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## IMMIGRATION OF BRITISH COAL MINERS IN THE CIVIL WAR DECADE\*

### I

British coal miners immigrated to the United States in increasing numbers during the Civil War decade. Their movement from the collieries gathered momentum in the early war years and reached its peak in 1869.<sup>1</sup> In 1862, almost all of the immigrants entering the United States who listed their occupation as “miner” were from Britain.<sup>2</sup> As shown in the table, such men accounted for more than 73% of all immigrant miners in each of the following years of the decade for which data are available, with the exception of 1864. In 1870, the 57,214 British immigrant miners listed in the United States Census represented more than 60% of all foreign-born miners (94,719) in the country.<sup>3</sup> The movement from Britain had already slowed when news of the American economic depression that began in 1873 reached the collieries in Britain, where an extraordinary demand for iron in the early 1870’s had hiked coal miners’ wages far above normal levels.<sup>4</sup> However, when employment in the American coalfields was

\* I am indebted to Professor Winton U. Solberg, of the University of Illinois, for his thoughtful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Returns of the numbers of miners and quarrymen who left the United Kingdom in passenger ships in each year (1861 to 1872) [Parliamentary Papers, 1873, LXI], p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> 1,720 of the 1,731 immigrant miners in 1862 were from Britain. *Ibid.*; Arrivals by Occupation of Alien Passengers 1820-67 and of Immigrants 1868-70, Bureau of Statistics (Washington, D.C., 1891), pp. 582-83. Data for miners who emigrated from Britain in 1860 and 1861 are not available. For a discussion of the inadequacy of data on emigrants from Britain, see Maldwyn A. Jones, “The Background to Emigration from Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century”, in: *Perspectives in American History*, ed. by Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), VII, pp. 20-24.

<sup>3</sup> These figures are for immigrant miners in all industries in the United States in 1870, including 17,069 men born in China or Japan. Miners of these nationalities were not found in the coalfields of the Midwest or East. *Ninth Census of the United States: 1870*, III, pp. 840-41.

<sup>4</sup> J. H. Clapham, *An Economic History of Modern Britain* (New York, 1932), II, ch. III; Arthur L. Bowley, *Wages in the United Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1900), pp. 105, 107-09; J. W. F. Rowe, *Wages in the Coal Industry* (London, 1923), pp. 72-73.

readily available in the 1860's and early 1870's, the risk involved in spending hard-won savings on the journey, which cost approximately £5 and took ten days by steamer, appeared reasonable.<sup>5</sup> In comparison with other wage earners coal miners in Britain were relatively well-paid.<sup>6</sup> They could, therefore, accumulate the cost of the trans-Atlantic passage during "good-times" at home.<sup>7</sup>

*British Immigrant Miners as Percentage of  
Miners from All Countries, 1862 to 1869*

	British Miners Total	Percent of Total Immigrant Miners	Miners from All Countries Total
1862	1,720	99.4	1,731
1863	3,220	74.6	4,314
1864	3,266	53.6	6,093
1865	5,643	74.0	7,631
1866	6,030	75.3	8,010
1867	5,641	73.1	7,709
1868	8,500	—	5,646
1869	9,913	—	6,005

Source: Returns of the numbers of miners and quarrymen, op. cit., p. 37; Immigration into the United States 1820-1903, House of Representatives, 57th Congress, 2nd Session, Document No 15, Pt 10, pp. 4392-98, 4406-22. The numbers of British miners for 1862 through 1869 are compiled from data in Parliamentary Papers and include all miners and quarrymen who emigrated from Britain to the United States. The discrepancy between British and United States figures related to British miners who entered the United States in 1868 and 1869 cannot be reconciled. Similar discrepancies occur also in 1860 and 1861.

Rowland Berthoff has suggested that the benefits to be derived in the immediate future encouraged miners to respond to the more profitable employment opportunities that were offered abroad.<sup>8</sup> John Wilson wrote of the "glowing accounts which reached us from America" and his decision to leave Britain. "The Civil War was raging there, and men were in great

<sup>5</sup> Brinley Thomas, *Migration and Growth*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1973), p. 96.

<sup>6</sup> E. H. Hunt, *Regional Wage Variations in Britain 1850-1914* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 73-74.

<sup>7</sup> Rowland T. Berthoff, *British Immigrants in American Industry 1790-1953* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

demand at very high wages.”<sup>9</sup> Many miners had relatives and friends already settled in America with whom they were in correspondence, and this provided an added impetus for those hesitant to take the final step.<sup>10</sup> Brinley Thomas, however, in his study *Migration and Economic Growth*, has cautioned against an over-simplified “pull” theory of American economic conditions in the second half of the nineteenth century. His data showed that prior to the Civil War (1848-62) immigration preceded railroad construction and followed coal production, whereas after the war, and for the remainder of the century, at least, both immigration and coal output lagged behind railroad expansion. He concluded, therefore, that the “pull” concept of American economic conditions needed revision.

Thomas did not discuss immigration and the economy in the Civil War era (1863-70), noting that this was an “uncertain period” marked by the disturbance caused by the war.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, in relation to the coal industry the “pull” of wage rates higher than could be earned at home was doubtlessly a factor for many among the almost 44,000 British immigrant miners who responded to the ready availability of employment in the American coalfields in the 1860’s.<sup>12</sup> Their years of experience at the coal face in the old-established mines in Britain had enabled them to acquire judgment, manipulative ability, technological skill, and mastery of other essential elements of their craft. Unlike mining-engineering knowledge, miners’ skills did not readily lend themselves to communication through the literature.<sup>13</sup> Their transference, therefore, was dependent upon emigration, and in the second half of the nineteenth century Britain was the only country in Europe from which substantial numbers of miners were leaving.<sup>14</sup> Their arrival in the American coalfields in the 1860’s enabled the mining industry to develop systematic operations and increase output, essential to the growth of manufactures. The increased coal supply also

<sup>9</sup> John Wilson, *Memories of a Labour Leader: The Autobiography of John Wilson, J.P., M.P.* (London, 1910), p. 143. See note 103.

<sup>10</sup> “In a great many cases [the emigrant] has friends already settled with whom he has been in correspondence.” Consul Harte, Glasgow, in *United States Consular Reports*, 1885, II, p. 971.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas, *Migration and Growth*, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

<sup>12</sup> See note 1.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion on the communication of craft skills see J. R. Harris, “Skills, Coal and British Industry in the Eighteenth Century”, in: *History*, LXI (1976), pp. 167-82.

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Roy, when mine inspector in Ohio, wrote: “Very few German miners ever emigrate to this country. [. . .] Thousands of Germans work in the coal mines of the United States, but question them and you will find that they, with rare exceptions, never saw a coalmine in the fatherland.” *Sixth Annual Report of the State Inspector of Mines, to the Governor of the State of Ohio, for the Year 1881* (Columbus, Ohio, 1881), p. 40; *National Labor Tribune*, 12 July 1890, p. 2.

helped speed the conversion from wood- to coal-burning locomotive engines, a necessary development in the movement toward a more rapid internal transport and communication system.<sup>15</sup> Thus, while the Civil War decade was indeed a disturbed economic period, it was also one of technological innovation and industrial growth.

Emigration from the collieries in Britain, however, was not solely a response to the ready availability of employment in the American coal-fields. Negative factors in the collieries at home were important determinants in the decision to emigrate. One of the most compelling was the colliery-owners' use of black-lists and lock-outs in efforts to thwart labor-union organization.<sup>16</sup> As early as 1825, colliery-owners in Hetton, Durham, black-listed a miner named Mackintosh after he attempted to organize a union. He solved his employment predicament by emigrating to the United States.<sup>17</sup> In 1858, Edward Corey and four other young miners in Northumberland went to sea after they were black-listed for breaking the Yearly Bond.<sup>18</sup> All twelve union miners sent to London in 1844, to collect money for men on strike in Northumberland and Durham, were black-listed.<sup>19</sup> Colliery-owners' black-lists were still in use a generation later, even when miners were in short supply. In the 1860's colliery-owners in Northumberland and Durham agreed that they would not employ men who could not produce a "certificate of leave" or a "clearance paper" from their last employers. Similarly, miners in Wales were black-listed for breach of contract.<sup>20</sup> Employers hoped such action would enable them to retain their mining labor-force and repulse union activity.<sup>21</sup> The refusal by

<sup>15</sup> See Edward F. Keuchel, "Coal Burning Locomotives: A Technical Development of the 1850's", in: *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XCIV (1970), pp. 484-95, and Alfred D. Chandler, Jr, "Anthracite Coal and the Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in the United States", in: *Business History Review*, XLVI (1972), pp. 141-81.

<sup>16</sup> J. L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, *The Skilled Labourer, 1760-1832* (London, 1919), p. 13; Richard Fynes, *The Miners of Northumberland and Durham*, 2nd ed. (Sunderland, 1923), pp. 235-37; A. J. Youngson Brown, "Trade Union Policy in the Scots Coalfields 1855-1885", in: *Economic History Review*, Second Series, VI (1953-54), pp. 39-40; T. S. Ashton and J. Sykes, *The Coal Industry in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester, 1929), p. 89; *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, 4 February and 25 March 1864; *Sentinel* (Glasgow), 20 August 1864, p. 5; *Mining Journal*, 23 June 1866, p. 400; *British Miner and General Newsman*, 27 September 1872.

<sup>17</sup> Fynes, *The Miners*, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

<sup>18</sup> William Hallam, *Miners' Leaders* (London, 1894), p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Sidney Webb, *The Story of the Durham Miners (1662-1921)* (London, 1921), pp. 50-51.

<sup>20</sup> J. H. Morris and L. J. Williams, *The South Wales Coal Industry* (Cardiff, 1958), p. 238.

<sup>21</sup> Fynes, *The Miners*, pp. 234-35; E. Welbourne, *The Miners' Unions of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 21; Ashton and Sykes, *The Coal Industry*, op. cit.,

employers in Northumberland and Durham to issue “clearance papers” served also to extend the restrictive function of the Yearly Bond, “the accursed yearly hiring”, which, until 1872, “had the men bound neck and heel”.<sup>22</sup>

The Yearly Bond, the custom of hiring miners by written agreement, was already known in the early nineteenth century. Under its terms, the price for coal mined under regular or difficult conditions was spelled out, as was the rate of pay for other work related to the extraction of coal. To attract men to work in the mines, mine-owners gave a bounty to those who would sign a Bond, which bound them to an employer for a year and a day. At the signing, miners were given “binding money”, which, when the coal trade was good, amounted to several guineas; in other years it was as little as a shilling or two. While the security of a fixed place of employment and rate of pay for the year was assured by the Bond, it did not provide for the payment of wages when the pit was idle for fewer than three days at a time. E. Welbourne observed that this clause in the contract had been devised to meet contingencies, such as accidents, but that it was abused in slack times when managers would briefly close mines in the interest of economy.<sup>23</sup> Men were not allowed to accept work at another colliery during periods of under-employment or unemployment, and infringement of the terms of the Bond rendered them liable to prosecution and the very real possibility of imprisonment. Without necessary “clearance papers” men on employers’ black-lists, or those who simply wished to change employers, were left with little alternative but to migrate from the district and to seek work elsewhere.<sup>24</sup>

## II

Not unexpectedly, the colliery-owners’ punitive actions seem to have united the miners. Pit lodges, the nucleus of miners’ unions, had persisted in some of the colliery districts throughout the decade of the 1850’s, although a national union of miners had not existed since the collapse of

land and Durham (Cambridge, 1923), p. 21; Ashton and Sykes, *The Coal Industry*, op. cit., p. 89; Morris and Williams, *South Wales Coal Industry*, op. cit., pp. 238, 266-67; Frank Machin, *The Yorkshire Miners*, I (Barnsley, 1958), p. 51; Report from the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the present dearness and scarcity of coal [Parliamentary Papers, 1873, X], qq. 5055, 5060.

<sup>22</sup> National Conference of Miners, Proceedings, 30 August to 1 September 1875 (Glasgow, n.d.), p. 12; John Wilson, *History of the Durham Miners’ Association* (Durham, 1907), p. 10.

<sup>23</sup> Welbourne, *The Miners’ Unions*, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>24</sup> Hallam, *Miners’ Leaders*, op. cit., p. 9; *Miners and Workman’s Advocate*, 4 February and 25 March 1864.

the Miners' National Association of Great Britain and Ireland in 1848.<sup>25</sup> Martin Jude, of Durham, had attempted to re-establish a national union in 1850, but his efforts failed. However, in 1863 county unions in Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, and in Scotland and Wales, joined together to organize the National Association of Coal Miners with Alexander McDonald, leader of the Scottish miners' union, as its president. While constituent unions retained the right to bargain individually with colliery-owners on wage rates, the Association functioned as a federated body in efforts to secure improved mine-safety legislation.<sup>26</sup> At its first meeting, held in Leeds from 9 to 17 November 1863, fifty-one delegates from the several colliery districts were in attendance.<sup>27</sup>

The main thrust for union-sponsored emigration appears to date from this time. The subject was not new. Union leaders had already advocated emigration as a means of reducing problems of excess labor at the mines, although it must have been clear to them that any diminution in the size of the workforce would be temporary; reinforcements from the stream of newcomers into the industry would soon make up its strength.<sup>28</sup> They espoused the wage-fund theory in the hope that a reduction in the size of the labor-force would strengthen their wage-bargaining position with colliery-owners.<sup>29</sup> Union leaders had long since learned, what E. J. Hobsbawm has termed, "the rules of the game"; that labor was a commodity to be sold at whatever price the market would bear.<sup>30</sup> Restriction of output was another bargaining device used in the belief that the increased price of available coal in the market place would bring higher wages. However, union leaders were doubtlessly aware that coal at the pit head was sold on long-term contracts, and that occasional higher prices during work stoppages benefited only the coal-dealers.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> A. J. Taylor, "The Miners' Association of Great Britain and Ireland, 1842-48: A Study of the Problem of Integration", in: *Economica*, New Series, XXII (1955), pp. 45-49; Morris and Williams, *South Wales Coal Industry*, pp. 270-72; E. W. Evans, *The Miners of South Wales* (Cardiff, 1961), pp. 88-89; Thomas Johnston, *The History of the Working Classes in Scotland* (Glasgow, n.d.), p. 340; Fynes, *The Miners*, pp. 179-87.

<sup>26</sup> G. D. H. Cole, "Some Notes on British Trade Unionism in the Third Quarter of the Nineteenth Century", in: *International Review for Social History*, II (1937), p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> National Association of Coal, Lime, and Iron-stone Miners of Great Britain, *Transactions and Results*, Leeds, 9-14 November 1863, pp. 1-3.

<sup>28</sup> See Charlotte Erickson, "The Encouragement of Emigration by British Trade Unions, 1850-1900", in: *Population Studies*, III (1949-50), pp. 248-73.

<sup>29</sup> Jones, "The Background to Emigration from Great Britain", loc. cit., pp. 50-51.

<sup>30</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men* (London, 1968), pp. 344-46.

<sup>31</sup> Fred Reid, "Keir Hardie's Conversion to Socialism", in: *Essays in Labour History 1886-1934*, ed. by Asa Briggs and John Saville (London, 1971), p. 25.

In 1862 the Scottish miners' union promised ten shillings from the General Fund to any miner who emigrated.<sup>32</sup> Miners in Northumberland and Durham had already held several meetings at which plans had been made for the formation of an Emigration Society. A union agent for Durham, John Hunter, had been named to provide information to prospective emigrants.<sup>33</sup> Nicholas Milburn, another union agent from Durham, was employed to travel to the Western district of the Durham coal-field and bring to the miners there a report of the resolution "to adopt an emigration scheme in the collieries at once", taken by the delegates at the meeting of the Miners' Mutual Confidence Association held at Washington and Usworth collieries in Durham, as well as information on the proposed emigration scheme.<sup>34</sup>

At the first meeting of the newly organized National Association of Miners, to which Milburn was a delegate, he reported that he was instructed by his constituents to request that the matter of emigration be placed on the agenda. He moved that "this Conference deem it desirable that some practical scheme of emigration should be established among the miners of the country; such a scheme to be, if possible, self-acting".<sup>35</sup> However, Milburn's motion was defeated when the delegate body agreed "that the question of emigration and the consideration of a scheme be left to the Executive Council".<sup>36</sup> Only a summary of the discussion at the meeting of the Executive Council, whose members included Alexander McDonald representing Scotland, William Pickard (Lancashire), Samuel Smith (Staffordshire), Thomas Stephenson (Yorkshire), Joseph Sheldon (Northumberland and Durham), and Richard Ingram (South Wales), is contained in the published report. Nonetheless, John Holmes, of West Yorkshire, the general treasurer for the Conference, injected into the record of the meeting the Council's agreement on the efficacy of emigration as a level on the supply of labor. "The propriety of removing the excess [labor] to a more favourable and less crowded market", Holmes reported, "must commend itself to everyone." "A Miners' Emigration Commissioner and agents would, of course, be costly", the Council agreed, "but they would give far more value for the costs involved than a 'Miners' Attorney-General'", an allusion to William Prowting Roberts, Chartist lawyer, who, in 1844, had been employed by the Northumberland and Durham Miners' Union to defend members charged with breaking con-

<sup>32</sup> *Sentinel*, 4 October 1862, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Transactions and Results*, op. cit., p. xviii.

<sup>34</sup> *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, 8 August 1863, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> *Transactions and Results*, pp. 30-32.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

ditions of the Yearly Bond, and through whom the union had been involved in costly litigation.<sup>37</sup>

While the Council cautioned, “we are not at present prepared to recommend any specific place of settlement or mode of operation; and we shrink from advising what we do not assuredly know as reliable”, they suggested the “founding of a scheme or arrangement [...] whereby knowledge of advantages and disadvantages of countries of immigration might be made available”.<sup>38</sup> The Council noted that many miners did very well by immigrating to Australia or to Belgium, and that those who immigrated to the “inexhaustible and growing requirements of the coalfields of America” benefited most.<sup>39</sup> A lightly veiled threat to the colliery-owners was made in the observation that stepped-up emigration would have the same dire effect on the mining labor-force in Britain as it had on the labor-force in Ireland following the famine. Colliery-owners had already expressed concern at the departure of some of their best miners.<sup>40</sup> Nonetheless, throughout the meetings the Executive Council refused to make a definite policy statement in favor of emigration. This was reasonable because firm requests for miners from overseas coal companies had not yet materialized. Caution, therefore, was the better part of valor. Not long after this meeting, however, union leaders were in full support of the movement, which A. J. Youngson Brown has characterized as the “emigration of optimism”.<sup>41</sup>

Among union leaders, Alexander McDonald, a miner for twenty years before acquiring a modest independent income which enabled him to devote himself to the miners’ cause, had an exact appreciation of the “rules of the game”. He approached the subject of emigration with a missionary zeal. “I say now, and always have said, that emigration is one of the surest ways of a miner bettering, not only his own condition, but that of those he leaves behind him.”<sup>42</sup> The re-establishment of a national union of miners in Britain had coincided with the beginning of the long-term expansion in the coal industry in the United States, and miners there were in short supply. The early 1860’s were also years of full employment in the collieries at home. Here was an opportunity for the unions to enhance their wage-negotiating position while expounding their economic doctrine – control

<sup>37</sup> See Taylor, “The Miners’ Association of Great Britain and Ireland”, loc. cit., pp. 48-52.

<sup>38</sup> Transactions and Results, pp. xvii-xviii.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Miner and Workman’s Advocate, 11 July 1863.

<sup>41</sup> Youngson Brown, “Trade Union Policy in the Scots Coalfields”, loc. cit., p. 36.

<sup>42</sup> Sentinel, 3 September 1864, p. 6.



of coal output and a reduction in size of the labor-force – through the encouragement of emigration. In the broadest sense, this plan fitted the Benthamite philosophy interpreted by McDonald, that “one of the primary objectives of trade unions must be to secure the greatest happiness to the greatest number”.<sup>43</sup>

Providentially, overseas employment opportunities mounted in the middle 1860's, when lock-outs and strikes in Britain were prevalent and miners, as well as shipwrights, and iron and tinplate workers, attempted to resist wage reductions.<sup>44</sup> Miners' leaders co-operated with agents for American, Nova Scotian, New Zealand and Australian coal companies in their recruitment efforts in the coalfields in the North of England, in Scotland and in Wales, and it was not an unusual sight to see parties of as many as a hundred miners or more sailing down the Clyde.<sup>45</sup> Peter Sinclair was one such agent for American coal companies. In Glasgow in 1864 to enlist miners for work in Illinois, he asked Alexander McDonald's co-operation in his recruitment drive. In response, McDonald wrote to two of his brothers who had already immigrated to Gardner, Grundy County, Illinois, to ask them to visit the mines named by Sinclair and verify that miners were indeed wanted.<sup>46</sup> This precaution was also to ensure that the men would not be used to break a strike. When the brothers responded favorably, the recruitment went ahead.<sup>47</sup> As Charlotte Erickson has observed, here was an interesting phenomenon, an official of a British trade union assisting the agent for an American industry to find recruits.<sup>48</sup> In 1867, Alexander McDonald traveled to the United States and visited the coalfields. In Braidwood, Illinois, he was greeted by some 500 men, nearly all of whom were said to be Scotsmen, many of them former members of

<sup>43</sup> Workingman's Advocate, 2 November 1867.

<sup>44</sup> Cole, "Some Notes on British Trade Unionism", loc. cit., p. 10; Sentinel, 3 September 1864, p. 5; 17 September, p. 5; 17 December, p. 5; 10 February 1865, p. 5; 18 March, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> Sentinel, 17 December 1864, p. 5; 10 February 1865, p. 5; 18 March, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> Sentinel, 20 August 1864, p. 5; 3 September, p. 5; 17 September, p. 5; 17 December, p. 8. Peter Sinclair was the agent for British investors in the Illinois Central Railroad. He had returned to England shortly before the Civil War with 5,000 posters advertising land for sale along the railroad. When the war came, he was employed full time to explain the Northern cause to British workingmen. He was also an agent for the Foreign Emigrant Aid Society, established late in 1863, in Boston, by a group of manufacturers. In addition, he was recipient of "secret service funds" dispensed by the American Consul in London. Sinclair thus had several strings to his "agent's" bow. Charlotte Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant 1860-1885* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), pp. 3-31; Paul W. Gates, *The Illinois Central Railroad and Its Colonization Work* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 223-24; Sentinel, 3 September 1865, p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> Sentinel, 22 April 1865, p. 5; 29 April, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant*, op. cit., p. 8.

colliery lodges of the unions. "There stood around a large body of well-known faces", McDonald wrote in his log published in the *Glasgow Sentinel*; the colliery union lodges of Maryhill, Johnstone, Den, Paisley and Inkerman were all represented.<sup>49</sup>

County unions in several of the main coalfields announced their readiness to assist their members to emigrate "to those countries where the conditions of labour and wages are known to be better than they are in this country".<sup>50</sup> Miners in Aberdare, South Wales, wrote to the editor of the *Miner and Workman's Advocate* that they were "liberating" themselves from "present slavery" by means of an Emigration Fund, and they invited men at other pits in the valley to send delegates to a meeting to discuss plans for establishing a General Emigration Fund.<sup>51</sup> Only a few months later, a correspondent in Aberdare noted that "every week a large number of able-bodied men leave this neighbourhood for America".<sup>52</sup> William Hartshorn, a union official from Blaina in Wales, suggested that an Emigration Fund be established on a national scale to aid miners who wished to leave the country.<sup>53</sup> Miners locked out at the Phillips Williams Colliery near Willenhall, Staffordshire, in 1864, appealed through the columns of the *Miner and Workman's Advocate* for contributions from union lodges in the surrounding collieries, not, it was explained, for their day-to-day maintenance, but rather to help them emigrate. Almost 150 of the miners who were locked out by the colliery-owners said that they would emigrate if funds for their ship tickets could be provided.<sup>54</sup> Miners in Scotland planned, through local emigration societies, to assist forty to fifty miners and their families to leave for America weekly, "where they would be respected, and soon earn as much money as would enable them to send for their friends, as those who had gone two years ago were doing".<sup>55</sup> In one fortnight these societies were reported to have paid the passage to America of no fewer than 100 miners.<sup>56</sup> At times only the eldest member, or the head

<sup>49</sup> *Sentinel*, 23 November 1867, p. 6.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 May 1865, p. 6; Wilson, *History of the Durham Miners' Association*, op. cit., p. 131; *Iron and Coal Trades Review*, 22 August 1879, p. 161; Fynes, *The Miners*, p. 210.

<sup>51</sup> *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, 4 February 1865.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 July.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 February.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 March 1864; Fynes, *The Miners*, pp. 235-36. Men in other skilled trades in a similar predicament also viewed emigration as a means of solving their unemployment problem. *Miner and Workman's Advocate*, 4 February 1864; Erickson, "The Encouragement of Emigration", loc. cit., pp. 253-61; Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, revised ed. (New York, 1957), p. 52.

<sup>55</sup> *Sentinel*, 6 May 1865, p. 6; *Workingman's Advocate*, 2 November 1867.

<sup>56</sup> Johnston, *The History of the Working Classes in Scotland*, op. cit., p. 340.

of the family, sailed, in the hope that within a short time he would be able to send for those who had remained at home.<sup>57</sup>

R. V. Clements observed that “the national organization under McDonald did not adopt a positive emigration policy”, yet in its book of rules, issued in 1879, emigration was listed among its policies.<sup>58</sup> Youngson Brown, on the other hand, has suggested: “Perhaps the first noteworthy statement [on emigration] was made by McDonald in 1865, when, in the face of a threat of wage reductions, he spoke of ‘the most sure and effectual remedy [. . .] emigration’.”<sup>59</sup> However, in innumerable speeches and letters to the press prior to this time McDonald had spoken in favor of the movement, and by 1865 his views on emigration were well established.

### III

The rise in mine fatalities may have been another consideration affecting the decision of some miners to leave the collieries in Britain. Although direct statements on the coincidence of emigration and mine explosions have not been located, both major mine accidents and emigration increased in the decade of the 1860's.<sup>60</sup> Among the more sensational accidents in this decade was an explosion that claimed 76 lives at the colliery in the village of Burradon, Northumberland, in March 1860. In January 1862, the pumping-engine beam at the Hartley Colliery, Northumberland, snapped and collapsed into the mine shaft, blocking the only exit for 204 men and boys below. In December of the same year, 361 men died in an explosion in the Oakes Colliery, Yorkshire. Men often refused to enter these mines because they believed conditions to be dangerous. In December 1867, an explosion in the Ferndale Colliery, Wales, claimed 178 lives. Another 53 men died in the same colliery in June 1869.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Sentinel, 18 March 1865, p. 5; Illinois, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Annual Coal Report, 1903, p. 140; Journal of United Labor, 1883, p. 485; Herbert G. Gutman, “Five Letters of Immigrant Workers from Scotland to the United States”, in: Labor History, IX (1968), pp. 384-408.

<sup>58</sup> R. V. Clements, “Trade Unions and Emigration, 1840-1880”, in: Population Studies, IX (1955-56), pp. 157-80; Sentinel, 20 May 1864, p. 5; 20 August, p. 5; Rules of the Miners' National Union, 1879, Webb Collection, London School of Economics and Political Science.

<sup>59</sup> Youngson Brown, “Trade Union Policy in the Scots Coalfields”, p. 39.

<sup>60</sup> P. E. H. Hair, “Mortality from Violence in British Coal-Mines, 1800-50”, in: Economic History Review, Second Series, XXI (1968), pp. 548-60; O. O. G. M. MacDonagh, “Coal Mines Regulation: The First Decade, 1842-1852”, in: Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain, ed. by Robert Robson (London, 1967), p. 69.

<sup>61</sup> R. Nelson Boyd, Coal Mines Inspection: Its History and Results (London, 1879), pp. 249-50; Morris and Williams, South Wales Coal Industry, p. 204; Hair, “Mortality from Violence”, loc. cit.; Fynes, The Miners, pp. 171-79; Independent (Sheffield), 5 July 1856, quoted in Machin, The Yorkshire Miners, I, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

At least 1,646 men were known to have died in mine disasters in the decade of the 1860's, an increase of 691 over the 955 deaths which occurred as a result of mine disasters in the previous decade.<sup>62</sup> Although the number of deaths from mine explosions had decreased in the 1860's, the total number of fatalities from all mine accidents was, in fact, on the increase.

In contrast to the British scene, prior to 1869, there had been no disaster in an American mine.<sup>63</sup> Individual accidents were not infrequent in the American coalfields, especially in the anthracite mines in Eastern Pennsylvania, where roof falls were frequent. But a majority of miners migrated to the bituminous mines in Western Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio and Illinois, where mines were shallow, the coal strata easy of access, and accidents less numerous.<sup>64</sup> While explicit evidence of a link between the fear of death in the mines and immigration to the United States has not been found, the pressure of mine fatalities appears to have been a potent force in the resolution to find employment away from the mines. William Pickard testified before the Select Committee on Coal, in 1873, that in Lancashire alone 400 men and boys had been killed in mine explosions since 1868.<sup>65</sup> As a result, he said, steady and provident miners were leaving the mines to find work elsewhere. "I find many of the men on the railway as railway guards, and porters, and they have gone to other situations, dreading explosions that might take away their lives; and it has caused many a collier to get his boys other situations if he can."<sup>66</sup> Before the same Committee, Alexander McDonald testified, in response to a question on the problem of attracting agricultural laborers to work in the mines despite the high rate of wages that prevailed at the time: "there is a very general aversion to working in the mines among the other classes of the community. The enormous death rate, the accidents [ . . . ] have led men such as handloom weavers and other classes who were in the habit of joining the mining industry to refrain from doing so."<sup>67</sup> Despite assumptions to the contrary, Youngson Brown noted in his analysis of the supply of labor to the mines, that "the number of boys who did not follow in their father's footsteps must have been very considerable".<sup>68</sup> Comparative freedom from

<sup>62</sup> Boyd, *Coal Mines Inspection*, op. cit., pp. 249-50.

<sup>63</sup> The first coal-mine disaster in the United States occurred in September 1869 in the Avondale mine, Pennsylvania, when 179 men lost their lives.

<sup>64</sup> Berthoff, *British Immigrants*, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>65</sup> Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., q. 4040.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 4598.

<sup>68</sup> A. J. Youngson Brown, "The Scots Coal Industry, 1845-1886" (unpublished D.Litt. Diss., University of Aberdeen, 1953), pp. 193-95.

gas and disasters in the bituminous coalfields in America might have been conducive to the decision to emigrate.

The momentum which the emigration movement gathered in the late 1860's led *The Times* to observe:

Although the winter season is not generally considered the most favourable for emigration, yet it is surprising to witness the large number of colliers and miners who are constantly leaving the iron and coal districts of South Wales from Merthyr, Aberdare, Pontypool, and other centres of population. It is an ordinary occurrence to witness the departure of 100 to 120 [. . .] weekly. The passage money of a large number of them has been paid by relatives and friends who left their native home years ago, and who have since so far prospered as to be able to render this assistance to their connexions. As usual a large majority of the emigrants are leaving for the United States.<sup>69</sup>

Our workmen, McDonald testified in 1873, "are getting to understand that they can carry their labour to the best market, and if wages continue higher in America, that is where the miner will go".<sup>70</sup> However, as noted earlier, when news of the onset of the Depression in America that year reached Britain, the emigration of miners had already slackened. Emigration did not pick up again until activity in the American coalfields improved at the end of the 1870's, when conditions in the British collieries were still depressed. At that time, miners in conference in Manchester and Leeds agreed to establish an emigration association. In the same year, the North Wales Miners' Association offered seven pounds to any member who would immigrate to America.<sup>71</sup>

#### IV

The unions' policy of encouraging the formation of emigration societies and of sponsoring the emigration of miners was not without critics within the unions.<sup>72</sup> On more than one occasion union leaders were called upon to defend their position. McDonald, who encouraged miners to settle in the coalfields in the Northern states in the years of the American Civil War, was accused by James King of sending miners to "the land of republicans, rebels, rogues and revolvers", and of providing soldiers for the Union Army.<sup>73</sup> The accusation brought a swift response. "To lend myself to repair the shattered ranks of the army of the North would be to me one of the most abhorrent occupations that I could engage in", McDonald wrote, and

<sup>69</sup> *The Times*, 25 November 1869, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Report from the Select Committee, q. 4769.

<sup>71</sup> Machin, *The Yorkshire Miners*, I, p. 260; Berthoff, *British Immigrants*, p. 52.

<sup>72</sup> *Sentinel*, 14 December 1867, p. 6.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 May 1865, p. 5.

on another occasion he added: "I would advise miners to go to the Federal States, although my sympathies are well known to be with the Southern [sic]." <sup>74</sup> On the whole, miners in Britain shared McDonald's political view and the sympathies of other workers in Britain toward the Confederate states. Coal sales in Lancashire had slumped with the cotton famine at the mills, and as a result miners as well as cotton operatives suffered. At their meetings numerous resolutions and petitions were passed demanding pro-Southern action by Parliament. <sup>75</sup> Despite McDonald's published statement, his name appeared in advertisements for miners placed in the Glasgow *Sentinel* by the Hampshire and Baltimore Coal Company, whose mines were in Virginia and Maryland. <sup>76</sup>

In contrast to McDonald's firm stand when under attack, others capitulated. When agents of the Durham Miners' Association were accused of dishonest dealings by "men of the 'viler sort'", who leveled charges of exploitation, its leaders proved more sensitive to criticism than McDonald, and the Association's Emigration Agency was disbanded. <sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, until the 1880's individual county union organizations continued to encourage emigration. <sup>78</sup> While "news of American prosperity [. . .] usually started British miners streaming toward the docks of Liverpool and Glasgow", wage reductions and adverse conditions in the American coalfields, or news of improved wages in Britain, were apt to send some men back home again. <sup>79</sup> Among those who returned to Britain were men who later left again for the United States. <sup>80</sup> During the American Depression of the 1870's, some British miners in America received emigration assistance from the Australian government. <sup>81</sup> Still others immigrated to America in the early 1880's, only to find conditions in mining communities there so uncongenial that as soon as they had saved the money for the return passage they left for home. <sup>82</sup> Some returned to Britain simply because they were homesick. In 1867, William Hannigan, a Scottish emigrant, wrote from

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 August 1864, p. 5; 3 September, p. 5.

<sup>75</sup> Mary Ellison, *Support for Secession* (Chicago, 1972), pp. 28, 53.

<sup>76</sup> *Sentinel*, 17 December 1864, p. 5; 18 March 1865, p. 5.

<sup>77</sup> Wilson, *History of the Durham Miners' Association*, pp. 131-32.

<sup>78</sup> Welbourne, *The Miners' Unions*, p. 213; *Miners' National Association, Proceedings*, 1874, p. 51; *National Labor Tribune*, 10 January 1874, p. 1.

<sup>79</sup> Berthoff, *British Immigrants*, pp. 51-52; Erickson, "The Encouragement of Emigration", p. 252.

<sup>80</sup> Berthoff, *British Immigrants*, pp. 53-54; *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois: Grundy County*, ed. by N. Bateman and S. Paul (Chicago, 1882), pp. 798-99.

<sup>81</sup> "It is hard to realize that from the country where so many thousands of our countrymen [. . .] went only a few years ago, that emigration should be going on." *Sentinel*, 24 March 1877, p. 4.

<sup>82</sup> Welbourne, *The Miners' Unions*, p. 213; *National Labor Tribune*, 31 December 1881, p. 5.

Ohio that, although miners could earn from 10/– to 16/– a day, “men return to Scotland because they cannot extirpate from their mind their prejudice” in favor of the old country.<sup>83</sup>

Miners wrote letters to the labor press at home warning prospective immigrants of inferior conditions in the American mines. They told of long hours of work and of “oppression in this country [. . .]. We have unions the same as you have, and strikes the same.” Others complained of the oversupply of labor; “miners still keep coming – coming all the time [. . .]. Many are coming with their wives and families, and still they come, but – all places are full.”<sup>84</sup> Some letters warned of the lack of educational facilities for the children.<sup>85</sup> Alexander McDonald also warned that life in America would not be easy. “You are not to think for one moment that you are going to paradise”, he told readers of the Glasgow *Sentinel*, although he also assured them that America was a land of boundless resources, where employment was plentiful and wages good.<sup>86</sup> Some miners wrote of their satisfaction in the new country. “This is a long way a better country for the working man. [. . .] I am a great deal better here than in Rutherford”, wrote one, while another referred obliquely to his new-found dignity: “a great many men who are now digging coal in America [. . .] would never have done so had they been treated like men in England.”<sup>87</sup> McDonald said that he could add the testimony of hundreds of other miners who had improved their situation by emigrating, including that of his brother William. William, who lived in Missouri and had gone South to join the Confederate Army, had written that despite the war conditions there were “considerably better than they were in Scotland”.<sup>88</sup> Some miners emigrated because they hoped to improve their social position in a new environment and in a different cultural setting.<sup>89</sup> McDonald told the Parliamentary Trade Union Commission, in 1868, that Scottish miners saved money with a view to emigrating, because they thought that they might be able to improve their situation in another country.<sup>90</sup>

Miners may also have been influenced by the “agrarian myth” – the

<sup>83</sup> *Sentinel*, 12 October 1867, p. 5.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from “An American Coal Digger”, in: *Miner and Workman’s Advocate*, 27 February 1864, p. 7; letter signed “W.W.”, *ibid.*, 29 July 1865, p. 7.

<sup>85</sup> Letter from “An American Digger”, *ibid.*, 13 February 1865.

<sup>86</sup> *Sentinel*, 29 April 1865, p. 5.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 September 1864, p. 5; *Miner and Workman’s Advocate*, 13 February 1864, p. 7.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> United States Consular Reports, 1885, I, pp. 594, 760, 792, 850; II, pp. 959, 970.

<sup>90</sup> Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the organization and rules of trade unions and other associations, Seventh Report [Parliamentary Papers, 1867-68, XXXIX], p. 41.

idea of cheap land on which a man could sustain his family.<sup>91</sup> When McDonald visited America, he was much impressed by the large parcels of land on which miners' houses stood. "A married man [. . .] gets a plot of ground", he wrote, "and keeps as many pigs as he likes." He told of meeting old friends, miners he had known in Scotland. One, James Broady, "late of Den and Johnstone [collieries]", invited McDonald to his home, "a good substantial wooden building with pigs, poultry and cattle around". McDonald asked Broady when he thought he could have possessed this in the old country; "the answer was slow, yet emphatic, 'Never'", he replied.<sup>92</sup> There were others, McDonald said, who "whenever wages are lower [. . .] draft [sic] off from the mines and go and occupy the land".<sup>93</sup> Union leaders, and McDonald in particular, urged the emigrants to fore-sake mining and to take up farming instead.<sup>94</sup> "You go to better your conditions", McDonald told a party bound for America as he accompanied them down the Clyde.

I would strongly urge you not to think of continuing in the mines. There is an abundance of land in America, let your aim be to settle on it. Here you are landless forever. There it is not so. It is within the reach of all of you to gain it.<sup>95</sup>

## V

But before such hopes could be realized the emigrants moved into the coalfields and took up the employment they knew best; their trade unionism nurtured by correspondence and visits from union leaders at home. Daniel Weaver, Thomas Lloyd and Ralph Green, all emigrants from Staffordshire before the Civil War, settled in St Clair County, Illinois, where in 1861 they organized the American Miners' Association, the first union of miners that was national in scope.<sup>96</sup> Green's son John, then twenty-one years old, "figured in every union of American miners" until he died at the age of eighty-eight, in 1928.<sup>97</sup> John Siney, whose trade-union experience in England was in the brickmaking industry, founded the Workingmen's Benevolent Association, in the Eastern Pennsylvania coalfields, in 1868. The Association's name was changed, in 1870, to Miners'

<sup>91</sup> See Charlotte Erickson, "Agrarian Myths of English Immigrants", in: *In the Trek of the Immigrants*, ed. by O. Frithof Ander (Rock Island, Ill., 1964), pp. 59-80.

<sup>92</sup> *Sentinel*, 9 November 1867, p. 6.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 April 1865, p. 6; 6 May, p. 6.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 April, p. 6.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Edward A. Wieck, *The American Miners' Association* (New York, 1940), pp. 190-93; *Weekly Advocate* (Belleville), 25 September 1896, p. 10; *Advocate* (Belleville), 30 August 1928, p. 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Advocate*, *ibid.*



and Mine Laborers' Benevolent Association. John Parker, a close collaborator of Siney's, was another English emigrant.<sup>98</sup>

John James, Daniel McLaughlin and William Mooney, intimate associates of Alexander McDonald in the Scottish miners' unions, settled in Braidwood, Illinois. James, who emigrated in 1865, was credited with writing the constitution for the Miners' National Union, said to be modeled on the Miners' National Association of Great Britain. James served the union as its secretary.<sup>99</sup> McLaughlin was a trade-union leader and a legislative lobbyist from the time he arrived in Illinois, in 1869, until he migrated to Colorado, in 1889, where he took up a position as a mine manager.<sup>100</sup> Mooney, who emigrated in 1865, studied law in his spare time while working as a miner, and later served the union as "miners' attorney". He was the first working miner elected to the Illinois House of Representatives, in 1874.<sup>101</sup> Chris Evans, secretary of the American Federation of Labor from 1889 to 1894, was another miners' leader who had learned his trade-union skills in the British coalfields before he emigrated in 1869. John Rae, first president of the United Mine Workers of America (1890), was a Scottish emigrant, while Robert Watchorn, its secretary, was a former member of the Derby and Nottinghamshire Miners' Union. Edward McKay and Benjamin James, members of the United Mine Workers executive board were, respectively, Scottish and Welsh; W. C. Pearce, secretary-treasurer, was English.<sup>102</sup>

Miners' leaders in Britain maintained contact and visited the emigrants in the United States. This communication provided an important link in the two-way flow of information regarding the state of the coal trade, employment, and mining legislation. John Wilson, president of the Durham Miners' Association, who was elected to Parliament in 1885 and again in 1890, was probably the most familiar with conditions in American coalfields. He and his wife left England as emigrants in 1864, intending to join Wilson's brother in the mines along the Monogahela River in Penn-

<sup>98</sup> Clifton K. Yearley, *Britons in American Labor 1820-1914* (Baltimore, 1957), p. 132; Berthoff, *British Immigrants*, p. 92.

<sup>99</sup> Yearley, *Britons in American Labor*, op. cit., p. 137; Andrew Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners of the United States*, 3rd ed. (Ohio, n.d.), pp. 154-55; *Journal of United Mineworkers of America*, 18 October 1910, p. 1; *Workingman's Advocate*, 29 November 1873; Chris Evans, *History of United Mine Workers of America from the Year 1860 to 1890* (Indianapolis, Ind., 1918), I, pp. 29, 83-84; *Journal of United Labor*, June 1883, pp. 485-86.

<sup>100</sup> *National Labor Tribune*, 15 July 1889, p. 2.

<sup>101</sup> *News (Joliet)*, 11 April 1901, p. 2; *United Mine Workers of America, Official Report of the Tenth Annual Convention, 1899*, pp. 27, 30.

<sup>102</sup> Yearley, *Britons in American Labor*, pp. 131-42; Berthoff, *British Immigrants*, p. 92.

sylvania. When they found that the brother had returned to England, they set out for Wesley City, Illinois, where there were families they had known in Haswell, County Durham. They stayed a short while before moving back to Pennsylvania. In 1867, the Wilsons returned to Haswell.<sup>103</sup> Alexander McDonald journeyed to America in 1867, 1869 and again in 1873. He was the most widely traveled in the United States of the British miners' union leaders. William Crawford, of the Durham Miners' Association, paid a short visit to the United States in 1877, and Thomas Burt, of the Northumberland Miners' Association, who together with Alexander McDonald was elected to Parliament in 1874, visited America in 1883.<sup>104</sup>

The immigrants, said Clifton Yearley, "retained an unquenchable interest in developments at home".<sup>105</sup> Some, including William Scaife, formerly of the Durham Miners' Union, secretary-treasurer of the (American) Miners' National Progressive Union, an editor of the journal of the United Mine Workers of America, and John Elias Williams, who emigrated from South Wales in 1864, were two who visited England and called on their trade-union friends. Williams maintained a life-long correspondence with Thomas Burt, MP, following Burt's visit to the United States.<sup>106</sup>

News of events and developments affecting miners and their communities were exchanged and published in labor journals on both sides of the Atlantic. The *Workingman's Advocate*, published in Chicago by a Northumbrian emigrant, Andrew Carr Cameron, contained much news and opinions of interest to miners. Cameron also maintained a correspondence with Alexander McDonald, and accompanied him on visits to the coalfields.<sup>107</sup> The *National Labor Tribune*, published in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, regularly devoted several columns to letters from the American coalfields, while the *Miner and Workman's Advocate* and the Glasgow *Sentinel* provided a forum for miners in Britain.

The spirit of commonality among miners, forged during years of work in the deep pits in Britain, was strengthened in America by the need to build new communities around the mines in the villages they helped to establish. Social barriers, such as they had known at home, were absent in the new

<sup>103</sup> Wilson, *A History of the Durham Miners' Association*, pp. 181-82; Joyce M. Bellamy and John Saville, *Dictionary of Labour Biography I* (London, 1972), p. 348.

<sup>104</sup> Free Press (Streator), 10 September, 1883, p. 2; Wilson, *History of Durham Miners*, pp. 165-66; Welbourne, *The Miners' Unions*, p. 181.

<sup>105</sup> Yearley, *Britons in American Labor*, p. 88.

<sup>106</sup> United Mine Workers Journal, 8 October 1891, p. 4; Fuel, 4 April 1911, p. 887; Thomas Burt, JP MP, to J. E. Williams, 9 September 1918, John E. Williams Collection, Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield.

<sup>107</sup> Chicago Tribune, 29 May 1892, p. 3.

setting, and employment away from the mines was open to those with even a modicum of education. Some miners became small shopkeepers, selling all manner of goods and produce to their countrymen. Others offered their services as barbers, saloon keepers, painters, insurance agents and undertakers. Still others became mine-owners, and some, while still employed at the coal face or in other positions around the mines, bought or rented farm land on the installment plan.<sup>108</sup>

A number of former miners and their children achieved professional status. Robert Watchorn was appointed chief clerk to the Governor of Pennsylvania, in 1891, after serving as secretary to the national board of the United Mine Workers. He then became chief factory inspector for the state. In 1905, he was appointed the federal government's Commissioner of Immigration at the port of New York.<sup>109</sup> Andrew Roy, who worked as a miner for a number of years, wrote *A History of Coal Miners in the United States*. In 1874, he was the first mine inspector appointed by the State of Ohio.<sup>110</sup> In Illinois, twenty of the twenty-four inspectors of mines appointed by the Governor between 1883 and 1900 were former British immigrant coal miners. Another, of Irish birth, had learned his mining skills in Scotland. David Ross, a Scottish miner who studied law and was admitted to the Bar by the Supreme Court of Illinois, was secretary of the state's Bureau of Labor Statistics from 1889 to 1913.<sup>111</sup>

Before the turn of the century, mining families had produced a number of practising attorneys, physicians and teachers.<sup>112</sup> Thus, in common with other immigrant groups, British miners and their families were able to achieve the occupational and social mobility that McDonald had assured them could be theirs in America.

<sup>108</sup> Katherine A. Harvey, *The Best-Dressed Miners* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1969), pp. 85-86; Wm LeBaron, Jr, *The History of Will County, Illinois* (Chicago, 1879), pp. 752-65; *History of LaSalle County, Illinois* (Chicago, 1886), pp. 593-649; Black Diamond, 15 December 1889, p. 311; *Coal Age*, VI (1914), p. 150; Fuel, 13 November 1906.

<sup>109</sup> Mary B. Sayles, "The Keepers of the Gate", in: *The Outlook*, 28 December 1907, p. 913; Robert Watchorn, "The Cost of Coal in Human Life", *ibid.*, 22 May 1909, p. 171; Roy, *A History of the Coal Miners*, op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>110</sup> *United Mine Workers Journal*, 10 October 1907, p. 4; *National Labor Tribune*, 1 January 1881, p. 2; 12 July 1890, p. 2.

<sup>111</sup> Major sources of data on these men were public records of births and deaths, manuscript population schedules, county histories, obituary notices published in trade and labor journals, and annual reports issued by the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics. For biographical sketches see Amy Zahl Gottlieb, "The Regulation of the Coal Mining Industry in Illinois with Special Reference to the Influence of British Miners and British Precedents, 1870-1911" (Ph.D. Diss., (LSE) University of London, 1975), pp. 303-38.

<sup>112</sup> Report of the Industrial Commission on the Relations and Conditions of Capital and Labor Employed in the Mining Industry (Washington, D.C., 1901), XII, p. 187; Harvey, *The Best-Dressed Miners*, op. cit., p. 86.