright author of *Wool Growing and the Tariff* the demand for wool plummeted and prices crashed during the latter half of the same ten-year period. According to the same report, sheep production after the war, between 1867-1871, fell by 75 percent in the Mid-Atlantic States and 25 percent nationwide. This would mean Shepherds earning money within the sheep business had to be low-cost producers of wool products. Hence, public grasslands in the west proved to be very suitable.[69] As it was documented by The 1862 Report of the Commission of Agriculture in the United States estimated that the "cost of keeping sheep was only half as great in the West as in the East".[70] Although the attraction of environment was high for possible sheep growing ventures, the demand for mutton by 1870 was simply not present. Thomas Durbin of Cheyenne introduced the first sheep in Wyoming in 1870. That year he and his brother trailed 800 sheep from New Mexico through Colorado to the vicinity of Cheyenne, mainly for slaughter and some for grazing. In 1871 they brought in 1,500 more.[71] This small enterprise would peril in comparison to the large sheep industries of the state in fifteen years, nevertheless, in 1870, sheepherding was not a niche for Wyoming.

By 1870, Wyoming had begun to have two diversified emerging industries to act as a third financial support leg for the region. These two industries interacted with the profits of railroad and government investment very differently. The first being coal, which would guide and then propel the railroad and government to invest in the Wyoming Basin. The second being ranching, which would arrive to Wyoming as per the needs of railroad and government ventures in the west. The two start-up industries, one lead while the other followed national expansion investment had cemented their place within Wyoming's economic theatre. During the next thirty years, coal and cattle would develop and conflict with one another over the thrown of leading economic power in Wyoming.

Chapter 3:

Coal and Cattle Compete 1870-1885

Between the years of 1868-1870 an intersection consilience of significance interests altered the trajectory of economic development in the Wyoming Territory. The two largest economic forces within the region, the federal government and the railroad, had taken a new local partner in the form of the ranching industry to establish the Wyoming Territory. The cattle industry was the local economic leg for national investors sink temporary capital into Wyoming and then freight the spoils out of the west at a far greater rate than the previous plundering of mining.[1] After the confirmation of territorial status, the two primary collaborators would begin to diverge from one another thus leaving a void in governmental and market leadership within Wyoming, hence allowing the emergence of the Wyoming Stockmen's Association to assume a monetary profitable alpha position within the government of the Territory. Because the early spoils of the entente did not permanently bind all three parties, over the next 15 years (1870-1885) the alliance would fracture and only the cattlemen would fully enjoy the fruits of the labor establishing the Wyoming Territory.

The coal industry would steadily earn profit for the railroad despite the national struggles of the Union Pacific Corporation. Extraction would operate under the control of the railroads and while its production was relatively high and consistent, coal's output would not be poured back into Wyoming's coffers, which was typical of colonial economies engulfed within extractive industries. Because of industries such as the railroad and coal mining, newly developed population centers called for an intensified focus on needs such as representation and tribunals to be addressed and for the advancement of other normalcies of eastern urban life.[2] Within Wyoming specifically, the districting of Laramie County was a direct result of Union Pacific hubs Cheyenne and Laramie and the second county, Carter, because of gold mining at South Pass City.[3]

On the other hand, the cattle industry did aggressively expand via its political connections in attempts to become the third major economic leg of the Wyoming Basin and in the process became the economic leader of the Territory for a time, albeit the chalice held by the railroads (coal) would have to be taken by the Cattlemen. Given the absence of meaningful direction from the territorial government or from Washington, D. C., and the lack of financial benefit for the territory from the coal industry, only the evolving cattle industry had a vested interest in developing the territory for long-term benefit.

Thomas Wardell in 1868 negotiated and received leases from the Union Pacific to mine for coal on land granted to the railroad by arranging to sell the coal to the railroad on a 15-year sliding scale.[4] As the ink on the leases dried, Wardell would travel to Carbon, Wyoming and commence his mining endeavors. Wardell would punch into two different coal seams in 1868 and opened Mines Number One and Number Three, while John Creighton of Omaha dug straight into another exposed seam which would be Mine Number Two at Carbon. Creighton had already amassed a fortune for himself and the railroad for constructing telegraph lines for the Union Pacific in the 1850s. Moreover, Creighton in 1868 carried several mine construction contracts for Wardell's Wyoming

Coal and Mining Company and within Mine Number Two at Carbon.[5] While Creighton and the railroad would oversee construction of the mines and the transportation of goods to and from, the organization and execution of specific mining happenings was originally left to Wardell.

Both Wardell's and Creighton's mines were dug into exposed seams of coal that cropped out of the ground. The miners followed the seams for a couple hundred feet and dug a pit around the vein until the deposit turned downward away from the surface and plunged further into the earth. After the extraction, the coal was loaded into coal cars to be hauled by mules up the slopes of the new pit mine one heap at a time. After exiting the pit, two or three of the cars were secured together and towed to the railroad depot.[6] Wardell quickly discovered in Carbon that to extract the largest amount of coal, mine shafts had to be opened, tipples constructed to load the coal onto waiting trains, and stream plants were needed to hoist the coal out of the mines. Moreover, men were needed too mine, schlep, haul the black rock to the surface, load the coal onto trains, and repair any and all the equipment used. To meet the needs of the miners an infrastructure of service workers was slowly put into place, which included shopkeepers, butchers, bakers, saloonkeepers, bankers, laundresses, in addition to the construction of buildings, homes, post offices and telegraph facilities.[7] At Carbon, the idea of an entirely enveloped company owned mining town for the Union Pacific was achieved. While Wardell had grand economic plans for himself, for a company town to survive (regardless of who operates the town) infrastructure and services were needed. As the town's local coal mining operations continued to grow, simultaneously so too did the service industry. The extraction and service industries would work in conjunction with one another. Once a new mine opened, more service opportunities would be created.[8]

Between 1868-1905, the thriving, expanding town, of Carbon began to build coal shoots above and mine shaft roots below the ground. Two miles north of Mine Number Two were the Number Four and Number Five mines. The fourth proved to be a failure, while Number Five encountered no faults. Eventually, some fifty buildings would emerge around the Number Six Mine, including log cabins, stores, saloons, boarding houses, and office buildings.[9] Carbon in her heyday fostered some of the then richest producing coalmines in southern Wyoming. After taking 6,560 tons of coal from the earth during her first year of operation, the miners of Carbon in 1869 took five times that amount. Subsequently thereafter, the coal yield for the next twenty years continued to increase with the opening of new mines.[10] Wardell's company, The Wyoming Coal and Mining firm, witnessed quick and unparalleled success in southern Wyoming. Due to their early success, the coal company became eager to expand its operations and the railroad was pleased with the rapid level of success found at Carbon. Ergo, with the support of the Union Pacific, The Wyoming Coal and Mining Company began to search west of Carbon for additional mining opportunities.

While operating the mines at Carbon, Thomas Wardell viewed branching out to other Wyoming coal mining opportunities as a very plausible and profitable adventure. Anxious to expand, Wardell sent his brother, Charles, and William Mellor west of Carbon to locate possible mine locations. The duo prospected heavily within the vicinity of Black Buttes and Hallsville, with limited excursions at Point of Rocks, Wyoming. However, their efforts were met with very little success. Not wanting to return to Carbon busted, the two speculators pushed further west. Near the future home of the Rock Springs railway station, the team found a patch of barren waste earth with outcroppings of coal that could be traced for miles. The men sent joyous word back to Carbon of their discovery. Accordingly, Thomas Wardell quickly reacted to the news from the west and brought in men from Missouri to embark about opening the Number One Mine at the new camp west of Carbon. They would call the new camp Rock Spring (The "s" was not added until years later). Union Pacific records offered that the Rock Spring camp produced 365 tons of coal its first year. The Number One Mine came in as the substantial producer in 1871 thanks to its output and high quality of coal. The camp population would grow quickly and the briefly classified man camp would evolve into a village that relied on its quality and quantity of coal.[11] The population growth of the village teamed with the Union Pacific and high quality coal would extinguish any other mining rivals arriving to or currently residing in the area.

During Wardell's expansion, the brothers Blair, Archibald and Duncan, who hailed from Scotland and traveled to the western United States to opportunistically, engage in gold mining and trapping within northern Wyoming. In 1868, they conceived the idea of relocating permanently to the Green River Valley Region because of its logical stop for the stagecoach and railroad. After completing their first test mine with success, the brothers erected a three-room building near the mine to provide for their living quarters, a mine office, a store and a restaurant. The brother's camp took their namesake and was entitled Blairstown. During 1869, they employed several men who made homes for themselves and their families, first in tents or dugouts on the hillsides near Blair Mine Number One, which was some distance further west from Rock Spring.

Several small cattle ranches in the area furnished meat and antelope abounded on the prairie.[12] Blairstown was moderately successful as a start-up mining town; it would quickly lose steam against the expansion of Wardell backed by the Union Pacific.

The railroad would arrive last to Carter (Sweetwater) County Wyoming, but with it came the real impetus for coal mining in the region, the money made from coal extraction.[13] Due to the coal quality of the Number One Mine and the similar production levels from the Number Two Mine which was opened by George L. Young, the post office at Blairstown was moved to Wardell's newly stone constructed mine office. The number of residents increased at Rock Spring to the point that when the railroad neared Carter County, it diverged from its original plan for a station at the proposed Blairstown site and moved to be the station at Rock Spring. Over the next six years, miners would leave Blairstown and move to Rock Spring. Wardell's town by 1875 stood at holding 1,000 residents.[14] The residents of Rock Spring witnessed their town grow because of the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company, so to did the Union Pacific regarding their local business endeavors, whom had assumed that the expansion and exploitation of the natural wealth of southern Wyoming would be reaped by the railroad company and not the miners.

With the leadership of Thomas Wardell, the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company originally opened publically in 1868 on the stock market with a subscribed 3,260 shares. By April 1, 1869, the company was capitalized at half a million dollars or 5,000 shares and the directors of the Union Pacific held 90 percent of the outstanding stock. The Union Pacific intended for the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company to interact with the railroad's coal contracts similarly as the Crédit Mobilier had with the railroad's construction contacts.[15] While the Crédit Mobilier earned large sums of money for the Union Pacific and its officials, the decision to draft a contract with Wardell was ill advised by the Union Pacific. The principal error for the Union Pacific regarding the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company was the difference of design between the word choice that crafted the funding for the Crédit Mobilier and the Wyoming Coal and Mining contracts.

The Crédit Mobilier was a construction company created from the loan and contract firm Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency to build the Union Pacific Railroad via construction contracts funded by the government. The construction company using the government's funding would then buy Union Pacific stocks and bonds at par value, thus driving the cost and ultimately the value of the company's stock up. With stock and bond prices elevated, the construction company owners would then sell their Union Pacific bonds on the open market to make huge profits.[16] On the contrary, The Wyoming Coal and Mining contract differed because only 10 percent of coal dividends would be forwarded back to the railroad (for possible purchase of railroad stock) and the rest would be directly sent to the coal company stakeholders whom were mostly comprised of Union Pacific men. Furthermore, the money flowing into the Wyoming Coal Company was from personal stock procurement and coal sale purchases as opposed to government investments as was the case for the Crédit Mobilier. Due to the intimate extension of Wyoming Coal's personal investor's purchase of mining stocks, depositor benefits was of the upmost importance, rather than the use of government money to increase the value of the railroad via the temporary construction company. Hence, Wyoming Coal's earnings would be paid to the Union Pacific men and not the railroad company.

The design of each contract was a reflection of the men whom drafted their respected arrangements. Thomas Wardell, the architect of the railroad coal mining contracts, was a successful Missouri miner whom traveled to southwestern Wyoming to pursue his coal mining fortune. On the other hand, Oakes Ames became involved with the Union Pacific and Crédit Mobilier as a New England investor from the Oliver Ames and Sons firm which amassed its fortune by manufacturing shovels and was credited as being the primary author of the Crédit Mobilier contracts. The United States Congressman representing the Second District of Massachusetts, Oakes along with his brother Oliver Ames who was the senior partner of the investment firm and President of the Union Pacific, pursued the implementation of the construction contracts to be directly funded by the American government which would then be used to line the pockets of Union Pacific investors.[17]

Congressman Ames was also credited with the distribution of construction company stocks to other United States congressmen.[18] Due to the federal government's funding portions of the railroad's construction, the costs were forwarded on to the congress. The legislature would then continue to fund monies to the Crédit Mobilier, which in turn would send the funds to the Union Pacific and ultimately conclude in the hands of investors of the Union Pacific. The funding model difference between the Crédit Mobilier and the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company was the structural difference between the companies, which were created for the same purpose although the outcomes of the short-lived financial success of construction fraud versus the railroad's constant struggles with Wardell's coal mining company.

The investment monies flowing into the Crédit Mobilier originated within the American Congress, whereas the capital headed to the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company came from private investors. Due to the differing genesis of investments, the stockowners of Wyoming Coal were critically concerned with the return of their investments because the monetary return was dependent on the success of the actual mining venture. Conversely, Crédit Mobilier shareholders were dependent on Ames and the Congress, not the success of the construction company or the railroad. The Union Pacific would only receive ten percent of the profits reaped from the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company contracts, whereas the railroad would receive all of the monies from the government's construction contracts. Nevertheless, the Union Pacific began to see a difficult situation brewing because Wyoming Coal was selling at a very high mark-up to the railroad and to other companies while it received a rebate to do so via the Union Pacific. Ultimately, Wardell's continued growth and productivity spelled a large profit potential loss for the Union Pacific.[19]

By 1870, the railroad felt that the costs it was paying were far too high and the ten percent return was not high enough considering the cost of mining coal was roughly $2.00 per ton and Wyoming Coal received a huge profit from the sale because the company's contract price was selling coal at $3.50 a ton, a whopping 75% profit. Furthermore, the contract price did not include the other perks of Wardell's contract, which comprised of a reduced rate on coal shipments and other mining goods to non-Union Pacific buyers.[20] On behalf of the railroad, an absurd situation had arisen. The Union Pacific was paying excessive prices for coal pulled from land granted to the railroad from a company it was supposed to own, and bore all the financial risks for a business over which it had no control. Unlike the Ames brothers' venture, which funneled money from the government, Wyoming Coal would funnel money from the Union Pacific to its mining investors.[21] As a Wyoming regional monopoly, the Union Pacific had replaced the government as the targeted financial conglomerate that was being siphoned and mimicked the bureaucratic tendencies of the east.[22]

The Union Pacific board attempted twice to annul the Wyoming Coal contracts and create a new organization by 1872. However, the board failed to come to terms with Wardell for his interest. Late in the same year, the board canceled the rebate provision of the original coal contract, but left the total reorganization of the contract in the hands of the Union Pacific Executive Committee due to their shareholding status with the railroad and Wyoming Coal. A glaring problem would arise by leaving the coal situation to the Executive Committee. The committee would be preoccupied by congressional hearings pertaining to the construction fraud of the Crédit Mobilier. The inner workings of the proxy market had been aired to the public by the New York Sun newspaper and the hearings were scheduled for early 1873.[23] Due to the congressional entanglement of the Union Pacific Executive Committee, any actions against Wyoming Coal and Mining would be temporarily postponed.

Late in the year of 1873 at the December Executive Board meeting, the committee took partial action against Wyoming Coal by voting to pause any further payments to Wardell until a settlement between the two companies could be reached. The board did offer good faith to continue working solely with Wardell by voting 5-4 against reopening Union Pacific coal lands for lease by other outside parties. Thomas Wardell would litigate against the board's decision to no avail throughout 1874.[24] During the brief two years of 1873-1874, Union Pacific stock plummeted due to the Crédit Mobilier scandal and subsequent congressional hearings. The railroad did not have a chip to bargain with against Wardell and the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company. Both sides were at a stand still regarding the situation. Wardell could not cease his operations because of the company's other buyers and the good will offered by the Union Pacific. The railroad was not going to pay Wardell for his services due to their perceived uneven balance of income and need for greater investment monies due to their plummeting stock prices and the stalemate was about to be ended by the railroad.

To cure the ills of the railroad, the executive committee would turn to one of their own investors for the solution. Wall Street broker and railroad man Jay Gould did have a possible solution to the contract strife between the Union Pacific and the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company. As the former president of the Erie Railroad (The Erie Railroad Company Board voted Gould out in 1872), Gould had earned his fortune buying large amounts of low cost railroad stock and thus raising the value of the company due to the newly limited availability of shares for public purchase and thus producing a proxy market for limited specific shares.[25] After being ousted from Erie, Gould implemented his system of share purchase of Union Pacific stock during the financial Panic of 1873 and the Crédit Mobilier scandal hearings. Gould would rise quickly within the Union Pacific through his investment strategy. The New York Financier would come to own 200,000 of the 367,000 available Union Pacific shares.[26] In 1874, the Union Pacific held an election for the director's position of the executive board committee and Gould was elected (he was the controlling owner of the Union Pacific). The day after the election, Gould in conjunction with the opinion of the Union Pacific General Attorney Andrew Poppelton, whom believed that the Wyoming Coal and Mining contract was invalid, urged the Executive Committee to repudiate the contract and seize the mines with the intention of operating them as the company's property. Wardell was astonished at the actions of the railroad and could not repel Gould. Rather, Wardell would take his case to the courts and ultimately lose and never regain control of the mines.[27] With Wardell out of the mining picture, the Union Pacific was able to reorganize southern Wyoming's coal mining operations to offer a better profit for the struggling railroad.

The action of the Executive Board to usurp control of Wyoming Coal and Mining away from Wardell enhanced the financial position of the Union Pacific. The coal the railroad was paying for was simply too high priced, considering the Union Pacific owned it. Wardell had been hired to extract the coal for the railroad, not to exploit the landowner. Gould regarded coal as the most valuable resource owned by the railroad and had no intention of sharing it with outsiders. Gould would offer "The only thing I have any solicitude about is the coal business.... it needs to be developed to its fullest extent and I will take hold of this department and get the mining and selling of the coal upon the most economical and efficient basis".[28] The Union Pacific mining organization struggled initially after the Executive Committee's actions, the production was low, costs were high, and labor problems abounded. Also, during its construction, the Union Pacific had incurred a huge amount of debt and thus operating capital was scarce, which would mean maintenance and expansion of the railroad would be limited. To reduce debt and increase revenue, the Union Pacific had to generate more traffic along its own line and cut costs. Gould felt coal could meet the criteria of both requirements needed to improve the financial standing of the Union Pacific.[29]

Jay Gould's first vision for the Wyoming Coal and Mining Company was to drive down the costs of the mining operation. In 1874, the company's production costs averaged roughly $2.13 a ton. The Director of the Board wanted to lower the cost to $1.30 a ton by 1875. To do this, Gould wanted to replicate his Blossburg, Pennsylvania bituminous mines that produced coal at a cost of $1.25 per ton.[30] Mine production would be the first goal of Gould and the second would be labor relations at the seven mines owned by the Union Pacific at Rock Springs, Carbon, and Almy.

The now united Union Pacific mining ventures reorganized southwestern Wyoming to produce profits for the corporation. The Wyoming Coal and Mining Company was renamed as the Union Pacific Coal Company and employed advanced mining techniques that would replace the straight quarry mining previously established at the small mining claims of Wardell. Earlier efforts would entail locating a vein and then dig a 20-30 foot pit around the exposed coal. The coal would then be removed and transported out in cars. Emerged coal bed outcroppings that ran parallel with the ground and emerged on a bank or cliff face would require a quarry entry driven directly into the exposed seam creating a drift mine. A slopping mine technique would be used if the coal seam was below ground at a distance of less than 100 hundred feet. The Union Pacific Coal Company would alter Sweetwater mining by teaming surface quarry mining with underground shaft mining.[31]

Instead of moving away from supposed cashed surface mines, miners of the Union Pacific Coal Company would plunge further into the earth following seams of coal. The resources available (lumber, tools, machinery, etc.) to the miners of the Union Pacific Coal Company dwarfed the resources of the pseudo independent Wyoming Coal and Mining Company due to the direct shipping and national reach of the Union Pacific, thus allowing more complex mining activities to be more feasible to execute. Ergo, after an underground seam of coal was reached, coalmine operators would determine if a room-and-pillar or long wall method of extraction was to be used. The room-and-pillar method would leave large columns of the coal seam intact to serve as supports for the mineshaft. Typically, a room-and-pillar dig would need two mines measuring at a width of eight feet and a height of five to eight feet. The mines would have parallel entries, which were vital to maintaining good airflow into the mine. Between the two entryways, pillars of coal ranging from twenty to fifty feet long were left intact to support the shaft. One shaft was designated as an entrance (air intake) into the mine and the other would be the haul away exit (air exhaust). Conversely, the long wall method involved removing all the coal and using wooden props, stone, and rubble to build "pack walls" that would support the undermined areas. While in the mines, the miners would extract the coal from what was called a room.[32]

Once the miner was at his work place or room, the day would always begin by checking the roof for possible cave-in by tapping it with his pickaxe handle or stick. After which, the miner would lie on his side and undercut the exposed coal seam with a pickaxe. He would pick into the bottom of the seam as far as he could reach. After the undercut was complete, the miner would prepare to blast the coal away from the shaft face. To blast, the miner would drill holes into the rock face spaced several feet apart and then insert twelve inch pasted rolls of gunpowder and brown paper using a long needle to push them into the bored holes. Once the charges were in place, the opening of the hole would be capped with coal dust or a powder dummy (cloth bag of sand) to force the charge's blast down or outward into the rock and not out of the hole. Once the miner blasted the coal, it would fall into the undercut area in clumps and the miner would load the lumps into ore cars that would be pulled to the surface by animals and later machinery on rail tracks. The coal tonnage removed from the mine is what paid the miners. Each cart coming to the surface would have the miner's metal identification tag on it to identify which miner was transferring coal to the surface to be weighed by the weight man.[33] After the coal was weighed and measured, the weight man would forward the amount of money to be owed to the miner. The Union Pacific pushed every angle to free up as much capital as possible to promote her sagging stock prices, which included life in the coal towns and the purchasing of services and perishable goods.

Just as Jay Gould seized the mines, the Union Pacific also commandeered the mercantile businesses of Thomas Wardell in Carbon and Rock Springs. The Beckwith-Quinn Concern (located in Evanston) was awarded the management of the Union Pacific Company Store(s) for the railroad in 1875. The now three company stores would also agree to handle the mineworkers' pay rolls. The monthly pay would arrive by train in gold and silver coins and then be piled with the store's fresh shipment of canned goods on an eight-foot long table at the rear of the retailer. The stores would handle a quarter of a million dollars monthly with a payroll between $150,000 and $200,000 with the stock of the mercantile being valued at roughly $100,000. On each monthly payday the miners would crowd into the company store before they journeyed to the saloons or took money home to their wives.[34] The centralized location of the payroll department teamed with the company store was an attempt by the Union Pacific to suck as much money back from the miners as possible. The complete establishment of company pay at the company store would almost entrench Carter county towns as company towns ultimately controlled by the Union Pacific.

Determined to turn the Union Pacific Coal Company into a revenue-making venture, Chairman Gould was resolute to convert southwestern Wyoming towns into fully monopolized company towns. What the Union Pacific wanted was to build such a large local trade that they could keep the mines and railroad's stock busy at the same time. The Union Pacific would be able to control the prices for mining equipment that miners had to purchase, food, and although housing could be built around Almy, company housing was also available. The endgame was to monopolize the coal trade and drive all other competitors out with discriminating freight rates on the railroad.[35] The railroad reasoned that consolidation of the mining district's properties to a few firms would make the region and by defacto the Union Pacific the only competition in Wyoming, which was similar to the copper industry of Butte, Montana.[36] While the mining processes were organized, the payment was systematic, and the shipment of goods was all controlled by the Union Pacific, Jay Gould felt very strongly that one more aspect of the Union Pacific Coal Company had to be addressed, the workers.

The Union Pacific wanted to reduce the cost of mining to $1.30 per ton, albeit the chief competition, The Central Pacific was still ahead in that race. The Rocky Mountain Coal Company near Evanston, which was owned by the Central Pacific paid only seventy-five cents per ton and could stockpile as much coal as it mined, while the miners at neighboring Almy would not permit the Union Pacific to stockpile coal ahead of present needs. One fact accounted for the difference between the two coal companies; Rocky Mountain employed Chinese Miners and Almy hired Caucasian workers exclusively. The hiring of Chinese miners would allow the Central to stockpile coal at a cheaper rate due to discriminatory pay practices and if demand for coal was low, the stockpiled reserves would be sold and the Chinese miners were laid off. While the practice was unethical regarding continued employment, the Central Pacific did save money in the process, which was the goal of Gould and the Union Pacific. Gould would comment that until the Union Pacific mastered its questions of labor, the railroad's coal business would never work to satisfactory with complete efficiency.[37]

Union Pacific officials concerned with limiting production costs in 1875 elected to reduce the work rate paid to miners by one-fifth and maintain the current sale price of coal and goods sold at company stores. Sweetwater miners were not pleased with the company's squeeze on both ends of the payroll and went on strike.[38] Upon hearing the news of the miners strike, Gould quickly urged that the white Wyoming miners be replaced with Chinese workers. From the labor maneuvering, the Union Pacific was able to reduce the Almy mining costs to $1.25 a ton and saved the railroad $40,000. The railroad pushed to crush the strike by whipping up public sentiment against the protesting miners and recruited the help of Governor John M. Thayer who sent troops to protect the company's property.[39] In all, the hiring of Chinese miners at $32.50 a month as opposed to the Caucasian miners wage of $52 a month was a measure that those within the Union Pacific Corporation smiled upon from its productivity and cost saving abilities. However, the Board of Immigration for the Territory of Wyoming felt differently on the topic of local coalmines being taken over by the Union Pacific. The board would offer an official statement concluding that the coal mining industry had recovered from a serve blow at the hands of the railroad company (fraud, scandal hearings, and the lost boom at

Cheyenne), whose policy at present was to bribe all coal out of the market, except that from which was taken from the company's mines. The price of coal production had been reduced while the market sale was not and as a natural result some of the best mines in the territory are closed and lying idle, while hundreds of men had been thrown out of employment.[40] Over the next eight years the Union Pacific Coal Company would plunge into a long series of miner strikes, and the general operation of the corporation would be to hire more Chinese strikebreakers. During the next decade the coal industry would earn large sums of money for the railroad, however while under the thumb of the Union Pacific, the coal industry would lose ground to the ranching industry regarding the power structure in Wyoming.

Just as coal was located and primarily controlled by the Union Pacific in Southwestern Wyoming, ranching also began in the same region, attracting little notice at first because of its small scale. But, after the exodus from Cheyenne and with railroad construction moving further west, the only business was the nascent cattle industry. From 1870 to 1885 the cattle industry grew by leaps and bounds and became a fashionable fad. Rich men's sons, college and university graduates, foreign investors from France, England and Scotland would pile their money into the business. The Wyoming Stock Growers Association, the first association of its kind ever formed in the area, represented the capitalization of over one hundred million dollars when Wyoming was just emerging from the wilderness.[41] The Stock Growers Association would grow via political motives, appointments, and elections that would uphold the priorities of Wyoming citizens concerning stability temporarily creating economic stability.[42] Due to the scandals and unfavorable light cast upon the Union Pacific, the stockmen would fill the voids made by the railroad and maneuver their industry into the forefront of the local market place and Wyoming politics.

The Wyoming Stock Growers Association was created among the cattlemen of the southern portion of the region with the intention to standardize and organize the cattle industry. Facing little economic competition and enjoying nearly monopoly conditions, the coterie quickly grew into a political force that was branded as the defacto territorial government.[43] Initially Wyoming was simply a thoroughfare for cattle, with–herds moving through Wyoming headed towards Montana, Oregon, Texas, or following the routes of railroad construction. The Wyoming Stock Growers Association credits the first permanent range-herd of Wyoming to W.G. Bullock and B.B. Mills near Fort Laramie in 1868.[44] Truly though, the growth of a domestic Wyoming cattle industry was a slaw. In Albany County, by 1870, there were five live stock firms with a total of 6,618 cattle valued at $98,390. It was estimated by Maurice Frink that nearly 60,000 head of cattle were within a 100-mile radius of Cheyenne. It should not be over looked that within Frink's defined 100-mile radius would include the large cattle enterprises of the Creighton brothers of western Nebraska, the operations of J.W. Iliff in Northern Colorado, and all of Albany County, Wyoming.[45] The locations of Cheyenne and Laramie were perfect spots to centralize the cattle industry. Both resided along the railroad, be the last major population centers before entering Native American lands, and the grass ranges surrounded both created a treasure-trove of opportunities for cattle operators to occupy the financial void left by the railroad in Cheyenne by establishing a productive hinterland surrounding Cheyenne and Laramie with the strategic use of the area's natural advantages.[46]

By early 1871, the Wyoming ranching industry and cattle population had expanded sufficiently to require organization to settle disputes surrounding land use and ownership, water rights, and cattle rustling ruminated throughout the Territory. The *Laramie Daily Sentinel* announced that stock growers of Albany County would hold a meeting for the purpose of organization in Laramie on the 15th of April. At that meeting, Luther Fillmore would preside and Frank Walcott acted as secretary. Among the other organizers of the event were Judge J.W. Kingman, Ora Haley, George Fox, Hiram Latham, Charles Hutton, and Thomas Alsop. The fellowship adopted the name of The Wyoming Stock and Wool Growers Society and declared its purpose as a combined effort to attain certain objects including large-scale purchase of stock and driving down costs than can be done by a single person. The association also wanted to command influence in securing cheap rates of freight, and other similar advantages. They pledged to work together for the purpose of improving the local breed of cattle, horses, and sheep, by the importation of stock in company, which would benefit all members and of the organize for the mutual protection of its members against depredations upon livestock[47] Briefly thereafter, the organization changed its name to the Wyoming Stock Graziers Association and it functioned solely throughout 1871. The first president was the first Wyoming Territorial Governor John A. Campbell. The Vice Presidents were Thomas Alsop of Albany County, J.W. Iliff of Laramie County, E. Hunt of Carbon County, L.I. Field of Sweetwater County, and W.A. Carter of Uinta County. Luther Fillmore would serve as the treasurer and Latham the secretary.[48] The obtainment of Governor Campbell's services to the Association was the first signal that the Graziers had a plan for

Wyoming and by securing a high-ranking official the group would be able to bend the ear of Wyoming politicians.

It appeared that Governor Campbell's membership to the Graziers Association was his attempt to pursue the objectives of President Ulysses S. Grant, whom appointed Campbell in 1868 and queried the possible survival of Wyoming due to the region's inability to attract farmers, which was a critical development for a new territory.[49] Grant was of the mindset that the characteristics of farming communities including more families, higher birth rates, and relatively permanent colonization tendencies would offer greater stability than railroad and mining communities which were normally transient, heavily male populated, and volatile.[50]

The Ohioan Campbell served in the Union Army during the Civil War, working on the staff of Major General John M. Schofield and continued briefly during Reconstruction working on the formation of senatorial and representative districts in Virginia just prior to his appointment. During his first assembly address to the Wyoming Territorial Government, Campbell would offer that Wyoming was created to enable the success of the railroad. Furthermore, he felt it was the duty of the local government to assist with the objectives established by the American Legislature to ensure that the prosperity of the proprietors and builders of the road come to fruition. The Territorial Governor would further state that "it would seem superfluous to say anything in relation to our advantages as a stock growing country, or wisdom and propriety of passing such laws as will give protection to herds and flocks".[51] Campbell was in support of the railroad in 1869, but was also invested in the possibilities of livestock in Wyoming. Campbell's tone of endorsement for the railroad would also waiver after the financial crash of Cheyenne, which would also move to a beat drummed by the President of the United States.

Campbell, like Grant, believed in development, although Grant considered political favor to rest with the homesteader and not corporations. Moreover, Grant attested to the growth and prosperity of the new states and territories within the Union to the legislature, which invited the tiller of the soil to secure a permanent home on terms within the reach of all. Due to the arid climate of Wyoming and the 1869 Territorial Law that offered all cattle of any stock could be housed, or fodder during the winter in Wyoming, flung the doors of the Territory open for cattlemen to come and compete nationally without their plows. Being the supportive agriculturalist, the President understood the intentions of the railroad and its speculators to exploit the region's iron and coal reserves and thus signed legislature blocking a Union Pacific application for more government assistance by way of land grants and bonds for the construction of a branch railroad line in 1871.[52] The President's actions trickled down to the Governor's office and Campbell understood that with the railroad pulling out of Cheyenne, coupled with the President's stance against corporations and support of agriculture, the Wyoming public servant would have to side with the Graziers because the Union Pacific would not permanently create a financial institution that would benefit Wyoming, nor withstand a possible dissolving of the territory. Emphasizing farming would not be an answer for the territory; rather, Campbell did see an opportunity for ranching to procure a permanent place for Wyoming by the manipulation of local capital and the expertise of its operators.[53]

Now in full support of ranching in November of 1871, the Governor and President of the Graziers Association called a joint session meeting of the stock-growers and Territorial Legislature to be held in the halls of the Wyoming House of Representatives. After several addresses concerning the livestock industry and it's importance to Wyoming, the Association adjourned its meeting and the legislatures passed a bill which defined the phrase "stock-grower" as to mean "every person who shall keep neat cattle, horses, mules, sheep or goats for their growth or increase". It also offered for the protection of stock in the Wyoming Territory and to punish certain offenses against range animals.[54] After 1871, the Graziers association never reconvened, the first stockmen's group had accomplished its goal to insert itself into Wyoming politics and gain alliances that would strengthen ranching's influence. The Graziers also planted the seed of power thanks too the official political recognition from the Territorial government. They also were able to gain some influence to push portions of legislation through a government that had previously solely supported the railroad. A rift had begun to grow between Wyoming's two primary financial institutions (government and railroad) and the Graziers became eager to establish their own place in Wyoming's financial theatre.

The election of Campbell as President of the Graziers Association is a very important note in Wyoming History, it inaugurated a government that created legislative districts that, in the long run, broke the power of the Union Pacific in Wyoming politics and lessened its role in economics. The local government was not going to distribute resources; rather it divided the previously consolidated power of mining endeavors and was going to manage the Territory's resources for the optimal growth of Wyoming.[55] While the vast majority of Wyoming's non-Native American population lived within the railroad towns along the Union Pacific, it was the responsibility of Governor Campbell and the Territorial Government to draw legislative districts and establish elections. The legislature divided the territory into five counties surrounding and dividing the company towns of Cheyenne (Laramie County), Laramie (Albany County), Rawlins (Carbon County), Rock Springs and Green River City (Carter soon to be Sweetwater County), and Bear River City later Evanston (Uinta County). Because the governor was also President of the Graziers Association, the districting of lands that enveloped the company towns would prevent the largest nongovernment landowner in the territory from expanding and would also firmly establish ranching as a focus for the new government as well as become a political threat to the railroad.[56]

Similar to other new pieces of legislation, problems soon arose with the stock laws of 1871. The ability of the government to enforce the new stock law passed was still viewed to be inadequate, especially concerning cattle rustling. Ranchers in southern Wyoming would attest that three days would be needed for the local authorities to respond to the needs of the rancher. Specifically, it would take a full days ride into town. A second would be consumed with notifying law enforcement and a third for returning to the ranch. Soon thereafter, the cattlemen of Cheyenne and nearby ranges began to hold private meetings in 1872 to discuss these specific local problems. One particular meeting held at the Jim Abbey stable located near Cheyenne included Tom and John Durbin, R.S. Van Tassell, and Charles Coffee. This meeting was the first step in the formation of the Stock Association of Laramie County, which later became the Wyoming Stock Growers Association.[57] Much like its predecessor the Graziers Association, the opening Laramie County Stock Growers Association meeting first settled on their common purpose.

The initial meeting of the Laramie County Stock Growers Association elected its purpose to be political in nature because the bulk of the meeting dealt with current Territorial legislative matters. According to the minutes of William L. Kuykendall, "On the motion of T.A. Kent, it has been resolved to present a bill for the better protection of the stock and stock interests of Laramie County".[58] From a motion from Kuykendall, a committee of five was appointed to draft a law to present to the Third Session of the Wyoming Legislature, with the full support of the Territorial Chief of State. From both instances it is viewed that the stock-growers fully supported the idea of direct political intervention and advisory to the Third Assembly of Wyoming. On a side note, it is very interesting that Judge Kuykendall motioned for direct government intervention by the cattlemen. Two years prior to the cattlemen's association meeting, Kuykendall attempted to lead an expedition north of Cheyenne into Native American Sioux lands to open for settlement and it was President Grant whom ordered the Army to stop the potential civilian lead invasion of central and northern Wyoming. Local Wyoming leaders knew that such a scheme would only work at the acquiescence of the Federal Government.[59] Hence, the stance of the 1871 cattlemen would be to work with the government to achieve the association's goals.

Governor Campbell would deliver the keynote address recommending that the legislature should aid the cattle industry. The Governor reminded the Representatives that it was the duty of the legislature to foster the growing interest of cattlemen by every means of their power and could not afford to permit the industry to be crippled.[60] The Governor's recommendation to side with the ranchers rested on two arguments, 1) ranching was the only industry in Cheyenne that was favorably viewed by President

Grant and the congress especially considering the recent legal entanglements of the Union Pacific's Crédit Mobilier scandal and 2) the United States Congress as well as President Grant strongly favored permanent settlement of new states and territories.[61] Ergo, a big push for cattle industry investments would transform the lower performing Wyoming economy into a legitimate regional enterprise and thus attract more settlers to the area.[62]

In December of 1872, Grant expressed his belief to the House Committee on Territories that Wyoming should be dissolved: "Wyoming would never obtain the necessary population to make it to statehood. The territory is a useless expense and burden to keep up their form of government. Let Colorado, Utah, Montana, and Idaho divide the territory."[63] Campbell persistent to remove the doubt of Wyoming's survival again worked with the stockmen and the Territorial government to attempt to establish a foothold for Wyoming. Based on the recommendations of the Governor, the lawmakers responded by passing a comprehensive act regulating the branding, herding, and care of stock. This law and subsequent amendments provided the basic legal requirements for the handling of stock on the Wyoming Range as per the urging of the stock growers.[64]

The creation of the stock laws of 1871 and 1872 temporarily cemented the presence of ranching as a strong political force within the Wyoming Legislature. The Assembly was propelled to continue the separation of local power away from the Union Pacific, which was favored by the United States Congress and local ranchers. Moreover, the third legislature's passage further empowered members of the Association to act as a governing body within the Territory. Due to the direct communication line established by the interests of the Laramie County Stockmen to Governor Campbell's management of the Territory lead Wyoming to be known briefly as the Cattlemen's Commonwealth. The regulation of cattle offered Stockmen a way to regulate the industry, although indirectly within Wyoming in 1872.

Acting in accordance with its nickname, the 1873 Territorial Assembly would expand upon the bill from the previous year regulating the branding, herding, and care of cattle. The aforementioned law provided for the basic legal requirements to deal with stock theft. The law made the stealing of horses or cattle a felony to be punished by imprisonment in the penitentiary not to exceed ten years and a fine not exceeding $5,000. It made misbranding, defacing or obliterating a brand a felony punishable by a $500 fine or five years imprisonment "or both". The law stated further, any person driving stock through Wyoming was to keep personal cattle from mixing with those of resident stockmen and the drover responsible for driving stock from their accustomed range and against the will of a landowner would be liable to indictment for larceny.[65] The key portion of the 1873 law was the outside stock reference. As noted earlier, during the Territorial period, the Cattlemen's Association was known as the defacto government of the Territory and as such, if an outsider were to enter Wyoming, the drover would need to act accordingly or join the Cattlemen's Association. While the 1871 and 1872 laws established the influence of stockmen and removed power from the Union Pacific; the 1873 law provided insulation for the Cattlemen's Association's power and centered its authority to those residing in Cheyenne. Essentially, the 1873 law was an exclusionary tactic by the Association limiting power to those within Wyoming and members of the Laramie County Stock Growers Association. Subsequently, over the next year and a half, the stockmen's association continued its pursuit of cattlemen's interest leading up to the general assembly of 1875.

Prior to the 1875 session, the Laramie Cattlemen's Association networked with local constituents and managed to receive elected positions for several of their members. Three Laramie County Councilmen of 1875 included Kuykendall (Association Secretary and Treasurer), Hiram B. Kelly, and G.A. Searight all became elected officials. Another Association founder, Alexander H. Reel served in the Wyoming House of Representatives in 1875 before moving to the county council for the sessions of 1879 and 1882.[66] Newly elected positions to be held by association members was well thought political jockeying to ensure that the goals of stockmen would continue to be pursued because Governor Campbell was going to be replaced by former Nebraska Senator John M. Thayer.

With Thayer's succeeding Campbell in 1875, the Association's standing was unclear with the new top civil servant of Wyoming. Although the new Governor failed to demonstrate the same enthusiasm for ranching as his predecessor, it did not take long to become evident that he was by no means at odds with the Association. Speaking before the General Legislative Assembly of 1875, Thayer emphasized the agricultural and mineral potentialities of the territory and admitted that Wyoming was to become one of the largest stock growing states in the Union.[67] Stock expansion was the valued goal of the Association, not to replace the power of the Union Pacific in 1875. The existence of the Laramie Stockmen's Association was in its infancy; it was created to remain steadfast in favor of the interests of stockmen and ensure that livestock would become a key staple product for the regional economy.[68]

To compare the worth of the two industries in 1875 would produce results that would begin to favor the industrial might of the stockmen. Union Pacific Coal would produce 208,222 tons of coal at a selling cost of roughly $3 (national average) per ton to total $624,666 dollars.[69] Whereas the 34,988 cattle of Laramie County[70] selling at the thoroughbred bull cost per head of $40 would produce $1,399,520 (granted, not all cattle were sold at the thoroughbred high-water mark for one year-old thoroughbred bulls).[71] Two points should be noticed from the previous figures: 1) the comparison of Wyoming coal to Laramie county livestock is essentially the comparison of the leading production goods of Laramie and Carter (Sweetwater) County, because both were the hubs for each of their respective industries within Wyoming. 2) The possibilities of Wyoming cattle generating greater income than coal to remain in Wyoming rather than the conglomerate comprised of the Union Pacific's national concerns became very enticing to the populous of the Wyoming Territory. To propel the local cattle industry forward, while listening to the first address of new Governor Thayer, the Stockmen successfully pursued two pieces of legislature that would safeguard and expand Cattlemen's interests.

The 1875 assembly would pass an act permitting county commissioners to appoint detectives to discover violations of stock laws. Those hired as detectives were to be paid from the county treasuries for their efforts. The detectives were to be selected based on the recommendation of the county cattlemen's organizations.[72] On a separate bill, the railroads were to be held liable for all stock killed by trains. If the owner of the animal was known, the railroad was to notify the owner within ten days after the cattle were killed. If the owner was unknown, a record of the cattle's brand was to be filed with the county clerk. If the railroad failed to give such a notification it would be liable to pay double indemnity. Moreover, any person who had stock killed was to notify the railway agent of its value and the railroad had to pay at least two thirds of the value of the livestock to be released from the requirements of the law.[73] For face value, the new laws offered protection for stock animals, however, the coupling of detectives recommended by the association and paid for by the county gave the Stockmen a private police force. This was a decidedly different approach by the stockmen as opposed to the Union Pacific. The railroad used the power of government funding to drive its own financial worth, whereas the cattlemen used government monies to protect self-interests. The association legally used local government to promote their own local interests, which differed greatly from the Union Pacific using government resources to promote national wealth.

Two years later during the fifth legislature of 1877, Governor Thayer was inducted into the Cattlemen's Association and during his annual address to lawmakers he was an enthusiastic supporter of stock interests. The Governor stated that stock raising was the leading economic activity of the territory, praised the advantages of open range feeding of cattle, and specifically offering that 32,480 head of cattle had been shipped from Wyoming selling at thirty dollars per head, making the aggregate sum of $974,400 for the Wyoming Cattle industry.[74] The governor would conclude, "This, certainly, is a good exhibit for a portion of land what was once regarded as the Great American Desert".[75] In lockstep with the praise of the governor, the 1877 assembly transferred jurisdiction over recording stock brands from the county clerks to a committee of three. Of the three members, two were to be representatives from the Stockmen's Association. Thus, officially begun what was thought to be one of the most important functions of the

Association, the inspection of livestock for the purpose of determining ownership.[76] During the short period of 1871-1877 the Laramie Stockmen's Association had grown from a meeting of three men into a viable lawmaking and enforcement troupe. The early legislation that supported stock interests would not have been feasible if the Association was not well represented.

Couriers of the Stock Growers Association were often present at the territorial legislature assemblies that convened between 1875-1880. These lawmaking bodies were never very large. The number of representatives attending the fourth through the eleventh sessions of the House of Representatives fluctuated between twenty and twenty-seven participants. Thirteen councilmen composed the upper chamber in 1875 and 1877 then afterwards the membership stabilized at twelve until the close of the territorial period. Although the Laramie County Stock Association had become an active political organization in the first two years of its existence and several of its leaders secured seats in the legislature of 1875, its influence was not dominant prior to 1882. Cheyenne, which was the headquarters of the stock association as well as the territorial capital, provided the essential core of the organization within the legislature. From 1875-1879, the association had at least one spokesman who either served on the committee that established the cattleman's organization or held a high position on the county council.[77]

John W. Hoyt arrived to Wyoming in 1879 to serve as governor to an ovation of thunderous stockmen applause. A Wisconsin native, Hoyt was previously known to have a tremendous interest in agriculture and was the editor of the first significant agricultural journal of Wisconsin. At the annual Stockmen's Association meeting in 1879, Hoyt was the principal speaker. After his address, the group elected the Governor to an honorary membership with the association. His message to the Territory assembly a few months later indicated that he was well informed of the cattle business, it's influence, and possible prosperities in Wyoming.[78] Hoyt would report that the stock business was unequaled for its opportunities for profits. He explained that the 250,000 to 300,000 cattle in the territory left much of the range unoccupied, which would be a very overt hint that more cattle would be headed towards the west.[79] Hoyt's early years of service would be far different than his predecessors. The third Governor of Wyoming with the guidance and support of the Stockmen's Association would oversee the expansion of ranching throughout the territory instead of Stockmen political power consolidation.

Stockmen's endeavors had principally been left to the southern portions of Wyoming. Small cattle operations were present throughout Wyoming during the 1870s, but the distance needed to market permanent herds and Native American threats made the expansion of cattle very difficult. Much of the northern portions of Wyoming were reserved for Native Americans by the Treaties of Fort Laramie 1851 and 1868. Nevertheless, after the Battle of Little Bighorn, congress passed a bill that ended further government appropriations for the subsistence of the local Sioux unless they relinquished their northern Wyoming hunting lands protected by the Treaty of Fort Laramie of 1868. The Sioux would come to an agreement with the government and vacated their hunting grounds east of the Bighorn Mountains.[80] Thanks to the "Sell or Starve" Act, not only was northeastern Wyoming open to travel for ranching enterprises, but the Big Horn Basin west of the Big Horn Mountains was also unprotected by the Native Americans.

Prior to 1879, the Bighorn Basin was home to one Caucasian, shepherd J.D. Woodruff. The sheep ranger had entered into an agreement with Shoshone Chief

Washakie to allow the shepherd's six thousand head of "Oregon Woolies" to graze along the northern side of the Wind River, which ran along the Owl Creek Mountains. The opening of Northern Wyoming altered the operations of Woodruff and in 1879, livestock poured into the Bighorn Basin. Judge William A. Carter of Fort Bridger sent Pete McCulloch into the basin with 4,000 cattle. Henry Clay Lovell brought in two herds and Otto Franc drove 1,200 Oregon cows into the Greybull River Basin. The Big Horn Cattle Company, LU Ranch, and Pitchfork Ranches all opened by 1882.[81] Ranching operations had expanded to all of the boundaries of the Wyoming Territory and the state assessors totaled the number of cattle in Wyoming to have reached 450,000[82] to compete against the 340,152 tons of coal produced only in southwestern Wyoming in 1879.[83] The Stockmen's Association gained membership momentum thanks to ranching's expansion.

At the annual association meeting in Cheyenne in March of 1879, the Laramie County organization assumed the name Wyoming Stock Growers Association and announced a program whereby its influence would extend throughout the territory. Between 1879-1882 association memberships increased from 85 to 195. When the seventh legislative assembly convened in 1882 the association had reached its maturity as a political group. Association members elected from Laramie County garnered support from other sections of the territory. Fifty per cent of county councilmen in 1882 were ranchers and at least a third were members of the Wyoming Association. Laramie City Representative Ora Haley was the founder of the Albany County Stock Growers Association, which remained independent until 1883 when it joined the Wyoming Stock Growers Association. Despite his faction's self-sufficiency, Haley's concerns regarding the passage of adequate stock laws were identical to his five other Representative contemporaries. Within the House of Representatives, five association members hailing from Laramie and Carbon Counties acted on the behalf of the range industry.[84] Speaking before the legislature prior to his departure from the Governorship, Hoyt acknowledged the supremacy of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association and sighted that due to its membership numbers, high character, and the amount of capital it employed, he believe it to be without rival in the United States or any other country.[85] The 1882 Assembly would respond to the exiting administrator by pursuing an act to suppress and prevent the dissemination of contagious and infectious diseases among domestic animals, due to a Texas fever outbreak in the Territory.[86] The Association's quasi-official status was again recognized with a provision requiring the Governor to act from the recommendation of the Association to name the territorial veterinarian who was to execute the quarantine law.[87] While the sway of the Association could be perceived as overreaching regarding public policy, it's influence generated by 476,274 cattle that produced a total value of $6,942,851.50[88] for the local economy could not be ignored. Such a figure would far outweigh other influences including the 728,210 tons of coal being shipped and sold out of Wyoming ranging between $2.50 and $4.5 per ton[89]; which would equate to the Union Pacific earning between $1,820,525 and $3,276,945 produced by southwestern Wyoming.[90] By doubling the output of coal, the Wyoming cattle business was the primary industrial earner within the Territory's economy. The opening of the northern portions of the Territory would have an immediate impact on the cattle industry with the expansion of grazing lands. The northern impact would be felt within the coal industry, however it would take longer for extraction to make its presence felt. The stock industry would garner national attention for Wyoming, while Carter County coal was another cog within the Union Pacific. The self-actualization of the influence of the cattle industry drove their expansion over the next three years in Wyoming.

The Wyoming Cattlemen's Association had ascended to another rung of authority within the Territory with the blessing of the legislature thanks to the windfall of local economic prosperity. The Association now organized the local cattle industry, enforced laws with detectives in the Territory, and executed exclusionary tactics against outsiders with the requirement of following local Association laws or be barred from the Territory due to supposed diseases. The monopoly of Wyoming was almost complete for the Association and yet its members continued to spread their influence to higher levels of government, without relinquishing local power and influence, unlike the Union Pacific.

The railroad's local power was executed in Wyoming by the coal mining industry. Although railroad boomtowns such as Cheyenne experienced large amounts of success while construction crews lived in the area, the builders would eventually move on and with their departure so to would Union Pacific revenue disappear. And most of the profits from coal extraction went to the company and its largely eastern and European stockholders. Hence, coal mining was the continual local market from which the railroad would exert influence. However, due to the slashing of wages, employment, and exporting, the monies received by the railroad from the Union Pacific Coal Company would not remain in Wyoming. Even though coal production in 1884 was on the climb from previous years, pulling 902,620 tons from the ground,[91] priced at $4.40 per ton (national average from American Iron and Steel Organization)[92] creating $3,971,528 for the Union Pacific. Such production would harvest a rough profit of $3 per ton after cost and labor. Juxtaposed, the Stockmen's Association would dwarf the ideas of coal and isolate Wyoming's interests to rest with cattle.

Retaining Wyoming's political and capital influence in local markets became the crucial goal of cattlemen. Such a goal allowed the Association to leap frog the local mining agenda, because the fiscal yield of cattle out performed extraction. Between the years of 1883-1884 the cattle population of Wyoming climbed to 749,569 head of cattle with a hundred weight average bulk-selling price ranging between $4 and $5.75[93] totaling to a shipping value resting between nine and ten million dollars.[94] Teaming with the previous estimates, Governor Hale would generate a clear picture that the Territorial Legislature would have to lend full support to the cattle industry and although coal annually reported earnings between three and five million dollars, the interests of coal resided with the national Union Pacific corporation. Whereas the interests of Stockmen and their profits stayed in Wyoming and thus the Stockmen's Association would find themselves at the crest of the cattle boom in 1885.

Between 1880 and 1885 the cattle industry experienced exponential growth and the Cattlemen's Association would ascend upon the national political stage. In 1880, the Wyoming Republican Party nominated Alexander H. Swan (an Association member and very large cattle operator) to be a congressional delegate. Swan however, lost the election to Morton E. Post. The Cattlemen's Association did not lose out on an opportunity for national representation, rather, Post held business interests with the Stock Growers National Bank, which was founded, by F.E. Warren (proprietor of the Warren Livestock Company in Wyoming) and Joseph Carey (Mayor of Cheyenne 1881-1885 and fellow Stockmen). Just prior to the election of 1882, Post joined the association and won a decisive victory at the polls. Nearing the end of his second two-year term, Post chose to not seek reelection. Instead, Joseph Carey, whom had held a membership since the 1870s, served on its executive board, and had been president of the Association since 1883 opted to run and his bid was successful. Carey's congressional tenure would last until the end of the territorial period. After his election in 1884, Carey would continue to hold his dual position as Wyoming's delegate to Congress and as the President of the Territorial Stock Growers Association.[95] As the Cattlemen's Association expanded to Washington, their hold on Wyoming politics and ranching endeavors grew tighter.

During the Eighth Council election in 1884, the association retained fifty per cent of its seats through the election of cattlemen from Laramie, Carbon, and Uinta counties.[96] During the Eighth Assembly, the Territorial congress enacted the Maverick Bill. All mavericks, which were unbranded cattle that were found on the range, were to be branded by the Association and sold to the highest bidder with the proceeds to be turned over to the Association treasury. In 1884 alone, the association had received $26,074.15 from the sale of 1,971 mavericks, with an average sale of $13.23 each.[97] The funds generated by mavericks would help pay for the services given to the Association's complete responsibility for supervising all round-ups.[98] Later, the Maverick Bill will cause great controversy within Wyoming. The bill would prompt conflicts between large and small-scale cattle operations, which will ultimately be one cause that would allow the extraction industry to regain its power within Wyoming and hurdle the ranching industry as the primary force within Wyoming's political and economic theatres. Nevertheless in 1885, The Association could not foresee the future and cattle assessments were reported to be at 894,788[99] head of cattle totaling to a value of $15,388,503.[100] The Association's economic circle of power would be completed as well in 1885 with the federal appointment of a new governor.

In 1885, the Wyoming Governorship was awarded for the first time to a resident of the territory. President Chester A. Arthur selected F.E. Warren to preside over the territory. During Warren's administration there was total cooperation between the Territorial Executive Office and the Stockmen's Association. The alliance was made complete thanks to Warren's association to Joseph Carey via the Stock Growers Bank. The Governor's business partner Carey could represent the interests of cattle in Wyoming while in Washington and the Governor with the Association controlled the domestic landscape. Throughout the year, the governor would often attend Association Executive Committee discussions concerning Wyoming quarantine laws passed by the local legislature and it's opposition from states including Illinois, Missouri, and Idaho. The out of Territory stockmen feared a loss of cattle due to prolonged quarantine restrictions barring the animals to be wintered on the open range.[101] After several association meetings, it was resolved by the Stockmen that they would recommend to Governor Warren that the issuance of a revised proclamation modifying the quarantine restrictions regarding Missouri and Illinois was needed.[102] The committee authored a letter asking for the removal of restrictions to all of Illinois except Du Page County and in conjunction the Association would finance the construction of quarantine stockyards near the railroad depot at Cheyenne. The Union Pacific cooperated by building a switch track to the enclosures and disinfected the corrals and cars in which diseased cattle had been transported.[103] The Wyoming Legislature enacted the very recommendations of the committee. From the efforts of the Association, government, and railroads the outcome of limiting diseases was successful. Although 52,791 head of cattle were brought into the state during 1885, contagious diseases were non-existent. Only eight herds, totaling 485 from Illinois and Missouri, had to be quarantined.[104] Due to complete accordance between the government and the Stockmen's Association, Wyoming's wealth had drastically changed because of the cattle industry effectively replacing the Union Pacific as the second leg of local commerce.

Coming into the winter of 1885-1886, the Territory intended to pursue the avenue of cattle, which had prompted the landslide of prosperity that induced national attention to focus on Wyoming. Alas, news and weather from Texas would soon initiate a change of perspective regarding the interests of Wyoming. Now that revenues from cattle appeared to eclipse coal earning for the territory, and given the favorable legislative districting that boosted ranching interest, the Wyoming cattle industry stood at the summit of economic and political prominence. The welfare of stockmen had avoided the political pitfalls, community backlashes, and prosperity speculations that ensnared other western industries into financial collapse. Moreover, while coal continued to produce, it suffered under the leadership and national investments of the Union Pacific. Conversely, the cattle industry grew to be locally centered with a focused intent on the preservation of the economic bonanza by limiting the authority of the cattle industry to Wyoming. During the subsequent years after 1885, the influence and success of the Stockmen's Association would wane within the government due to major divisions among Wyoming's cattle operations, range wars between cattle growers, the invasion of woolgrowers, and nature, too, played the role of grim reaper in the harsh winter of the "great die up," which ravaged the native herds in 1886 and 1887. The tumultuous years of 1886-1900 would spell an end to the Cattlemen's Commonwealth and during those fifteen years the coal industry would have a chance to reassume the hegemonic position in Wyoming.

Chapter 4:

Coal's Consistency Defeats Competition

After the climax of stock prices in 1885, trouble loomed on the horizon for Wyoming's Cattlemen. The winter of 1885-1886 had been warm with little snow. A hot dry summer was followed by similar autumn conditions and the range grew poorly. "Our ranges are already bare," Montana Governor Samuel T. Hauser wrote to the Secretary of the Interior, "or so nearly so that our stock are in poor condition for the winter".[1] Throughout the cattle territories of Montana, Wyoming, Texas and others drought and heat had arrived in the summer of 1885 and remained throughout the winter and summer of 1886, thus making open range nourishment scarce. In Cheyenne specifically, the total rainfall accumulation for May, June, and July of 1886 was recorded at a scant 2.55 inches, albeit the average was 5.15 inches during the previous decade.[2] Long time cattleman John Clay would recall the summer of 1886 to be the driest he had ever witnessed in his thirty-five years as a Wyoming cattle operator. The cowboy would retell of riding over the south-central Wyoming range to see scarcely a blade of grass. He would further recount that the same conditions prevailed on the Belle Fourche, Little Missouri, and Powder Rivers. Moreover, tributary streams such as the Rosebud River had ceased to flow.[3]

Because of the environmental plague, high numbers of poor quality cattle arrived to the markets during the fall of 1886 and cattle value price per head decreased. The overstocked range had caused a market glut, lacking rainfall created poor stock conditions, and falling beef prices influenced stockmen to carryover as many steers to the following spring as possible. A range surplus accumulated quickly due to the amount of cattle that were not marketed during the previous fall.[4] Many believed that the cattle market would rebound quickly and were under the assumption that the downward trend of beef was a brief economic blip. However, the economic condition of the range market was in great distress and then Mother Nature spoke.

In the fall of 1886, Cattlemen began to notice the bark on cottonwood trees were abnormally thick, ducks and geese flew south earlier than usual, beavers and muskrat houses along creek beds were built twice their normal size, and Artic Owls began to appear on the range, which was never a good sign for local ranchers because the owls would only appear during the most severe of winters. As for the cattle of Wyoming, their coats were noticeably longer and shaggier. The *Bismarck Daily Times* would be the first to report the arrival of winter on Monday night, November 22. Temperatures on the northern plains would plummet to -12F in late November and then fall to -24F in early December as accounted by the *Glendive Times*. One month later Eastern Montana ranchers would report temperatures of -46F and by February of 1887, range temperatures still rested at 15F degrees below zero on average.[5] The coldest winter in two decades had enveloped the pastures and exposed the shortcomings of open range stock life. Despite range industry efforts the stock business tumbled after the winter of 1886-87. The vacancy created by the grazing trade drove Wyoming to fully endorse coal mining as the economic leader years later due to extractions' steady production.

Preceding the blizzard's fury, the economic slurry of range stock rested on the low cost maintenance of feeding and supporting animals. Driving cattle from higher ranges in the summer to lower elevations in the winter served as a constant feeding ground for ranchers. Due to the limited monetary output needed by operators to maintain their herds, open range cattle appeared to be a guaranteed moneymaker. Because of the constant food supply and mild seasons, ranchers did not plan to build shelters or to cut and store hay for possible long winter months. As James Young pointed out during the winter of 1886-1887 "In log ranch houses and side-hill dugouts, ranchers tried to block out the bawling of hungry cattle bunched at corral fences crying for hay that was not available. Ranch employees were found frozen to death near Sundance, Evanston, and Stinking Water Wyoming."[6] The value of the stock industry would plummet during the harsh conditions and would take a considerable amount of time to rebound from the winter disaster of 1886-1887. To offer that the winter struck a vital blow to the range animal industry would over simplify situation. Moreover, the lack of preparation for limited food sources would cause the national beef market to regress.

In Montana, in January of 1887, a long cold spell caked the open range with ice. Cold, wind, and snow continued through February, punishing all whom resided in the future Big Sky State. Joseph Kinsey Howard described the situation as "starving cattle staggered through village streets and collapsed and died in dooryards looking for food." Five thousand head invaded the outskirts of Great Falls. The cattle losses were estimated at 362,000 head or 60 percent of the territory's beef population. The winter wiped out many of the speculative corporate ranches.[7] On the contrary, in Wyoming, winter losses were not as severe. Wyoming registers reported statewide wintertime losses not far above

15 per cent. Specifically, assessors in the major beef counties cut cattle losses as followed: Crook 45 percent, Carbon 23 percent, Albany 15 percent, Johnson 10 per cent, and Laramie 5 percent.[8] It should be assumed that if Wyoming fared better than Montana during the great freeze then the demand for Wyoming beef would be high and the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association would reap the benefits of a niche market created by the winter, alas this was not the case.

Had Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas been the only producers of beef in 1887, one could imagine a favorable situation of supply-and-demand with high prices for the remaining beef producers from the market. While the Wyoming stock population numbers only decreased by 15 percent, the total valuation of cattle industry prices was reduced by 30 percent. The deflation of cattle values was based on a combination speculative ranching debt from the northern plains and drought in the southwest and Middle West. Thus, poor feeding conditions and financing caused the beef market to be flooded with thin cattle. A Chicago news release dated October 8, 1887, said "Never before was so much common stock put upon the market and at no time within the memory of living man have prices for that class been lower than now".[9] Creditors began to call upon speculative, corporate, and other debt strapped ranches to pay on their loans. Because of the low cost of beef, ranchers would not receive adequate returns for their loaned investments, ergo; they were unable to repay their debts. Because of a lack of payment to the banks, creditors demanded a liquidation of ranch assets. The cash strapped outfits were left with little choice but to round up their remaining ragged steers, ship them east, and sell them at giveaway prices. The cattle that did arrive to the stockyard sale lots were usually deemed unfit for immediate sale and had to be housed and fed at the farmyards for several months thus furthering the decline in beef prices.[10] While temporary drought followed by freezing snow was unbearable for stockmen, the state of affairs of the national beef market became intolerable.

The open-range system declined rapidly after the winter of 1886-1887. The boom atmosphere had evaporated. The hard winter taught ranchers the values of winter-feed and the number of hay acreages increased rapidly from an estimated fifty-six thousand acres in 1885 to more than seven hundred thousand by 1900.[11] The efforts of building shelter for cattle, cultivating and cutting hay, and hiring more hands to perform such duties all tugged at the purse strings of ranch owners and operators. The Wyoming cattle industry would never again mirror its stature held between 1868 and 1886. It would not be until 1910 that cattle prices would reach $7.00 per hundredweight and by then stockmen were plagued with even more agricultural competition.[12] T.A. Larson would offer that with the combination of cattle devaluation and the winter storms the course of Wyoming history was forever altered. While the cattlemen struggled to cope with the realities of the beef market, the years between 1880-1887 would also be a turning point for the Wyoming mining industry.

In early 1880, Jay Gould convinced the Union Pacific Board that company expansion coupled with the steady production of coal was the only measure that would ensure financial prosperity. In January of that year, the Pacific Union merged assets with the Kansas Pacific (capital worth $10,000,000) and the Denver Pacific (capital worth $4,000,000), which increased the Union Pacific Railway Company's capital worth from $36,762,300 to $50,762,300. The company's bonded indebtedness also increased to $92,984,624. The company's revenue increased from $13,201,077 to $22,455,134 and it felt the impact of elevated operating expenses rising from $5,475,503 to $10,545,119.[13] The merger was not in the best interest of the Union Pacific because the railroad's debt was almost double its worth. Gould's rational for the merger was based on his stock investment philosophy. While Union Pacific stock did not experience a jump in value, Kansas and Denver Pacific stock skyrocketed. Gould later recounted before a congressional committee in 1887 that Kansas Pacific common stock was traded in January of 1879 at $9.50 per share and by December with the impending merger the same shares were valued and $92.50.[14] Because Gould was the controlling stockholder of the Union Pacific, he would reap the greatest benefits from the post merger spike of Kansas and Denver Pacific stock. While singular investors of the Union Pacific would see little gains, greater debt, and a saturated underutilized railroad market. As soon as the Union Pacific soaked up the smaller lines, Jay Gould began the second stage of his investment strategy.

Between the years of 1880-1883, Jay Gould quietly began to sell his railroad investments. The debt of the Union Pacific from original construction costs accompanied with poor company mergers, increased competition between transcontinental lines, and a 1881 descending downturn of corn (smallest since 1874) and wheat crops (production decreased by twenty-five percent) which translated to less rail traffic. Thus, meaning a downward spiral for the railroad giant.[15] While the cost of coal production still hovered around $1.30 per ton, majority shareholder Gould felt he had taken as much as he could from the Union Pacific and by 1883 had completely removed himself from the company. Leading into 1884, the Union Pacific's national enterprise endeavors were in shabby condition as was Wyoming mining.

Miners' labor rights concerning work hours, method of payment, and racial hiring practices had been feeding the fires of unrest within Wyoming for some time. Tragedy would propel workmen's rights to elevated levels. As Jay Gould begun his exit strategy from the railroad, a disaster occurred within the Almy mines. Leakage of flammable gas into mine shafts was not a new phenomenon. Alas in 1881, the first major mining disaster occurred in Wyoming because of gas seepage. According to the *Cheyenne Weekly Leader*, on March 3, an explosion occurred in the Central Pacific Mine No.3 killing 35 Chinese and 3 Caucasian workers. The *Leader* further detailed the situation as a fire had been raging within the mine for five years, but was contained by fortified stonewalls; however it finally spread via the outflow of gas. The explosion burned 9 surface buildings and set the mine slope on fire.[16] After the explosion, miner safety bills were introduced to the Territorial Government, but the Cattlemen's Commonwealth signed none into law. Moreover, during the next four years, other safety and labor bills were introduced and the territorial government failed to enact any into law.

Specifically, miners of Sweetwater County failed to bend the ear of the government or garner the Union Pacific as an audience to listen to their concerns. Feeling they had no other options the Caucasian miners turned to the Knights of Labor. The union group listened to the concerns of the laborers and drafted a list of grievances to be forwarded to the Union Pacific. The three canons of the miners were for shorter working hours, better working conditions, and increased pay. A fourth emphasis was placed on racial relations. Sentiment within the Caucasian ranks concluded that Chinese miners were granted favors not privy to their Caucasian counterparts. The miners claimed that the Chinese were given easier dig assignments. In Rock Springs, it was contended that

Mine Superintendent J.M. Tisdel sold favors to the Chinese such as preferential selection of residency in Union Pacific built homes while some Caucasian miners still resided in dugouts along Bitter Creek.[17] The labor party did present the criticisms of their constituents to the Union Pacific while concurrently attempting to organize the southern Wyoming miners.

Initially, to squelch the racial unrest, the Knights of Labor attempted to recruit Chinese miners to join the labor party to form a solidified miner's union. Caucasian miners did not smile upon this practice because the labor party had been previously known strictly as a "White Man's Organization" and subsequently the Chinese Miners refused.[18] Judging the demographics of Sweetwater County, the inclusion of Chinese miners was a logical step for the Knights of Labor. From the 1880 census it was reported that 914 Chinese residents were found within the Territory and 854 resided in Sweetwater County. In Rock Springs, the town's total population was 763 occupants with 497 being Chinese.[19] The racial squabbling dissolved any hope for a unified front to advocate for the three concerns of the Knights of Labor. Hence, the Territorial Government and mine owners would not be compelled to alter their stance regarding labor until two more explosions would rock the Wyoming mining community.

After Jay Gould exited the Union Pacific in 1883, Charles F. Adams Jr. was appointed president of the railroad in 1884 and was immediately flooded with letters from miners arguing for labor rights. Conversely, Union Pacific managers concerned with mining operations filled the mailbox at Adams' office as well. In January of 1885, the General Manager of the Union Pacific in Omaha S.R. Callaway grew anxious because of possible coal shortages. Callaway's concerns were founded because of two reasons: 1) the mines in southwestern Wyoming were becoming exhausted (Carbon and Almy specifically) and 2) labor relations were eroding and a possible strike was looming. Callaway would expound that if the Knights of Labor ordered a general strike " I must confess I do not see my way out." Finally, the Union Pacific Manager reported to the Knights of Labor that the Chinese miners would not be discharged, but men engaged in labor trouble along the North Platte would be relieved of their position.[20]

As a reaction to Callaway's claims and the Union Pacific's reaction, the Knights of Labor filed four more claims on behalf of the miners. 1) The Union Pacific fired men whom were deemed troublesome or those whom would not vote in favor of company policies during union meetings, 2) the company "short-weighted" tons of coal, 3) increased pay differentials between Caucasian and Chinese miners, and 4) the company forced laborers to shop at company stores by issuing scrip payments.[21] Half of the Knights claims detailed old business such as the structure of monopolized mining towns and miner compensation. The two remaining claims directly reflected the contemporary feelings of racial inequality and representation within mining camps. While waiting for a reaction to the official claims of the Knights of Labor the second major explosion occurred in Wyoming.

In early September 1885, a riot began in a workroom of Union Pacific Mine No. 6 at Rock Springs. The common assumption of miners was if they began work in one room it was then off limits to other miners. On September 1, two miners, Isaiah Whitehouse and William Jenkins were assigned rooms at the entry of mine No. 6, but the mine foreman did not give specific room number assignments, simply a general location. The miners arrived to the first two unoccupied rooms they could find and began preparing the room for coal extraction. The following day, Whitehouse returned to the room to find two Chinese miners in possession of what he considered to be his room. The two Chinese miners also thought the room was their occupied workspace because the workers were not assigned specific rooms. Heated words were quickly followed by an exchange of fisticuffs. Chinese and Caucasian miners from other rooms rushed in and a brawl ensued using picks, shovels, drills, and rock needles as weapons.[22]

After the melee in the room ended, the foreman ordered a cease of operations for the day. The Chinese left the No. 6 mine after the underground incident and returned to their homes and/or company-owned residencies on the north side of Bitter Creek. The Caucasian workers also returned to their homes or local bars. At about two o'clock in the afternoon, a mob, divided into two gangs, decided to invade Chinatown (north of Bitter Creek). One gang crossed the Bitter Creek Bridge while the other crossed over the railroad bridge. The Chinese were encircled by the two Caucasian mobs. Between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. some of the Chinese residents were able to escape to the southern and northern hills, while others stayed. Regardless, at the conclusion of the evening all but one of the company homes in Chinatown were burned with 28 Chinese fatalities and 15 injured.[23] News of the ruckus in Rock Springs spread quickly to Union Pacific officials.

Upon hearing the news of Rock Springs, the Union Pacific ordered train conductors to pick-up any Chinese traveling along the mainline and give them safe harbor to Evanston. Company I of the American Army was transferred from Evanston to Rock Springs. Days later, when the Chinese laborers returned to Rock Springs they found only the burnt remains of Chinatown. To aid the newly homeless population of Rock Springs, the Union Pacific offered covered wagons for the Chinese to sleep in, transportation to other destinations, and troops from the American Army for protection.[24] The incident was reported to the governor's office and a quick response was issued.

From Cheyenne, Territorial Governor F.E. Warren requested federal troops from Fort Steele (near Rawlins) to be deployed to Rock Springs. The Governor stated, "Allow me to express my earnest wish that your road will under no circumstances recede in the slightest degree from my stand taken, that the Chinese shall work and criminals shall not…you surely have the United States behind you and China to aid you."[25] Several arrests were made shortly after the riot. Though several were held in custody for a brief time, anyone held in detention was only temporary as no official charges of crimes committed were filed at Rock Springs.

The Chinese Massacre at Rock Springs gained national attention, so much so that Wong Sic Chen (Chinese Consul at New York) arrived in the Wyoming Territory to investigate the situation. As a reaction to the conflict, President Grover Cleveland cited Article II of the Angel Treaty between the United States and China stating, "If Chinese laborers or Chinese of any other class, now either permanently or temporarily residing in a Territory of the United States are meet with ill-treatment at the hands of any persons, the government will exert all power to devise measures for their protection." To demonstrate its resolve to protect Chinese miners, the military constructed Camp Pilot Butte adjacent from the former location of Chinatown. Furthermore, the new living quarters for the Chinese were built next to a United States Army camp, which would remain stationed at Rock Springs with the specific directive to protect the Chinese, railroad, and the mining interests in the area for the next thirteen years until the outbreak of the Spanish-American War.[26]

Despite threatened work stoppages, inefficiencies claimed by the Knights of Labor, and the Chinese Massacre; the Union Pacific reopened the Rock Springs mines in the ensuing months. One hundred reluctant Chinese miners returned to their labor positions. To the Chinese, the worst possible situation they could find themselves in was unemployment. The concept of a strike meant a lack of pay to send home or be unable to finance a return trip to China as a successful miner.[27] However, Caucasian miners refused to return to the mines. Caucasian miners resented two things: the government's backing (construction of new housing and guaranteed work) of Chinese miners after the massacre and the previous four allegations of the Knights of Labor not being addressed by the Union Pacific. As a response to the strike, the Union Pacific began to replace the Caucasian operators with new immigrants. The first to arrive as replacement miners were Mormons from Utah. Mechanization served both as a replacement of mining workers and as a cost saving measure. For example, the Union Pacific had considered the implementation of new cutting equipment to be used in the mines. Union Pacific Company President Adams had pondered if the work stoppage teamed with the Chinese Massacre offered an ideal circumstance to install production cost saving technology. From his Boston office, Adams was quoted as offering "operate Rock Springs with Chinese and machinery only". [28] With labor strikes and plans for different mining operations the Territorial government sifted through the ashes of the massacre and a third explosion occurred in Wyoming.

In January of 1886, gas again ignited a mine explosion in Almy, this time in the No.4 mine. The *Cheyenne Daily Sun* reported the situation, as the force from the blast was such a blow to the buildings above ground that they were reduced to kindling.

Timber and rocks were blown three-quarters of a mile away. Thirteen Mormon men and two boys lost their lives in the explosion.[29] As news of the second Almy explosion circulated, Wyoming miners began walking out of the mines of Carbon, Rock Springs, and Almy. This was the last of three major events that would propel the Territorial government to respond to the calls for reform in the mining industry and community.

The Wyoming Territorial Legislature was about to convene just days after the second mine disaster at Almy. In reaction to the mine disasters, Chinese Massacre, and the claims of the Knights of Labor, Wyoming legislators passed new mine safety laws. The new law created The Office of the Territorial Mine Inspector with the duty of inspecting every coalmine in Wyoming once at least every three months. The act further banned boys under 14 from working underground. Women were also "protected" from the hazards of mining when it was made unlawful for them to work in mines. As per other specifics of the new legislation, maps for each mine had to be drawn to assist rescue workers in case of cave-ins. Also the maps were to establish whether coal was being mined from areas owned by the company or not. Moreover, it was required that each mine had two openings for ventilation and the enforcement of the laws would rest in the office of the Territorial Inspector of Coal Mines. Only the Washington Territory had preceded Wyoming with the passage of such mining regulation legislation within the territories.[30] The circumstances surrounding the passage of new legislature cannot be over looked. Just as the Cattlemen's Common Wealth gained importance from the Territorial government in the 1870s, the miner's association had finally earned a place within the Wyoming Assembly with the recognition of the plight of the miner.

Three years later, as Wyoming delegates were drafting the state constitution; the Territorial mining laws were grandfathered in as Article Nine of the new State Constitution. Article Nine further expanded to read that the legislature would provide by law for the proper development, ventilation, drainage, and operation of all mines in the state.[31] Concurrently, while Article Nine was penned to directly address mining safety, Article Nineteen of the Constitution rendered that eight hours of actual work would constitute a lawful day's work in all mines and on all state and municipal works.[32] Between 1885-1889, Wyoming Mining had leveled the political arena with the Cattlemen's Association by receiving legislative support for the ills that were found within their industry. Similar to the Cattlemen's Association gaining the support of politicians to serve in the best interest of their respective industry, so to had the mining community. The implementation of state regulation and tying the labor of miners to other state employees placed mining efforts on the same plain as stock detectives and other state livestock officials.

In these watershed years between 1885-1886, Wyoming Cattle had reached its crescendo and began to experience the effects of a losing market and Wyoming Coal had survived the onslaught of poor labor relations and violence. Both local markets appeared to be on the brink of a bust cycle. Livestock teetered thanks to stock prices and mining swayed because of a lack of regulation. The business of both institutions would be plagued by their respective calamities if an intervention did not occur. The Wyoming Government could not interfere to a great extent to affect the falling national cattle prices. The government could and did intercede the struggles of the mining community. The great winter of 1886-1887 did cause a lack of confidence with the Cattlemen's

Commonwealth and thus cattle prices plummeted from the freeze. Conversely, the unrest and tragedy that plagued southern Wyoming mining began an upswing of regulation for the extraction business. Three instances within the political theatre would signal that coal could make hay for Wyoming.

Just as the livestock industry had delved into Wyoming politics in the 1870s, coal had legitimately been acknowledged in Cheyenne by the mid-1880s with the passage of mining safety laws. What's more, the regulation of working conditions (ventilation, pay, and working hours) was a severing of mine control away from the railroads and placed into the hands of the state government and miners. Lastly, as the Cattlemen's Association was granted regulator status within their industry as per their various direct appointments and functions within Wyoming's Government (cattle inspectors etc.), so too was the managerial aspect of mining left to government officials (Office of the Territorial Mine Inspector). The Cattlemen's Association may have been dealt a severe blow thanks to stock prices in 1886-1887, but their competition from the Knights of Labor for political and economic influence had not yet concluded.

Attempting to weather the crisis that had befallen the cattle industry during the great winter of falling cattle prices, an organization was briefly established to combat the hardships of the stock industry. At the February 1887 meeting of the International Range Association in Cleveland, Ohio, range cattle investor Edward M. McGillin lamented to the congregation that two things were desperately needed for the cattle industry. The first was national organization of the containment and treatment of bovine diseases and more importantly his primary emphasis was on the meat packers of the east and their perceived control over the low prices of the cattle market.[33] The claims of Mr. McGillin were that the packing plants and sale lots were behind the devaluation of cattle during 1887, rather than the quality of beef shipped to Chicago, Omaha, and Philadelphia and the necessity to feed the underweight cattle prior to sale. Nevertheless, the Ohio dry goods tycoon would propose a plan to cure the slumping cattle industry.

Resembling monopolies such as Standard Oil and Carnegie Steel, McGillin's proposition detailed that all cattlemen should fight as one monopoly. Specifically, the company would incorporate one hundred million dollars and then arrange, manage, and sell every animal from birth to the grocery store purchase. To create such a pool, each member would first mortgage his cattle at $5.00 per head. The sum would be payable in five annual payments accompanied with 6 per cent interest. Then the payments would be deducted from the beef sales of the proposed conglomerate. All individual sales by owners were prohibited. Each state would elect directors and in turn they would vote for a state president. The state presidents would act as the board of directors for the national corporation.[34] The idea was simple; all details pertaining to the cattle industry were to be controlled by a single group (i.e. the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association model) the market would be operated by one alliance free to set their own product costs and prices.

After four months of deliberation regarding the panacea of the plan, it was announced that Colorado Govenor John L. Routt, Texans R.G. Head, Christopher Columbus Slaughter, Captain John T. Lytle, with Wyomingites Thomas Sturgis and Francis E. Warren had organized the American Cattle Trust.[35] With Warren and Sturgis in the mix, several roadblocks were prematurely avoided. Warren had already served as the President of the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association as well as Territorial Governor and would give the new trust footing within the cattle stronghold of Wyoming. Moreover, Warren's business dealings with Joseph Carey and the Wyoming Stock Growers Bank would offer local Wyoming investment into the trust. The New York investor Sturgis would procure the same monetary wrangling at a national level. Sturgis, another former Wyoming Stock Growers President, was a heavy Wyoming cattle investor and enticed several of his New York banking and financial cohorts (Charles F. Smillie, Richard T. Wilson Jr., and Samuel Thomas) to serve on the trust's board of directors. Sturgis hoped that with his connections raising initial operating capital for the cattle trust would be less of a burden.[36] With large amounts of financial backing, the trust hoped to avoid cash draining details that the original plan had not conceived.

To implement the plan, the company was in need of a packing plant, which was purchased from Nelson Morris (a meat packing giant and appointed trust advisor) in Chicago. In Gilmore, Nebraska, the trust obtained farms for feeding the cattle prior to eastern shipment. Contracts for canned beef were secured with the Belgian and French governments. It was further estimated that a hundred thousand cattle would be reportedly needed to fill the European orders.[37] While external marketing, demand, and initial purchasing seemed to be moving very well, early internal strife would spell doom for the new trust in its infancy.

While state trustees seemed to have a large swath of power regarding the division of geographic herds, local price of, and the number of cattle shipped to market; in actuality, eastern trust officers thwarted many ideas stemming from local matters. To gain financial momentum, eastern directors wanted to flood the market with as much beef as possible, while western directors wanted to furlough the sale of beef and simply feed through the winter of 1887-1888 in hopes that higher quality cattle would produce higher prices, because the trust had not yet cornered the market and cattle prices were still low.[38] The ideas of the eastern trust officers was based on the economic principle of flooding the market and thus lowering the price of beef further for the industry as a whole, similar to Rockefeller's driving down oil prices to purchase smaller companies at little cost. The problem with such a theory was ranchers of the west had already hit rock bottom and a need to survive financially was the behest of livestock operators. The clash was based on dollars versus living wages and the ranchers of the west could not simply wait for prices to rebound, while investors of the east had the means to endure.

By the spring of 1888, the head count of the trust cattle was 218,934 head valued at $3,862,214.76 and the total resources including land, equipment, and the packing plant was set at $7,959,971. The trust would see stiff competition from none members especially from Wyoming. In Wyoming during the same year, Territory assessors stated that the head count for the territory was 753,648 valued at $10,186,362.[39] The assessment roles for the trust would be no better in 1889. The head count and valuation of trust livestock had dropped to 164,472 worth $2,911,286 culminating in a total net price tag of $4,984,762. Production costs from the Nebraska farms and the Chicago meatpacking plant yielded negative returns and by 1890 the trust was deemed to be a money pit. The monopoly was a complete failure. No profits were made by the trust during its three-year existence and during the summer of 1890 the American Cattle Trust was completely liquidated. Each member of the cattle trust was paid a dividend based on their original investment, plus any profit accrued (there was none), minus any specific debts of each member.[40] The failure of the American Cattle Trust signaled that a return to the high-water mark of 1885 would not be easily contrived, nor would it be manipulated to do so.

The resemblance of the American Cattle Trust to the Wyoming Stockmen's Association was astonishing. A group of single investors attempted to isolate and singularly control the cattle market. Furthermore, either local investment via the Stock Growers Bank or national investors pouring money into the venture and the outcome produced similar negative results. The only difference between the American Trust and the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association was the employment and legal payment of government officials to serve on the behalf of cattle interests. Larger national investment and centralized control did not push the cattle industry any closer to regaining previous success. Contrary to the cattle industry's failed national experiment, local investment in Wyoming Coal proved to be making progress.

Between 1880-1890 coal mining gradually spread throughout Wyoming. By 1890, all thirteen counties had attempted to develop the industry. Laramie and Albany counties were the slowest to invest in the extraction business, albeit they were also the epicenter of the Cattlemen's Association.[41] As noted earlier, the Union Pacific had considered implementing new drilling and cutting machinery in Wyoming to reduce production cost. Initial machinery tests in 1882 at the Rock Springs Mine No.4 proved to be a success and the company increased their emphasis on cost saving technologies. In 1884, Union Pacific Mines extracted 306,150 tons of coal. During 1885, 328,601 tons were harvested and 359,238 tons came from the ground in 1886. The increase continued in 1887 with 465,445 tons traveled to the market. While the cattle industry struggled to find an answer to their financial downturn during the late 1880s and early 1890s, coal mining endeavors continued to rise culminating in 1892 in which 943,943 tons of coal were produced.[42] The increase of coal production mirrored American consumption of the fuel. Nationally, coal fuel consumption increased between 1851-1895 from nine percent of the American fuel consumption market to sixty-five percent. At the beginning of the same period, wood comprised ninety-one percent of the energy market of the United States and at the conclusion of the subsequent 45 years it embraced only thirty percent.[43] The national consumption spike of coal was predicated on the products built during the Second Industrial Revolution i.e. railroads, steel plants, steam engines, etc. and all burned coal as a fuel source. However, coal's increase did not directly affect the monetary slump of Wyoming's cattle industry. Regardless, the slow progress of coal teamed with the dip of the cattle industry did not slow migration to the northern plains.

During the 1880s, Wyoming received a slight population bump, although slower than her neighbors. During the decade, the Territory added 40,000 residents to the preexisting 20,000. At the end of the decade the pace of expansion was slow compared to the total population counts of Kansas (1,400,00), Nebraska (1,000,000), Colorado (400,000), Montana (100,000), and South Dakota (350,000).[44] Nevertheless, by the middle of the decade, Governor Warren openly discussed the possibilities of Wyoming statehood. To achieve such a status, the Governor relied on an old formula. The Territory's Chief of State pushed for more railroad investment from the Union Pacific.

The Union Pacific did not have the immediate financial availability nor was it interested in other routes to travel through Wyoming to invest in greater expansion. The railroad company was not focused on arriving to Montana by way of Wyoming due to the construction of the Utah Northern, which connected the southern Wyoming rail highway in the Salt Lake Valley. Nevertheless, by 1886, the Wyoming Central (a subsidiary of the Chicago Northwestern Line) was moving goods to and from central (Casper) Wyoming via Nebraska and not through Cheyenne. Governor Warren would claim that the Wyoming Central shipped roughly $300,000 dollars worth of cattle out of Wyoming. To compound the issue, cattle industry products were not the primary goods shipped by the central line; rather it was coal.[45] As a reaction to the Central Line, Warren spoke with the Union Pacific stating if a northern connection from Cheyenne were not built, the Union Pacific would be left with only 50-75 miles of active rail track in Wyoming. With the blessing of the Union Pacific, Warren proposed a bond election for a northern railroad, which was accepted by the Territorial Legislature on the basis of greater expenditures and the creation of new jobs as a result from the endeavor.[46] What Warren advocated for was greater exposure for Cheyenne ranching; however, what his railroad efforts created was a race to northern Wyoming between the Union Pacific, Wyoming Central, and the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroads. To worsen the situation, Warren would not be available to maneuver the northern railroad push for the benefit of the Cattlemen's Association because of political strife.

The national political scene shifted in 1885 with the arrival of President Grover Cleveland. The President's regard for Federal property and settler's rights in the west heavily influenced the first Cleveland administration.[47] Specifically, the President felt it was the duty of the civil office to limit public expenditures to the actual needs of governance. Land reform quickly mimicked the President's beliefs to protect public lands for future settlers and restricted unlawful occupation of the land. The first act by the administration to affect Wyoming occurred in April 1885 with the suspension of all final actions on western homestead, desert land, timber, and stone act claims in the west. In August, the Cattlemen suffered a second blow when Cleveland issued a proclamation, which demanded the immediate removal of all fences from public domain. Such a proclamation damaged efforts of Wyoming ranchers attempting to obtain and isolate large swaths of public land for private use.[48] Governor Warren would not be silent regarding the actions of the President and proposed a two-pronged attack to promote the economy of Wyoming beginning in 1886.

The first portion of Warren's plan was to establish greater Union Pacific railroad investment in northern Wyoming and the second was the construction of public buildings in Cheyenne from state and federal funding. Passage of the measure would rest in the hands of the voters of Albany, Laramie, and Uinta counties. In order to secure the sufficient amount votes from each of the Union Pacific counties, the governor brokered deals with each to receive some portion of the funding for public buildings. The final set of bills presented to the Territorial government called for the construction of Capitol buildings to be built in Cheyenne (thus ensuring the capitol would remain in Cheyenne), a university to be built in Laramie, the state penitentiary in Rawlings, the state hospital built in Rock Springs, and the state insane asylum in Evanston.[49] Cleveland Democrats were opposed to the actions of Warren. Small government supporters felt the Governor's actions would entice greater government involvement and control in Wyoming. As a reaction, the Democrats called for the President to replace the Republican Governor. Cleveland opted not to replace Warren because of his response to the Rock Springs Chinese Massacre, the railroad, and public buildings bills would first ask for local investment from the railroad and Territorial government coffers and not the Federal Treasury.[50] The president would quickly change his mood regarding Governor Warren late in 1886.

Warren tested the patients of the President leading into the Territorial elections of 1886. At the Republican Territorial Convention held in Rawlins, the Governor pursued the appeal of the Cleveland Administration's stance on land reform by asking for special agents to examine land prior to claims and then immediately patent the land according to their findings. Wyoming Republicans endorsed the deal, while Democrats protested to no avail. The elections of 1886 culminated in Republican victories (including a Carey reelection) and no endorsement of the policies suggested by the Democrat President. Warren would further attack land reform in November of 1886 by offering in his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior that "efforts to protect public domain for actual settlers and prevent frauds is commendable, but if an overzealous course is pursued and the acquirement of land was made to difficult and a great injury is done to Wyoming."[51] In retaliation to the Territorial Governor's report to The Commissioner of the United States General Land Office, William A.J. Sparks (Land Office Commissioner) claimed that Warren had personally engaged in public land fraud and was an official agent of men engaged in fraudulent and speculative appropriations of public lands and should be removed. Based on the recommendation from Sparks, Cleveland replaced Warren with local cattleman George W. Baxter and then with small farm supporter Thomas Moonlight in 1887.[52] From his rejection of land reform on the national stage, Warren's economic plan for Wyoming was endangered because of his removal. Without the Cattlemen's guidance, other avenues would be pursued for the betterment of Wyoming. Speculative northern mining appeared to gain momentum and small operation homesteaders gained a foothold and in the west.

The 1890 census counted 62,000 people within Wyoming and twelve counties had been organized. The five Union Pacific Counties claimed three fourths of the population including Albany (8,865), Carbon (6,857), Laramie (16,777), Sweetwater (4,941), and Uinta (7,414). However, six other counties had thereafter been established due to northern expansion including Converse (2,738), Crook (2,338), Freemont (2,463), Johnson (2,357), Natrona (1,094), Sheridan (1,972), Weston (2,422), Yellowstone (467), and 1,850 Native Americans were all counted in the 1890 census.[53] The Territory's growth brought new people and new issues to the forefront. The growth did not alter the pattern in which Wyoming expanded. Homesteaders in the newer counties traveled and settled in ways similar to the genesis of the Union Pacific five.

Wyoming coal was in high demand in the late 1880s thanks to the Anaconda Mines of Butte, Montana. The coal was shipped from western depots operated by the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad in Nebraska and from the Union and Central Pacific Railways. As a result of elevated demand, interest in coalfields elsewhere in the Territory grew.[54] With only the Wyoming Central currently servicing the central portion of the Territory and no rail tracks available within the northern boundaries, ranchers were the first to begin coal production in central and northern Wyoming.

Ranch mining operations were smaller enterprises and their greatest need was not for more miners, rather it was railroad availability.[55] In much of rural Wyoming, wood was scarce and far too valuable to burn because of its other uses. Hence exposed seams of coal were used for heating and cooking at homesteads. These small mines were referenced as wagon mines and the seams that were worked were visible on the surface and did not require elaborate mining practices. Coal was traded locally for other goods and services as well. As it was in Carbon twenty years earlier, household merchandise, small numbers of livestock, construction materials and labor were all bartered for the fuel source.[56] Money was to be made from mining in central and northern Wyoming and more investment began outside of Union Pacific and Cattlemen counties.

Thanks to ranching and small mining operations near Douglass, successful Nebraska rancher and merchandiser J.D. Richards established the Richards and Lidell Mercantile in the small town. Richards then organized the First National Bank of Douglass. Two years later, Richards opened the Inez mine in 1888. During the mine's first year of existence it produced 12,986 tons of coal. Twenty-seven miles north of Douglass the Deer Creek No.1 mine, which was, opened outside of Glenrock and it produced 13,000 tons of coal during the same year.[57] Thanks to transportation offered by the Wyoming Central Railroad, the two mines employed 114 men.[58] Concurrent with the two Converse County mines, a third lesser-known operation, the Buffalo Fuel Company opened the No.1 Mine with twelve labors. These three mines were credited as the only significant mining operations outside of the Union Pacific mainline. For Converse and Johnson County, the total output for the three mines toped out at 27,986 tons.[59] The establishment of new mines away from the Union Pacific was a maneuver that would payoff in spades for the Wyoming Mining community. Further mining expansion into northern Wyoming would not have to wait long due to the scheduled arrival of the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad in 1889.

The previous success of the Union Pacific and current upswing of the Wyoming Central was the catalyst that thrust the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad into Wyoming. The company had two reasons for entering Wyoming. The company wanted access to Wyoming's timber, coal, and iron to ship and sell to eastern markets. Secondly, corporation officials deemed northern Wyoming as the cross roads of the northern Rocky Mountains and considered the area to be the best route for a connection to the Northern Pacific Railway.[60] Beginning in Alliance, Nebraska late in 1888, the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad set out west and a year later arrived at the Cambria mines just west of the Black Hills. During the spring of 1890, the rail line reached Merino (Upton) Wyoming and the following year made another pit stop in Donkey Town (Gillette), Wyoming. In 1892, the Powder River was crossed at Suggs (Arvada) and temporarily concluding at Sheridan in November. An independent spur line (the Wyoming Railway) was cut north 37 miles from Buffalo to connect with Sheridan. Finally, the Chicago Burlington Quincy pushed north from Sheridan and landed in Huntley, Montana connecting with the Northern Pacific two years later.[61] The architecture of the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad was a small-scale mirror image of the first Transcontinental Railroad. The local Wyoming line was created to link the major wealth pockets of Wyoming together and then connect the energy consortium to the northern national highway. During the relatively short years between 1887-1892 continued railroad expansions, further positive mining endeavors, greater homesteader settlement pushed the Wyoming Legislature to begin considering the endorsement of statehood and the cattlemen of the Territorial Congress agreed.

Wyoming was experiencing greater infrastructure reform with new railroad construction, elevated homesteader migration, increased mining production, while the cattle industry sagged. At the Territorial Convention of 1888, the Republican platform asserted that the territory now had the taxable wealth and the population necessary to support a state government.[62] Cattlemen Association Members Joseph Carey and Francis Warren would again play major roles in the process within the Wyoming political theatre. Wyoming Republicans would again endorse and ultimately become successful backing Carey's Congressional nomination. Carey would win his election easily with a tally of 10,461 to 7,557 votes. It is claimed that Carey's margin of victory was ballooned by miners in western Wyoming counties voting between two to four times apiece. The *Cheyenne Daily Leader* claimed that Carey's election did not hinge on statehood, however it was a subsidiary mandated by the people.[63] Shortly following the Carey reelection, Warren was endorsed to replace Governor Moonlight by seventeen of the twenty members of the Republican Territorial Committee. On March 27, 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Warren to return as Wyoming's Territorial Governor. The *Cheyenne Sun* editorialized Warren's reappointment as "a blessing to the territory as well as a fitting recognition of the man and an exemplification of President Harrison's home rule policy".[64] Upon taking office, Warren was compelled to continue the work he had begun four years earlier promoting what was best for the Wyoming economy from the vantage of the cattle industry.

Warren believed that territorial lawmakers had shown too much regard for the rights of miner's safety, settlers homesteading, and resources for the less fortunate. Once more, he felt district reapportionment would need to occur because he felt the convention discriminated against Laramie County by allowing the county only three Representatives and three Senators while giving the northern counties more than their population called for.[65] Over the following few months the Wyoming legislature would draft the Wyoming State Constitution and within the document Warren felt he could swing the state constitution in the favor of the cattle industry. The returning governor would fail to expand the strength of cattle interests. As previously offered, the constitutional convention included the rights of miners and labors, but it also levied state control and ownership over water rights based on prior beneficial use and that the state would be divided into four water divisions.[66] At the conclusion of the 1880s, Wyoming was a much different place than it had been ten years earlier. The strong arm of the Union Pacific was challenged, coal was producing, and the cattle business was lagging.

Political stalwarts, Warren and Carey were also well aware of the problems that continued to restrict Wyoming. Since inception, the territory struggled with underdevelopment and relied heavily on homogenous markets, which in turn would be subject to boom and bust cycles. The major market of the cattle industry had receded and for the economy to expand new resources would have to be discovered or general and specific federal investment would need to be increased regarding irrigation, settlement, and agricultural growth. However, the role of the federal government as an alternate resource was going to be limited. The possibility of statehood threw the expenses of governing Wyoming upon the state. The Federal government's military presence was reduced in the area as forts began to close and troops were relocated to Arizona and New Mexico.[67] The state convention found itself needing to generate equality amongst its small-varied economic outlets because no individual market in 1889-90 could completely shoulder the burden of total economic support. The railroads, coal mining, government employment, and big cattle ranching all helped drive Wyoming to possible statehood and when the constitutional convention arrived at the threshold between Territorial and Statehood status no two or three legged economic support system was present as it had been during the Territorial Convention. Rather, the people and industries of Wyoming (while limited) earned their living in stock raising (13.5 percent), crop agriculture (12.4 percent), mining (10.4 percent), manufacturing (9.1 percent), and railroad work (7.2 percent) and the equity within the State was reflected by the diverse interests represented by the Constitution. On March 26, 1890 the Wyoming House of Representatives voted 139-127 in favor of the State Constitution and the Senate concurred.[68] Wyoming advanced forward with the combined support of all the small business ventures and the Cattlemen's Association would struggle because of its political connections, focused attention on a singular market, and specifically with small homestead ranchers.

The Maverick law of 1884 was intended by the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association to restrict cattle competition within Wyoming and isolate the Wyoming market from other outside interferences and bovine infections. When the cattle market was strong the Cattlemen's Association's average membership increased roughly 16% between the Maverick Law years of 1884-1887. New members would pay a one-time fee of $15 and annual dues of $10. Moreover, instructions given to association foremen regarding unrecognizable brands were to be returned to their mother's brand. The association also published a book with all brands found in Wyoming and distributed it free of charge. During the same period, the percentage of Maverick sales to non-association members was roughly 30%.[69] During the high watermark years, range cordialness was partially stressed by the association to gain new members, but during the downturn, the association closed ranks against outsiders.

Although the Cattlemen's Association did perform diligence towards small ranchers, sheep-men, and grangers prior to the freeze, after the decline in cattle prices, small operations pushed for the liquidation of large cattle companies to obtain greater shares of public domain. Small ranch operators claimed that large cattle operations were agents of large corporate concerns backed by foreign capital, which was not good for Wyoming due to profit monies leaving the area. To make matters worse for the association, in 1888, the Wyoming Legislature voted to transfer the responsibilities of Maverick round ups to the Wyoming Livestock Commission. The transition of livestock supervision meant the conclusion of the second income generated by the defunct Maverick Law. The discrepancy of operating funds for the Association would swing from $35,000 to $6,295 between 1888 and 1889 and at the end of 1890; the association treasury held $29 and had lost 177 members. To make matters worse, the Association was unable to pay for Wyoming Cattle detective work and cattle inspections were not completed during the summer of 1888-1889. At this time, the Association's Executive Committee tendered the idea that its primary function was to liquidate debts and retire the joint cattle endeavor, but this idea never came to pass and the association limped forward.

A year and half later, the Cattlemen's Association was in grave shape and the cattle commission was not any better. The commission received a $10,000 lifeline from the Wyoming Legislature and in return the group would annually report their needs to the governor to be recommended for legislative appropriation. Many on the range and in the commission debated the need for the Cattlemen's Association and the State Cattle Commission. Both entities struggled financially and the support for both was levied openly. However, Governor Warren did not pursue dissolving the Association or the Commission. Rather, the Association would maintain offices in Cheyenne for the Association's Veterinarian and Secretary, while the field functions of the Association would remain with Wyoming state agencies.[70] The preservation of local wealth by the Cattlemen's Association had been a failure at the birth of Wyoming's statehood. The possibility of linking local and national cattle wealth pockets would be a bust by 1890; however, a steady stream of Wyoming coal from the north would increase the state's mineral wealth enabled by a growing herd of iron horses.

The Chicago Burlington Quincy Railway pushed into Wyoming from Alliance, Nebraska. The railroad pursued its course to Newcastle, Wyoming due to surveyors locating large coalfields in northeastern Wyoming in 1888. The railroad felt it was advantageous to travel along the western edge of the Black Hills Mountains to these coalfields because it would be more cost effective to extract and use local coal than to ship the fuel in from mines in Iowa and Illinois, plus the gold smelters in Lead and Deadwood South Dakota offered another market for northern Wyoming coal. As quickly as the railroad could arrive at Newcastle, the Cambria Coal Company was created. The northeastern black rock deposit was a very unique find because it was the only bituminous coking coal discovered in the area.[71]

The young coal camp sprang quickly to life because of the high quality of bituminous coke coal (much of the moisture and poisonous impurities had been naturally removed meaning it was extremely high in British Thermal Units) and the presence of water and trees in the area made it very attractive for new business and settlement. By 1892, the production from the Antelope and Jumbo mines of Cambria had risen to 366,944 tons. Another interesting piece of Cambria coked coal was the gold content within it. The value of gold coke was estimated between $2.74-$5.60 per ton. Due to the pleasantries connected to Cambria, the Wyoming mine inspector offered, "Rock Springs will have to dig deep within her laurels to maintain her reputation as the producer of the best coal in Wyoming". .

Pushing further into Wyoming, the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad sent surveyor crews ahead of track construction to locate the most manageable route for the railroad to traverse. The group established a camp for several months along the banks of Donkey Creek. Head railroad surveyor Edward Gillette guided the expeditions from the tent community of Donkey Town. Based on Gillette's findings, the surveyor found a route that could navigate through the region and avoid several rivers to save railroad construction efforts and the cost of building 30 bridges needed to cross Donkey Creek. As a reward for his findings, the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad renamed the tent community as Gillette, much to the chagrin of the lead surveyor. Gillette stated he would have preferred to have a raise than have a small city take his namesake. The small town would act as the terminus for the railroad until it arrived at Sheridan. Gillette would act as a staging point for the Lincoln Livestock Company, many small homesteaders (especially shepherds), and railroad employees. However, the mining industry at Gillette would remain a wagon operation until the 20th Century.[72]

Sheridan would also experience a boom. Similar to other early mining efforts, the Dietz mines were operated by James and John Birchby and began as a wagon mine. The British Thermal Units were not as high as compared to Cambria (thus locomotives would struggle to burn the product), however the company town and mines would grow into a sizable community.[73] In 1892, the Sheridan Fuel Company was born and the annual production for Sheridan County was 2000 tons. The State Geologist would comment that due to the horizontal nature of the coal beds found in the Sheridan district that if they were continuous they would underlie the entire area.[74] Later, locomotive engine design would improve and could burn brown coal similar to that found in the Sheridan loads.

In 1892, the young Wyoming state had two major railroad loops and one spur line all producing coal. The productive Union Pacific southern loop was comprised of the mines in Carbon, Sweetwater, and Uinta Counties. The Chicago Burlington Quincy northern loop encompassed the county mines of Johnson, Weston, Sheridan, and Crook. The Wyoming Central Railroad spur line would include mining operations in Converse and Natrona Counties and act as a distant outlet for Freemont County production. During the same year the expanded coal operations of Wyoming produced 2,378,657 tons of coal for shipment and 2,503,839 of total product. This would remain as the high tide marker for the decade until 1898. The Union Pacific Mines (tons per county: Sweetwater 1,218,480, Carbon 479,693, and Uintah 326,266) harvested nearly eighty-five percent of Wyoming's outgoing coal shipments. Weston County coal (311,300 tons) shipped by the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad contributed thirteen percent and Converse County (42,918) on the Wyoming Central milled the final two percent of outgoing coal. Interestingly, Sheridan County reported no coal shipments and the counties of Freemont (8,000) and Johnson (10,290 tons) did not ship coal out of the state, but they lead the state in local coal sale totaling a combined sum of over 18,000 tons. Considering only 27,054 tons of coal was produced in all of the state for local consumption, the small Wyoming Central line mines supported sixty-eight percent of Wyoming's local coal needs. The total value of Wyoming coal production alone was estimated at $3,168,776 with the average sale price per ton resting at one dollar and twenty-seven cents. A small secondary price emphasis point was the cost difference between the counties. Johnson and Freemont

Counties' coal price tag had an average which ranged from two dollars and fifty cents too two dollars and sixty-eight cents. The two local producers charged over a dollar more per ton than their sister mines around the state.[75] The mining industry had successfully established a local and export market for its product. Addressing local and feeding national consumption was the same model followed by the cattle industry during its heyday.

Considering the dire straits of local and national efforts surrounding the Wyoming cattle industry, the three million dollar business of coal extraction was a positive bump for the Wyoming economy. As the coffers of the Cattlemen's Association was going dry, coal steadily improved from the late 1880s through the early 1890s. By 1892 the coal industry had partially risen from labor and racial turmoil to expand throughout the state and temporarily crest. Slight political shifting, violence, and an economic down turn would again level the economic landscape and indirectly pit Wyoming Cattle against Coal Mining as the leading financial power in the state leading into 1892-93.

During the state elections of 1892, Francis Warren and Joseph Carrey were elected to the United States Senate to represent Wyoming. A beacon of relief for the cattle industry was nowhere in sight. Warren felt that land reclamation, similar to water ownership as a measure would propel the Wyoming economy and specifically the cattle industry forward. He submitted an arid land bill to the United States Senate stating that arid lands should be granted to the states without restriction. Once the state received their portion of public domain, it would need to create irrigation districts, provide for the allocation of water to them, and supervise the actual work of reclamation. The state would also be allowed to mortgage or use the land as collateral for more bonds.

Moreover, the lands would simultaneously stimulate private enterprise and prevent the federal government from exercising control over the development of arid lands.[76]

Senator Warren proposed bill S.5087 on the senate floor in 1892 and argued that current public land policy created continuous unrest and discontent. Moreover, Warren's arid land cession retort would allow the states to frame land laws suitable to their peculiar condition. Warren also pushed to have the cession of open lands be adjacent to Wyoming's irrigation districts. The Senator would offer "Every occupier and cultivator of the irrigated lands should have a proportional interest of control in the grazing areas to create the greatest benefit from the secured irrigated areas.[77] On the other hand, Warren's detractors claimed that the arid land bill was a device to enable him as one of the leading landowners and stock raiser (owner of Warren Livestock Company) in the state to monopolize more grazing land. Small farmers and ranchers claimed that once Wyoming gained control of the lands, the political machinery of the Cattlemen's Association would increase their personal holdings. Warren would counter the claims against him by offering his only intentions were for the betterment of Wyoming and to provide new settlers a region that was somewhat on par with the farmlands of the eastern states. Ultimately, Warren's bill died in congressional committee.[78] Certainly the Cattlemen's Association would have benefited from the arid land cession, but so too would have other grazers, grangers, and cowboys from Wyoming. Instead of land cession success, the Cattlemen's Association dealt with a heavy backlash from homesteaders.

Suffering from low cattle prices, large and small stock operations began to cut their losses and downsize, which included limited or temporary employment for ranch hands and cowboys. Many of those saddled with unemployment resorted to homesteading. Needing to be more mindful of their inventory due to limited returns, several of the big companies believed their former employees were rustling cattle for profit or for private homestead herds. Based on true accusations or not, stock detectives working for large cattle firms would vigilantly pursue anyone suspected of rustling. Thus small and large cattle confrontations ensued. The clash would climax with the Johnson County War.

In the late 1880s, several large herd owners Tom Sun, John and Tom Durbin, Albert Bothwell, Robert Conner, and Robert Galbraith all had moved to Rawlins, Wyoming looking for livestock and mining financial success. After the cattle crash, the group built portable cabins to be placed in land claims. Once the claims were filed and released, the cabin would be towed to a new location for another claim. In 1889, Bothwell began moving on land surrounding the Sweetwater River. The cattleman approached Ella Watson and Jim Averell. The couple lived on and controlled approximately one mile of water of Horse Creek (small tributary of the Sweetwater River). The couple refused to sell to Bothwell several times over the next few months. The couple had previously attempted unsuccessfully to register a brand with the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association on five different occasions during the previous three years. Finally, the Horse Creek couple purchased the previously registered brand "L-U" to avoid another Cattlemen's Association denial letter. With brand in hand, Watson burned 41 cattle tattoos in early July 1889. The Wyoming Cattlemen's Association claimed Watson was illegally acquiring mavericks, which the association considered to be their property. To make matters worse for Watson and Averell, they openly protested Bothwell's continued attempts to purchase their land and water via the local press.[79]

Attempting to make a profit, Bothwell and five other cattlemen in the area had begun advertising large homestead claims selling at high prices around Rawlins in newspapers. Furthermore, the brochures for the Town of Bothwell promoted amenities including a town store, blacksmith's shop, a post office, and a newspaper. The homesteader Watson wrote to the *Casper Weekly Mail* stating that Bothwell was a scam. On July 20, 1889 Cattlemen Association Roundup bosses Bothwell, Sun and the Durbins rode to the Watson homestead with Gailbrath and accused the small operators of rustling and the Horse Creek homesteaders were subsequently lynched. All five-cattlemen and a sixth man (cowboy Ernie McLean) were named in the first of two coroner's inquests. When a grand jury convened in October, four witnesses to the crime had died or left the territory. The murder case of Cattle Kate was dropped due to lack of evidence.[80] The case of Cattle Kate was not the only situation to arise between small and large cattle companies; stories often circulated the Wyoming Territory about violence and injustice against homesteaders. The same stories would continue after statehood.

One such tale involved Nate Champion the former foreman of the EK Ranch (Northern Sheridan County) during the cattle boom years, but during the bust, Champion became unemployed and set out for himself. After Champion obtained his own brand, he incurred upon two difficult situations with the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association.[81] The first occurred early in 1891 when four or five of Champion's cattle became intermixed with herds from the EK, NH, and Bar C Ranches. The small time cattleman queried foreman Mike Shonsey to separate the herds and upon completion of the task, the foreman scattered Champion's cattle across the range. After the incident, the two men exchanged their feelings in a less than cordial manner regarding the matter and both walked away from the fray with hard feelings towards the other.[82]

The second incident again involved the Bar C Ranch found in the Hole in the Wall country in southern Johnson County. Bar C foreman Robert Tisdale pushed 2,000 head of cattle into the valley area just in ahead of Champion and his 200 head. Champion felt the Whole in the Wall range could support both herds and proceeded towards the range. Tisdale was offended that the small rancher would try to graze on the same 100,000 acres and the Bar C rancher immediately pulled his cattle out of the area and some of Champion's followed as well. A small band lead by Champion tracked the Bar C herd to retrieve the lost intermixed animals. When the Champion assemblage caught up with Tisdale, they reclaimed their own cattle as well as the calves of the small herd. The Bar C foreman would claim that Champion and his contemporaries acted aggressively, were heavily armed, and branded everything in sight without regard. Upon investigation, Champion was never found guilty of any crimes committed against the Bar C cattle firm. Based on his actions he was black listed by the Wyoming Stockmen's Association as a known rustler and was branded "King of the Rustlers". The protest for range inclusion by Champion was not good for large cattle companies because small cattle operators would continue to levy claims for range use in Johnson County.[83]

It was not a secret that small cattle operators throughout the state deeply resented the power of the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association. Juxtaposed to the rustling claims of large companies, small ranchers complained of the Cattlemen's Association's support of vigilante acts against homesteaders resembling what had befallen "Cattle Kate" in 1889 or what happened to Nate Champion during the early winter of 1891. In November of

1891, Champion with Ross Gilbertson in tow lived at a rented chalet branded the "Hall Cabin" along the headwaters of the Middle Fork River. The cabin was merely a mile from the Headquarters of the Bar C Ranch. The rustling king had selected this area as his winter home due to the oval pocket produced by the Middle Fork Valley, which surrounded the remote small rectangular cottage.[84]

The two men were awakened from their bunk beds when four men entered the front door of the cabin, guns drawn, and stood adjacent to the stove at the back of the lone room structure. Frank Canton, Fred Coates, Joe Elliot, and Billy Lykins were all employed as Stock Detectives for the Wyoming Stock Growers Association and had decided that the best way to deal with the King of The Rustlers was to ambush and kill him. Champion questioned the purpose of the men coming to the cabin and suddenly shots range out. The four intruders quickly escaped in the direction from which they came. Still firing at the scampering interlopers, Champion struck Billy Lykins in the midsection and he would die from this wound almost a month later in Missouri.[85]

After the fighting concluded, Champion traveled up Red Fork Creek to the Powder River then towards the homestead of friend John Tisdale. Tisdale was a respected small stockman whom had not been black listed by the Cattlemen's Association. Once Champion arrived at the Tisdale home and reported what had happened, the landowner agreed to travel with Champion towards Beaver Creek to find the culprits of the ambush. They enlisted a third man, local homesteader Orley E. "Ranger" Jones as well. As the trio traveled south, they came across Mike Shonsey, whom Champion had suspected to be part the ruckus. While Shonsey was not one of the four invaders he was the fifth man of the party as he tended to the horses during the raid, which Shonsey admitted too. From the confession, Ranger Jones and Tisdale had become witnesses to Stock Detectives committing attempted murder.[86]

Within the next month, both Ranger Jones and John Tisdale were both shot while traveling through the Hole in the Wall Country. The Buffalo community respected both men and the *Buffalo Bulletin* commented that the murder of both men was intentional even though Sherriff Red Angus and County Attorney Alvin Bennett did not disclose the importance of both murder victims in their investigation of Champion's attack. A hearing was held for Canton as one witness claimed to have seen him near the Tisdale Homestead during the day of the shooting. However, the Stock Detective was acquitted just as quickly due to lack of evidence. But, the investigation would continue with the *Buffalo Bulletin* lamenting that stock interests committed the Champion attack.[87]

During the same week as the Champion attack, a small group of ranchers from Johnson County organized a meeting to discuss common community problems, including stock seizures, the troubled relationship between large and small outfits, and the group became known as the Northern Wyoming Farmers and Stock Growers Association. Four months later the group elected to compete with the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association. The Johnson County Ranchers concluded they would hold a round-up independent from the state, the Cattlemen's Association, and the County Stock Commissions, on May 1, 1892. The sovereign roundup was to be held one month prior to the annual Wyoming Cattlemen's Association roundup. Moreover, Nate Champion was appointed the captain of the event.[88]

Owners of big cattle operations and association members were unhappy with the new association forming in a county where many Cattlemen's Association members still maintained open range herds. The former commonwealth kingpins believed the Northern Wyoming Farmers and Stock Grower Association had completely defied the law with their actions as per the Stock Commissions' control of the organization of roundups. Big operators started referring to Champion's group in Johnson County as the "red sash gang," implying that they were a gang of rustlers and not a legitimate association of small ranchers.

No record of an executive committee meeting is found, however, discussions about invading Johnson County to counter the actions of Johnson County ranchers and their direct threat to the power of the Cattlemen's Association was rumored to have occurred. The Cattlemen's group elected to make the decision that action needed to occur immediately. The invasion was secretly planned for the fall or winter of 1891. During the later months of 1891, 22 gunmen were hired to travel to Wyoming. Paris, Texas was the home of 21 of the gunmen and the other hailed from Idaho. All would serve as Stock Detective Deputies to end the rustler problem in Johnson County. They were to be paid $5 per day and a bonus of $50 for every rustler shot.[89] The invaders planned to shoot suspected rustlers and to arrest rustler sympathizers. The troop was also given a prepared kill list, which included the names of 70 Johnson County residents that were deemed to be rustlers.[90]

Simultaneously with the planning of the invasion, The Wyoming Stock Growers Association held its 20th annual meeting in Cheyenne on April 4, 1892. During the business meetings, the association passed a resolution commending the State Livestock Commissioners for withholding proceeds from the sale of stolen cattle until ownership of the cattle could be proven. This adversely affected small operators who were not association members and who had brands that the association refused to recognize. Due to the nature of small herd ownership, homesteaders at times did not have similar salient book keeping resources as large firms. Ergo, the ability to produce clear unwavering ownership of a steer could usually be questioned of any small operator. Because State Commissioners had the backing of the State and the Association, they could usually wait out small ranchers in litigation.[91]

Shortly after the association's meeting in early April, a group of 52 men met in Cheyenne to amass the northern invasion force. The alliance included 19 cattlemen, 22 hired gunmen, five stock detectives (including Canton), six non-combatants (reporters Sam Clover and Ed Toews from Chicago and Cheyenne) and medical doctor Charles Penrose. For the crowd to move north, supplies and horses were loaded into railway cars. Senator Joseph M. Carey's cattle company employee E.T. David cut the telegraph and telephone lines too Buffalo so the residents would have little forthcoming knowledge of the invasion. The train departed from Cheyenne on the independent spur line Colorado & Southern Railroad north for Casper. After arriving in Natrona County, the invasion force unloaded the freight cars and quietly moved toward Johnson County on horseback and covered wagon.[92]

The invaders were greeted and delayed by a typical Wyoming spring snowfall. Soon afterwards, Mike Shonsey rode ahead as an advance scout and returned to report that two rustlers were staying at a cabin at the KC Ranch and one of them was Nate Champion. The invasion squad felt that pursuing Champion was the best course of action considering the testimony of his attack linked Stock Detective Joe Elliot as one of the attackers at the Hole in the Wall cabin from the previous year. Johnson County officials were already compiling a case against Elliot and the witness' account would be very damaging to the Stock Detectives and their Cattlemen's Association employers.[93] The previous dealings between Champion and the Stockmen's Association coupled with the Elliot testimony made The King of the Rustlers a prime target for the wrath of the invaders.

The invasion leaders quarreled regarding the best plan of action whether to pursue Champion at the KC Ranch or travel to Buffalo. Canton wanted to get to Buffalo before the invasion party was discovered to attack the "fountainhead" of anti-Association activities. Elliot supporters argued that Champion was on the kill list, was a member of the Northern Wyoming Farming and Stockmen Association, had previous entanglements with the Cattlemen's Association, and offered testimony that would link Stock Detective malfeasance to large cattle operators. Canton lost the argument to Elliot supporters and the group detoured to the KC Ranch cabin to hunt Champion.[94]

The squad arrived to the cabin at daybreak and immediately surrounded it. Two hours passed before anyone came or left the cottage. After the elapsed time, unemployed cowboy turned trapper Ben Jones appeared in the doorway with a water bucket and traveled down to the creek. After he was out of eyeshot of the cabin he was taken captive. Shortly thereafter, another out of work ranch roustabout Billy Walker left the house and unknowingly sauntered into captivity. From the two trappers the invasion squad was told that only Nate Champion and Nick Ray were left inside.[95]

Ray shortly afterwards stepped outside of the cabin and he was immediately fired upon by the invasion squad's sniper. After the first cartridge fell, the private army mirrored the first discharged shell. Under a hail of bullets the fallen Ray crawled back towards the door of the cabin. Suddenly, Champion darted from the house unloading his handgun in all directions and dragged the wounded Ray back into the cabin. The two sides volleyed shots to a standstill until mid-afternoon when a wagon approached.

The wagon was driven by Alonzo Taylor and was followed by his stepfather Jack Flagg on horseback. The pair was in route to the Wyoming Democratic State Convention in Douglass when they passed the KC Ranch. As the duo approached the cabin, one of the gunmen proclaimed "that's Jack Flagg, shoot him". The two suspected rustlers turned around quickly as three horsemen from the squad took off in pursuit. Taylor and Flagg managed to cut the trace from one of the horses pulling the wagon and escaped on horseback heading back to Buffalo to notify Sheriff Angus.[96]

The Stock Detective force was very concerned with the possibility of Taylor and Flagg reporting the KC incident to the Sheriff. While remaining undetected was of the upmost importance, Flagg and Taylor would not make contact with Angus until late in the evening and by then Angus already knew of the Johnson Invasion party thanks to local homesteader Terrance Smith. Early in the morning of the day of the shooting, Smith was saddling a horse when he heard gunshots coming from the KC Ranch. Smith quickly rode to a ridge that overlooked the ranch and watched the early action. After an hour, Smith left the scene and traveled to Buffalo to warn Sheriff Angus.

While Smith was headed for Buffalo, the invasion gang still had Champion to deal with. The group chose to take the abandoned wagon from Taylor and Flagg and push it to Champion's cabin and light it on fire. Smoke plumed into the air and the heat from the blaze finally smoked Champion out of the house and he ran south into a ravine near the cabin. As the rustler leaped into the cover of the ravine he was immediately shot by

Jim Dudley in the left arm and then through the chest by Jeff Mynett. The King of the Rustlers had fallen to the private army. After the death of Champion, Ben Jones and Billy Walker were given money for their losses in the fire and sent south, while the group refocused on traveling to Buffalo.[97]

People who knew of the invasion had already begun preparing for the confrontation. Taylor and Flagg had recruited men to ride back to the KC Ranch and Angus had already ridden to the ranch and retrieved the remains of Ray and Champion. After returning from KC, the sheriff asked local militia Captain J.B. Menardi for assistance regarding the possible threat. Menardi replied to Angus he had just received a message from Governor Barber's office commanding local National Guard units to honor requests only from the governor and not local sheriffs.[98] Despite the plight of Red Angus regarding the militia, the local Sherriff was able to recruit six men to ride with him and Flagg solicited another eight to ride out to the T.A. Ranch (14 miles south of Buffalo) and was joined by 23 other enraged Buffalo citizens whom were also heading towards the T.A. Ranch after hearing of the near death escape of Taylor, the blaze at the K.C. Ranch, and of the location of the marauders.[99]

The escape of Taylor and Flagg was a concern for the invasion army. So much so, they opted to hunker down and fortify the T.A. Ranch and hope their connections with Senators Carey and Warren would alert the cavalry to be sent from Fort McKinney to save the army against the Johnson County citizen's retaliation group.[100] The farmhouse, barn, and stable at the T.A. Ranch were built with 10-12 inch think hewed logs and the group used earth to pack and fortify the structures. Moreover, rifle pits and trenches were dug around the acreage. The fortified property was referenced as a small fort able to withstand a rifle barrage indefinitely, or as long as the provisions would hold.[101] On April 10th at dawn, Flagg and now 49 volunteers surrounded the property and shots were exchanged between the invasion army and the volunteers of Buffalo. Volunteers continued to arrive to the aid of Johnson County and over the next two days the numbers of the besieging line increased from 200 to 300 men all working to fortify the areas surrounding the T.A. Ranch to keep the private army at bay.[102]

The two sides had dug in deep against one another and relief for either side over the next two days would not appear. Governor Barber eagerly waited to hear of any news about the invasion having sent his orders to the militia and then having the invasion squad cut the telegraph lines of Johnson County. In Buffalo, Sheriff Angus had discussed the T.A. Ranch situation with Colonel J.J. Van Horn of Fort McKinney. Van Horn agreed to take soldiers to the ranch to end the dispute. Van Horn left the fort with eleven officers and 96 enlisted men. When the military group arrived at the standoff on April 13th Van Horn asked Angus to have his besieging group cease-fire at the ranch. After which, the invaders negotiated a surrender to the military, not Sheriff Angus, and were marched to Fort McKinney.[103]

After the private army arrived at the fort, Angus attempted to pursue an expedient prisoner transfer process between the military and Johnson County law enforcement. During the next three days the invaders stayed at Fort McKinney until the Governor ordered the prisoners to be transferred to Fort Russell in Laramie County outside of Cheyenne. The prisoners marched out of Fort McKinney on April 17 to Douglass and then rode a train to Cheyenne to await trial.[104] After seven months of pre-trial deliberation, financial issues arose concerning the detainment of the prisoners at the fort and the cost of prosecuting the case. Johnson County was held responsible for covering the expenses of the case although the trial was held in Laramie County. On one side of the coin, Johnson County residence complained of the possibility of the invaders being released without punishment and the other side contended the case could bankrupt the county. In January of 1893, the case of *State v. Frank M. Canton et al.* was dismissed.[105] Although litigated justice was not served, for Johnson County, Wyoming voters had grown tired of the status quo and spoke out against the Cattlemen's Commonwealth.

During the early 1890s Wyoming struggled to find alternative avenues of production to create revenue. Laramie, the most industrialized city in the state watched its glassworks factory close in 1889, followed by the closures of its flourmill and cigar factories in 1891. Also during the period of the planning, failing, and acquitting of the invaders of the Johnson County War, Wyoming lost four of its 15 banks, The Cheyenne National Bank (November 1891), First National Bank of Cheyenne (July 1893), Bank of Cheyenne (July 1893), and the First National Bank of Sundance (October 1893).[106] Residents of Wyoming urged for more easily accessible commerce and Senators Carey and Warren voted against free silver coinage, which many within the state did not endorse. Both Senators had to choose between conservatism and western interests. Some politicians argued that the limited availability of gold was too difficult for citizens to obtain. Others argued that the inflationary value of silver would raise the amount of currency available; but it also would drive up the price of goods. Had the silver standard been passed in 1892, occupants of Wyoming had always held out hope that the valuable metal would be located within the state's borders. The state never was a silver producer; nonetheless, a Wyoming endorsement of free silver coinage would promote western mining endeavors in general. Furthermore, Democrat and Populist Party members believed that readily available money would help develop settlement in the west.[107] The Republican Party in the 1892 elections chose not to endorse silver and it proved to be a costly mistake.

Between Warren's Arid Land Bill, The Johnson County War, and other errors committed by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association including the failure of the National Trust and the Gold Standard emphasis placed the Democrat Party in a good position to win the Elections of 1892. The Democrats nominated Rawlins druggist and Sheppard John E Osborne to be pitted against Republican and Laramie philanthropist Edward Ivinson. Preliminary polls held the two to be in a dead lock. However, in late September, the Populist Party of Wyoming voted in favor of endorsing the Democrat's nominee. Republicans had never worried about the 2,000 some odd votes that the Wyoming Populists could produce before 1892 because party supporters were found in the sparsely populated northeastern counties and the roughly two million dollar annual production of Wyoming farming did not rival the thirty-three million dollar value of the cattle industry.[108] The setback from the Populist Party swing endorsement was another body blow to weaken the Republican Party and also the Cattlemen's Association. Leading into the elections one final jab at the Republicans would firmly guarantee a victory for the Democrats.

In October before the elections, *The Northwest Livestock Journal* published a confession to Johnson County authorities from George Dunning concerning his role and the purpose of the Johnson County invasion squad. At the conclusion of the standoff, Dunning claimed to have hidden in the hayloft of the barn at the T.A. Ranch and waited for the crowd to disperse. After the crowd departed, Dunning claimed to have climbed out of his hideout and begun walking to the road headed for Buffalo. When Dunning arrived in Buffalo, he was quickly arrested by Sheriff Angus and had claimed he had walked down the wrong end of the road. Shortly thereafter, Dunning rendered a confession linking every prominent Republican in the state including Senator Warren and Governor Barber with complicity to the conspiracy.[109] After the publication of the confession, Wyoming voters went to the polls to offer their endorsements and the outcome was predictable.

On November 8, 1892, the Republicans suffered defeat with the election of Democrats Osborne as Governor, Henry Coffeen to the House of Representatives, and Gibson Clark to the Wyoming State Supreme Court. The Democratic Party stood a good chance of controlling enough votes within the legislature to name a Democrat Senator. According to the *Leader,* "Wyoming had not only been redeemed, but rejuvenated and it is a proclamation to the world that this is a free sovereign state, handicapped though it is and has been, cannot descend to the level of a political pocket borough for any man or clique". To summarize it another way, a worker for the Wyoming Democrats wrote to a colleague after the elections by stating, "The gang is dead and no political messiah will save or resurrect them." The electoral evidence suggests that the Johnson County War was the culminating piece to topple the Republicans. Ivinson would only carry Laramie County, while Osborne had a very strong showing in Carbon (his home district), Johnson, and Sheridan. The presence of Henry A. Coffeen of Sheridan gave an extra incentive to Democrat voters in that area.[110] Regardless of the county's economic affinity, whether ranching, mining, or the railroad, only the stronghold of ranching in Laramie County clung to the Republican Party. The Republican Party had been the preferred politico for Wyoming during her Territorial period, again during statehood admittance, and was viewed to be a guide for the area. Hence, the first major lose for the party signaled that a different Republican platform was needed to appease the Wyoming electorate.

The gaffes of the Republican Party cost voter support and rendered the fusion between the Democrats and Populists possible. The unity between the two fronts would not last long because in 1893 Senator Warren's seat was set to expire. To elect a Senator to the District of Columbia, state legislatures would vote to fill the position (until the adoption of the Seventeenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1913). The Wyoming Senate vote was completely divided by party lines. Within the Legislature, Republicans held twenty-two votes, conversely the Democrats and Populists held twenty-one and five electors respectively. It was deduced after twenty-four ballots that a clear majority vote for the available Senate seat was not obtainable. Some Republicans were put-off by the Johnson County War. While hardline Democrats balked at Populist ideas although the Populist vote was the swing vote. By February, Governor Osborne opted to not appoint a Senator and did not call a special session to sleuth out a candidate to fill the seat. Hence from 1893-1895 Senator Carey was the lone Wyoming Senator in Washington D.C.[111]

Concurrent with the Wyoming Senate issue, the United States mimicked the struggles of Wyoming and/or vice versa. Gold currency was in short supply in 1893, while the American economy had steadily increased since the Civil War and a major gold infusion into the treasury had not occurred since the 1870s. The crux of the gold situation was more money was circulating throughout the country, however its gold backing remained at stagnant if not declining levels. The reason was due to increased wages, loans, and over production. Five transcontinental railroads were operating and the amount of cargo shipped would realistically maintain two. However, as the rush into Wyoming demonstrated, railroads were built quickly to expand across the county. The problem with this model was railroads needed loans for expansion construction. With large debts and limited track activity, railroads began to declare bankruptcy, starting with The Philadelphia & Reading Railroad in February of 1893. Other railroads failed as such including The Erie Railroad (July), Northern Pacific (August), Union Pacific (October), and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (December). The railroads were financially unstable and when the Philadelphia & Reading closed, investors of the other railroads began to pull their investments causing a run on banks also meaning a run on gold currency. For Wyoming, the economic failures of the railroad signaled an end of the industry's influence in the state. The industry that followed and attempted to saddle coal had fallen. The Panic of 1893 removed one leg of the Wyoming economic system. The coal within the state remained; the yoke of the railroad and its political influence did not. The remaining supports for Wyoming's commerce and business (government and stock raising) would also drastically change from the depression caused by the Panic of 1893.

Farmers and ranchers suffered through the deflation value of their goods thanks to overproduction similar to what had been witnessed within the cattle industry. Moreover, agricultural laborers could not obtain credit because of the run on banks, which caused operating currency for banks to be limited. Short supply of credit induced many foreclosures of small farms, and ranches ensued, just as it had with the railroads. The country was marred in an economic depression after the burst of the railroad bubble in

1893. The downturn would eventually end because of the Klondike Gold Rush pouring more gold into the American Treasury and poor crop seasons in Europe and India which allowed American grain, meat, and manufactured products to be shipped and sold overseas, thus creating a demand for American goods and stimulated the American Economy out of its four year slump.[112] The hardships of the country did produce an angle for the Republican Party to regain the lead political position in Wyoming. To achieve the pole position, the Republicans would have to sacrifice cattle stock growing and endorse mining initiatives.

For Republicans like Francis Warren to regain power in Wyoming the Democrats would need to falter and several issues would cause the demise for the incumbent party. The fundamental causes for Democrat stumbling heading into the elections of 1894 was the closure of banks from the Panic of 1893, the Union Pacific falling into receivership, and the lassitude of the cattle industry.[113] Moreover, current Democrat President Cleveland was a staunch supporter of the gold standard and planned to repeal the Sherman Silver Purchasing Act. Representative Coffeen from Northern Wyoming also damaged the chances of the Democrats when he wavered badly on the McKinley Tariff, which placed a maximum duty rates on most woolen imported goods and proposed that Fort McKinney should be moved from Buffalo to Sheridan.[114] Coffeen's proposal regarding Fort McKinney translated to less government aid to be spent in Buffalo and also less perceived security for Johnson County.

Democratic constituents in Johnson and Sheridan County felt the tariff on wool had driven down the price of wool. The purpose of the tariff was to protect American wool producers and industries. Because foreign wool was taxed to a heavy extent, it limited competition within the wool industry. Curbing foreign wool suitors allowed American wool producers to corner the domestic market. The problem concerning dominating a market like wool was the supply was high and the demand for the product was low. The tariff effectively limited non-American wool competition, but the protectionist aspect of the tariff did not elevate the price of wool and importers where willing to pay the high duty. The sheep industry suffered during the economic depression (as had the cattle industry), but it was not the tariff that plagued sheep rangers. Rather, the economic depression of 1893 directly affected the public's purchasing power of woolen products. Moreover, the manufacturing of wool suffered from a lack of purchasing and thus the demand and manufacturing of wool decreased along with the price. The constraints felt by the laborers of Wyoming pushed support for the other two parties heading into the fall election season.

With arms open, both the Populists and the Republicans supported the exodus of Democrat supporters and championed the urgings of the Wyoming public. The Populist Party did not support a second fusion ticket in 1894. Due to the Cleveland Administration's strong stance of anti-labor, anti-Populist, and anti-silver sentiments, the Populist Party saw little need to support the Democrats and instead elected to wage a separate campaign.[115] Republicans whom had voted consistently against bimetallism in 1890 and 1892 announced the party's full support of silver. Although Wyoming did not produce silver, the state did have a substantial mining community and it sympathized with its silver-producing neighbors including Montana and Colorado.[116]

Wyoming voters in November 1894 did not support the Democrats at the local polls. When the dust settled from the 1894 elections, free coinage Republicans won in a landslide. Republican William Richards won the governorship, 18 Republicans versus 4 Democrats sat in the state Senate, 34 Republicans and 2 Democrats assembled on the floor of the House of Representatives. Representative Coffeen was replaced by Republican Frank W. Mondell and both United States Senate seats where assumed by Republicans Clarence D. Clark and Francis E. Warren.[117] Republicans shifted their primary campaign endorsements to favor the mining industry rather than cattle business endeavors and in turn stirred the political shift of Wyoming in 1894. The Democrats did shoulder burdens that were not of their own making such as the financial collapse of many railroads and the agricultural slump of the 1890s. However, the maneuvering away from the fusion ticket in 1894, the silver question, and the moving of Fort McKinney were mistakes that plagued the party. Performing a shrewd political exercise, the Republican shift away from the cattle industry signaled that the Cattlemen's Commonwealth had passed into the annuals of Wyoming. The bonanza of the cattle barons was not to return, even Senator Warren's Livestock Company fell into receivership during the Panic of 1893. Raising stock would still operate within Wyoming, however competition within the industry would be the final blow to the singular emphasis of the cattle market.

Woolgrowers spelled the end of the exclusive focus on one stock raising market and the diversification of Wyoming was good for the state. Unlike the cattle barons, early Wyoming sheep-men tended to be "hand built". The shepherds came from modest economic circumstances and arrived on the western range looking to achieve the lowest costs of production possible. Early sheep herding between 1878-1885 was not as profitable as the open range cattle boom, but sheep stock prices remained steady between

$3.50 and $4.50 per hundredweight.[118] Life for early range shepherds was nomadic. While tending too roughly two thousand sheep, the herder packed his tent, bedding, food, and rifle for hunting and protection of the flock while the band wandered the grasslands.[119] Similar to the cattle industry, the origins of Wyoming's sheep herding has varied accounts as to its originator. Samuel Western offers that the Durbin brothers and their 900 churros were the first to enter the region in 1870; *America's Sheep Trails* lends the title of Sheep King to Morton Post, Wyoming Surveyor General Silas Reed states Edward Creighton was the chief sheep operator running 10,000 sheep between western Nebraska and eastern Wyoming.[120] The low, but steady prices of wool products in the 1870s offered enough incentive for locals and new immigrants to join the sheep movement in Wyoming, specifically Francis Warren, John B. Okie, and Charles H. "Dad" Worland.

Sheep grazing pioneers had to continuously move their flock from one pasture to the next to prevent over grazing. The larger the flock, the more ground was needed to be traversed by the shepherd. The Warren Livestock Company, which was based out of Cheyenne pushed sheep east to west within southern Wyoming. John B. Okie (from Washington D.C.) whom arrived in Rawlins, Wyoming in 1882 paid $4,500 to purchase (a loan from his mother) 1,000 ewes and 16 rams and grazed his herd in southwestern Wyoming and suffered heavy winter loses. After the winter of 1882, Okie moved his operation north to Boysen Reservoir (north of present day Shoshoni) and traveled along the southern edge of the Big Horn Mountains to the Lost Cabin area.[121] Four years later in 1886, Charles H. "Dad" Worland drove 7,700 head of sheep into the Big Horn Basin and then lost almost all during the winter.[122] Natural grazing boundaries emerged from one flock operator to the next and disputes occurred between cattle, sheepherders, and other homesteaders. Advertisements concerning the friendly environments of Wyoming enticed wool producers to travel to the Great American Desert, as it was a natural home for sheep.[123] As quickly as shepherds arrived to Wyoming in the mid-1880s they were welcomed by the bad winter of 1886-1887.

The interesting aspect of the big freeze of 1886-1887 regarding Wyoming's sheep industry was it played as a staging point for Wyoming wool production to surpass the cattle industry. The cost of wool did fall after the winter, however it did not plummet similarly to cattle prices. The yeoman prices of sheep could not compete during the high water mark of cattle. When the bottom fell out of the beef market, the slight decline of wool product prices appeared to be more manageable to stock raisers. The national average of woolen fleece for clothing per pound ranged between thirty-three and thirty-six cents. During the next seven years between the winter of 1886-1887 and the Panic of 1893 the same product's price range would hit a low point between twenty-nine and thirty-three cents per pound in 1893.[124] The price of wool was affected by the harsh winter and wool clip per pound dipped due to lacking grasslands. Nevertheless, the price of American wool remained somewhat stagnant. The consistent monies generated from the industry outweighed the speculation of high and low cattle prices. Wyoming ranchers including the Warren Livestock Company began to invest in the steady industry. By 1889 Warren's Company would report their sheep to cattle population as 90,000 to 2,500. Moreover, the average cost per hundredweight of sacked wool was $2.47 with each sheared animal producing a clip between five to six pounds.[125] Between 1886-1893 the wool industries survived with steady product pricing and the Wyoming sheep population climbed.

Heading into 1890, the Wyoming (as had the nation's) sheep population had increased; however, the market value of the product remained steady. The passage of the McKinley Tariff was a move designed to isolate the American market from the foreign wool invasion and hopefully raise stock prices. From 1890-1893 sheep prices did not budge and after the Panic of 1893, the price decreased. As a reaction to bank and railroad failures, President Cleveland rescinded the tariff enabling a free wool trade. Without the tariff, the price of American wool declined further. On a global perspective, wool production had flooded the market. Specifically, wool production from Australia and New Zealand had sky rocketed. Locally in Wyoming, resident sheep grangers cried out for a tariff that would not be implemented until 1897.

Amid the passage of free wool (1894) and the Dingley Tariff (1897) American wool prices fluctuated at low levels. Severe drought hit Australia in 1895 causing a twelve percent reduction the first year and a twenty-three percent decrease of foreign wool production between 1896-1900. During the same span, American wool populations increased by twenty-five percent.[126] For Wyoming, sheep production jumped thirty-two percent from 1,940,021 head in 1898 to 2,840,190 in 1900. Conversely, during the same three years, the cattle industry experienced an eight percent increase from 1898 (706,000) to 1900 (767,000).[127] Thanks to the Dingley Tariff and the American demand for wool products, the reduction of imported foreign wool enabled American sheep products to be sold to more local markets. The demand for beef remained constant, while American wool increased.

Large corporations did not operate Wyoming's sheep population; rather homesteaders and grangers comprised the bulk of the sheep movement. The none cattle enterprises strengthened Wyoming's stock raising ventures with diversification, however it was also the death blow to the Cattlemen's Common Wealth.[128] Heading into 1900, Wyoming's diversified stock population was maintaining steady yields, but none eclipsed the summit of the cattle boom. Moreover, the diversification of ranching endeavors, while at lower production levels, proved to be more reliable then speculative ventures. Thanks to differing stock enterprises and other commerce, Wyoming's property tax valuation steadily remained around $30,000,000 total value between 1890-1900 despite lower cattle prices.[129] The expansion of Wyoming stock diversification propelled general stock grazing to be a steady economic support that would replace lone focused cattle ranching. The economic influence of the Cattlemen's Commonwealth was replaced by general livestock investment and the replacement of the financially failed railroads would not come from the agricultural sector.

The Wyoming legislation's 1894 endorsement of the silver standard was an attempt to appease the local mining industry. It was performed by Republicans attempting to regain their footing within the state's legislature and was geared towards garnering support from the local mining industry. The backing of extraction was for good reason because during the previous year at the beginning of the Panic of 1893 the Wyoming state auditor valued railroad properties to be $7,642,250.00 with Sweetwater, Laramie, and Uinta leading all others by each being valued nearly at or above one million dollars apiece. Conversely, the combined value of cattle and sheep statewide would total $5,658,710.00.[130] The comparison of railroad and ranching properties is an inexact measurement of comparison, certainly including Laramie County because of the slight mining influence from that particular county. Nevertheless, Uinta and Sweetwater properties were heavily coal influenced and if coal were to be produced efficiently, the railroad coal companies would be producing gains for Wyoming residents. In 1893, Wyoming's coal output rested at 2,280,685 tons and sold at an average of $1.35 per ton creating a total value of sales at $3,296,904.[131] The cattle industry, which had been under fire for seven years with declining prices and value, was estimated to having a production value of $4,108,272.00. [132] While cattle produced, coal production and value had remained a constant. Coal had increased production and had been selling from the late 1880s into the Panic of 1893 between $1.25 and $1.50 per ton, while the value and price of cattle was on a consistent decline. Because of the steadiness of the mining industry leading into the Panic of 1893, Wyoming state delegates stood firmly in support of the endeavors of the miners.

At the beginning of the Panic of 1893 the Union Pacific attempted to alter pay periods of miners to be limited to once per month and in the following year reduced miners wages by ten cents per ton.[133] While the reduction in pay was at the discrepancy of the Union Pacific, the shifting of the pay period was against Wyoming law. As noted earlier, the Wyoming Constitution stated that companies would pay semi-monthly. The Wyoming Legislature, which was primarily composed of Democrats, shouldered the bulk of blame from residents for the shift of the railroad pay cycles. Due to the pay period and financial struggles of the Union Pacific in 1894 many employees (including miners) went on strike.[134] The support of Republicans regarding the silver issue shifted the miner's support to challenging the Democrat party. Complaints of the Union Pacific's bankruptcy propelled some to wonder if Wyoming coal was not maximizing it's potential from the railroad's leadership. The Union Pacific would survive the Panic of 1893, however it would be reorganized and between 1893-1897 Wyoming coal would expand.

The primary operator of the Wyoming coal industry in 1893 was the Union Pacific Railroad contributing sixty-three percent of the state's total coal output.[135] The failure of such a company in Wyoming impacted all aspects of the Wyoming economy. Wyoming coal miners were still working amid the sluggish economy; while some labor and working conditions disputes occurred like the Finnish uprising (miners threated to hang the mine boss) and gas explosions of the Hanna mines of 1893 and the Almy gas explosion of 1895, general activity remained steady. The key reason for miners of the Union Pacific to still be compensated for their efforts was the 1890 transfer of all Union Pacific coal interests to be owned and maintained separately from the rest of the railroad as a subsidy.[136] Between 1893-1897 Wyoming's coal productions ranged between 2,200,000-and 2,500,000 tons of coal and an average selling price that fluctuated from $1.21 to $1.35 per ton.[137] The market conditions were not primed for a mining boom, but the Panic of 1893 and the shortfalls of the railroads did not stop mining efforts.

To recover, the bankrupt Union Pacific went into receivership and several lines off the main thoroughfare left the parent company. The Denver and Gulf Railway went to John Evans of Colorado in 1893. The next summer, the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company as well as the St. Joseph-Grand Island line also obtained a separate receiver.[138] What these events offered was that the Union Pacific Railroad had lost access to branch lines from eastern Utah to the Missouri River and from the Gulf of Mexico to Wyoming. The railroad afterword was purchased and organized by Edward Henry Harriman in

1897.[139] During this time of continuous shuffling of the railroads, Wyoming mining steadily performed and expanded.

Rock Springs Coal Company co-founder Patrick J. Quealy sold his interests in the company and set out to the Ham's Fork Valley. Quealy wanted to build new mines in western Wyoming. To obtain adequate financial backing, Quealy (the former Wyoming Territorial Coal Mine Inspector) reached out to M.S. Kemmerer who was the Chairman of the Carbon Iron and Steel Company of Pennsylvania. The pair drafted the Ham's Fork Coal Land Proposition and acquired land north of the small Diamondville mines (west of Rock Springs), which were opened in 1894.[140] Assessing their Diamondville competition, Quealy and Kemmerer planned to construct their mining operations to mirror the town model of Hanna and Carbon. The new towns created by the investing pair were Kemmerer and Frontier. In Kemmerer, small plots of land could be purchased and Frontier would hold company housing. To further develop the two company towns, the Frontier Supply Company, Ham's Fork Cattle Company, Uinta Improvement Company, and surface mining facilities were all established by the same parent company Kemmerer Coal by 1897.[141] During the ensuing year, Anaconda Copper of Montana purchased the Diamondville Mines. The small pairing of Kemmerer and Frontier was slated to compete with one of the largest mining enterprises in the west.[142] The new investments in Wyoming coal signaled that the nation's economy was beginning to recover from the four-year depression after the Panic of 1893 and with the return of investment, Wyoming would experience another boom.

Steady production was the theme for Wyoming during the years following the economic crisis of 1893. Between 1898 and 1899 the coal industry witnessed a spike of

1,000,000 tons of coal shipped across the country. The price of the harvest still roughly rested at $1.25 per ton, but added production increased the value of the industry to nearly $5,000,000.00.[143] The laborers employed by the mining industry rose from 2,949 in 1886 to 5,332 in 1900. Wyoming was second to Colorado concerning coal producing western states and ranked thirteenth nationally in 1900.[144] Not all flourished in the latest coal boom. The life of a mine only lasts as long as the coal seam and eventually the supply line will pinch. In 1900, the Union Pacific closed the mines of Almy and two years later the Carbon mines ceased operations. Coal shortages would not be a problem for the Union Pacific because the miners, equipment, and company housing were transferred to new mining operations opened in Superior (east of Rock Springs) and Cumberland (south of Kemmerer).[145]

During the next five years, Wyoming mining experienced unparalleled success. In 1901 Wyoming Coal would produce 4,485,374 tons of coal, which were valued at $6,060,462.00. Sweetwater and Uinta Counties would lead the way procuring 1,706,880 and 1,439,147 tons respectively.[146] Over the subsequent 5 years, coal production would substantially grow by 33%. Sweetwater and Uinta Counties would again be the leaders of extraction with Sweetwater also becoming the first Wyoming County to singularly produce over 2,000,000 tons in one year. Uinta as well as Sweetwater would achieve the same feat the subsequent year. Surprisingly, the third leading county in 1906 was Sheridan, which eclipsed 1,000,000 tons for the first time. The 80% growth of northern Sheridan coal was astonishing because the county produced 221,000 tons in 1901 to the 1906 mark of 1,014,318 tons. Also, 1906 was the first year that three Wyoming Counties all produced over 1,000,000 tons of coal.[147]

Kemmerer mine operator P.J. Quealy credited the early successes of the Union Pacific specifically to the coalmines of Sweetwater, Uinta, and Carbon counties. Furthermore, he would add that the Burlington and Elkhorn Railroads would enable the development of the mines of Weston, Sheridan, Big Horn, Converse, and Crook Counties. However, Quealy would question if the leadership of the railroads had stunted the development of Wyoming's coal industry. "While our coal business is entirely linked to the railroads, we have six individual coal companies who have no connection with any railroad system, while Utah has one".[148] It is very important to not lose sight of the connection between railroad expansion and the development of Wyoming coal. Although Quealy was correct regarding railroads as the lifeblood of the coal industry, it was the presence of coal that propelled the Union Pacific, Northern Pacific, Burlington, and other locomotive companies to travel to Wyoming.

Heading into 1905, roughly twelve major coal or fuel companies were listed on the Biennial Report of Wyoming showing the taxation of the mining properties. Of the companies listed, five were directly linked to major railroads and a sixth to the Anaconda Mining Company.[149] The Wyoming delegation echoed the sentiments of P.J. Quealy that in order for Wyoming industry to expand, businesses such as the railroads needed to be enticed to migrate to Wyoming. Keeping extraction industries in Wyoming had been the goal of the legislature since the state's inception. No severance tax had been passed by the state delegation since the state's genesis. It was discussed at great length during the constitutional convention and it was argued that an extraction tax would not generate enough revenue for a meaningful earning for the state, albeit the corporations and the companies would pass the tax along to the miners or let the coal sit idle.[150] Either choice by the coal companies would not be to the benefit of the Wyoming population. Hence after the 1889 debate regarding a severance tax, the Wyoming Legislature did not entertain the idea again until the 1920's and a severance tax was not passed until the 1970s.

The legislature's decision not to pursue a severance tax against coal companies was the final action to place coal mining as the economic leader for Wyoming. The roar of legislative inaction speaks as loudly as drafted passages. Constitutional Convention President M.C. Brown stated years later after the convention that not fixing a tonnage tax on coal was the gravest mistake of the convention.[151] While the cattle industry came under heavy support by the state government to save it's commerce, Wyoming Coal mining did not. Political motives drove cattlemen to endorse sheep, but to ultimately regain power in Cheyenne, Republicans had to fully endorse the coal miner. Since 1894, P.J. Quealy estimated that half of Wyoming's population reaped the financial benefits of working in some capacity of the coal mining industry.[152] By 1908 the Stock and Fitzhugh oil claims had erupted at Salt Creek and another extraction industry had emerged as a major force in Wyoming.[153] The early 1900s might have been a golden opportunity for a severance tax to be passed and bolster the coffers of the financially small state. It was entertained in the 1920s due to oil production and again defeated due to fears of companies leaving Wyoming. Fear of losing the lucrative industry propelled the stance of neutrality by local officials. While the cattle industry played a large part making legislation for a time in Cheyenne, very few if any Wyoming state delegates attempted to regulate the extraction business. Moreover, their motives to tax oil as a focal point rather than the constant of coal lent an insight to the respect of the state to the reliability and dependability of its most valuable resource.

The last decade and a half of the Nineteenth Century marked important transitions in Wyoming's economy, which placed the nascent state on its current trajectory. Cattle ranching and the influence of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association yielded power and importance to mining, itself made possible by guiding the development of railroad transportation within the state. Politically, mining gained authority in the same manner as grazing, albeit conditions, production, and constant value would ensure extraction would not relinquish the economic thrown. Racial Violence and the Johnson County War reflected the passing of the frontier and the tensions of economic change did lessen as further grazing regulation became popular as well as sister extraction endeavors such as oil and gas teamed with coal. As had been the earlier pattern, economic operations and political power went hand in hand. So to as American fuel consumption is centered on fossil fuels or for the duration of Wyoming's supplies, authority within the state will rest with extraction.

Conclusion:

The Wyoming Thesis or Amendment and American West Historiography

Wyoming's fuel output would remain high through World War I. Between 1911-1920 coal production from Rock Springs and southern Wyoming increased from 4,865,761 to 6,528,813 tons. Southern Wyoming mines led the state in coal production, but coal output statewide had also jumped and the Office of the State Inspector of Mines could not feasibly manage all the extraction sites in the state individually. Therefore, the state legislation altered the face of the Wyoming mining industry, again. Administrators from the state altered mining in Wyoming by dividing the state's coal producing regions into two distinct districts. The southern mines were allocated to be Mining District One and the northern mines were Mining District Two. Although Sweetwater and Uinta counties often jockeyed for the lead production position in District One, Sheridan County was decidedly the top producer in District Two, by churning out 1,906,750 tons. Moreover, Hot Springs, Weston, Fremont, Converse, and Johnson counties joined Sheridan to produce 3,051,461 tons at the dawn of the roaring 20s.[1] Coal production had grown to unprecedented heights in Wyoming. Notably, the WyoDak mines of Campbell County are not listed in the preceding reports because the mines of Gillette had just begun operations at the Peerless mine in late 1918.[2] The 1920 records do not indicate the influence WyoDak will have on Wyoming extraction; nevertheless, the sleeping giant in northeastern Wyoming will become a third mining institution for Wyoming. As mining continued to climb during the first two decades of the twentieth century, the livestock industries also continue with its previous trajectory.

The unsettled nature of the cattle industry continued in the early twentieth century. Bovine estimates from 1900-1910 ranged between 700,000 and 900,000 head of cattle. The sheep industry exploded during the same ten-year span jumping from 2,500,000 to over 5,000,000. Afterwards, both industries declined over the next three years with the cattle population resting at an estimated 500,000 and sheep ranging from 5,000,000 to 4,000,000.[3] The beginning of World War I would split the two range industries for a period of time. Beginning in 1914, cattle counts would increase and finally crest in 1919 totaling 1,172,000 and be valued at $73,824,000. The sheep industry did not fare as well as its counterparts and its numbers declined from 4,500,000 to 3,300,000 by 1919.[4] The first twenty years of the 1900s proved to beneficial for the Wyoming economy and new industries emerged.

Oil had been discovered in the Salt Creek region at the end of the 19th century, which led to manufacturing and refinement to slowly develop thereafter. In 1917, twenty-three proven oil fields were producing petroleum including Salt Creek, Grass Creek, Elk Basin, and Big Muddy. Furthermore, five refineries were operational (two in Casper, two in Greybull, and one in Cowley). Interestingly, three of the five refineries that operated in Wyoming were in the Big Horn Basin. Obviously, the refineries were located close to oil producing fields, but the crux of the matter is the geography of the Big Horn Basin. Oil transported from the refineries of the Basin was closer to Montana rather than to the other depots in Wyoming. Regardless, Governor Houx would comment on Wyoming's petroleum business as growing in five years (1912-1917) from a minor industry to ranking just below agriculture as one of Wyoming's most important industrial activities. The governor would continue by estimating the value of the gasoline market to be $37,500,000 and other petroleum products roughly appraised at $11,250,000. Thus, the governor would conclude that Wyoming oil's gross business was only four percent less than agriculture.[5] The joy and earnings from the World War I era would soon vanish.

During the course of the 1920s, all production of Wyoming's goods slowed dramatically. The demand for rangeland and extraction products declined as an economic depression settled over the state. At the conclusion of World War I, production encountered an impasse with a twenty-year economic depression, which will conclude this study. The purpose for ending at this stage is threefold; first, at the onset of the depression, Wyoming had solidified itself as a viable economic producer with a permanent imprint on several major American markets. Secondly, cowboys, violence on the range, dirty smoke filled miners, and wildcatter oil speculators had passed onto folklore after World War I. Yes, ranchers still rode fences and squabbled over water rights, coal extraction was still operational, and oil was the next big boom business. Individuals whom established these three industries in Wyoming during the 19th century were made into legends within their perspective arenas and with the general public. Yet, heading into the 1920s and beyond, the figureheads of the three industries were retired as the focus of the nation shifted from the Wild West to a more global perspective, but they were fully entrenched within the state and simply become Wyoming's business. Finally, the depression reduced all facets of economic contributions in the state and remained downturned until World War II. The state's economy was not reduced to a nonentity; however, after a length of time encompassing the depression and wartime production, Wyoming emerged from World War II a much different state. Hence, the oddity of Wyoming's developmental phase is critical to understanding the state's place in the American West.

The development of Wyoming struggles to find proper definition in western historiography. Stegner can be used when discussing Wyoming's achievement as a place by returning to his offering defining a place does not become as such until the region is shaped and experienced by those whom reside there over the course of time by generations.[6] Alas, further use of Stegner in attempting to define Wyoming in the American West becomes a struggle due to the author's counterclaims against Walter Prescott Webb by asserting that the west is insular and circular in a sense that it is defined more by mountain ranges than basins.[7] The mountain claim of Stegner would reveal that roughly only one-third of Wyoming would qualify as a member of the American West. Ergo, to better explain Wyoming's full membership with the American West, investigations into the varied historical off shoots of the state must be included to appropriately define the relationship between the state and the American West.

Borrowing the thoughts of Etulain to understand the American West and apply his detailed treatment of western history to Wyoming, it is asserted that treatment of both sides of a historical topic must occur to avoid a narrowness of the scope of examination.[8] Moreover, to understand the development of Wyoming, an investigation of the financial institutions of the state would be the next step when attempting to correlate Wyoming and the American West. While Wyoming has held many agricultural and industrial industries within its borders, delving into the histories of ranching and extraction offers a clear vision of the development of the Indian Paintbrush state. Specifically, the continual presence of both industries from the state's inception through the modern era offers a substantial data pool spanning over time from which inferences can be drawn. Furthermore, to focus on one industry and not the other would create an incomplete record of the events that have shaped Wyoming. While the guidance of Etulain is spot on concerning research practice, it is limited concerning the categorization of the findings pertaining to Wyoming.

To gain greater insight as to the progress of Wyoming's coal and cattle industries, homage to the state's general develop must be addressed. From Ray Billington it is understood that the state's of the American West follow a zonal pattern of development. This theory is correct when investigating Wyoming, however the order of the pattern's operations diverges away from the Northwest University history professor.[9] Wyoming's pattern begins with the trappers' arrival to the region and operating under the context of a colonial economic system, which is described as a singular flow of currency and goods away from the area. After which, the state follows it own pattern with the establishment of trading and guide posts to serve migrants. Outlining service posts are a very important aspect to understand when compared to the activities of trappers. Wyoming's outlining posts created permanent settlements within the area and operated within an open economic system of currency traveling into the region rather than commodities headed solely east. After the opening of duel trade; the following three phases (coal, railroads, and cattle) arrived very closely to one another. To explain the reason for each industry's arrival and to distinguish one from the other, the reason for each to travel west must be determined. Simply, coal drove the railroads to travel through Wyoming and the cattle industry followed the railroad. Following cattle, phase four of Wyoming's development is defined as general farming. Finally, the last stage of development for Wyoming was the urbanization of depots along the Transcontinental Railroad because of coal mining and ranching. Although the Wyoming hypothesis of development offers an overview of economic maturation, it still does not divulge the relationship between Wyoming and the west, nor with the United States.

Before Wyoming's stance in the west can be determined, the relationship between the state and the country must be analyzed. Further economic examination is applicable to illuminate the nature of the connection between Wyoming and the United States. As previously offered, Wyoming did support Devoto's claims of colonialism during the first phase of development. Because of the open exchange of currency and permanent settlement during stage two, Wyoming diverges from Devoto's theory. To expand on thoughts relating to Wyoming's departure from colonialism, coal is key. Because coal received eastern investment to maintain production and the railroad and cattle industries did not, extraction further extended its leadership of Wyoming away from colonialism. Coal's leadership replicated the open exchange model of currency during phase two and thus cementing a bilateral relationship between the country and the state, because financial gain was experienced from both parties.

A second thought regarding the relationship between the United States and Wyoming concerning coal and cattle pertains to the Boom Hypothesis. Webb contests that the Boom Hypothesis occurs when an economic flurry of monetary gains ensues in the metropolis thanks to frontier land acquisition.[10] Webb's thoughts are very applicable to four of Wyoming's five boom cycles (all but coal). Ideas of a tributary state have previously been debunked; nevertheless, heightened economic activity can occur without servitude. The metropolis did enjoy a brief monetary windfall concerning ranch products, as did Wyoming with greater cattle investment. The temporary nature of the bovine upswing argues quite well for Webb, though when focusing on coal, the Boom Hypothesis falls short. Wyoming coal pulled investment from the metropolis to the frontier. Moreover, coal continuously produced economic gains for Wyoming as opposed to the other economic cycles of the state. Finally, because of the consistency of coal, greater settlement in the state occurred.

The relationship between Wyoming and the United States is one defined by dual economic exchange. Though the country and the state both benefit from their relationship, a connection between Wyoming and the American West is still unclear after economic evaluation. The uncertain association between Wyoming and the west at this juncture is based on the lack of inclusion of the populous living in the frontier. The coal amendment of the Boom Hypothesis demonstrates that the east was pulled to Wyoming. Moreover, the communities of Wyoming were imitations of their eastern counterparts. Government, economic structures, and extraction practices implemented in Wyoming were all previously utilized elsewhere in the United States. Coal was the linchpin to foster the settlement of Wyoming because of the industry's consistent production. If the other boom industries were the only production markets of Wyoming, the communities dependent on those boom products would end when their products were not longer financially favorable. Nevertheless, the communities that followed the Wyoming model of development and observed the guidelines of the east established a foundation of communal stability. Never in the history of Wyoming was imitation more apparent than during the state elections of 1894.

In 1894, Wyoming voters were entrenched with national silver debates and the usefulness of Bimetallism to curb a financial depression caused by the Panic of 1893. Wyoming mining was the only viable financial institution in the state because the cattle and railroad industries had both faltered. Previously, Republicans of Wyoming had staunchly supported stockmen politics, but chose to move away from the range and support the national platform of Democrats concerning Bimetallism. This distinction is very important to examine because if Wyoming were to simply support the national platform, Democrats would have been the preferred party within the state. This was not the case; Republicans emerged in 1894 as the primary mining supporters and won the elections. Wyoming's imitation of eastern settlement and attention to issues does fall under Pomeroy's definition of the American West.[11] However, the exchange relationship with the nation teamed with Wyoming Republicans winning the election of 1894 signals that Pomeroy's continuity also can only partially explain Wyoming. Had Pomeroy's imitation model not included colonialism, Wyoming would clearly comply with the author's theory. Rather, before territorial status was granted, Wyoming had broken away from such pen strokes and the actions of local constituents forty years later continue to disrupt the hypotheses of Pomeroy and other American West theorists. The pivotal issue that drove the state's interpretation of American imitation was mining.

Wyoming's mining industry is the key that links the state to the American West, while separating itself from western expansion. Extraction in Wyoming distorts the slow methodical advancement of frontier borders depicted in the Frontier Thesis. Furthermore, the consistent permanence of the industry also counters the idea that the frontier closed because of the lack of free land available for the romanticized pioneer to shape and influence American democracy.[12] Both Dippie and Wade offer strong arguments concerning mining against Turner and yet do not accurately support Wyoming. Specifically, gold rushes disrupted the stately progression of the frontier line[13] and the stages of social evolution were interrupted because mining camps appeared almost simultaneously with the opening of the region.[14] The methodical movement portrayed by Turner did not account for miners first traveling to Wyoming and again moving to the northern reaches of the state in the 1880s. Simply, the organization of each mining movement was to sporadically locate coal reserves and establish a camp every time a new territory was opened. Mining in general did bring the railroads west and split the Wyoming Territory into two counties, but the general practice of extraction does not fully support Wade or Dippie.

The instance that Wyoming coal differs from both Dippie and Wade was the two authors discussed gold and precious metal mining negating the Frontier Thesis. Additionally, gold and silver booms are considered to be symptoms of a colonial system because the camps adjacent to the mining claims are not permanent and the currency flows unilaterally. Rather, Wyoming coal's prolonged consistent settlement greatly disrupts the frontier border theory, while not enforcing differing theories of the same genre. Understanding the impact of Wyoming coal requires a differentiated approach to the various fields of Wyoming mining.

The continual division of American Western theories because of Wyoming coal entices the notion that Wyoming Coal stands alone in need of its category. Wyoming coal extraction should be labeled as the third mode of the west and stand alongside Worster's two modes of the ecological west, pastoral and hydraulic.[15] The proposed Wyoming mode thesis is not applicable to other states or regions; it has been specifically created because of Wyoming's history. Wyoming coal replicates the definitive characteristics laid forth by Worster when describing his two modes of the west. Concerning ranching, the cowboy moved to the west with no intentions of leaving and built the range's way of life. Similarly, Wyoming's coal industry sank mineshafts into the earth and produced a consistent presence. Returning to Worster concerning the irrigated farm and its similarity to Wyoming coal. Farming in the west is dependent on the storage and usage of water. Explicitly, the typical irrigator is not merely trying to enhance his production; he is critically dependent on the steady delivery of water on a reliable basis.[16] Likewise, Wyoming has depended on its coal production to be the centerpiece of the state's many industries thanks to its steady output. Thus in turn has created and maintained communities within the state, and placed Wyoming in a relationship of trade with the United States.

Worster misses the comparisons of Wyoming coal to range and farming because of the author's narrow vision. For Worster's west to better-fit Wyoming, the University of Kansas Chair should explore the ideas of Rodman Paul and Michael Malone's *Tradition and Challenge in Western Historiography.* The joint authors propose that the historiography of mining has evolved into a specialization of ore and its many affects.[17] The importance of this specialization concerning Worster and coal is the industry's established reliability within Wyoming. While boom and bust is directly linked to gold and silver mining, the consistency of coal mining has paved the way for Wyoming's communities and economy. In other mining communities, especially precious metals, once the valuable ore has all been removed, the communities end. The decline of those comminutes demonstrates a lack of stable development. Concerning Wyoming coal, urbanization has followed the extraction business and the mining cities have developed differing economic supports using extraction as a backbone. Worster does not address this facet of Wyoming coal. While the establishment of pastoral and agrarian pursuits has played a large part in the development of the west, neither has produced continued gains over an extended period of time to create or sustain a permanent generational developed backdrop for Wyoming.

Wyoming is certainly apart of the American West. Wyoming's early history puts the state in a position to be viewed as a place, located beyond the hundredth meridian, began under colonialism, quickly removed the title of tributary state, used available resources and technology to spur greater development (pastoral and extraction), and established a continuity of settlement within the arid region. It is the vantage of the observer that explains how the aforementioned qualities of the American West were procured in Wyoming. The often-highlighted American West holds a romantic gaze towards the cowboy, the range, the prospector, and the farmer. Wyoming's coal miner does not meet many of the requirements of the previously mentioned western folk heroes. Moreover, the soft rock miners of Wyoming established a permanence of production and settlement within the state, while other enterprises faulted, to afford a continuity of Wyoming's west. All of the industries within Wyoming (cattle, sheep, coal, oil, railroads, etc.) have a relationship with the state and its populous. The lifestyle and business of Wyoming's pastoral and agrarian pursuits should never be overlooked nor diminished in value concerning the development of Wyoming. Is it possible that once Wyoming coal ceases production, literature will click its pen and recount the tales of mining and long for the bygone days of coal production, or at least resemble the consistent drafts of dime store western cattle craze novels? The romanticism that has been extended to the stereotypical American West needs to broaden its scope to Wyoming Coal, if nothing else to be mentioned when directly discussing the state itself. For Wyoming, coal mining is a fruitful venture that has continued to produce for the state during the highs and lows of other local industries like the railroads, cattle, and sheep.

Wyoming coal founded an independent identity for the state, while remaining firmly nestled in the bosom of the American West. The extraction business acted as a protective blanket for local enterprisers to experiment with other avenues of production. While some entrepreneurs found success away from coal, it was soft rock mining that acted as a pillar for Wyoming commerce and community development. Interpretations of many historians may focus on the specter of a brief American West presumably ruled by range and agrarian novelties. In the case of Wyoming, coal mining was the avenue that furnished the uniqueness of the state while still reflecting other developmental trends as part of the American West.

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