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Playing with the Past: Heritage and Public Identity in the American West

Bonnie Christensen

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of

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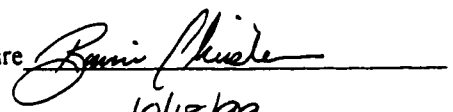
Signature 

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Abstract

Playing with the Past: Heritage and Public Identity in the American West

Bonnie Christensen

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Professor Richard White
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This study investigates the development of public identity and heritage in Red Lodge, Montana between 1889 and the 1990s. Like many western towns, Red Lodge is the creation of a variety of forces and its public identity reflects an amalgamation of local history, national mythology, and economic motivation. To look closely at these identities is to understand how complicated their constructions are and to recognize that local, regional, and national identities can be symbiotic as well as antithetical. Local western identities, grounded in specific places, have become inextricable intertwined with national ideas about the West and the people who inhabit it. This study picks apart these specific and local western identities to see how and why they developed over time and to understand the ways in which people have generated and used them to explain who they are, both to themselves and to outsiders. I do so by examining one small town, looking particularly at public imagery and the construction of a local heritage. The dissertation proceeds both chronologically and topically. Chapters One and Two look at the townspeople's initial attempts in the 1890s to eliminate the imagery of the popular "Wild West" from the town's environs as they strove to create an identity as a safe, industrial, union town. Chapters Three and Four investigate how and why residents in the mid-20th century chose to "redesign" that industrial history to create a heritage more appropriate to their contemporary needs. The results show how these local people picked and chose particular story lines from the town's past, which they then interwove with powerful national narratives of the "West" and American pluralism. Chapter Five examines the impact of federal lands—specifically Yellowstone National Park and the Beartooth Mountains—on the town's public identity. Finally, the conclusion looks at more recent attempts to reconstruct a cleaned-up version of a mining heritage into the town's public identity.

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RED LODGE, MONTANA

Most people see Red Lodge from behind the windshields of their cars. It's the little town with the speed limit that slows them down for a mile or so as they drive to or from Yellowstone National Park. Sometimes these drivers take an interest in the quaint-looking brick buildings of the downtown area; they may stop for a sandwich or soda at the Red Lodge Café or perhaps purchase a T-shirt from the Mountain People store. And then, they're on their way again, speeding off to see more natural wonders, or maybe just heading back to Billings or Sheridan. On the way through town they may notice the straight, grid-pattern of streets leading away from Broadway Avenue, looking like so many other street patterns in the right-angled American West. They might pay attention to the trout stream that runs along the edge of the road on the south side of town—the end that leads toward Yellowstone. Many, however, see little beyond the mile markers telling them that it's 72 miles to the national park or 60 miles to Billings.

But, if you have the time pause for a moment and really *look* at Red Lodge. Look closely and critically and try to figure out this little town and its reason for being. Where did this place come from, you might ask? What is its history? Why is it here? The pretty little downtown, first of all, suggests a prosperous past; around the turn of the century this town had some money. How was that money made? The log-cabin museum, the 4th of July rodeo, and a preponderance of cowboy hats and boots indicate, perhaps, a local history of ranching. Yes, some ranching was done in the area, but cattle and cattlemen did not build this town. What else? The town abounds in references to an annual ethnic celebration, the "Festival of Nations," which suggests a multicultural past in this overwhelmingly white community. If there were immigrants here, what did they do? The abandoned mill works on the east bench above town mark a mining past; most people notice that. But don't be fooled by that obvious tunnel entrance. Yes,

this once was a mining town, but that particular structure dates back only to the 1950s when a short-lived chrome operation tried to make a go of it here. You'll need to look a lot harder to find the boarded up coal mine tunnel across the river and under the weeds, near the grassy hollow that used to be a settling pond and where deer now sometimes feed. That coal entrance is the real history of this town, the source of its original wealth and reason for being. Other markers of the coal-driven past can be found around the community, but again, they're hard to locate. Just at the north entrance to town, for example, there's a football field where the Red Lodge High School football team, the Redskins, plays. Kneel down and look at that field and you'll notice a bunch of shiny black flakes that feel almost greasy to the touch; you'd need to ask, though, to find out that the playing field sits on a government-reclaimed slack pile—an industrial waste site from the boom days of coal. The pile used to loom hundreds of feet above the town, covering more than the length of the football field. Like much of the mining past, though, the tower of waste has been cleaned up, removed from sight, and almost forgotten.

From the town's founding in 1889 into the 1930s, Red Lodge's public identity revolved around coal, coal miners, and industrial development. But, for many different reasons it is much easier today to find images of cowboys, ranching, and Indians around town than it is to find references to Red Lodge's coal mines. Red Lodge, like other towns scattered around the West, seems to possess a kind of fractured public identity that does not really make sense. It's a town built by miners that presents itself as a town of cowboys. It's a community of white Americans who every year celebrate their cultural diversity. Many residents now favor environmentalist positions about wilderness, yet the town was built on the extraction of coal and has survived into the present through the construction of a highway that has brought automobiles into the heart of some of the most remote wild areas in the nation. The historical creation of these public identities, which seem so contradictory and confusing, lies at the heart of this dissertation.

* * *

Questions of identity and public memory have been central to many recent academic discussions, but relatively few of these discussions have looked at the evolution of local or regional identities over a considerable time frame.[1] Scholars have written much about "American" and "Western" identities, but while broad, sweeping studies of the "myth of the frontier" and the "American character" provide valuable frameworks for the investigation of local identities, they leave many gaps in our understanding of how people in specific places have adapted or rejected national or regional "identities" in the construction of their own public presentations of who they are. Richard Slotkin's books on the "Myth of the Frontier," for example, have shed light on the ways in which the ideas of "the West" spread throughout the nation and gained great power. Red Lodge residents' struggles against the imagery of the West in the 1890s and their embrace of it in the 1930s, certainly illustrate the validity of some of Slotkin's arguments about the pervasiveness of the mythology of the West. But, such broad studies cannot explain or explore all the different nuances and variations of how and why local peoples have responded to certain aspects of national culture. As this study of Red Lodge shows, local people certainly found themselves wrapped up in nationally generated trends and concepts, but these people also adapted such larger ideas to their own local situations.

To look closely at identities such as "Western" and "American" in a particular place such as Red Lodge is to understand how complicated their constructions are and to recognize that local, regional, and national identities can be symbiotic as well as antithetical. The American West is a particularly fertile place to examine these questions. Everyone seems to know what a "Westerner" and "the West" look like. Americans, and indeed people around the world, have been bombarded with images of the West for centuries. The West has come to mean cowboys, Indians, pioneer farmers, deserts, mountains, and vast plains. It represents masculinity, wilderness, rugged individualism, democracy. These images and

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[1] For works on public memory, see Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); David Lowenthal, The Past is a Foreign Country (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Lowenthal, The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); John Bodner, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

meanings—distributed through dime novels, newspaper stories, magazines, and, in the 20th century, by radio, movies and television—have had great cultural power and appeal in the United States.[2]

These are national images: mass produced cultural representations. But they are something more for Westerners who have used these popular images of the West to create their own local identities. Westerners have imbibed these images along with everyone else and have recognized the power that such identities might offer them. Thus, even in a coal town like Red Lodge, local people learned to wear cowboy boots and hats in the mid-twentieth century because that was part of what it meant to be a Westerner. Local western identities, grounded in specific places, have become inextricably intertwined with national ideas about the West and the people who inhabit it. This study picks apart these specific and local western identities to see how and why they developed over time and to understand the ways in which people have generated and used them explain who they are, both to themselves and to outsiders. I do so by examining one small town, looking particularly at *public* imagery and the construction of a local *heritage*.

The choice of Red Lodge, first of all, deserves some explanation. A small town of about 2,000 residents on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains, Red Lodge's history and location typify a variety of very "Western" aspects. Red Lodge, like much of the West, had a history in resource extraction (in this case coal mining); it lay close to an immense swath of national forest and park lands and also within a few dozen miles of an Indian reservation; its early population was made up largely of European immigrants; and the town itself was created by a huge national corporation, the Northern Pacific Railroad.

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[2] On the power of Western mythology, see Robert G. Athearn, The Mythic West in the Twentieth Century (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1986); Richard Slotkin, The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization (New York: HarperPerennial, 1985); Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America (New York: HarperPerennial, 1992); Henry Nash Smith, Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970, 1950); Richard White, "Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill," in James R. Grossman, ed. The Frontier in American Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 7-55; Malcolm J. Rohrbough, Days of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the American Nation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 118; Clyde A. Milner II, "America Only More So," in The Oxford History of the American West, ed. Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 1-7. On identity, see John Findlay, "A Fishy Proposition: Regional Identity in the Pacific Northwest," in Many Wests: Place, Culture, and Regional Identity, ed. David M. Wrobel and Michael C. Steiner (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 37-70; Bodnar, Remaking America; Lowenthal, The Past is a Foreign Country; Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory.

Red Lodge has also had a variety of intriguing public festivals and monuments including an annual rodeo, an annual ethnic celebration, a county museum, and an entire downtown district on the national register of historic places. The town has made a point of staging its heritage for public consumption.

Red Lodge, in short, is a wonderful place to investigate questions of Western identity and the creation of public memory. Digging into the town's past, one does not find simple definitions of who belongs and who doesn't, of what it means to be from Red Lodge. The townspeople have drawn their identity as much from American reverence for the Yellowstone area and complex ideas about Indian peoples, as they have from the coal mining industry that dominated the town's economy and culture from the 1880s into the 1930s. Red Lodge's location near thousands of acres of public lands, its industrial past and tourism-driven present, and the inhabitants' studied celebration of their history through festivals and ceremonies make this town a fascinating and illuminating site for this type of study. Between their desires to create colorful and interesting tourist attractions and to erase troublesome social divisions, Red Lodge inhabitants have developed celebrations that have reinforced certain appealing identities. The celebrations and identities created through them have become part of the town's image and how residents understand themselves and their past.

Red Lodge is also a very small community, which, although greatly influenced by national ideas and economic forces, never attracted the kind of mega-corporate presence that transformed such communities as Sun Valley, Aspen, and Park City in the 20th century. The sort of corporate "colonization" discussed by historian Hal K. Rothman in his study of Western tourism did not take place in Red Lodge (at least not yet). Red Lodge residents never faced the monolithic power W. Averill Harriman's Union Pacific Railroad wielded in Sun Valley, for example, or that Walter Paepcke had in Aspen.[3] In Red Lodge, tourism—and the desire to attract tourist dollars to the community—certainly influenced the development of the town's public identity; but, at least into the early 1990s, local tourism remained very much a *local* concern. Without the influence of multi-million dollar corporations arranging grand attractions and events (think of the Vegas strip, for example), local people had to create their own attractions that reflected *their* interpretations of what might draw tourists to this small town.

Public celebrations like the annual rodeo and Festival of Nations really did became community efforts to create an attractive and appealing public identity for the town.

Red Lodge, thus, provides an ideal location to investigate the development of *public* identity in a local western place. The emphasis here is on "public." This study looks at celebrations, architecture, publications, and monuments designed for public consumption. I make the distinction between what Yi-Fu Tuan refers to as "public symbols" and "fields of care." "Fields of care" are areas holding personal, private meanings for individuals—their particular homes, special taverns, private places. "Public symbols," on the other hand, "command attention and even awe;" they project specific images to observers. Public symbols include not only physical buildings and public events, but also images of the ideal city: printed pictures and word portraits of how residents *want* the town to be perceived by outsiders.[4] In Red Lodge, local people shaped and reshaped this public identity over the course of a century as they responded to a variety of new conditions, challenges and changes—local, regional, and national.

Granted, this focus on the "public" shaping of identity means looking most specifically at the actions and activities of an elite set of local leaders—those with the time or money to write newspaper stories, to form rodeo committees, or sit on the board of the county historical society. And, much of this study does rely on the presentation of public identity found in the local newspapers; these publications, though, represented one of the community's main means of communicating a vision of itself to readers who lived both in Red Lodge and outside the town's boundaries. These newspapers represented the voices of the people who made the most vigorous efforts to shape the town's public imagery. But, the actions of other residents is also examined, although in less direct ways. For example, through their willingness (or unwillingness) to dress up as Slovenian immigrants or Wild West cowboys, local people lent their support (or lack thereof) to the efforts of groups like the Chamber of Commerce, Woman's Club, and Italian Girls' Victory Club as they tried to create specific public identities for the little town. I

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[3] Hal K. Rothman, Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).

[4] Yi-Fu Tuan, "Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective," in Progress in Geography: International Reviews of Current Research, vol. 6, Christopher Board, Richard J. Charley, Peter Haggett, and David R. Stoddart, eds. (London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1974), 236-245.

have also used the oral histories of long-time residents to add depth and differing perspectives to many of discussions of how the town developed its various public personas. As is seen in Chapter Four's discussion of the Festival of Nations, local people often fit their personal memories around popular narratives of local heritage; but their personal histories also revealed some of the town's lingering class, ethnic, and racial tensions that the studied public performances and displays had eventually smoothed over or eliminated.

"Heritage" is a second important factor in this study. Heritage, first of all, needs to be understood as a version of history that explains the local past in ways its residents prefer it to be understood. This distinction between heritage and history is important. According to David Lowenthal, "while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it." Where history "explores and explains pasts grown ever more opaque over time; heritage clarifies pasts so as to infuse them with present purposes."[5] Heritage, as it were, consists of the stories we *want* to tell about ourselves and how we came to be. In creating Red Lodge's public identity, residents pulled from various versions of the past—some of it not even really the *local* past—to create a heritage appropriate to what they wanted Red Lodge, and themselves, to represent. Significantly, residents often shaped this heritage according to larger regional and national stories of western and American identity even as they attached these larger mythologies to particular local places and people.

Finally, the dissertation focuses on a certain interpretation of what "local" means. "Local" can be a tricky term, especially in the mobile West where residency persistence averaged about 10 years at the turn of the century. By itself, as historian Louis S. Warren notes, "the word *local* masks varying degrees of rootedness."[6] Red Lodge "locals" came and went continuously in the almost 100 years of this study. And, these locals never shared a common view of what "Red Lodge" meant; their conceptions of the town and its identity split along class, ethnic, racial, and gender lines. Some, it seemed, had little in common beyond the fact that they lived in the same community. But, that proximity of residence *is* something. "Local" is an important term, which I use to differentiate between residents (of whatever

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[5] Lowenthal, The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History, xi-xv.
[6] Louis S. Warren, The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists in Twentieth-Century America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 16.

duration) and the visitors, tourists, and potential investors whose experiences with the town were much more fleeting than those who invested years of work and hopes in the community. So, even though some Red Lodge old-timers still might reserve "local" only for those whose family roots in the town extend back at least two generations, this work accepts a much broader definition that, basically, equates local with resident.

The dissertation proceeds both chronologically and topically through an examination of how Red Lodge residents produced their local public identity. Chapters One and Two, first of all, look at the townspeople's initial attempts in the 1890s to eliminate the imagery of the popular "Wild West" from the town's environs as the community strove to create an identity as a safe, industrial, union town. Next, Chapters Three and Four investigate how and why residents in the mid-20th century chose to "redesign" that industrial history to create a heritage more appropriate to their contemporary needs. The results show how these local people picked and chose particular story lines from the town's past, which they then interwove with powerful national narratives of the "West" and American pluralism. Chapter Five veers off slightly from the focus on local heritage to examine the impact of federal lands—specifically Yellowstone National Park and the Beartooth Mountains—on the town's public identity. The western ruggedness and outdoor ability associated in the national imagination with such vast acres of wild forested lands became part of the town's defining identity. And the impact of the Beartooth Highway, a 10,000-feet-high road running between Red Lodge and Yellowstone National Park, is simply too great to ignore in this study. Dubbed Red Lodge's "Gateway to Wonderland," this highway became the cornerstone of the town's tourism economy and part of the very vocabulary of the community. From the Hi-Road Harmonizers to the Beartooth Boosters, the highway became part of what Red Lodge meant both to its residents and to visitors. Finally, the conclusion looks at more recent attempts to reconstruct a cleaned-up version of a mining heritage into the town's public identity. Ironically, with the last remnants of that past almost gone—slack piles and miners alike have disappeared—residents have finally started to create public markers to commemorate the industry and men that created the town.

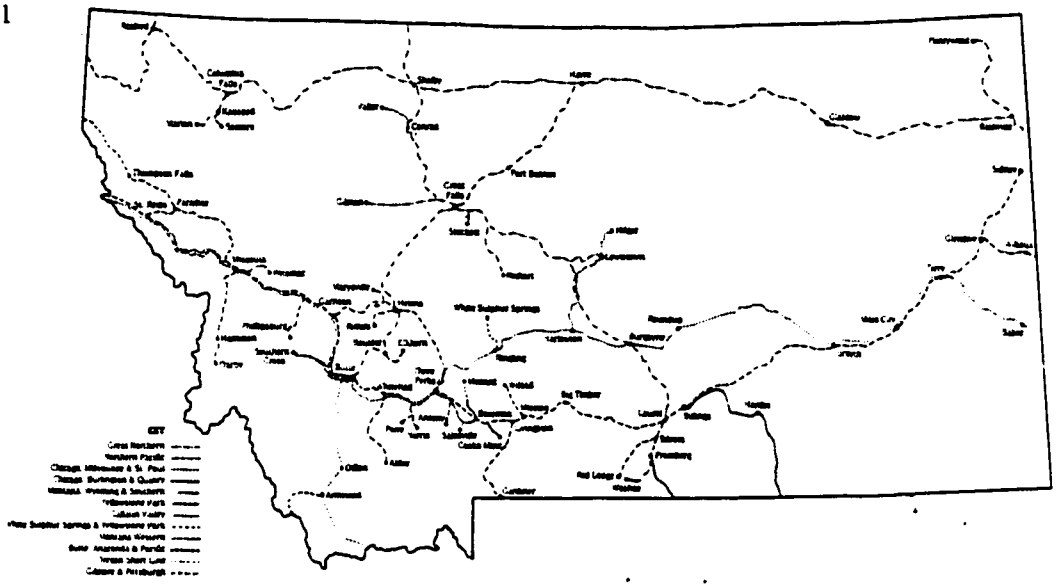
This investigation, then, lays out a story of salesmanship, adaptation, and, ultimately, survival in one little town that managed to endure through the turbulent ups and downs of the West's unpredictable

extractive-industries economy. It is significant because it tells a little bit about who we all are—how and why we pick and choose among various versions of the past to find the meanings that fit who we want to be and who we want others to think we are. In this story of Red Lodge we see the contradictions, ironies, and humor that are part of all our lives as we continually invent and re-invent ourselves. Over the course of a few decades, after all, Red Lodge had miners dressed up like cowboys, miners dressed up like Italian immigrants, cowboys wrestling steers from speeding cars, cowboys who were really Indians (and vice versa), and trout dumped from airplanes to make nature more "natural." More than giving a humorous glimpse into our attempts to re-make ourselves, Red Lodge's story reveals also the enduring power of a nationally created western mythology, which has enticed local Westerners with no roots at all in ranching or farming or mountaineering, to assume these mythic identities as part of their contemporary identity and culture. This study also shows the ways in which national ideas about "Americaness" have intertwined with local histories as residents interpreted their own past against a larger story of American progress and exceptionalism. We need to acknowledge and understand the power of these narratives that have become so ingrained into our modern lives and cultures.

As the story of Red Lodge's evolving and shifting identities shows, local people can put both the past and the natural world to a variety of uses. But, as this study also shows, local heritage and understandings of the environment have not stood outside of much larger, national and regional developments. From townspeople's early attempts to obscure Wild West associations to their claims that the Festival of Nations represented a quintessentially "American multiculturalism," Red Lodge residents have drawn their very local public identities from national ideas about the West, immigration, nature, small towns, and the preservation of history. But, these national trends never determined exactly how local people would develop their public identities. Yes, the Wild West exerted a powerful influence on the West, but other places, like Cody, Wyoming, embraced Wild West imagery much more so than did Red Lodge. And lots of mining towns with large immigrant populations—like Belt and Roundup in Montana—never started up ethnic celebrations like the Festival of Nations. Members of the Red Lodge historical society *chose* to work for the town's inclusion on the National Register even though many other towns in the state never made such an effort.

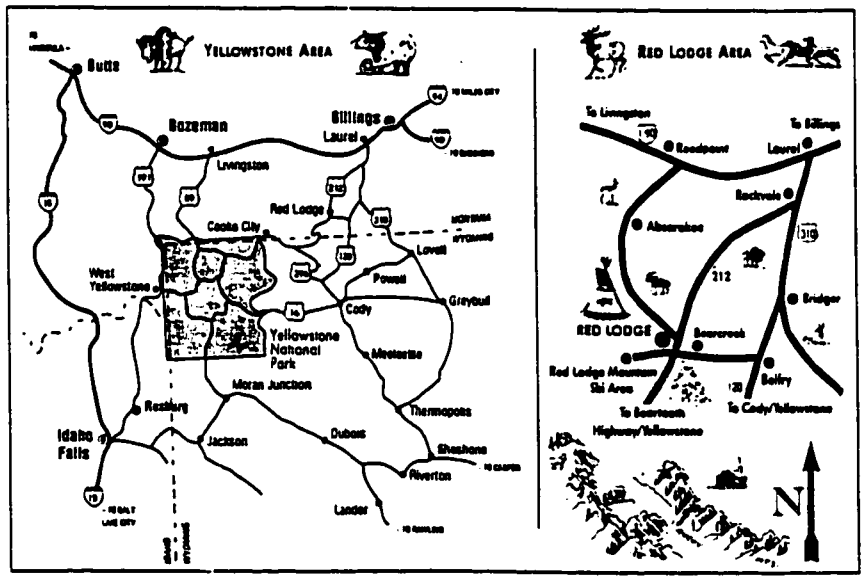
In the end, what's important to this study are the hows and whys and the ways in which local residents developed complicated shifting public identities. Red Lodge created itself into an industrial coal town with a "wild west" cowboy heritage populated by "hardy" European immigrants with special ties to the great outdoors. Separating out these different images, following their development over time, and thus examining how one little town established such a complex and intriguing public heritage illustrates the fascinating ways in which people combine the local, regional, and national to create peculiar and particular public identities and presentations of heritage.

Figure 1



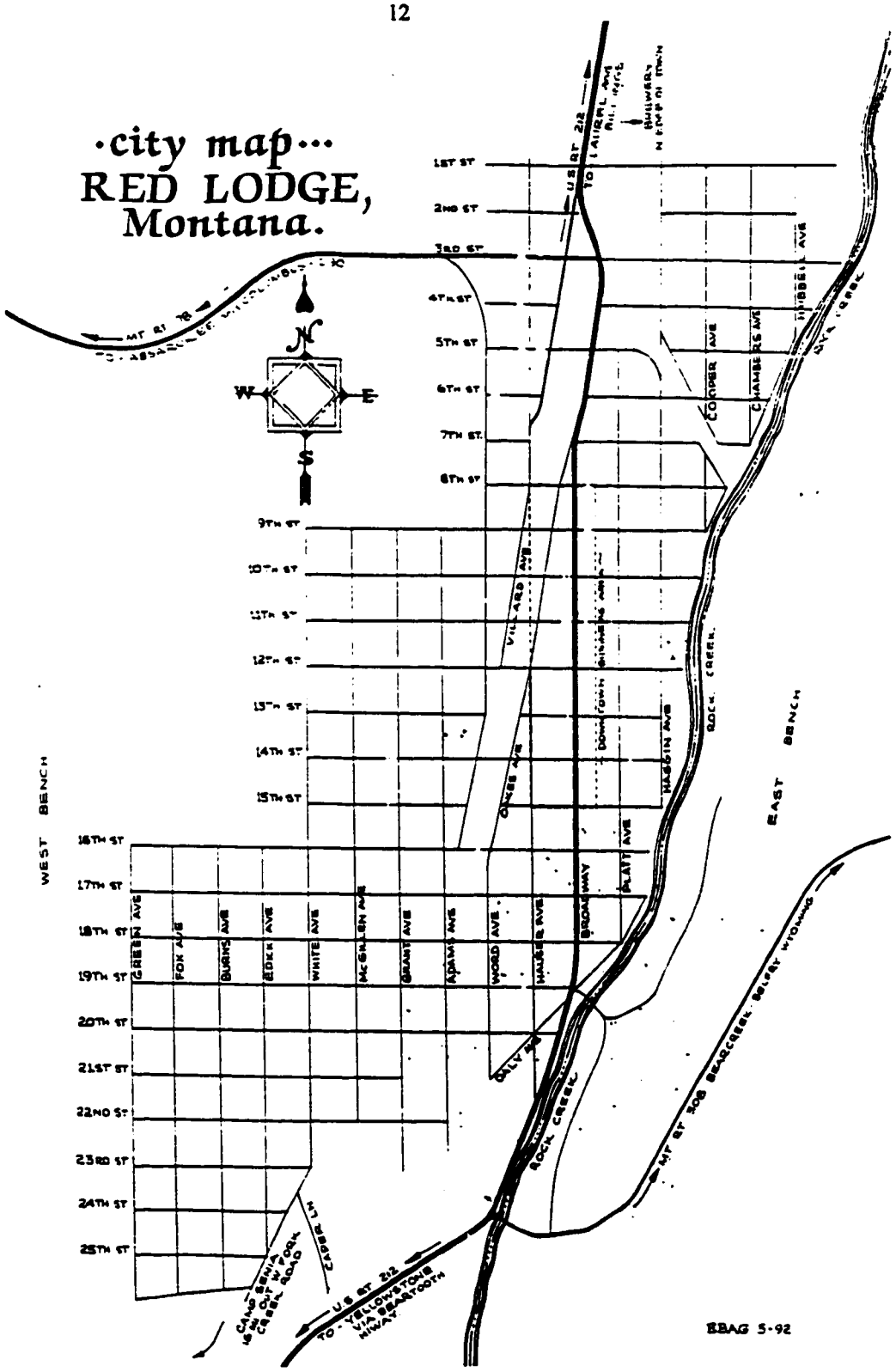
Map 6 Railroads, 1913 (map by Barbara Lien; source: Montana Railroad Commission, 1913, copyright © Rand McNally & Company)

Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William Lang, Montana: A History of Two Centuries rev. ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 282.



Red Lodge Visitor's Guide, 1995-96 (Red Lodge: Carbon County News, 1995), 1.

Figure 2



Clerk's Files. Carbon County District Court. Red Lodge, Montana.

CHAPTER ONE

WESTERN AT THE FRINGES: RED LODGE IN THE 1890S

Destined to Greatness: ....Red Lodge is a Good Place to Invest Your Money and Suddenly Grow Into Comfortable Circumstances.[1]

A Runaway Kid: Johnny Southward, an eleven-year-old took the dime novel notion of starting out on his own hook. He borrowed a horse from his father for the occasion and rode to Billings preparatory to taking a freight train for the west. His father learning of his whereabouts went down to the train and captured the runaway, who was glad enough to come back home.[2]

Red Lodge's public identity always intertwined with the western land on which the town was built. Red Lodge was a western town, a product of the western geography that created coal fields for industrial exploitation and the western climate that brought hard winters and dry summers to the region. With its urban population of miners, bankers, merchants, prostitutes, boarding house keepers, children, and immigrants, Red Lodge represented the modern West of cities, industry, and capitalism. Its residents lived with the presence of a strong federal government and alongside millions of acres of government-owned forests and park lands. Much of what defined the West defined Red Lodge; the physical, cultural, and social place of the West necessarily became part of Red Lodge—a place that disappointed young boys like Johnny Southward with their dime-novel visions of what the West *should* be.

That Red Lodge, as "western" as any place could get, could disappoint youths like Southward in the early 1890s points to the fact that Westerners like those in Red Lodge dealt almost daily with larger *cultural* conceptions about the West and those who lived there. "The West" had become a mythical site by the late 19th century, a place that Americans invested with a lot of cultural baggage. Bombarded by paintings, photographs, books, newspaper stories, and live performances (like those presented by Buffalo

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[1]Picket (Red Lodge), 19 December 1891, 3.

Bill), Americans readily associated the West with a variety of images, values, and personalities: farmers, log cabins, independence, cowboys, Indians, masculinity. These popular perceptions of the West drew from some very real people, places, and events. But, in the course of their transmission to the East and their appropriation by Americans, the West became transformed into mythology. Americans created meanings and stories out of the westward experience that represented not so much the West itself, but what Americans wanted to believe about themselves and their nation. In the junction between this mythologized West and the modern West of industrial coal mining, Red Lodge residents negotiatied their town's initial public identity.

The first installment in the story of Red Lodge's developing public identity covers the 1890s, the decade of settlement and promotion when local townbuilders sought to create the "correct" image to boost their growing little community. That image and identity drew primarily from eastern and midwestern models of the prosperous industrial town with broad sidewalks and solid buildings; as *western* townbuilders, though, Red Lodge's early image shapers also had to contend with national ideas about the West and "Westerness." While attempting to construct an appropriate identity as a modern community, local boosters were compelled to confront the powerful mythology of the pioneer farmer and ranch cowboy that permeated national culture, and, interestingly enough, they emphatically chose one popular version of "Westerness" over another. Although they never put their struggle into such neat terms, Red Lodge townbuilders in effect embraced one particular mythology of the West—the "agrarian West" of the farmer—while rejecting another—the "Wild West" of the cowboy. For, although ideas about the West remained somewhat scattered by the late 19th century, these two particular mythologies had already begun to take shape as the most compelling narratives explaining the nation's advance westward. In the one, the heroic pioneer farmer civilized the region with his plow and log cabin; in the other, the noble cowboy tamed the plains by shooting his six-gun at Indians. Both represented the domination of white men over the western region, but each told that story in a different way and with different heroes.[3] In 1890s Red

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[2]Picket, 14 May 1892, 3.

[3]Works on the myth and imagery of the American West include, Robert G. Athearn, The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986); Richard Slotkin, The Fatal

Lodge, town leaders definitely favored one over the other in the construction of the town's public imagery. Their preferred identity had everything to do with agriculture and farmers and the mythology of plows conquering the West; it rejected the Wild West of Indian attacks, ranchers who controlled the prairies, and aggressive cowhands.

Significantly, though, even as townbuilders sought to eliminate cowboys, Indians, and ranchers from the town's public identity, some local promoters had actually begun to incorporate a different kind of Wild West figure into the community's imagery. Even in the early 1890s, townspeople realized that certain safe representatives of the Wild West might be used to boost Red Lodge's public image. The "mountain man"—an older icon of the West—promised a safe public association between the town and the masculinity of the Wild West. This remained a minor effort, making Red Lodge "wild western" only at the fringes, but it pointed toward the path later town boosters would follow. For, the period of fighting against the Wild West did not last for long. It lasted, really, only so long as the actual figures of that cultural narrative still retained some power in the real West. That power faded quickly as farmers closed off the open range, Indians settled onto ever-smaller reservations, and local government curtailed the gun-slinging fun of rowdy cowhands.[4] But the real power of the Wild West—its grip on the national imagination—lasted far longer, and eventually enveloped the very western communities that had once despised and feared Indians, cowboys, and ranchers. Towns like Red Lodge, which in the 1890s had accepted only safe, "fringe" elements of the Wild West, would quickly learn how to manipulate these popular images to their own advantage.

Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890 (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994), especially chapters 1 and 2; Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America (New York: HarperPerennial, 1992), pp. 1-26; Henry Nash Smith, Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970); Richard White, "Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill," in James R. Grossman, ed. The Frontier in American Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 7-55; Malcolm J. Rohrbough, Days of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the American Nation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 118; Clyde A. Milner II, "America Only More So," in Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss, ed. The Oxford History of the American West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

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Red Lodge, Montana did not have to be. The town owed its existence as much to the whims of political boundaries and the shrewd business sense of eastern capitalists as it did to the abundant resources of rich, dark bituminous coal that lay beneath its streets. Capital, hand-in-hand with the federal government, created Red Lodge. Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) officials invented the town in 1887 because the railroad needed coal and corporate insiders wanted to make money. Territorial governor Samuel T. Hauser, owner of the largest bank in Montana, Henry Villard, president of the NPRR, and Frederick Billings, former NPRR president, played key roles in the game of developing the Red Lodge mine, railroad, and townsite. All were capitalists used to gambling for big stakes, looking out for their own interests, and recognizing how each could use the other for his own gain. Hauser, who had made his initial fortune by securing eastern investment in Montana gold mines in the 1860s, wielded great influence within the territorial government while Villard and Billings had close ties not only to the NPRR but also to other power brokers at the national level. They chose Red Lodge as the NPRR's newest coal source not because of proximity to the railroad's mainline or because of the quality of the coal there. Other coal fields lay closer and had better burning coal. But, the Red Lodge field lay within the boundaries of the Crow Indian Reservation in the early 1880s, off limits to speculators who had already laid claim to the territory's other coal resources.[5] Allied, Hauser, Villard, and Billings had the political and economic clout to secure claims to coal lands on the newly opened reservation in 1887, fund construction of the new mine and railroad line, and even to wrangle federal consent for a railroad right of way through the ever-shrinking

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[4] Robert J. Dykstra explores some of these issues in The Cattle Towns (New York: Knopf, 1968).
[5]Carroll Van West, Capitalism on the Frontier: Billings and the Yellowstone Valley in the Nineteenth Century (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 165.

Crow Reservation.[6] Determined to make money from every aspect of local development, the major investors controlled not only the coal mine and railroad branch line, but also all sales of electricity and town lots. In 1889 the 44-mile-long Rocky Fork Railway connected Red Lodge to the main line of the NPRR, the mines came into operation, and the population at the new townsite almost immediately swelled to over 500. By early 1890, Hauser and his partners had created a boomtown that promised to enhance their already considerable personal fortunes.[7] From the beginning of Anglo-American possession, the resources of this western place offered the greatest wealth to those who already had enough money and political power to claim and exploit the area.

Like many other towns in the West, Red Lodge developed as a creature of corporate interests. Hauser and his partners manipulated both town and residents to secure maximum profits in the new town. The mines, the railroad, the mansions of the corporate managers, and even the street names marked the very unegalitarian distribution of resources in the new community. On the plats for the new townsite, developers carefully penned in "Hauser" and "Billings" avenues as they paid homage to the capitalists who had funded the town's creation; the names of smaller streets and boulevards honored a variety of other prominent Northern Pacific officials.[8] Mine managers, such as Dr. J.M. Fox, who supervised the Rocky Fork Coal Company from 1887 to 1900, settled into ostentatious mansions on Hauser Street that reflected their power and prestige as corporate representatives. When it wanted to, capital could even stifle Red Lodge in one place and resurrect in another. In 1893, denied clear title to the land around the new mine because of the presence of an opportunistic homesteader with a somewhat spurious competing claim, Hauser and his associates in the Rocky Fork Town & Electric Company (RFT&EC) simply moved the center of town further west, away from the mine and toward the railroad tracks. Borrowing money from

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[6]K. Ross Toole, Montana: An Uncommon Land (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, 1959), 157; Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana: High, Wide, and Handsome (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948, 1943), 52-54; Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang, Montana: A History of Two Centuries rev. ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 190; Van West, Capitalism on the Frontier, 175, 177-78.

[7]Shirley Zupan and Harry J. Owens, Red Lodge: Saga of a Western Area (Billings: Frontier Press, Inc., 1979), 22-23; E.V. Smalley, "Red Lodge, Montana," The Northwest Magazine 10 (Aug. 1892): 20.

the NPRR, townsite trustees erected the town's first brick structure, the Spofford Hotel, and declared that it stood in the center of Red Lodge's "downtown." Sitting alone in the middle of acres of mud and dirt, the three-story Spofford seemed a very tall center of nothing by the end of 1894, while the town's business life continued to hum along in the motley collection of huts and tents clustered around the mine entrance half a mile away. Like a magnet, however, capital gradually pulled the entire "old town" of merchant houses, saloons, bordellos, and professionals over to where Hauser and his colleagues declared the downtown to be.[9] Access to capital trumped possession of land in town building.[10] In 1901, Fox's daughters quite literally marked this social hierarchy on the town. While entertaining eastern friends, the girls arranged an expedition to climb the mountain at the edge of town. Upon reaching the top, the party broke open a bottle of champagne and christened the peak Mt. Maurice after Dr. Fox. Instead of a nameless peak, now "Mt. Maurice" (the name stuck) loomed over the little town, a reminder of who sat at the top of the local class structure at the turn of the century.[11]

Into this modern West of industrial mining, eastern capital, and mountains named after corporate managers streamed the workers who would bring life to Red Lodge and the entrepreneurs who would shape the new town's culture, civic life, and, of course, public image. Undaunted by the symbolism of Mt. Maurice, these men and women approached Red Lodge as a place alive with the possibility of wealth and success: the opportunity inherent in Western mythology. For them, capitalistic investment—the corporate creation of towns like Red Lodge—created the chances for success that had brought them West. Capital had already replicated its structures in the West, but there was plenty of room for maneuvering up the

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[8] At least nine of Red Lodge's streets were named after men with interests in the Northern Pacific or its subsidiary, the Rocky Fork Coal Company, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 39.

[9] Picket, 20 April 1895, 2.

[10] Smalley, "Red Lodge," 22, 24; Picket 25 March 1893, 3; 8 July 1893, 3; 8 June 1895, 3; 24 August 1895, 3; 31 August 1895, 2. On an original investment of $53,334.40 the trustees of the RFT&EC had received dividends of $145,000 by 1911, a modest profit. D.G. O'Shea to S.T. Hauser, 22 March 1912, 31/3; D.G. O'Shea to Geo. H. Hill, 14 October 1909, 29/46, Samuel T. Hauser Collection, MC 37, Montana Historical Society (MHS).

[11] Picket, 19 December 1891, 2; Leona Lampi, "Red Lodge: From a Frenetic Past of Crows, Coal and Boom and Bust Emerges a Unique Festival of Diverse Nationality Groups," Montana, the Magazine of Western History 11 (July 1961): 21-22; Beverly Rue Wellington, Red Lodge Landmarks (Red Lodge: The Carbon County News, 1992), 22-23; Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 25-26.

social and economic ladder in new boom towns. Most of the new arrivals were workers, many of them immigrants, who came searching for jobs in and around the mines. For them the West's opportunity was not great wealth but the chance to earn a wage and perhaps save enough money to establish a small business, take out a homestead claim, or return to the Old World in triumph.[12] Above these wage laborers sat a smaller group of entrepreneurs who, as the new community's incipient middle class, laid a stronger claim to the town's opportunities for riches. Although they possessed far less money, influence, and power than did men like Hauser and Billings or even Fox, these new residents--merchants, lawyers, and other professionals--made substantial capital investments in Red Lodge, gambling that this western place would return them handsome profits.

Red Lodge's "pioneer" moment provided plenty of possibilities for big dreams. Here the imagined West of bonanzas and great wealth might actually come true. Economic niches were up for grabs, and minimal investments by early arrivals might yield hefty returns.[13] Entrepreneurs rushed in, eager to get in on the ground floor of a booming town. Saloon keepers and brothel madams moved in first, putting up hastily built tent businesses in 1887 to reap the quick profits to be made serving the desires of railroad and mine workers.[14] They were quickly followed by people like Jim Virtue, who started a small livery barn in the town in 1888, and Charles Bowlen, whose lumber business opened a year later. These smaller operations stood side by side with branches of state-wide businesses such as the J.H. Conrad Company, which in 1889 added Red Lodge to its network of merchant and banking houses.[15] By 1891 the local paper contained advertisements for a stage company, various restaurants and clothing stores, a druggist, barbers, insurance and real estate services, a bank, meat market, lumberyard, bakery, saloons, and an assayer, as well as people selling ice, jewelry, groceries, and shoes, and providing paper hanging

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[12]The story of Red Lodge's immigrant workers is in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

[13]Van West, Capitalism on the Frontier, 124.

[14]Elliott West notes that liquor was "high in value in relation to its bulk," which made it an profitable item to ship; he also shows that saloon keeping was a popular mode of advancement taken by working-class men who wanted to enter the entrepreneurial class. West, The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 13, 100, 105, 109.

[15]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 23; Smalley, "Red Lodge, Montana," 25-26.

services.[16] Many of these men and women moved on quickly, disappointed by conditions in Red Lodge or drawn on by the promise of better profits in other places. Others stayed on, encouraged by their success in occupying economic niches during the town's founding period and expecting to find even greater success by sticking with this one town and making it grow. These merchants, professionals, and business managers—the ones who stayed for at least a few years—created Red Lodge's initial business class.

Local growth meant everything to this business class. If Red Lodge got bigger, they got richer. Unlike corporate investors such as Hauser and Villard, who depended on regional or national markets, local entrepreneurs provided goods and services for consumers within a very limited area. Hauser and his partners spread their investments over the entire region; Virtue and Bowlen and other local business owners, although tied through workers' wages to the larger corporate market, had much of their lives and capital wrapped up in one town. Small capitalists in the West pinned their hopes for success on their ability to choose a promising site, invest their time and money in that place, and then sell it as aggressively as possible to newcomers. However lavish their promises and predictions, these men and women worked within a limited vision of what the West was and should be. In effect, these middle-class entrepreneurs believed that the West was simply a preliminary stage toward becoming the East. As Richard Slotkin has argued, townbuilders really wanted to replicate the "Metropolis," the eastern city, in their western landscape.[17] Optimistic entrepreneurs visualized the transformation of towns like Red Lodge from a scattered collection of rickety shacks into a "live and progressive little city composed of cozy and comfortable residences and substantial business blocks."[18] Success to the business class meant re-creating familiar economic and social structures with *themselves* in the prominent civic roles reserved for entrenched elites in older communities. Every increase in the local population—each successful "sale" of

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[16]Picket 15 August 1891, 3.

[17]Slotkin, Fatal Environment, 39. On replicating eastern social and economic structures in the West, see West, Capitalism on the Frontier, 134-142, 148; and David Hamer, New Towns in the New World: Images and Perceptions of the Nineteenth-Century Urban Frontier (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 85, 130-138.

[18]Picket, 17 October 1896, 3. See also, David M. Emmons, Garden in the Grasslands: Boomer Literature of the Central Great Plains (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), 47-77; and Allan G. Bogue, "An Agricultural Empire," in The Oxford History of the American West, 285-87.

Red Lodge—meant more customers for Jim Virtue's livery barn, the rise in value of his main-street property, and an improvement in his status as a town founder and leading businessman. Virtue's success depended on selling, or "boosting," Red Lodge: creating and marketing a local image that would convince outsiders to settle and invest in this emerging town.

Ironically, Red Lodge townbuilders had to "boost" their town aggressively because so many of the area's possibilities seemed cut off by the very conditions that had created the West upon which they had converged with such great hope. Boosting, or selling the land to outsiders, seemed the easiest way to circumvent the frustrating obstacles to development that marked the local landscape. The land that produced wealth in coal hampered expansion of trade; the railroad officials who had made Red Lodge happen monopolized transportation in the region; and the federal government that had so obligingly redrawn the Crow Reservation boundaries to accommodate the Red Lodge mines, seemed impervious to local demands for more Crow lands to support the developing town's growing economy. If Red Lodge were to grow, it would do so in spite of these combined interests.

The western topography, first of all, was maddeningly inconvenient to Red Lodge entrepreneurs whose inability to reshape geography cut off growth and increased the town's dependence on the Northern Pacific Railroad. The new town's promise depended, in large part, on the convergence of coal and railroads, but their convergence at Red Lodge was also geographically unfortunate. The town's rich hinterland was inaccessible. Red Lodge stood at the edge of the Rocky Mountains, where the high lands swept down to the Great Plains. It was a place of stunning beauty; snow-capped mountains, heavy forests, and rushing streams promised bounties of ore, wood and water. But, the towering Beartooth Range and snow-fed rivers separated the town from potential customers, making transportation difficult and cutting off the expansion of the town's merchant trade into the gold fields of Cooke City, ranches of Northern Wyoming, and farmlands of the Clark's Fork Valley in Montana. Lacking the resources to reshape the western topography, local entrepreneurs had to depend on the Rocky Fork Railway company and the NPRR for reliable, if expensive and limited, transportation and connections to a wider marketplace.[19]

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[19]Picket 30 January 1892, 3; 13 February 1892, 3; 4 March 1893, 3; 6 May 1893, 3; 7 October 1893, 2.

The federal government could be just as intransigent as the geography, just as detrimental to agricultural progress, and equally difficult to modify. The government's Yellowstone Park Timberland Reserve act of 1891 permanently prevented the private acquisition of thousands of acres of forest lands near Red Lodge. The government did not exactly "lock up" this land, as some opponents claimed, but the federal presence in and control of the forests limited development. The federal role in "locking up" land was more evident on the Crow reservation, where troops and agents kept settlers out of over six million acres of reservation land in the early 1890s. To local promoters these expansive grasslands, which stretched out toward the Pryor and Crazy Mountains far to the east and north, were the right and natural site for the homes and fields of hundreds of farmers who would make the prairie blossom—and bring business to the town. To dispossess the weakened Crow from their lands only a few miles from Red Lodge, entrepreneurs had to lobby a federal government over two thousand miles away. Through successive treaties the federal government reduced the Reservation from 6,500,000 acres in 1882 to 4,500,000 acres in 1892, and 3,400,000 acres in 1904,[20] but to promoters intent on rapid development, the process of taking the Crow's land and turning it into farmland seemed painfully slow.

Unable to speed up the government, move mountains, or remove Indians by themselves, townbuilders relied on constructing vivid images of Red Lodge to lure settlers and investors whose work and money would reshape the land and economy according to local wishes (or so boosters assumed). Boosting assumed grand dimensions in the 19th-century West as townbuilders across the region competed against each other in a serious, though often absurd, game of salesmanship. Image was everything. Promoters from every town in the West, not just Red Lodge, churned out newspaper stories and promotional brochures promising a "Grand Future" for their community and assuring potential settlers and investors that it was "destined in time to be a great city."[21] Immune to shame, boosters sold places with a ridiculous mixture of hyperbole and mythology, marketing locales with vivid descriptions of fertile lands and assurances of industrial development. The *Coal Metropolis*, as boosters quickly labeled Red Lodge,

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[20]Burton M. Smith, "Politics and the Crow Indian Land Cessions," Montana, The Magazine of Western History 36 (Autumn 1986): 24-37.

[21]Stinking Water Prospector (Red Lodge), 24 June 1891, 3.

had an official population of only 624 in the early 1890s, when local boosters described it as a city "of over two thousand inhabitants" or, more eloquently, as "a young giant stretching his sinewy limbs in all directions."[22] According to various booster reports, the Red Lodge area not only possessed "an unequaled and vast expanse of agricultural country," and coal enough "to supply a million people for centuries,"[23] it was also destined to produce "a veritable bonanza" of gold mines in the near future.[24] Townbuilders promised, in short, that Red Lodge would live up to the promises of the West.

Boosters, of course, recognized the power of western mythology and eagerly mobilized its national images in service to their cause. One would not expect less of such flamboyant salesmen. Significantly, these boosters carefully separated out certain versions of the western story, emphasizing only those facets of the mythology that served their own, promotional interests. For, in the 1890s, the "West" (the idea) was not simply one thing. It was a jumble of contradictory images and symbols and stories that merged around two broad narratives of American westward advancement. Similar in many ways, these twinned narratives explained the West as a site of conquest. One version, elegantly summarized by Frederick Jackson Turner in his 1893 essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," centered on the independent farmer whose plow brought civilization to the wild region in an orderly series of population waves: "the Indian, the fur-trader and hunter, the cattle-raiser, the pioneer farmer."[25] This version of the West most clearly promoted the region as the site of democratic opportunity and egalitarian values. Significantly, Turner virtually ignored Indian and Mexican land claims to the West; his tale of conquest assumed free land for white advancement and predicted a steady progression of capitalist expansion in the region. In contrast, a second narrative of westward expansion focused on the bloody struggle between white and non-white peoples in the conquest of the West. The "Wild West," as made

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[22]Stinking Water Prospector, 24 June 1891, 3; Picket, 19 December 1891, 3. Red Lodge's 1890 population figures are included in U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1910, Characteristics of the Population, volume II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 1138.

[23]Smalley, "Red Lodge," 21.

[24]Stinking Water Prospector, 24 June 1891.

[25]Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in The Early Writings

popular by showman Buffalo Bill Cody, presented six-gun wielding cowboys as the heroes of a violent region. More blatantly elitist and racist than Turner's West of farmers and fields, the Wild West stressed the region's freedom, but suggested that natural aristocracy and talent outweighed democratic egalitarianism in this region of men and guns. These two western stories mingled and merged in the physical and imagined Wests of the 1890s, up for grabs by Red Lodge boosters who, almost of accord, favored Turner's farmer over Buffalo Bill's cowboys and Indians.

In fact, as they grasped at national images of the West to support their dreams of gain, Red Lodge entrepreneurs, in effect, separated these two strands of the American westering mythology and pitted them against each other—advancing the narrative of the agrarian hero while deriding, and seeking to control, the Wild West figures. Boosters championed the farmer and vilified the rancher, cowboy, and Indian. In later years movie producers would re-create this mythic struggle in popular Westerns like "Shane," in which the farmer and rancher battled for the right to determine the destiny of the region's resources. Would it be wheat or cattle? Fences or open range? Of course, in the movies there could be little doubt of the outcome: cattle and Indians inevitably yielded to the farmers and the townbuilders. The Wild West always lost in the end; its glamour lay in its ephemeral quality of being an era over almost before it began.[26] Shane himself, as a figure of the Wild West, had to disappear at the end of movie, riding off into the night and away from a world that no longer had a place for him. With the Wild West's ranchers and cowboys under control, the story implied, farmer Joe Starrett and his friends would continue their efforts of building farms, homes, towns, and churches in the newly opened lands. This was the kind of simple, comprehensible narrative Red Lodge boosters yearned for as they mobilized local resources to champion the sturdy, pioneer farmer as their western icon of choice.

The farmer, a powerful national image, ensnared 19th-century middle-class Americans in a deeply rooted pastoralism.[27] Although well aware of their deepening dependence on industrial goods and services, Americans, including Red Lodge entrepreneurs, had not yet shed an earlier Jeffersonian

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of Frederick Jackson Turner, Everett E. Edwards, ed. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1938), 199.

[26]Athearn, Mythic West, 10-13; for an analysis of "Shane," see Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 369-400.

agrarianism. They believed, deeply, in the necessary role of the farmer and his plow as the agents of civilization, stability, and morality. According to Leo Marx, this belief in the pastoral ideal in the face of the "machine's" appearance in the landscape, "enabled the nation to continue defining its purpose as the pursuit of rural happiness while devoting itself to productivity, wealth, and power."[28] By the late 19th century, the farmer embodied a mythology of American progress that denied the social and economic changes that accompanied the nation's rapid industrialization in the late-19th century.[29] In the West, according to this mythology, the pioneer farmer confronted a land without artificial class structures, where wealth and social position in fact meant nothing compared to courage and hard work.[30] The imagery of the frontier farmer thus allowed Americans faced with a nation divided by race and class to retain their faith in American democratic and egalitarian ideals. On their own small scale, Red Lodge boosters echoed this larger, national infatuation with the American farmer, with an emphasis on this figure's ability to bolster a struggling regional economy. Entrepreneurs could not look at the industrial landscape of Red Lodge without painting in the small farms, industrious farmers, and bountiful harvests that made the picture "complete."[31]

The small, independent farmer, both as a symbol and as an actual person with a family to provide for (preferably with goods purchased in Red Lodge), became a touchstone of local boosterism in the town's early years. The farmer, both a consumer and a producer, embodied dual images: he was at once a link to older, more stable pre-capitalist values, and also a small entrepreneur who would help the town's economic growth.[32] Farmers promised economic diversity to a town that seemed painfully dependent on a single corporate industry. While grateful, even boastful, of the economic advantages offered by the

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[27]Smith, Virgin Land, 123-24.

[28]Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America (London: Oxford University Press, 1978, 1964), 226.

[29]Smith, Virgin Land, 124; Picket, 5 December 1896, 2.

[30]Turner, "Significance of the Frontier in American History," 186-89.

[31]Emmons, Garden in the Grasslands, 1-4; Smith, Virgin Land, 124-144; Frank R. Grant, "Embattled Voice for the Montana Farmers: Robert Sutherlin's Rocky Mountain Husbandman," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Montana, 1984), 169; Richard Brown Roeder, "Montana in the Early Years of the Progressive Period," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1971), 86.

Rocky Fork Coal Company and the Rocky Fork Railroad, local entrepreneurs feared being held hostage to these powerful companies. The mines and railroads represented the modern technological progress that had created Red Lodge, but boosters wanted that industrial core buffered by an older, more familiar form of extractive enterprise. "The farms that are tributary to this city," the local newspaper stated in 1893, "will give Red Lodge a permanency that other industries cannot assure."[33] Independent, capitalist farmers would protect local entrepreneurs from the frightening vicissitudes of an industrial economy that seemed increasingly prone to financial panics, booms and busts. Economic stability, at least in the minds of local businessmen, resided in small freeholders steadily tilling fields and harvesting crops.

But, however focused on their own dreams of creating a profitable, stable garden around Red Lodge, local entrepreneurs never lost sight of the power of the farmer at the *national* level. In Red Lodge, the independent farmer became both a goal and a tool to persuade influential Easterners to "open up" more western lands to the very farming that local entrepreneurs wanted in the area. Wrapped up themselves in convictions about the role of agriculture in "civilizing" a region, boosters readily used agrarian imagery to play to eastern concerns about the nation's increasing industrialization and urbanization. In so doing, they laid bare the class and racial assumptions that underlay the egalitarian agrarian mythology.

The independent farmer promised not only local wealth and stability to Red Lodge townbuilders, but also class- and race-driven justifications for middle- and upper-class Easterners to support this localized goal. Western farming, boosters argued, could ameliorate eastern labor troubles. As industrial tensions mounted in the factory towns of the East—sensationalized by the Haymarket Riot of 1886 and the violent Homestead Strike of 1892—Red Lodge townbuilders stepped up to offer the solution of western lands. The "discouraged industrial classes of the overcrowded East," the Red Lodge Picket suggested, could find hope and financial security on the lands around Red Lodge. The agency of earth, plow, and private property could transform discontented industrial workers into property-owning farmers who would work within the American capitalist system instead of against it. Drawing on popular ideas of

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[32]Picket, 5 December 1896, 2.
[33]Picket, 16 December 1893, 2.

the time, Red Lodge entrepreneurs marketed the arable land around their town as a "safety valve" that might save eastern city dwellers from the eruption of an increasingly violent, urban working class.[34]

First, however, the federal government would have to take the land away from the Crow Indians who claimed it.[35] Opportunity for the white farmer, which represented the salvation of American capitalism and democracy, depended on the dispossession of Indians—and Red Lodge boosters were eager to convince Easterners of the need to "open up" more Crow land to non-Indian settlement. Of course, as numerous scholars have pointed out and as many thinking Americans recognized at the time, few really "miserable" workers from the industrial classes could afford to travel out West, buy seed and tools to plant a first crop, and wait out a year with no income before a homestead farm might begin to pay off. Only those with ready cash could afford to take advantage of the "free" land offered under the various federal Homestead Acts. Industrial workers with dreams of western success more often struggled for jobs and survival in the deep mine shafts under industrial towns like Red Lodge, or Butte, or Bisbee, not on agricultural lands seized from Indians. The power of the Jeffersonian image of the farmer overwhelmed these mundane statistics, however, promising to solve the heightening industrial (read class) problems of the East through the simple expedient of taking land away from Indians. Red Lodge's emerging middle class thus mustered the democratic image of Turner's frontier farmer in service to their own, and Easterners', class interests and at the expense of dispossessed Crow Indians. As Red Lodge townbuilders quickly discovered, for an egalitarian figure, the farmer could serve a variety of decidedly unegalitarian ends.

Though enmeshed in the agrarian imagery of the frontier farmer, Red Lodge entrepreneurs, as they demonstrated in their arguments about Crow lands, were never simply the creatures of this national mythology. Boosters eagerly manipulated the image of the farmer to their own advantage whenever they could, even when it might not seem particularly appropriate. Red Lodge entrepreneurs, for example, early on took control of the very terminology of the pioneer farmer, cloaking themselves in the culturally weighted terminology of the "pioneer" to lend legitimacy to their assumption of local leadership roles in

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[34]Picket, 5 December 1896, 2. Also 15 April 1893, 3; Slotkin, Fatal Environment, 308.

the urban space of Red Lodge. Entrepreneurs understood that "pioneer" and "farmer," intimately intertwined in national thought, shared a kind of veneration in American popular culture.[36] The term evoked images like those in Walt Whitman's "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" (1865): "We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend ... We the virgin soil upheaving, Pioneers! O Pioneers!"[37] According to the popular mythology, restless and ambitious farmers had led much of America's westward movement, earning the designation "pioneer" through their struggles to settle and farm the nation's western boundaries.[38] Anyone calling himself a "pioneer" invoked this agrarian association. Academic historians like Frederick Jackson Turner recognized and reinforced the popular connection—pointing out, if townbuilders had cared to look, that "pioneers" were farmers, not townsmen. In his essay on the frontier, Turner explicitly defined *pioneers* as agrarian people; they cleared and tamed the wilderness, making way for the towns that would come several stages later. Although heroic in their own way, the townbuilders were, in frontiering myths, farther removed from the crucible of the frontier—the "pioneering" stage—and thus closer to the corruption of the Old World. The towns brought "gardens, colleges, and churches" to the West, but were also prone toward "luxuries, elegances, frivolities, and fashions."[39] Pioneers, in American culture, embodied the *agrarian* strand of western mythology.

In Red Lodge, however, the local entrepreneurial class assumed the right to determine who might be called pioneer in their community.[40] The original entrepreneurs justified their possession of the title of "pioneer"—and the exclusion of workers, Indians, and later arrivals—by pointing out that in the Red

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[35]Picket, 15 April 1893, 3; 5 December 1896, 2.

[36]John Bodnar, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 16, 34, 49, 92-93, 249-50.

[37]Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), 169-72.

[38]In his classic study of the mythology of the yeoman farmer, Virgin Land, p. 303, Henry Nash Smith's index reference for pioneer reads simply, "*see* Farmer."

[39]Turner quotes from Peck's New Guide to the West (1837) in this passage on towns, " Significance of the Frontier," 208-09.

[40]James U. Sanders, ed. Society of Montana Pioneers, vol. I (Akron: The Werner Company, 1899). The Montana Society of Pioneers tried to control the term by applying it only to those who had arrived in Montana by 1864 (later extended to 1868), excluding only Indians and outlaws from the category. Conditions for Society membership did not preclude other Montanans from using the term, however,

Lodge area, the pioneer risk-takers had been the townbuilders who had stuck with the community and worked to make it prosper and succeed. In the local newspaper, use of "pioneer" was extensive but selective; school teachers, businessmen, and farmers might be called pioneers, but never miners, Indians, prostitutes, or immigrants.[41] When Red Lodge was only a few years old, a rickety and disorganized collection of shacks and tents surrounding the Rocky Fork Coal Company mine, a local editor argued that Red Lodge residents enjoyed "comfortable circumstances" at the present time only because of the efforts and sacrifices of the early townbuilders, "the pioneers of Red Lodge, who first discovered and opened up our immense coal fields and splendid agricultural resources and made them accessible."[42] Reversing the Turnerian process, townsmen had taken the land away from the Indians and made it safe for farmers. In a telling statement meant to reassure new settlers, the Red Lodge Picket made this point clearly. "The Indian has disappeared," it proudly claimed, "and the land is yours for the asking."[43] (Of course, the Indians had not *quite* disappeared, but exaggeration was standard operating procedure for western boosters.) Almost as soon as they could, the spokesmen of the developing middle class created themselves as "pioneers," borrowing from the mystique of Jeffersonian farmers to assert their own moral authority to lead the new community.

Red Lodge boosters invented nothing new in these manipulations of frontier imagery. Such appropriations of pioneer terminology were fairly common in the American West whenever local entrepreneurs sought to secure their positions and fortunes in developing communities. As Richard Slotkin has observed, this appropriation of mythological language ensured that the "dangerous or dubious form of the bourgeois could be made to disappear into the mystique of the buckskin pioneer."[44] Entrepreneurs masked their goals through an egalitarian imagery that, in fact, excluded almost everyone else in the community. They made this point clearly in their exclusive possession of the term, "pioneer."

Clyde A. Milner II, "The Shared Memory of Montana Pioneers," Montana, the Magazine of Western History 37 (Winter 1987): 13.

[41]Picket, 15 August 1891, 3; 19 December 1891, 3.

[42]Picket, 19 December 1891, 3.

[43]Picket, 15 April 1893, 3.

[44]Slotkin, Fatal Environment, 45.

As the town matured and social classes became better established, the business classes would loosen their grip on this frontier imagery. Gradually, other local groups would appropriate the terminology of the pioneer as they, too, laid claim to the town's history and sought to advance their own social status. Eventually even the middle-class descendants of the town's immigrant miners could proudly identify their working-class ancestors as true "pioneers" of Red Lodge.[45] In the early 1890s, however, the entrepreneurial classes kept much tighter rein over this powerful imagery, even as they manipulated it for their own gain.

But imagery could only go so far in the American West. Boosting remained a limited tool. Printed descriptions of fertile fields and pioneer farmers might convince some settlers to purchase local lands or persuade a lawmaker to vote in favor of Indian land cessions, but these promotional tools could do little to change a climate, influence an intractable (and distant) federal bureaucracy, or lower rates on a corporate railroad monopoly. Continually rebuffed by the land, NPRR, and federal government, Red Lodge entrepreneurs clung to the image of the independent farmer and the promise of local control over local resources. But, events and conditions conspired against Red Lodge boosters' plans to achieve wealth rapidly and easily. Even when the federal government threw open 1.8 million acres of the Crow reservation to settlers in 1892, local promoters felt profoundly ill-used. They expected a land rush and instead got something more like a trickle. The Panic of 1893, which closely followed the reservation opening, devastated the national economy and stifled interest in western lands. And, the prospective settlers who braved the poor economy to purchase land rejected much of the available acreage around Red Lodge. The provisions of the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 had allowed individual Crow Indians to retain some of the best creek bottom lands on the ceded reservation, and what remained was too arid to be very appealing in hard times. At the very moment they expected the golden influx of hardy farmers, boosters faced instead another frustrating failure.

Angered at the continual frustration of the "natural" progression of western land from wilderness to ranch to farm and cities, local boosters cast around for convenient scapegoats to explain the failure of

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[45]Lampi, "Red Lodge," 20.

their model of western progress. Interestingly, the figures these townbuilders chose to blame for Red Lodge's failure to prosper happened to be the key figures from the popular version of the Wild West: the Indian, rancher, and cowboy. Boosters, of course, never employed the neat label of "Wild West" to identify the people who seemed to stand in the way of progress; but, in the early 1890s towbuilders spoke out—sometimes viciously—against these representative figures of the Wild West and the danger (wildness) they brought to the public imagery of the little town. Through their newspaper articles and editorials, boosters essentially created a dichotomy between the agrarian and wild Wests around Red Lodge, blaming the latter for the failure of the former to establish an agricultural paradise in the area.[46]

Ironically, much of the nation in the 1890s seemed fascinated with the very mythology of the Wild West that regional boosters fought against. The very popularity of the Wild West was part of the boosters' problem. Even as western townsmen derided and attacked local Indians, ranchers, and cowboys, the nation developed an insatiable appetite for stories about these exotic characters and their adventures in a West full of danger and excitement. The Wild West offered Americans and Europeans a chance to escape the sense of overcivilization and artificiality that seemed to permeate urban society by the end of the century. While still attached to the agrarian imagery of the egalitarian farmer, Americans grew increasingly fascinated with the Wild West's bloody and violent narrative of expansion into a rough frontier. The appeal was widespread. Dime novel Westerns, churned out by writers paid by the page, featured extravagant adventures set in a West full of Indians, bandits, cowboys, and masked women. Young boys and workers snapped up sensational tales of intrepid, valiant men like Wild Bill Hickok, who could track a murderer across miles of desert and then single-handedly kill two dozen desperadoes in a good day's work. Germans in the 1890s could not get enough of Karl May's stirring stories about "Old Shatterhand" and the Indian chief, "Winnetou," who battled evil villains against the wild and beautiful backdrop of the American

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[46] Picket, 29 October 1892, 3; 11 March 1893, 3; 15 April 1893, 3; 18 March 1893, 3; 6 October 1894, 3; 15 September 1894, 3; 20 August 1892, 3; 22 October 1892, 3; 3 August 1895, 3; 8 February 1896, 2; 29 June 1895; 10 March 1894, 2; 19 December 1891, 2; 5 September 1891, 3; 15 October 1892, 3; 10 December 1892, 3; 6 February 1892, 3; 16 September 1893, 3.

Southwest.[47] Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West extravaganza brought these dime novels to glorious life for middle-class viewers with "authentic" reproductions of western scenes that turned the conquest of the West into a glamorous spectacle of racialized violence. From 1883 into the 1910s, Cody and his Wild West performers toured the world, thrilling audiences with such dramatic episodes as "A Prairie Immigrant Train Crossing the Plains," in which cowboys rescued settlers from attacks by genuine Indian actors, and "Capture of the Deadwood Mail Coach by the Indians" (the title speaks for the storyline).[48] Like Deadwood Dick, Calamity Jane, Winnetou, and Wild Bill Hickok, Buffalo Bill lived in a West rippling with danger and intrigue enough to raise the blood pressure of excitable readers who, like Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn, dreamed of "lightin' out fer the territories."

But the Wild West's messages ran much deeper than simple danger and excitement, although these facets appealed greatly to urban dwellers safe in warm homes. The Wild West also presented the West as the proving ground of Anglo-American superiority. Unlike the pioneer farmer mythology, which obscured its racist and classist foundations beneath the stalwart image of the egalitarian farmer, the Wild West assumed a clearly stated racial and class hierarchy.[49] To Cody's largely middle-class, white audience the Indians' atrocities and the skill of the cowboys and scouts who defeated them reaffirmed the racial superiority of white Americans over Indian savages and, by extension, over other "colored" races. The conquest of the West *proved* the superiority of white America. Theodore Roosevelt refined this message

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[47]Michael Denning, Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America (London: Verso, 1987), 157-58; Smith, Virgin Lands, 90-111; Jane Tompkin, West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Heribert Frhr Feilitzsch, "Karl May: The 'Wild West' as seen in Germany," Journal of Popular Culture 27 (Winter 1993): 173-189. For examples of dime-novel Westerns, see Ned Buntline, Buffalo Bill and His Adventures in the Wild West (New York: J.S. Ogelvie & Company, 1884), or Edward L. Wheeler, Deadwood Dick's Big Deal, or The Gold Brick of Oregon (New York: Beadle and Adams, 1883).

[48]White, "Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill," 27; L.G. Moses, Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 1.

[49]Michael Denning argues that in a particular version of dime novel Westerns, the outlaw tale, the Western hero briefly emerged as a social bandit who "openly defied laws, reacted violently against social restraint." Deadwood Dick, and later Jesse James, were the most popular of these working-class heroes. Between 1877 and 1883, as Denning puts it, "outlaws defied the law and got away with it, escaping the moral universe of both genteel and sensational fiction." But middle-class morality quickly caught up with these wild outlaws; the Postmaster General squelched distribution of such novels in 1893, and the West

for a more elite audience, but essentially reiterated in print what Cody presented in the arena. Denouncing "sentimentalists" who decried the fate of conquered Indians, Roosevelt replied: "*war was inevitable*.... It is wholly impossible to avoid conflicts with a weaker race."[50] Race in this case was not a simple white/black or white/red equation. Roosevelt, like many other Americans, was heavily influenced by the social Darwinism and biological racism popular in the late 19th century. His friend Owen Wister made this point bluntly in the classic 1901 Western, The Virginian. Men like Wister's Virginian succeeded in the West not through hard work alone, but because they were better than those around them, especially Indians, Mexicans, Chinese, and eastern European immigrants. Anglo-Saxon men rose to the top in the West, socially and economically, because of natural abilities borne out of racial superiority. "Equality is a great big bluff," the Virginian pointed out to the eastern greenhorn, "It's easy called."[51] The harsh, uncivilized Wild West proved his point.

For the most part, Red Lodge entrepreneurs had little trouble accepting, even embracing, the racist and class assumptions of the Wild West narrative, which after all reflected much wider national ideas of the late 19th century. Townbuilders readily advocated stripping Indians of treaty lands and asserted their own class rights to dominate local leadership roles.[52] But *violence*—the very heart of the Wild West—was bad for business. Affirming Anglo-Saxon superiority was all well and good, but stories of ambushes and massacres painted the region as a place without law, order, or progress. Wildness meant crime, Indian attacks, and lack of protection for property and capital investments. Middle-class families and farmers, who might enjoy seeing a Wild West show, did not move to "wild" places themselves or invest in businesses there. Besides, two of the Wild West's representative characters—the rancher and the Indian—threatened local progress by monopolizing arable lands that might support thousands of farmers and their families. The Wild West not only presented the wrong image of the West, but the real-life

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returned to the control of "proper" heroes who killed only Indians and rustlers. Denning, Mechanic Accents, 157-160.

[50]Quoted in Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 48.

[51]Owen Wister, The Virginian (New York: Popular Library, Eagle Books, 1962), 93.

[52] Boosters, for example, insisted the white settlers should, of course, supercede Indians on area lands. Picket, 6 October 1894, 3; 18 January 1896, 2; 8 February 1896, 2.

representatives of that narrative controlled too much land. Except for minor, fringe elements of this narrative, local boosters determined to fight the Wild West in and around Red Lodge in their quest to make the town into a model, eastern-style city surrounded by respectable, and profitable, farmlands rather than by Indians, ranchers, and cowboys.

Indians were the worst of a bad bunch of Wild West figures who lived near Red Lodge. The most evocative and powerful symbol of the Wild West, Indians posed multiple threats to Red Lodge business interests. The Crow not only monopolized some of the region's best land, they also frightened prospective settlers who remained culturally convinced that all Indians were terrifying savages intent on massacring and scalping white victims. Surprisingly, remnants of this attitude toward Indians persisted even into the late 19th-century. The perception, after all, had deep roots in a nation obsessed since colonial days with Indian atrocities against white settlers. Americans had long memorialized white victimization, virtually ignoring accompanying white atrocities against Indians. Buffalo Bill's Wild West, for example, regularly featured Indian attacks on helpless white settlers, but never presented tableaux of white Americans massacring or dispossessing Indians. That was not part of the popular story. The Custer Battlefield became a national monument; the site of the Marias massacre, where U.S. soldiers killed 173 Blackfeet Indians, mostly women and children, in 1870, never even warranted a marker.[53] Western mythologies effectively "inverted" the story of American conquest. As Richard White argues, spectacles like Buffalo Bill's presented the American conquest of the West as a site where whites were victims and Indians aggressors. Such images permeated American culture, and Americans learned well the lesson of white victimization, as Red Lodge boosters soon discovered.[54]

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[53]James Welch noted that in his research for a novel on Blackfeet Indians, Fools Crow, he had to search out the site of the Marias massacre. Unlike the Custer Battlefield, which became a national monument, the Marias site is just an unmarked field of grass. William Kittredge relates this story in Who Owns the West (San Francisco: Mercury House, 1996), 122; also Richard Maxwell Brown, "Violence," in The Oxford History of the American West, 416.

[54] White, "Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill," 27-32; Moses, Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1; Slotkin Gunfighter Nation, 76; Glenda Riley, Women and Indians on the Frontier, 1825-1915 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 250

In the early 1890s, the Red Lodge area resounded with stories of white victims of Indian aggression.[55] Although white settlers invariably initiated any violent encounters between Indians and non-Indians, whites insisted that Indian savagery endangered their lives and property. Conditioned by the mythology of the Wild West, new settlers to the region *expected* Indian violence and saw it everywhere. In 1892 and 1893 dozens of rural residents fled their homes in anticipation of Crow uprisings, and a favorite story in Red Lodge family reminiscences tells of a farmwife just settled on former Crow land who scurried into her cellar any time an Indian approached her house, fearfully awaiting the inevitable attack that never came.[56] The presence of these new settlers on former reservation land did produce tensions, but mostly because white newcomers illegally claimed land and other resources owned by individual Crows. Rumors of Indian attacks that swept through the Red Lodge area in the early 1890s invariably developed out of white violence toward Indian landholders. In October of 1892, for example, two white settlers who took claims on Indian lands drove off the Crow owner with guns when he protested the intrusion. The incident set off a series of rumors that Indians were gathering for an attack on the settlers.[57] A few months later two men shot and killed an Indian who protested their theft of lumber from his allotted land. When about 150 or so Indians gathered to demonstrate against the killing, the terrified residents of the town of Wilsey (about 30 miles north of Red Lodge) fled to Laurel on the main line of the Northern Pacific.[58] Fears of an Indian uprising were unfounded, the local newspaper assured its readers; the Crow would not engage in such "foolishness," knowing as they did that any such attack would mean that "the entire tribe would be wiped out of existence in a few days."[59] But new settlers were slow to

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[55] In at least three separate incidents, rural residents near Red Lodge fled their homes in fear of Indian attacks. Picket, 29 October 1892, 3; 11 March 1893, 3; 18 March 1893, 3. Some residents, even in the early 1890s, feared Indians just because they were Indians. For example, Mrs. Hicox, an early Red Lodge resident wrote that "I dreaded the arrival of the Crows, for I feared them so. Every time I saw them coming, I hid and pretended I wasn't home," Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 22.

[56] Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 22, 324.

[57] Picket, 29 October 1892, 3.

[58] Picket, 11 March 1893, 3 The man who shot the Indian was later acquitted on the grounds of self-defense; he argued that the Crow had been reaching for his gun, Picket 15 April 1893, 3.

[59] Picket, 11 March 1893, 3

accept such reassurance. Masking their own aggressiveness, they believed all Indians eager to massacre white victims in the manner of the blood-thirsty Sioux in Buffalo Bill's Wild West.

Local boosters dismissed the "absurd rumors" about Indian attacks, but they quickly realized that the very presence of Indians spawned such rumors. Indians, quite simply, were bad for the region's image. Rumors of Indian uprisings, even if unfounded, produced "highly sensational reports" which eastern newspapers seized upon to generate dramatic stories about the dangers of the Wild West in Red Lodge.[60] To identify the Red Lodge area as a peaceful and settled part of the West, boosters would have to make the Indians disappear.[61] Entrepreneurs and new settlers did not care that the Crow had been military allies of the United States since 1825 or that these Indians had engaged in a vigorous and important barter economy with the earlier American settlers in the Yellowstone area.[62] The complete elimination of Indians from non-reservation lands was needed to put an end to the bad publicity inevitably arising from the interaction of two seemingly incompatible groups. The local paper put it bluntly: "We all know that when Indians come in contact with the western settler the effect is about the same as planting a red flag in the face of a maddened bull. The two classes will never assimilate. The proper remedy is to remove those Indians to the reservation."[63] Final removal of the Indians ("red" flags) from their former lands would serve the dual purposes of opening up more acreage to farmers and eliminating a vital element of the Wild West from Red Lodge's public image. Indians in the area were safe only as a distant memory or restricted within the ever-shrinking boundaries of a reservation.

In later years, tourism promoters would actively solicit Indians to appear in Red Lodge rodeos and festivals as symbols of the town's Wild West past, but in the early 1890s Indians were too much of a presence and retained too many associations with real danger and economic troubles to be welcomed in the community. Town leaders preferred to have them completely out of sight. Local boosters even tried to change the town's name to Villard in 1889, dropping its connection to Indian dwellings while currying

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[60]Picket, 18 March 1893, 3. White notes this tendency of Eastern newspapers to seize upon rumors of Indian attacks, in "Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill," 29.

[61]Picket, 6 October 1894, 3; 18 January 1896, 2; 8 February 1896, 2.

[62]Van West, Capitalism on the Frontier, 8-66.

favor with the president of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Henry Villard requested, however, that the name not be changed, and the "Indian" name of the town would eventually become one of its most effective marketing features. By the 1920s boosters began to incorporate Indian symbols into the town logo, and promotional campaigns played up the area's "Indian past." Outside of ceremonial events, however, real Indians remained largely unwelcome in the community for much of the 20th century.[64] Unlike the other Wild West characters of the rancher and the cowboy, the Indian's presence stayed almost entirely symbolic in Red Lodge's developing "western" identity.

If Indians represented the racialized, savage "other" on the western landscape, then the rancher embodied the Anglo-American success story of the Wild West. White, male, wealthy property holders, ranchers controlled huge acreages of land in the region, often living in grand style at luxurious ranch headquarters with imported furnishings and foods. For many eastern observers, ranchers epitomized western success. Theodore Roosevelt championed the rancher lifestyle; he played at being a rancher in the Dakotas for several years and idolized men such as Granville Stuart, owner of one of the largest ranches in Montana in the 1880s. Owen Wister hobnobbed with the rancher elite at the Cheyenne Club in Wyoming and admired their radical egalitarianism: the newly rich rubbed shoulders democratically with the sons of eastern millionaires.[65] Ranchers such as those who befriended Wister and Roosevelt did not terrify settlers, threaten public safety, or provoke wild rumors about massacres. But, in the early 1890s, Red Lodge boosters despised these figures as much as, if not more than, the Crow Indians.

Local battles against ranchers centered on land—or more particularly on accusations that cattle owners monopolized arable acres that might more profitably support farmers than cows. Ranchers represented the Wild West of the open range; they controlled enormous acreages in the region, both through the manipulation of federal law and through sometimes shady alliances with the Crow Indians.[66]

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[63]Picket, 6 October 1894, 3; Hamer, New Towns in the New World, 219.

[64]Van West, Capitalism on the Frontier, 178.

[65]Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 170.

[66] Red Lodge, though, never erupted into the kind of violence that marked the struggle between ranchers and farmers in the so-called "Johnson County War" in Wyoming, Richard White, "It's Your Misfortune

Cattlemen's consolidation of local lands actually began a few years before the founding of Red Lodge, when the killing winter of 1886-87 ended the days of the open range. The harsh winter decimated herds and destroyed many of the big cattle companies.[67] Cattlemen used any method at hand, legal or illegal, to gain control over key parcels of land on which they could grow fodder to feed their herds through the winter months. Local rancher J.R. Dilworth, for example, took a Desert Land claim that he never lived on himself, but which his outfit, the Dilworth Cattle Company, "fenced and cultivated" for its own benefit. Dilworth's successor, J.N. Tolman, also took out filings under the Homestead and Desert Land acts, and Tolman's cousin claimed a Timber Culture filing for the company, which was headquartered in Kansas. In a typical manipulation of these land acts' stipulations, Tolman swore to use the acreage only for his own benefit, then offered the Company "full use of the Land so long as they may wish it."[68] Flagrantly misusing national land policies, companies like the Dilworth outfit managed to control a vast territory around Red Lodge for a decade after the open range ended, thus, according to townbuilders, delaying the Turnerian evolution from cattleman to farmer, Wild West to civilized countryside.

More infuriating to local boosters, cattlemen actually allied with that other despised Wild West figure, the Indian, to gain access to even more land around Red Lodge. Ironically, cattlemen expanded their range land by twisting provisions of the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887, which was supposed to transform reservation Indians into independent farmers. Under the Dawes Act, individual Indians could claim 160 acres of reservation land for cultivation. A paternalistic provision of the act, meant to shield naive Indians from ruthless speculators, prohibited individuals from selling their allotted land for 25 years. But, Indians *could* lease their land. After the federal government redrew the boundaries of the Crow Reservation in 1892, ranchers such as Tolman, who had connections with the reservation agent, contracted with Crow Indians to lease both individual parcels of allotted land and tribal acreages within the reservation itself. Indignant town merchants and promoters assessed the situation and hotly denounced the

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and None of My Own:" A History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 345-346.

[67] J.R. Dilworth to Williamson, 28 February 1887, Dilworth Cattle Company Records, MF 308a, MHS.

[68] J.N. Tolman to D.J. Campbell, 23 March 1893, and J.N. Tolman to John Wilson, 1 May 1893, Dilworth Cattle Company Records, MF 308a, MHS.

Crow agreement (arranged in 1890, but not ratified until 1892) as "one of the most unjust and pernicious treaties ever made"--not because it abrogated earlier promises made to a loyal American ally, but because individual Crows (and through them, area ranchers) managed to hold onto some of the better lands during the negotiations. Reluctant to acknowledge Indian agency in the process, boosters painted the Crow as simple dupes of wily ranchers. "Through the interests and manipulations of a lot of interested cattle owners," the Red Lodge Picket fumed, "most of this land amounting to some 54,000 acres, and the choicest for agricultural purposes, was reserved for the Indians as allotments in order that the cattle barons could use it for grazing and hay purposes."[69] Thus allied, these two Wild West figures could deny Red Lodge entrepreneurs their rightful slice of the region's promised wealth.

Red Lodge boosters furiously insisted that by monopolizing choice parcels of land, ranchers perpetuated an older, less efficient use of local resources. More importantly, the cattleman--who might use five or more acres to feed a single cow—kept that land out of the hands of hundreds or thousands of farm families. The greater population density created by numerous small farms would generate not only customers for local entrepreneurs, but also many of the markers of civilization that boosters so wanted in the area: schools, roads, churches, and fences [70] Determined to replace ranches with farms, the open range with picket fences, Red Lodge entrepreneurs waged a vicious propaganda battle against the ranchers and their control of land and resources.

Frustrated and furious at continued obstructions to their dreams of wealth and stability, Red Lodge boosters struck out at the ranchers and Indians who seemed most immediately responsible for the region's lack of progress. Red Lodge boosters despised both of these Wild West figures, but, significantly, they made important racial distinctions between these allied figures. The ranchers' unpardonable fault was

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[69]Quote from Picket, 15 September 1894, 3. For other references to ranchers and Indians working together to keep land from farmers, see Picket, 20 August 1892, 3; 22 October 1892, 3; 6 October 1894, 3; 3 August 1895, 3; 8 February 1896, 2.

[70]Most Montanans of this period supported the idea that farming was a higher and better use of resources than was cattle ranching, Roeder, "Montana in the Early Years of the Progressive Period," 86. Red Lodge boosters may have been aware that the land surrounding the town was currently hard to cultivate, but they laid their hopes in irrigation projects and the promises of dry-land farming techniques. In the early 1900s, for example, local merchant W. A. Talmadge helped to organize a series of dry-land farming conferences in the state, Republican Picket (Red Lodge), 26 August 1909, 1.

that in maintaining their business interests they denied Red Lodge merchants their own chances to grow rich from the opportunities presented by the development of the West. Townsmen blasted the ranchers in print and fought to force them to give up illegal land claims. But, Red Lodge boosters never dehumanized the ranchers as they did Indians. The Red Lodge Picket freely labeled Crow Indians as "barbaric," "worthless," government "pets." A headline in 1893 even declared one Crow, killed by a white settler, "A Good Indian! Because He Has a Bullet Through His Heart."[71] Articles denouncing the cattlemen rarely used terms any harsher than "Cattle Baron." In a state dominated by "Copper Barons" who ran much of the Montana economy and politics, the term *was* a slur, but nothing like the "good Indian/dead Indian" references to Crows. Ranchers were part of a much-despised Wild West, but they were also rich, powerful, and *white*. Racist assumptions lay at the core of the westward movement in all of its mythological manifestations, and, once stripped of the bulk of their land holding, ranchers metamorphisized into respected members of the community. Indians remained largely outsiders, racialized others with no place in the town.

Whatever form their attacks took, however, Red Lodge boosters could do little about the presence of Indians and ranchers in the early 1890s. These local Wild West figures were close at hand and their offenses easily comprehensible. But they also lay largely outside the influence of Red Lodge boosters. Much as they might hate the Indians and ranchers, boosters had little influence over the Wild West that extended beyond their town borders. Like the federal government, corporate officials, and the land itself, these Wild West figures—even though they made convenient targets for vicious propaganda attack—stood outside local control. In this phase of the battle between the Wild West and the agrarian West, local entrepreneurs did not have the power to take direct action. They produced scathing articles and allied with other businessmen around the state to lobby the federal government for help in reallocating Indian lands, but townsmen could not simply force Indians to give up allotments or demand that ranchers abide by the letter and spirit of the Desert Land or Dawes Allotment acts. The federal government enforced (at least nominally) the rights of the Indians, and the stockmen formed powerful state

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[71]Picket, 6 October 1894, 3; 29 June 1895, 3; 10 March 1894, 2; 11 March 1893, 3.

organizations to protect their own privileged status in the West. The Indians and the ranchers, located outside the town, remained largely beyond the reach of the community's entrepreneurial class.

Unlike the rancher and the Indian, a third Wild West figure, the cowboy, invaded the public spaces of Red Lodge, itself. The cowboy brought the Wild West into the community, posing a physical danger to residents and marking the town as "unsafe" to outsiders. Since the cowboy controlled no land, had no powerful protectors, and acted within the town, local entrepreneurs could more easily and readily regulate his behavior than they could the Indians and wealthy ranchers out on the prairies. In fact, Red Lodge entrepreneurs took advantage of the danger posed by cowboys and other "ruffians" to tighten their control over the town's development and public image. Boosters used the cowboy as an excuse to push residents into establishing a town government with ordinances designed to impose middle-class morality on the local population. The Wild West within Red Lodge died a quick death, stifled by an entrepreneurial class determined to create a respectable, safe, and profitable community.

Briefly, Red Lodge had played the role of a western boomtown. When the coal mine started operations in 1889 and the miners' payroll began to flow through eager hands, Red Lodge went a little wild. Although it was perhaps never *quite* as rowdy as later residents would like to boast, few social controls existed in the town's first years to keep the mostly single, male population in check.[72] Saloons operating out of tents opened up almost the moment the town existed; prostitutes followed as quickly. Gamblers wandered into Red Lodge ready to make a quick buck off a naive miner or a drunken cowhand. Hoodlums and cowboys (local entrepreneurs did not distinguish between the two) openly carried firearms, delighting in disrupting church services and the sleep of decent citizens. Life and property seemed constantly endangered. In 1891, cattleman J.N. Tolman dismissed the town as a den of horse thieves, the headquarters of a "gang of very suspicious characters."[73] There was simply no one to stop any of these wild characters from doing what they liked. As an unincorporated town, Red Lodge had no city tax funds to hire police officers, and the sheriff lived over 100 miles away in the county seat of Livingston; in 1891,

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[72] Efforts to control the "wild" imagery of the town's industrial miners is discussed in Chapter Two.

[73] J.N. Tolman to W.J. Anderson, 30 August 1891, Dilworth Cattle Company Records, MF 308a, MHS.

Red Lodge did not even have a deputy sheriff in residence to deal with either Tolman's horse thieves or drunken cowboys on their shooting spree.[74]

Although many different characters contributed to the vice and violence in the new town, cowboys epitomized (or at least were blamed for) much of the wild behavior in early Red Lodge. In the early 1890s, cowboys constituted an unemployed "hobo" population in Red Lodge during a large part of the year. Many of the cowhands who drove cattle to the railhead of the Rocky Fork Railway line were fired from their ranch jobs during the winter months; they wandered in and out of town taking odd jobs here and there, often rustling livestock to keep from starving.[75] With no police force or town government to enforce codes of behavior, the cowboys freely carried and fired weapons, relieving their boredom through smoke, noise, and fear.[76] Montana cowboy Billa Gallagher typified the wild behavior of these cowboys. He swaggered into Red Lodge in late 1892, boasting of being a "desperado" and swearing to make the town "smoke." After loading up on whiskey, Gallagher and his friends let loose, firing off their guns in one of the local saloons.[77] Each shot Gallagher fired drove home to local residents the need for a local governmental structure to control legally the Billa Gallaghers of the world.

For middle-class Westerners in the 1890s the physical presence of the Wild West—drunken, obnoxious, smelly Billa Gallagher—seemed far from romantic. The cowboy in Red Lodge was an often unemployed, often inebriated nuisance, not some idealized hero of the plains, who, like Owen Wister's Virginian, bashfully asked the new school marm for a dance before riding out to rescue settlers from savage Indians.[78] Up close, men such as Gallagher simply did not fit Theodore Roosevelt's description of cowboys as "hard-working, faithful fellows," who constituted a proud, spirited, Anglo-Saxon class on the

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[74]Picket, 19 December 1891, 2.

[75]Most cowboys lost their jobs during the winter and wandered around western towns, Kristine Fredericksson, American Rodeo: From Buffalo Bill to Big Business (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), 13; Blake Allmendinger, The Cowboy: Representations of Labor in an American Work Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 84-86.

[76]Picket, 5 September 1891, 3.

[77]Picket, 15 October 1892, 3.

[78]See, for example, the classic western, Wister's The Virginian, for this ideal of the fun-loving, noble cowhand.

plains.[79] To townspeople in the West, cowboys were working-class men who threatened the lives and property of their betters while making little or no contribution to the local economy. Invading public spaces and tying up town business with "wild and reckless abandon," cowboys like Billa Gallagher represented exactly what local elites were determined to eliminate from their town.[80] Such people, Red Lodge boosters insisted, needed to be controlled so that "the impression will not go abroad that we are a community of border ruffians who shoot and kill for the mere pleasure that is supposed to afford the bad man to spill blood."[81]

Suppression of the cowboys marked the tightening of local entrepreneurial control over Red Lodge society and the town's public identity. Eager to make Red Lodge an attractive and safe place for themselves and prospective settlers, town and company officials implemented controls to discourage undesirable people and behavior. They sought to remove the "wild" from this western town in their quest for prosperity. In the first step toward this goal, the entrepreneurial class led a successful vote for incorporation in 1892, which was followed a few years later by the town's victorious bid to become county seat of the newly formed Carbon County. The Red Lodge Picket justified the expense of creating local government by warning that this was the only way to "put an end to the lawlessness and all-around foolishness of the hobo element of the town."[82] The town then hired the famous old trapper John "Liver-Eating" Johnson as constable. A remnant of an older West himself, Johnson had earned a reputation for not carrying a gun while enforcing the law in nearby Coulsten (Billings) a few years earlier: "I just beat hell out of the ones that should be arrested," he once claimed, "and turn 'em loose, and I've never had to arrest the same man twice!"[83] Despite Johnson's reputation, city officials thought it prudent to vote funds for the construction of a city jail. They, unfortunately, skimped on the project, and neighboring towns

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[79]Quoted in Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 39.

[80]Picket, 15 October 1892, 3.

[81]Picket, 10 December 1892, 3.

[82]Picket, 6 February 1892, 3. "Hobo" was a reference also to the multitudes of unemployed workers wandering around the country in the late 19th century. It did not necessarily refer to "cowboys," but the local newspaper sometimes used the two terms interchangeably, 6 February 1892, 6; 15 October 1892, 3. On hobos, see Eric H. Monkkonen, ed., Walking to Work: Tramps in America, 1790-1935 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

delighted in poking fun at the Red Lodge jail for being as easy to get out of as into.[84] The state of the city jail notwithstanding, town leaders took further measures to control wild behavior. The city council prohibited the discharge of weapons within the city limits and made it a crime to carry a concealed weapon in town.[85] Billa Gallagher and his friends found that Red Lodge was no longer a "wide open" place by the end of 1892. Constable Johnson arrested Gallagher and threw him in jail (which, fortunately for the town's crimebusting efforts, managed to hold him); town officials then imposed a fine so high that his friends could not raise the bail. Townsmen drove home the point that Red Lodge was no longer a wild town. "In future," announced the local newspaper, "cowboys, or others who indulge in the practice of firing their pistols within the corporate limits had better go slow. ... Red Lodge is incorporated and the pistol must go."[86]

Social control in Red Lodge only began with cowboys like Billa Gallagher. The town's suppression of wild cowboy antics symbolized a larger movement to control public appearance and behavior in the new community that extended to women, miners, prostitutes, children, and even pets. Since the public behavior of women, in particular, marked a town as orderly and progressive, the town council took pains to regulate female activities in Red Lodge according to middle-class standards, stipulating what women could wear and how they could speak in public. In 1894, for example, the town decided that "Mother Hubbard" dresses violated local sensibilities and were thus forbidden. These loose-fitting garments, worn by a few daring women at the turn of the century, eschewed the structure of corsets and bustles, making them more comfortable but also more likely to reveal the real shape of a woman's body.[87] Such freedom from social restraints could not be allowed in the newly incorporated town.

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[83]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 16.

[84]By early 1893, the jail was in such bad shape that the marshal had to physically guard prisoners who could not pay their fines, Picket, 11 February 1893, 3.

[85]Picket, 16 September 1893, 3.

[86]Picket, 15 October 1892, 3

[87]A movement to "reform" women's clothing gained momentum in the 1890s; advocates argued that looser and lighter clothing would make women healthier and better workers. Some reformers advocated the "Mother Hubbard" dress, which was popular in the West because it was so simple to make and comfortable to wear. Some western towns like Red Lodge prohibited the dress because it seemed indecent; others, like Pendleton, Oregon, outlawed Mother Hubbards because the loose-flowing cloth was

Hereafter, warned the Red Lodge Picket, "it will not be in 'good form' to wear these garments on the streets of Red Lodge."[88] The local constable also arrested women for swearing in public, arguing that this behavior disturbed the peace and offended "good order and morals."[89]

Other ordinances extended beyond women. By 1893 one could not sell alcohol to minors or drunks, or peddle goods in town without a license. Rocky Fork Coal Company officials reinforced these municipal efforts in 1892 by threatening to lay off workers who failed to arrive promptly at the mines the day after payday.[90] This policy curbed the tendency of miners to make the monthly payday into an explosive day of celebration punctuated by drunken brawls and lewd behavior. And, town leaders even regulated dogs. Every unlicensed hound that did not look valuable was subject to capture and extermination by order of the town council.[91] Acting together, local elites sought to impose "moral order" on the working class element of the town (and its pets), thus making the town, as a whole, appear more regulated, efficient, and worthy of investment. The Red Lodge Picket hopefully asserted in early 1893 that "Red Lodge is now a quiet and orderly town. You don't hear any shooting on the streets any more because the marshal is around to put a stop to it."[92]

Creating a "quiet and orderly town" remained, however, a complicated procedure. Some of the elements of the "wild" West were not as easily (or as willingly in some cases) controlled as others. The question of prostitution, for example, created dissension within the ranks of the town council. When brought up at a council meeting in early 1893, the issue of regulating "bawdy houses" generated a lively discussion. Opponents of the original bill to outlaw the brothels argued that it would be a "dead letter" if adopted. One alderman went so far as to acknowledge that humanity was "so low that bawdy houses were

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likely to blow in the wind and frighten horses. Lee Hall, Common Threads: A Parade of American Clothing (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1992). For examples of dress reform arguments, see almost any Arena magazine from the 1890s.

[88]Picket, 26 May 1894, 3.

[89]City of Red Lodge v. Mary McDonald (1897), appeal from Justice Court, Carbon County District Court (CCDC), Criminal Records; Picket, 25 March 1893, 3.

[90]Picket, 24 December 1892, 3

[91]Picket, 21 January 1893, 3; 10 December 1892, 3. The marshal could simply shoot any unlicensed dog that seemed to be without value (a mutt), but was required to take any dog that seemed valuable to the pound, a profound class distinction for the hounds, Picket 14 January 1893, 3.

necessary in a community." The shocked mayor ended this discussion by referring the measure to a ways and means committee, which eventually declared the houses "public nuisances" to be fined between $5 and $50 for each conviction.[93] The town would periodically crack down on prostitution—especially at the beginning of World War I—but the local brothels were well-known institutions that operated much of the time with little official interference. The town newspapers reflected the type of smug indulgence with which many residents regarded the working girls. Writers felt free to joke about a married alderman called upon to "prove that the defendants were bad girls," or the young man who "in the kindness of his heart" would bail out particularly attractive members of the demimonde.[94] As long as they paid their fines, prostitutes continued to work with little interference or official condemnation.

Regulating prostitutes rather than running them out of town made perfect sense to town leaders, especially those less shocked than the mayor about the morality of the institution. Many established communities around the nation practiced similar controls at the turn of the century By keeping track of the bawdy houses, fining the inhabitants, and routinely jailing some of them, city officials practiced and expanded their new municipal powers. When brothel owners paid their fines and kind-hearted young men bailed out their favorite "bad girls," that money went straight into the coffers of the new city's treasury, lightening the tax burden on more respectable citizens. Historian Anne M. Butler has argued that this "dual status" of the prostitute as both "criminal and citizen" made her a "stepping stone for the building of social institutions."[95] Through her marginal status, the prostitute helped the town's middle classes secure control over the community's remaining wildness. The town council took measures, however, to mute the public presence of local brothels. Prostitutes might be "necessary in a community," but there was no need to flaunt the fact. In 1905 town leaders effectively "zoned" for prostitution, restricting the "denizens of the

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[92]Picket, 21 January 1893, 3.

[93]Picket, 14 January 1893, 3; 21 January 1893, 3.

[94]Picket, 11 February 1893, 3; 25 March 1893, 3; 13 May 1893, 3. Anne M. Butler noted the ambivalent attitude of the frontier press toward prostitution, in Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery: Prostitutes in the American West, 1865-90 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 29, 81. See also, Paula Petrik, No Step Backward: Women and Family on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier, 1865-1900 (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1987).

[95]Butler, Daughters of Joy, 153.

badlands" to a "more secluded part of the city," where they would not disturb "moral citizens."[96] Properly regulated, the members of the demimonde did not detract from the overall image of a modern, orderly community no longer connected to the wildness of the open West.

Public attacks on the Wild West within Red Lodge lasted only as long as these wild figures seemed to present a real threat to the town's prospects for prosperity. When the immediate danger of wildness faded—when cowboys no longer threatened life and property, Indians stayed within their reservation borders, and prostitutes paid the appropriate fines—then local residents gained the distance needed to re-imagine these characters as somehow glamorous and appealing. Later celebrations of these once-despised figures showed that the local crackdown on the representatives of the Wild West was only a prelude to residents' mobilization of these characters as symbols of the town's ties to a romanticized view of the West. This change came quickly enough. By the last years of the 1890s, Indians and ranchers had lost control of much of the land around town. As ranches contracted or disappeared, many cowboys lost their jobs; they either gave up cowboying or left the region to find work elsewhere. As his numbers in Red Lodge diminished and his national fame increased, the cowboy became colorful instead of dirty, heroic rather than dangerous. By the 1920s, Red Lodge entrepreneurs would establish both the cowboy and the Indian as prominent symbols of the town's Wild West heritage, and local histories would make frequent, winking allusions to dancehall girls and prostitutes to add some verve to tales of past wildness.[97] In 1930 local leaders even established a highly successful annual rodeo to showcase the town's connection to the once-despised cowboy and his mystique. The war against the wildness associated with the cowboy, Indian, and rancher lasted only a few short years; the period of proudly proclaiming the town's association to such a wild past would last much longer.[98]

In fact, even while local boosters attacked the Wild West of cowboys, Indians, and ranchers, they were actually starting the process of tying Red Lodge's public identity into some fringe elements of the

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[96]Carbon County Gazette (Red Lodge), 11 May 1905, 1. The town collected $225.25 in April of 1905 from "red light fines, gambling and drunks," Picket, 11 May 1905, 1, 2.

[97]For example, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 243-45.

[98]Lampi, "Red Lodge," 24.

Wild West mythology. In the early 1890s, although still focused on the farmer as the most appropriate icon of western progress, alert local businessmen recognized that an older, safer strain of the Wild West narrative might actually help the town's image and economic opportunities. They seized upon the imagery of the "mountain man," the valiant loner who trapped and hunted the high mountain wildernesses. In its early years, Red Lodge actually possessed a few remnants of this older breed of Wild West hero, the antecedent to the cowboy. Boosters embraced these local figures (figuratively—they tended to dress in smelly buckskins), presenting them to the outside world as proof that, in spite of its hard-won respectability, Red Lodge was, indeed, a thoroughly masculine, muscular western town—at least on the fringes.

The promotion of the mountain man was only a minor effort compared the later, vigorous attempts to associate Red Lodge with Buffalo Bill's Wild West imagery, but it revealed a significant exception to townbuilders' determination to control the Wild West in the 1890s. It illustrated the beginning of certain local trends in the creation of public identity. First, local pride in the "mountain man" showed how the concept of immediate "danger" influenced townspeople's acceptance of certain western associations. The mountain man was part of the Wild West, but he posed no immediate danger to Red Lodge entrepreneurs. Second, promotion of the mountain man marked the town's very earliest efforts to attract visitors—tourists—into the community. Through the 1910s, tourism was never much of a consideration for local leaders, but these early flirtations with both Wild West imagery and tourist dollars created a foundation of sorts upon which later generations would build.

The town's romantic Wild West associations began with boosters' modest efforts to make the "mountain man" a local symbol of western masculinity according to the national mythology surrounding this figure. The mountain man represented an older version of the Wild West: Natty Bumppo and Jedediah Smith made popular again in the 1890s by Theodore Roosevelt's stirring stories of western hunting expeditions. Roosevelt, a firm believer in the outdoor life, focused much of his later works on the benefits of hunting to a society grown soft from overcivilization. In the late 19th century, as T.J. Jackson Lears has shown, middle- and upper-class Americans like Roosevelt were longing for "physical, moral and

spiritual regeneration."[99] Confronted by an increasingly industrialized and urbanized society, Americans experienced a "spreading sense of moral impotence and spiritual sterility—a feeling that life had become not only overcivilized but also curiously unreal."[100] Big game hunting, Roosevelt believed, could rejuvenate men whose lives were increasingly spent indoors managing businesses and shuffling papers. Overcivilization found its antidote in the rugged and masculine West. The future president wrote a series of books and articles detailing how hunting in the wilds of the mountains forced men to test themselves against the natural world; in these works the "masculine" West contrasted favorably with the perceived "feminization" of East Coast cities. When Roosevelt named the hunting club he co-founded in 1887 the Boone and Crockett Club, he displayed this veneration of masculine confrontation with the wilderness. Naming the club after two of the most idealized frontiersmen in American history suggests the experience of confronting and conquering raw nature that Roosevelt and his cohorts sought to re-create.[101] Elite Easterners, according to this credo, could (and should) imitate their frontier forefathers. Of course, due to pressing business and social concerns in the East, they could confine the imitation to a few weeks in the West. And, hardship in the wild should be pressed only so far. Many Easterners who took inspiration from Roosevelt's descriptions of hunting in the West often chose to confront nature in as much comfort as possible—bringing with them chefs, personal servants, wagonloads of provisions, and trained guides.[102]

Alert Red Lodge boosters quickly picked up that these eastern sportsmen were wealthy, venerated frontier figures, and readily spent money in pursuit of their masculine adventures. So, while "taming" the cowboy and the Indian, local businessmen also advanced a kind of milder Wild West image of Red Lodge in the form of the masculine hunter/trapper figure who could guide wealthy Easterners into the wilds of the surrounding mountains. Mountain men presented a variety of desirable attributes. Unlike the cowboys who could overwhelm the town during certain seasons, the remaining "mountain man" figures in

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[99]T.J. Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), xii.
[100]Lears, No Place of Grace, 4-5.
[101]Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 37.

the region tended to be more solitary, thus less dangerous and more exotic. Nor did they monopolize large tracts of land or threaten settlers. And, their activities did not taint the town with a negative form of violence. Roosevelt's contemporary version of the "vigorous" West of tracking and hunting big game was just as violent as other Wild West narratives, but he channeled its violence into activities Red Lodge entrepreneurs could appreciate and benefit from. The vigorous West encouraged rich Easterners to vent their "masculine" passions against big animals, not against other human beings or private property. And, while pursuing this acceptable activity, the wealthy hunters traveled through the West, spending money and making themselves fair game (so to speak) for western boosters intent on making every new visitor an investor in their vision of the region. In the 1890s, Red Lodge boosters rejected Buffalo Bills' Indians and cowboys, but they seized upon the masculine trapper as a thoroughly acceptable hero whose appearance and activities lent a colorful, but safe, western edge to the town's newly won respectability.

Two particular local "mountain man" figures—John "Liver Eating" Johnson and E.E. VanDyke—connected the town of Red Lodge to the western virility that wealthy Easterners looked for in the West. Solitary men who did not threaten the orderly townscape that local leaders were trying to create, Johnson and VanDyke, nevertheless, wonderfully symbolized the perceived gulf between the strong, masculine West and the effeminate East that Red Lodge boosters sought to use to their own advantage.

E.E. VanDyke was the most prominent hunting guide in the region and a favorite character in Red Lodge newspaper stories. Operating out of Cooke City, about 60 miles south of Red Lodge, VanDyke traveled often to the Coal Metropolis over the trail he blazed across the Beartooth Mountains to the Northern Pacific line where he met most of his clients. There the grizzled hunter greeted each newcomer with a personal guarantee that the veteran mountain man would put the greenhorn in the path of big game animals; if necessary, he would even shoot the beast himself, so that the client could take home a worthy trophy. According to local rancher Malcolm Mackay, a wealthy eastern transplant who once hired the well-known hunter to guide a bear-hunting expedition, VanDyke's clients by the turn of the century

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[102]Earl Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990, 1957), 74-75; Malcolm S. Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), 146, 156.

included celebrities from large eastern cities as well as some "titled gentlemen from foreign lands."[103] VanDyke even guided Theodore Roosevelt himself on a big game hunt.[104]

The Red Lodge newspaper followed the actions of "the live hunter and trapper" with obvious enthusiasm, taking pride both in the clients he brought West and in his rough physical appearance. One account described him as a man who "wore a crop of hair which reached to his shoulders, and with his trapper's dress and big gun, would present a startling aspect in the effete east."[105] A somewhat less boastful observer, Malcolm Mackay, noted that the mountain man was amazingly slovenly, had offensive manners, and an even more offensive odor emanating from his (exotic) buckskin clothes. This was exactly what so delighted the Red Lodge boosters. Gruff, smelly, and taciturn, VanDyke seemed to embody a life in the rugged mountains that was to many the epitome of masculine adventure and hardihood. To Red Lodge boosters, VanDyke was a double blessing. They could use him not only to emphasize their own manly qualities—*they* were not startled at VanDyke's dress and big gun--but they could also take advantage of the wealthy clients he brought into the area, all of whom were potential investors in the Coal Metropolis.[106]

Although not in the business of guiding greenhorn hunters from the East, old Liver-Eating Johnson generated local admiration as the living embodiment of the wild and woolly (and safe) past of trapping and scouting. Johnson, who had hunted and trapped in the Beartooths for over four decades, was a well-known Montana figure by the 1890s, primarily, perhaps, because of his gruesome nickname. A startling figure, over six feet tall with shaggy black whiskers and long hair (a biographer called him "a magnificent specimen of physical manhood")[107], Johnson had reputedly killed dozens of Indians in

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[103]Mackay, once hired VanDyke to take him bear hunting, Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, 18-32, 146, 156.

[104]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 8-9.

[105]Picket, 28 May 1892, 3.

[106]Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West, 131-33.

[107]Harry Owens, "John (Liver Eating) Johnston," in Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 15. A local historian, Owens has made something of a crusade out of redeeming Johnson's name and character after the publication of Crow Killer in 1958, a book which portrayed Johnson as a bloodthirsty and insatiable Indian killer, and the movie "Jeremiah Johnson," which he considered a inaccurate depiction of the mountain man. Owens also insists on the spelling of Johnson's name as Johnston, since that was the name he signed on the

various dramatic encounters. The story of how he acquired the name of "Liver-Eating" became a kind of Montana legend around the turn of century, and local historians still argue over the origin of the nickname. The most widely accepted story is that he held up the liver of an Indian he had just killed outside of Fort Mussellshell and pretended to eat a bite of it; at its most sensational, the legend is that he ate hundreds of livers from the Indians he killed avenging his wife's death.[108] His was the kind of name regularly dropped in memoirs, like Teddy Blue Abbott's, of life in early Montana,[109] in contemporary newspaper stories about frontier life,[110] and national publications such as Field and Stream.[111] Red Lodge boosters delighted in their possession of this real Western hero and highlighted his activities around town in a number of promotional stories.

Johnson actually encompassed two versions of the Wild West. Red Lodge promoters sold the old Liver-Eater not only as a rugged hunter, but also as a more genuine version of the frontier scout hero made popular by showmen like Buffalo Bill Cody, Frank Miles, and Yellowstone Kelly. The U.S. Army had employed such scouts as guides, hunters, and Indian contacts; their national fame soared in the late 19th century as Cody, Miles and others portrayed themselves as the real heroes of the Indian wars. Dressed in tight-fitting breeches with long lovelocks streaming from beneath their broad-brimmed hats, these scouts toured the nation telling of their adventures.[112] Although Johnson belittled the "three months men who wear their hair long and hunt up a crowd in order to tell of their experiences," he and Red Lodge

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homestead patent he took out on land just south of Red Lodge in 1897. I have used Johnson throughout this work, since it is the name by which he is generally known.

[108]Zupan and Owen, Red Lodge, 12-13; E.C. Abbott and Helena Huntington Smith, We Pointed Them North: Recollections of a Cowpuncher (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989, 1939), 117-118; Raymond W. Thorp and Robert Bunker, Crow Killer: The Saga of Liver-Eating Johnson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), the entire book is a sensationalistic, bloody version of Johnson's life, in which the authors claim Johnson killed hundreds of Indians, many of them with his bare hands.

[109]Abbott, We Pointed Them North, 117-18.

[110]The Helena Independent published a letter on Johnson in 1893, reprinted in the Picket, 13 May 1893, 3; a story on Johnson from the Billings Gazette was reprinted in the Picket, 28 December 1895, 3.

[111]A reporter from Field and Stream met with Johnson in 1894 to get a "narrative on Indian warfare and life in the early days of Montana," Picket, 28 April 1894, 3.

[112]See, for example, the portrait of Yellowstone Kelly at the front of his memoirs, "Yellowstone Kelly": The Memoirs of Luther S. Kelly, M.M. Quaife, ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1926), ii.

boosters benefited from the notoriety that these men generated.[113] Local entrepreneurs certainly recognized that "poet-scouts" such as Captain Jack Crawford, who catered to audiences eager to believe in Western heroes, helped to create the frontier scout as an American icon, thus boosting Johnson's appeal as a local promotional tool.[114] Johnson never toured the continent as the more famous scouts did in the 1890s, but he told his own stories and enjoyed an audience of appreciative listeners. Despite his rough appearance, Johnson was a favorite among the children of the town, and he would regale them and any adult bystanders for hours with tales of life in the mountains and among Indians. In the 1890s, however, Johnson was wearing down. By the time the old Liver Eater settled in Red Lodge, he was already in his sixties. Apart from his police work, he spent most of his days tending to his garden and traveling to the Wyoming hot springs seeking some ease for his aged, aching body.[115] His presence in town provided local color safely displayed in a tough old man who told stories about the good old days and tended to his own business.

The western "edge" of the town's image served local promoters well. Boosters packaged local residents according to national images of hero trappers and scouts, and then sold these residents to the nation (at least those who had any idea what Red Lodge was) as more "genuine" than the showmen who created those very images from which they had drawn. In their view, a certain touch of the "Wild West"—descriptions of VanDyke, the "live trapper," and references to local hero Liver-Eating Johnson—made the town interesting enough that wealthy tourists might stop by and take a look. It also suited the townsmen's egos to contrast their masculine environment, embodied in the mountain man, to the "effete" conditions and residents of the East. But, all that boosters wanted was to be Wild West at the fringes. Plunging into the Wild West was exciting, but only in very small doses—and only if remunerative.

Local efforts to control and exploit Wild West imagery in Red Lodge demonstrated the shifting nature of public identities in this community. In the 1890s, middle-class boosters spent much energy

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[113]Picket, 27 May 1893, 3.

[114]Picket, 13 May 1893, 3; 27 May 1893, 3.

[115]Picket, 11 June 1892, 3; 23 February 1895, 3; 6 April 1895, 3; 9 June 1894, 2; 15 May 1897, 3; 17 July 1897, 3; 6 November 1897, 3.

creating an image for the town that distanced the community both from the realities of surrounding Montana life and also from many of the popular images of the Wild West. They endorsed only a minor, "fringe," element of the Wild West—the mountain man—as a safe, exotic addition to the town's public identity. These efforts changed significantly in the early 20th century when town leaders began to incorporate the imagery of cowboys, ranchers and Indians into the town's public identity. Soon enough the western "edge" would take over much of the town's image. The positive associations of Wild West characters overwhelmed the negative as the figures themselves became physically harmless to the entrepreneurial pursuit of western prosperity. In fact, boosters soon found that these characters could actually improve the town's image and business opportunities. The popularity of western novels and movies reinforced the positive connotations of figures like the cowboy and rancher so that local elites actually became eager to identify with these men. They would work the region's cowboys into the town's public identity as they had already done with the town's remaining mountain men. Successful use of such images reinforced the townspeople's own identification with these symbols which gradually became part of the town's public identity apart from specific promotional efforts by boosters. Instead of seeing these images simply as creations for the benefit of outsiders, local residents re-inserted the figures into their town's history, thus using the past to serve modern needs. The local middle classes that once argued for the expulsion of cowboys and Indians from the community would begin to argue that their town's unique and proud history depended, in large part, on these once-despised figures.

Meanwhile, buoyed by improved economic conditions in the late 1890s, Red Lodge launched into two decades of prosperity by the beginning of the 20th century. Coal mining boomed and local farmers built extensive irrigation systems to create fields of oats, hay, and sugar beets. Some of the entrepreneurs who had pinned their hopes on Red Lodge saw their dreams fulfilled. As the town grew, so did the fortunes of the downtown business owners, lawyers, and real estate developers. The hierarchical underpinnings of the boosters' western mythology began to become clearer, however, in the new century as labor tensions shook the community and workers began to demand a bigger share of the West's fortunes.

CHAPTER TWO

"...NOTHING UP HERE BUT FOREIGNERS AND COAL SLACK." THE INDUSTRIAL WEST

The full-throated bass of the steam sirens now carries fulsome, satisfying suggestions of a steady stream of coal tumbling over tipples at both the Sunrise and Sunset mines and a harmonious accompaniment is rendered by the groaning and grinding of fuel laden trains jockying around for a start toward the main line and the big centers of industry.[1]

We was raised on coal dust and steam.[2]

In 1919, Red Lodge businessmen set to work mining the town's only public monument. In this little coal town, that monument was, appropriately enough, a huge chunk of bituminous coal—6,600 pounds worth dug out of the extensive mine tunnels that honeycombed the earth beneath the town's straight, sidewalked streets. For over six years, the giant monument had stood proudly on Red Lodge's main street, a symbol of the town's thriving coal industry. Red Lodge miners had placed the massive hunk of coal downtown after parading it up Broadway Avenue on 4 July 1913. Pictures of the parade depict the miners posing proudly next to their contribution to the patriotic demonstration; with pickaxes over their shoulders, the miners showed off their masculine strength and skill before residents and visitors alike. For, that block of coal marked not only the industrial wealth of the town, but also the power of its workers.[3]

In the bitterly cold winter of 1919, though, when the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) went on strike, Red Lodge merchants started hacking off nuggets from the monument to heat their homes

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[1]Picket-Journal (Red Lodge), 24 December 1919, 1.

[2]J.H. "Pat" Patten Oral History, OH 361, Montana Historical Society Collections (MHS).

[3]Photograph Collection, "Parades," Carbon County Historical Society Collections (CCHS); Picket-Journal, 17 December 1919, 4.

and businesses.[4] Bit by bit, as the strike went on, the hunk of coal disappeared. Like that block of coal—quickly chopped up and carted away—mining itself would soon vanish from Red Lodge, a victim of mechanized strip mining in other parts of the state and increasing competition from newer and more efficient fuels such as electricity and diesel. When the Red Lodge mines stopped working in the 1920s and 1930s, no official public monument remained to commemorate the industry that had created the town and shaped its early public identity.

For its first four decades, though, Red Lodge was a coal town whose public identity centered around industrialization, workers, and immigrants—all coated in the dust and grime of coal. Coal, quite simply, dominated the town's early years from the built environment and economy to the population composition and life patterns of local residents. In 1900, 65% of the adult males in this town of 2,152 people worked in the mines.[5] In September of 1905 alone, the Northwest Improvement Company (a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific Railway and successor to the Rocky Fork Coal Company) pumped $50,000 in wages into the town as its 600 employees put out about 2,000 tons of coal a day from its two Red Lodge mines.[6] The mines shaped the boundaries of working-class neighborhoods, the influx of foreign workers, and the development of local union activism. Coal physically marked the town with its distinctive black powder. Three tall smokestacks spewed the mine's product over Red Lodge so that the black dust coated houses, trees, people, and even the waters of Rock Creek, which sometimes ran black with mine run-off. Twin mountains of coal slack—waste particles too fine for use in most furnaces—towered over the west and east sides of town. Coal also connected Red Lodge to the avenues of national capital and industry, which turned the black rock extracted from under the town's streets into brick buildings, fine houses, and modern sidewalks.[7] Even the name of the county, Carbon, reflected the area's

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[4]Picket-Journal, 17 December 1919, 4.

[5]Erika A. Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage: Red Lodge's Finnish Immigrants, 1890-1922" (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1987), 21-22.

[6]Picket-Journal, 21 September 1905, 1.

[7]For more on the transformation of natural resources to capital in the industrial age see William Cronon, Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), and Richard White, The Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995).

overwhelming connection to the products of the underground mines.[8] People moved to Red Lodge, stayed there, and left because of coal.

This modern West full of immigrant miners and industrial pollution reflected a different kind of western landscape than that made popular by eastern writers and artists. Beyond the frantic rhetoric and wishful hopes of local townbuilders, the twinned narratives of Buffalo Bill's "Wild West" and Frederick Jackson Turner's agrarian West had little place in the physical world of Red Lodge at the turn of the century. Some business leaders, of course, still dreamed of a Turnerian kind of "garden" around Red Lodge, inhabited by the "right" kinds of hard-working farmers. W.A. Talmadge, for example, lobbied long and hard for a state-wide dry-land farming movement that might help farmers find ways to work the arid land around Red Lodge. Talmadge, who owned one of the biggest mercantile stores in Red Lodge, worried that the area's lack of agriculture reflected poorly on his community. "Down there at Billings," he groused in 1909, "they say that we have nothing up here but foreigners and coal slack."[9] The dream of a diversified, farming-centered economy died hard, but Red Lodge, quite simply represented a different kind of western development with a different kind of public identity than that put forward in the popular mythology about the region.

Red Lodge was not a farm town or a cow town. Its history lay in a modern West of machinery, technology, and corporate capital. Even though most Americans of the 1890s (and 1990s, for that matter) regarded the West as the most remote and backward region of the country, historians have recently argued just the opposite—that the West of the post-Civil War years was in many ways not the least but the *most* modern part of the nation.[10] In the late-19th-century West, after all, modern centralized government

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[8]Picket-Journal, 5 January 1895, 3; 9 March 1895, 3.

[9]Republican Picket (Red Lodge), 26 August 1909, 1.

[10]For example, Patricia Nelson Limerick, The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987); Robert G. Athearn, The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986); William Cronon, "Kennecott Journey: The Paths out of Town," in Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past, ed. William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), 28-51; Donald Worster, "Beyond the Agrarian Myth," in Trails: Toward a New Western History, ed. Patricia Nelson Limerick, Clyde A. Milner II, and Charles E. Rankin (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 3-25; Carlos A. Schwantes, "Wage Earners and Wealth Makers," in The Oxford History of the American West, ed. Clyde

flexed its muscle most fully: managing Indian reservations, governing territories, and using the army to assert its will. Here the new, huge corporations wielded their greatest power—running rail lines that tied the nation together, controlling mineral resources in places like Butte, and cutting down entire forests to meet their industrial needs. Steel-edged plows made it possible for farmers to cut through the deep sod of the prairies, and mechanized combines and threshers from modern factories sheared swaths through endless fields of wheat on Dakota bonanza farms. Mass-produced barbed wire permitted the survival of cattle kingdoms in the settling West. Farmers in the Pacific Northwest sold their crops to an international market through steam trains and steam ships. The West was a region of cities and towns, railroad lines, and the machinery of modern industry.

Red Lodge, with its public identity of coal slack and immigrant workers, grew up as part of this modern West.

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Looking at Red Lodge in the early 1910s—only about a mile square, nestled into the narrow valley of Rock Creek—one could easily spot the influence of modern mass production and industrial labor on the townscape. Twin mining operations dominated the southeast and southwest ends of town. Clearly visible because of their tall smokestacks and large tipples, these mines seemed to brace the little town, providing support to the neighborhoods of small houses that clustered around the mine shafts. Red Lodge, with a population of 4,860 in 1910, spread out away from these mines in the typical American grid pattern with a single downtown district packed tightly for five blocks or so on either side of a wide main street. The small homes and large boarding houses of working-class residents clung closely around the mines, while to the northwest—the point furthest from the dust and smell of mine work—a street of large homes marked off the town's upper-class neighborhood. A single railroad track ran into town from the north,

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A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994),

cutting diagonally across the obstinate north-south regularity of the platted streets. These tracks split into smaller branches near the middle of town, leading toward the coal tunnels and tipples to the south. On these rails, the town shipped out tons of coal and brought in factory-made goods, imported foods, and other products of modern capital.[11] Small, compact, and clearly industrial, the little community might have fit easily into any mining state from the East Coast to the Midwest. On a cursory view, only the characteristically western false fronts on the downtown buildings and the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains to the south and west indicated the "westerness" of this productive mining community.

Conceived and born out of the modern West of machines, corporate capital, and mass production, Red Lodge was intricately tied into an expanding industrial economy that stretched across the region. Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) officials created Red Lodge to serve their corporate needs and to enhance their personal fortunes. While NPRR investors made money from sales of Red Lodge town lots, Rocky Fork coal fueled the trains that ran across much of Montana and the Dakotas, contributing to the maintenance of a nation-wide industrial complex of tracks, locomotives, and iron works. In turn, coal miners' wages, channeled through corporate headquarters in St. Paul and Tacoma, brought a piece of the profits of this extensive empire back into Red Lodge. Here the nation's industrial wealth turned into buildings, homes, streets, and new automobiles.

While the heavy mining machinery and impressive steam engines vividly embodied the new industrialism, other parts of the town, like the downtown area, spoke just as eloquently of the ties that bound Red Lodge to a larger industrial network.[12] Many of the downtown buildings, for example, while constructed primarily out of locally quarried stone, sported cast-iron fronts or pressed-metal ceilings, mass produced in Illinois or Indiana factories and shipped via rail to the developing town on the edge of the Rocky Mountains. The name of the Mesker Brothers Iron Works of Indiana, imprinted on the front of

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431-467.

[11] For images of early Red Lodge, see the Photograph Collections at the Carbon County Historical Society. On railroads and the flow of raw materials and capital, see Cronon, Nature's Metropolis.

[12] Richard V. Francaviglia provides a good overview of mining landscapes in Hard Places: Reading the Landscape of America's Historic Mining Districts (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991). On vernacular architecture in the West, see Thomas Carter, ed. Images of an American Land: Vernacular Architecture in the Western United States (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

Red Lodge's Budas block and on the sheet-metal cornice of the Pollard Hotel, marked the modern manufacturing that defined much of the trans-Missouri West. Red Lodge, like many other small western towns of this period, combined the building products of the local place with ideas and materials supplied along the routes of modern industry.[13] Discerning eastern architects disdained the "impatient West's" efforts as an attempt to look impressive through the use of manufactured materials such as ornamental cast-iron store fronts and mass-produced ceilings. As one old architectural don sniffed, "It serves, for the time, to confer upon the newly built streets of the West a delusive aspect of metropolitan completeness and finish, until, after a few years, the paint wears off, the wooden sham begins to decay, and the galvanized iron to betray its hollow mockeries."[14] But, the "sheet iron elegance" dismissed by eastern elites, possessed a variety of advantages to Westerners, who favored it because it was fire-proof, sanitary, and relatively cheap.[15] And, it provided the town with the illusion of modernity now available through mail-order catalogues, mass production, and expanding railroad routes—all made possible for local entrepreneurs because of the corporate wages moving through the town's economy.[16] The NPRR paid workers to dig coal for the railroad; workers spent that money in local stores; Red Lodge merchants used their profits to buy "eastern-style" facades for their expanding businesses.

Likewise, the town's upper-class residential district, known locally as the "Hi Bug" area, reflected both local industrial wealth and national mass production. In the Hi Bug, mine managers, bankers, merchants, lawyers, and doctors turned the fruits of the area's coal resources into elaborate homes, fancy furniture, and expansive lawns. The homes and furniture themselves came to Red Lodge via the nation's

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[13]Arthur A. Hart, "Sheet Iron Elegance: Mail Order Architecture in Montana," Montana, Magazine of Western History 40 (Autumn 1990): 27-31; Kingston Heath, "False-Front Architecture on Montana's Urban Frontier," in Images of an American Land, 21-39.

[14]Henry Van Brunt, "Architecture in the West," in Architecture and Society: Selected Essays of Henry VanBrunt, ed. William A. Coles (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969), 182; see also, Pamela H. Simpson, "Cheap, Quick, and Easy, Part II: Pressed Metal Ceilings, 1880-1930," in Gender, Class, and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, V, ed. Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 158-159.

[15]Hart, "Sheet Iron Elegance," 30-31; Simpson, "Cheap, Quick, and Easy," 152-156.

[16]For a discussion on conformity and diversity in the modern age, see John Sinton, "When Moscow Looks Like Chicago: An Essay on Uniformity and Diversity in Landscapes and Communities," Environmental History Review 17 (Fall 1993): 23-41.

developing transportation and communication networks. Like hundreds of thousands of people around the nation, wealthy Red Lodge residents selected houses, interior designs, and furniture from the pages of mass-distributed "pattern books," design magazines, and catalogues.[17] Lawyer and banker William F. Meyer's beautiful Queen Anne house (built from a patternbook design) included parquet floors and an ornamented oak staircase. Banker John Chapman's spacious Hauser Avenue home featured intricately leaded and beveled glass windows, a golden oak staircase, and imported tile sheaths for the fireplaces. Coal flowed out of Red Lodge and returned as pressed-metal ceilings, parquet floors, and home designs.

Industry, likewise, shaped the physical spaces of the working-class sections of Red Lodge. Workers' neighborhoods, first of all, lay physically alongside both the Westside and Eastside mines, as miners and their families oriented themselves toward the industrial workplace. Boarding houses and company-owned "salt-box" duplexes intermingled in these neighborhoods with smaller single-family dwellings. These different dwellings reflected the differing status of mine workers. Single, male workers tended to favor the boarding houses, where they could eat and sleep between shifts. Married miners often rented a company house or tried to save up to purchase a home. Some of these "houses" were little more than shacks, hastily constructed for sale or rent to men and families who crowded into Red Lodge to find work at the mines. Others were quite substantial, neat little places owned by miners or other laborers who made ends meet by taking in boarders and relatives who helped out with living costs.[18] The shacks displayed the working poverty of the mine's least skilled workers, while the solid houses indicated the moderate success some workers found in the labor of industrial mining.

The yards of these houses and the numbers of people crowded into them also pointed toward the hardships of the mining business, which was tied so closely to a larger, fluctuating economy. In contrast to the expansive lawns of the Hi Bug, workers' yard spaces were filled with vegetable gardens, currant

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[17]On patternbook architecture, see Jan Jennings, "Cheap and Tasteful Dwellings in Popular Architecture," in Gender, Class, and Shelter, 133-151.

[18]In 1900, 33% of heads of households in Red Lodge owned their own homes, Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 22. On crowding see the oral history of Tony Persha, who claimed that many houses held two to three families each, Tony Persha Oral History, OH 305; also on families taking in boarders to get by see Rose Jurkovich Oral History, OH 1486, 1; Rose Naglich MacFarland Oral History, OH 1474, 6; J.N. "Buck" Cornelio Oral History, OH 546, MHS.

bushes, chickens, pigs, and even cows (until ordinances in the late 1910s imposed restrictions on livestock within town limits)—anything that might bring in some extra food or money for these working families. That cow, pig, or garden could ensure a family's survival when low coal prices or a warm winter slowed down work—and wages—at the Northwestern Improvement Company mines. The built environment, thus, reflected the town's industrial center in a variety of ways. Through its buildings, yards, and neighborhoods, a visitor to Red Lodge could actually *see* the web of industrialism that spread over and around the little town.[19]

To identify some of the most pervasive markers of industrial identity in the town, however, one would have to listen instead of look. For, as a writer for the Red Lodge Picket-Journal noted in 1919, the *sounds* of industry permeated the town when the mines were working and identified Red Lodge's productive place in the national economy. The grinding of cars running out of tunnels, the rumble of coal dropping from the tipple into waiting railcars, and the continuous rhythm of steam trains running in and out of town told the story of the town's life business.[20]

Of all these sounds, the mine whistles stood out as the most vivid marker of Red Lodge's urban, industrial identity. The mine whistles punctuated the townscape, signaling not just the ending and beginning of shifts, but the very pulse of the extractive labor that gave life to the little town. Residents lived by the sound of those mine signals, which split up the day according to the precise dictates of the mechanical clock. The whistles not only told miners when to be at work, but also informed boardinghouse keepers when to have supper ready and let children know it was time to head down to the local pub to fetch father a bucket of beer.[21] When work was slow, especially in the summer, a double whistle in the evening was a welcome signal that miners would work the next day, or at least part of it; men listening for

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[19]Edward Blazina Oral History, OH 1485, 9-11, 14; John Kastelitz Oral History, OH 1478, 15-17; Persha Oral History; John Barovich Oral History, OH 1482, 5-8; Mike Barovich Oral History, OH 1480, 9; John Michunovich Oral History, OH 1491, 19-21; Jurkovich Oral History, 13; Edi G. Massa Sernel Oral History, OH 1081; Mildred Cheserek Harboldt Oral History, OH 1483, 22-25; Ollie Anderson Oral History, OH 302, 5, 24; MacFarland Oral History, 29-31, MHS.

[20] Picket-Journal, 24 December 1919, 1.

the sound knew to prepare either for work or for an evening at their favorite saloon. The regular whistles comforted a town dependent on the mines. But friends and family of underground miners dreaded the heart-piercing scream of the off-schedule siren. That sound would clear out the town's streets, schools, and business houses, drawing residents toward the mine to help victims of a fire or cave-in, or, more often, simply to watch and wait to find out what had happened: who had been injured, who came out alive, and who had not survived. The sounds of industry could terrify as well as comfort.[22]

Industrial connections, in fact, stretched into every part of the town's life—including not only buildings and sounds but also the very people who lived and worked in the mining town. In this workers' community, the very bodies of the residents reflected the industrial nature of the labor that built Red Lodge. The gender composition of Red Lodge, first of all, featured the kind of imbalance that characterized extractive-resources economies.[23] Red Lodge, like so many western mining towns, was very masculine in its early years. In 1910, men made up 61% of the population.[24] Although many miners had wives and families, the fluctuating work of the mines attracted to Red Lodge large numbers of young, single, males, many of whom worked in the tunnels for a few months in the winter before moving on to jobs in other of the West's seasonal extractive industries. Businesses that catered to men thrived in the small town. Numerous boarding houses sprang up in Red Lodge's working-class neighborhoods, particularly Finn Town. Male workers also found comfort and companionship in the saloons strung along Billings Avenue. According to popular legend, at one time this town of less than 5,000 residents boasted 21 saloons serving drinks and food almost around the clock until local ordinances began limiting their

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[21]On fetching the bucket of beer, see Tony and Shirley Zupan Oral History, OH 1479, MHS, and Michunovich Oral History, 18; on boarding house meals around mine whistles, Leoni Lampi Oral History, OH 303, MHS; on listening to the whistle to find out about work, Persha Oral History.

[22]Vera Marincheck Naglich Oral History, OH 1490, 7; Walpas Koski Oral History, OH 359, 25-26, 28, MHS; Blazina Oral History, 23-24; Anderson Oral History.

[23] Deryck W. Holdsworth, "'I'm a Lumberjack and I'm OK': The Built Environment and Varied Masculinities in the Industrial Age," in Gender, Class, and Shelter, 15-17; Susan L. Johnson, "Sharing Bed and Board: Cohabitation and Cultural Difference in Central Arizona Mining Towns, 1863-1873," in The Women's West, ed. Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 77-91.

[24]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1910, Population, Volume II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 1160.

hours in the mid-1900s. And a thriving red light district operated just outside the downtown area. Regulated through fines and payoffs to local officials, Red Lodge brothels were a prominent part of the town's public identity until the combined forces of progressive reformers and company managers closed them down during World War I. But, in the pre-war years, the saloons and brothels leant an air of wildness to the streets of the little town. On most weekend nights the downtown area would be punctuated by the raucous sounds of fighting in and around these places of male leisure [25]

Red Lodge often seemed even more overwhelmingly male that it actually was in the early 20th century because masculine work and pleasure dominated so many of the town's public spaces. Blackened miners heading home from work, raucous drinkers at the town's male-only saloons, and town meetings of male voters reinforced the masculine image of the mining community. The town's women, especially those from the working class, ventured into these downtown public spheres far less often than did men.[26] Most, quite simply, did not have the time to leave the housework that dominated their lives and enabled their families to survive the hard times that so often defined the mining economy.[27] Working-class women usually had to combine family work with paid household labor of some sort, usually caring and cooking for boarders or taking in sewing. The mines paid well when they ran, but families depended, too, on the work of women.[28] Some like Ida Kallio, a Finnish immigrant, helped to run the family business, in her case a public sauna. In addition to other chores, Kallio cleaned the bath house, washed towels, prepared soap, and handled the crowds who showed up for the Wednesday and Saturday saunas. In her rare moments of free time, she might visit friends around the neighborhood, but never went far from the safety of the places,

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[25] Shirley Zupan and Harry J. Owens, Red Lodge: Saga of a Western Area (Billings: Frontier Press, Inc., 1979), 29-31.

[26] Women, first of all, were simply not allowed in many of the public places where men gathered. State laws actually forbade women from entering saloons unless the establishment had a separate "Ladies Lounge" (which most did not have), while local authorities frowned on such activities as disturbing the peace. The county sheriff readily arrested women who tried to break the barrier and enter these male bastions. Women, of course, worked in the town's many brothels, but local officials gradually moved these residences into discrete parts of the community where these women made the least public impact possible, Picket, 11 May 1905, 1, 2.

[27] Kastelitz Oral History, 20; Michunovich Oral History, 34; Jurkovich Oral History, 12-13; D.W., William M., William N., and Dan Dimich Oral History, OH 1478, 8; Daisy Pekich Lazetich Oral History, OH 1488, 6, 9, MHS; MacFarland Oral History, 11-12; Zupan Oral History, 10.

people, and language she knew.[29] A large number of immigrant women lacked the language skills to negotiate their way comfortably around town; unlike the men who picked up some English while working, many immigrant women had few opportunities to learn the language.[30] Children, whose English skills had been improved by attending local public schools, often ran the household errands for these families, sometimes eliminating the need for immigrant women ever to leave the safety of their neighborhoods. Kallio's children delivered milk around town and ran to the butcher shop to get meat for meals.[31] Not all women, of course, stayed so close to home. Lillian Jarussi's mother, an Italian immigrant, ventured into the commercial area to do her shopping; but she limited her movements around town, going only into those places where the clerks spoke Italian. Other mining women acquired enough English to take jobs cleaning house for the "English" women in Hi Bug, or to advertise to take in sewing and washing.[32] But, for many, work and language limitations narrowed their public lives significantly and contributed to the very masculine appearance of downtown Red Lodge in its early years.

If the work of mining influenced both the gender composition of Red Lodge and the town's masculine atmosphere, it also marked physically the very bodies of the people who lived there.[33] A visitor entering Red Lodge in the early 20th century would see not only a town of robust male workers, but also a place of cripples—men left too weak or disabled from accidents, black lung disease, or gas poisoning to function fully. Missing limbs, eyes, and fingers, limps, and crooked backs told the physical story of the hazards of underground mining.[34] A visitor did not have to look hard to find such evidence. Long-time

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[28]Holdsworth, "I'm a Lumberjack and I'm OK", 15-17.

[29]Senia Kallio Oral History, OH 357, 38, MHS.

[30]Indeed, some women like John and Mike Barovich's mother refused to learn English, John Barovich Oral History, 10, and Mike Barovich Oral History, 7.

[31]Kallio Oral History, 9.

[32]Alice and Richard Mallin Oral History, OH 1481, MHS, 5; Koski Oral History, 8; "Montana" Vera Buening Oral History, OH 358, MHS.

[33]For a good overview of coal mining in the West, see Priscilla Long, Where the Sun Never Shines: A History of America's Bloody Coal Industry (New York: Paragon Books, 1991), especially part II, "Coal in the American West."

[34]Local reminiscences and oral histories are filled with references to mine accidents and injuries. Richard Mallin's father's leg was amputated after a 1912 accident; he was then given the position of check weighman by the union, Mallin Oral History, 3. Edward Blazina's father carried huge scars from his varied

police constable, James McAllister, provided only the most prominent example of the mines' physical toll on its workers. Patrolling Red Lodge's streets from 1903 until 1954, McAllister always wore a large patch over his face to cover the hole where his left eye had once been. The eye had been torn out by a loose machine handle in 1900, leaving McAllister, who had never known any job other than mining, unemployed and owing over $200 in medical bills. Like so many other stricken miners, McAllister could no longer dig coal after his accident; with no insurance or workers' compensation—such progressive reforms would not pass in Montana until a decade later—McAllister was fortunate to find a lower-paying job with the city to scrape by.[35] Although he eventually rose through the ranks to a position of stability and respect, McAllister, along with many other Red Lodge workers, bore the visible mark of the mines for the rest of his life. In this mining town, even those men without visible injuries often walked more slowly and looked older because of years in the dank tunnels breathing the stale air that coated their faces and lungs with black dust.[36] But, these men, battered and crippled though they may have been, at least had survived the coal mines. Not everyone was so lucky.

The grimmest testament to the town's industrial heart lay in the all-too-frequent funeral processions winding their way from various fraternal lodges and union halls to the cemetery on the west bluff above the town. The mines that gave the town its substantial payroll also took the lives of many of its workers. Most residents of the town's working-class neighborhoods had lost a brother, father, son, or

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accidents underground, Blazina Oral History, 12-13. When William Tweedie's father was injured in the mines, young William had to quit school and go into the mines himself to support his family, William Tweedie Oral History, OH 222, 1A, MHS. Rose Jurkovich's father injured his back while mining, Jurkovich Oral History, 9. William Glancy recalled that many old miners died struggling for breath, William Glancy Oral History, OH 516, 49, MHS; Rose Naglich MacFarland's father developed consumption at the age of 24 and had to quit mining, MacFarland Oral History, 3.

[35]James H. McAllister v. Rocky Fork Coal Co. of Montana (1902), Carbon County District Court (CCDC), Civil Records. Being Irish probably helped McAllister's local job prospects since Irish immigrants at the turn of the century held a number of important municipal posts in Red Lodge, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 43-44.

[36]Walpas Koski recalled that his father, like other miners, looked old before his time, Koski Oral History, 41. See also, Alan Derickson, "The United Mine Workers of America and the Recognition of Occupational Respiratory Diseases, 1902-1968," American Journal of Public Health 81 (June 1991) 782-784.

uncle to the mines, sometimes multiple family members.[37] Coal mining was a bloody industry made even more dangerous by the lack of safety regulations and by the contract system favored by the mining companies.[38] At the turn of the century, mine operators, including the Rocky Fork Coal Company and its successor the Northwest Improvement Company (NWIC), paid most of its miners not by the hour but according to the number of tons of coal they removed each day. The system invited miners to disregard safety to get as much rock out as possible—especially since mine operators were notorious for underweighing coal.[39] The combination of haste, negligence, and dangerous conditions yielded predictable results.[40] Men died in the mines, sometimes only two annually (as in 1891, 1895, 1896), other times as many as eight in one tragic accident (1906).[41] And, these figures do not account for those permanently disabled in non-fatal accidents. The "bloody coal mines" of Red Lodge crippled and killed men every year of their operation. The NWIC entered the figures in cold numbers. From 1 November 1919 to 31 October 1920: 203 accidents, three fatal, three others resulting in permanent injuries, and 29 disabling workers for four weeks or more; one wife made a widow and two children rendered fatherless.[42] These numbers, though, were men with names and identities, like Nestor Maki, killed by an explosion of powder in 1896, probably as he returned to the site to check on a delayed fuse—a common accident among miners who had to rush through these operations to get enough coal out to make their pay.[43] A fall of rock crushed Nestor Puumala to death in 1905 while he tried to clear away an obstruction of

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[37]Local oral histories bring up mine deaths quite often. For example, John Kastelitz lost his father in the mines, Kastelitz Oral History, 3. Tony Persha's brother and Faye Anderson's father and son were all killed in the mines, Persha Oral History, Anderson Oral History.

[38]On the hazards of underground mining, see Jack Reardon, "Injuries and Illnesses Among Bituminous and Lignite Coal Miners," Monthly Labor Review 116 (October 1993): 51; Jacqueline Karnell Corn, "'Dark as a Dungeon:' Environment and Coal Miners' Health and Safety in Nineteenth Century America," Environmental Review 7 (Fall 1983): 257-268; Long, Where the Sun Never Shines, 24-51.

[39] Ollie Anderson's brother died in the mines, Anderson Oral History, 6. Lillian Lampi's husband helped to care for many of the widows living in Red Lodge, Lampi Oral History, 16-17. Senia Kallio also noted the large numbers of widows in town, Kallio Oral History, 33.

[40]Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 79.

[41] Rocky Fork Coal Company Records, 136/D/17/3B, Minnesota Historical Society.

[42]Northwestern Improvement Company Records, 138/C/6/2, Box 53, Volume 119, Minnesota Historical Society.

overhanging coal in a room inadequately timbered for such an operation. In 1906, a 700-pound rock fell on Andrew Hill, killing him immediately.[44] Reports of accidents and deaths in the tunnels became almost routine in mining towns like Red Lodge, creating a monotonous refrain in local headlines: "Fatal Accident in Mine," "Miner Loses His Life," "Rock Crushes Out His Life."[45] Townspeople in this coal-mining community lived with the presence of death just as they lived off of the product of the coal mines. The industrial coal mining that dominated the town's public identity took many of the town's residents also.

But, after the funerals, the hospital visits, and the mourning, life went on outside the mines. And, in Red Lodge, that life was decidedly foreign. As merchant W.A. Talmadge had noted in his 1909 complaint about Red Lodge's public image, foreigners, did, indeed, dominate much of the community's appearance and personality. Wandering along the streets of Red Lodge in the early 1900s, one could not help but notice the diversity of the town's immigrant population. Slovenians, Finns, Italians, Russians, Austrians, Germans, Norwegians, Croats, and Greeks all intermingled under the towering stacks of the NWIC mining works. The discordant hum of conversations in various languages, shop signs in Finnish and Italian, and the powerful smell of garlic coming from some residences (and residents) gave the town a decidedly international flavor. By 1910 almost three-quarters of the town's residents were immigrants or the children of immigrants—many of whom spoke little, if any, English.[46] Neighborhood names like Finn Town and Little Italy imprinted this "foreignness" on the town's nomenclature. Interwoven with the town's "coal slack" identity, Red Lodge's "foreigners" created a distinctive element of the community's public image as they negotiated their own identities as ethnic Americans in the town's early years..

Much of the West itself in these decades was a region of foreigners. Pushed out of the Old Country by debt loads and limited farm lands, and drawn to the American West by stories of good jobs and cheap land, immigrants flowed into the region in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By 1890, 30% of California's residents and 32% of those in the Dakotas were foreign born; in 1900 over a quarter of those

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[43]Picket (Red Lodge), 17 October 1896, 3.
[44]Republican (Red Lodge), 23 March 1906, 1.
[45]Picket, 16 February 1905, 1; 22 June 1905, 1; Republican, 23 March 1906, 1.

living in Montana had been born outside the United States. [47] In some mining camps and lumber towns, the numbers soared even higher. Although many immigrants who made it that far West often tried to take up homestead land, others had neither the money nor the inclination to do so. Mostly young men, they flocked to places like Red Lodge, Butte, Bisbee, Coos Bay, and other communities that had jobs in extractive resources industries. Some lumber and mining companies actively recruited European immigrants to perform the strenuous physical labor required to turn the trees and rocks of the West into commerce and capital. Some, indeed, hoped that hiring workers with different backgrounds and languages might prevent laborers from joining together into potentially dangerous unions. Often these immigrants ran up against the hard wall of prejudice and job discrimination. Cripple Creek, Colorado, for example, was a "white man's camp;" entrenched workers there thwarted employers' attempts to divide and conquer workers by forcing out Slavs, Italians, Greeks, and others so that they would not undermine the wage structure for white (i.e. native-born or Anglo) workers.[48] The Red Lodge area, however, settled early on by Finnish and Slavic miners, had no such exclusions, and southern and eastern European immigrants eagerly headed out for the opportunities offered by the town's coal mines.

In Red Lodge and elsewhere in the West, people from specific regions of Europe often piled up in certain areas of the West, creating particularly Finnish or Irish neighborhoods in cities and towns. And, these clusters of immigrants with their concentration of alien language and customs centered in one area, reinforced a given community's "foreign" appearance. This phenomenon developed out of the common and understandable practice of "chain migration." Immigrants tended to follow each other in chains; one or two people would head out to a new site and send word to friends and family if things looked promising. Once in a place, friends and family tended to stick together, sharing homes and taking comfort

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[46] Thirteenth Census of the United States, Population, Volume II, 1160; Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 25-26.

[47] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1920, Volume III, Population (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 574;

[48] Elizabeth Jameson, All That Glitters: Class, Conflict, and Community in Cripple Creek (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 140-160; Richard White, It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own:" A History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 194, 289.

from the presence of familiar voices, music, and jokes.[49] In Red Lodge, for example, Finnish miners often followed a well-worn trail from the mines of Pennsylvania to the Masabi Range of Michigan to the coal fields of Wyoming and finally to Red Lodge. From Red Lodge, many moved on to copper mines in Butte or the coal mines at Roslyn, Washington.[50]

The very names and geographical locations of Red Lodge neighborhoods told much about the town's waves of migration, social mobility, and work, even while they imprinted a very public "foreignness" on the town's identity. Finnish immigrants were among the first workers in the town and they clustered near the entrance to the Eastside Mine. This working-class neighborhood, which gradually took the name of "Finn Town," assumed a long and narrow shape, hedged in by Rock Creek to the east and the rigid line of Billings Avenue's business district to the west, but as close to the Eastside Mine as these other boundaries would permit. New Finnish arrivals crowded into the homes and boarding houses on the town's east side, conveniently close to work, downtown businesses, and the reassuring sound of the Finnish language. Later waves of immigrant workers—particularly Italians and Slavic peoples from the Austro-Hungarian Empire—arrived as the NWIC opened up the town's second mine, the Westside Mine. These newer people congregated in particularly, though not exclusively, Slavic and Italian neighborhoods on the west side of Billings Avenue (renamed Broadway Avenue in the early 20th century) toward the tipple of the Westside Mine. A second grouping of Italians, "Little Italy", lay on the northeast end of town near Red Lodge's only other industry, the beer brewery, and also close to downtown where many of the Italian immigrants developed small businesses and shops to service the miners. Immigrant workers chose to live near the town's industrial jobs but also close to those who could help them find housing, work, and

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[49]A good account of this kind of migration pattern is in John Gjerde's From Peasants to Farmers: The Migration from Balestrand, Norway to the Upper Middle West (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[50]Mikko Marttunen typified this pattern of migration; he left Finland in 1910 and worked in the mines at Bessemer, Michigan for a few months before heading off for Red Lodge, where he had heard there were good jobs in the coal mines, Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 111-114. See also, Reino Kero, "Migration Traditions from Finland to North America," in A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930, ed. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991): 111-120; Al Gedicks, "Ethnicity, Class Solidarity, and Labor Radicalism among Finnish Immigrants in Michigan Copper Country," Politics and Society 7 (1977): 127-28, 136, 154; Eugene Van Cleef, "The Finn in America," The Geographical Review VI (September 1918): 185-189.

a place in the community. The creation of these small neighborhood clusters lent a foreign nomenclature to the community as residents learned to identify the town by the groups of people who lived in specific areas.

Significantly, there was no "Irish Town" in the local geography at the turn of the century, even though Irish miners had been a large part of the mining company's original workforce. Unlike the Finns, the Irish were native speakers of English and often had some skill at mining; they quickly moved up the social and economic ladder—and away from the immediate proximity of the mines. The Irish, for the most part, ensconced themselves in and around the Hi Bug area on Hauser Avenue, a district marked by both nationality and wealth.[51] Also known as the "English" area of town, Hi Bug residents, with few exceptions, were native speakers of English born in the United States, Ireland, or England. In a town teeming with Finns and Italians who spoke little if any English, Irishmen like D.G. O'Shea, William O'Connor, and Roger Fleming could rise rapidly in the town's social and economic hierarchy. O'Shea, who arrived in the United States from County Cork in 1881, started as a clerk in the Rocky Fork Coal Company in the early 1890s. By 1900 he had moved up to be the company's resident manager and into the grand Hauser Avenue home originally built for Rocky Fork's first manager, Maurice Fox.[52] William O'Connor, another Irish immigrant, was Red Lodge's first elected mayor and one of the original superintendents of the Rocky Fork Mine. Irish immigrant Roger Fleming, a prominent liquor merchant,

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[51] Timothy J. Sarbaugh argues that because the western frontier lacked the entrenched bigotries of the East, it "proved to be frightfully liberating for Irish immigrants," "The Irish in the West: An Ethnic Tradition of Enterprise and Innovation, 1848-1991," Journal of the West (April 1992): 5. On Irish success in the West, see also David M. Emmons, The Butte Irish: Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town, 1875-1925 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); James P. Walsh, "The Irish in the New America: 'Way Out West," in America and Ireland, 1776-1976: The American Identity and the Irish Connection, ed. David Noel Doyle and Owen Dudley Edwards (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980), 165-176; Thomas J. Noel, "The Immigrant Saloon in Denver," in Immigrant Institutions: The Organization of Immigrant Life, ed. George E. Pozzetta (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991): 209-212; Marlene S. McCleary Bosanko, "Among Colored Hats and Other Gewgaws: The Early Irish in Washington State," Journal of the West (April 1992): 33-40; Timothy J. Sarbaugh, "Celts with the Midas Touch: The Farmers, Entrepreneurs, and Millionaires of Spokane's City and County Pioneer Community," Journal of the West (April 1992): 41-51.

[52] An Illustrated History of the Yellowstone Valley Embracing the Counties of Park, Sweet Grass, Carbon, Yellowstone, Rosebud, Custer and Dawson, State of Montana (Spokane: Western Historical Publishing Company, 1907), 634; Beverly Rue Wellington, Red Lodge Landmarks (Red Lodge: The Carbon County News, 1992), 63-64.

built one of the biggest houses on Hauser Avenue. His wife, Kathryn, was a member of the Red Lodge Woman's Club and a leader in the movement to create the city's library association. In the new town, Irish immigrants quickly assumed positions of leadership in the mines and in the town's business and social communities.[53] Although many Irish continued to work in the mines, many assumed the most highly paid positions there. In the town's geography, "Irish" blended easily into Hi Bug's "English" designation.

Non-English speaking immigrants and their children, on the other hand, tended to live and socialize within their own specific ethnic groupings, creating prominent "nationality" identities in Red Lodge through the 1910s. For, immigrants did only choose to live close to each other, they also created fraternities, businesses, and cultural groups that introduced "foreignness" into the town's social and cultural life. Places like Finn Hall, Italian Hall, the Roman Theatre, Paolo Pracca's Mining Shop, and the Kaleva Cooperative Mercantile became part of Red Lodge's downtown identity. Specific "nationality" saloons also popped up along Billings Avenue, readily identified by residents as the Finnish bar, the Slovak saloon, or the Italian place. More formally, each sizeable immigrant population in Red Lodge organized its own fraternal group, usually mutual-aid societies that provided accident insurance and funeral expenses for members. These societies often featured specific uniforms for their members. The Finnish Kalevan Kitarit society, for example, decked themselves out in blue tunics, white sashes, and dashing plumed hats. Gathered together in full uniform for funeral processions, sometimes 200 strong, these immigrant societies made bold public statements about their identity within the town.[54] And "nationality" bands, like the Finnish orchestra, the Serbian tamburitza orchestra, and Italian band—much in demand for community events—provided further opportunities for local immigrants, surrounded by others of similar background, to perform in public. Ethnic celebrations would also break through the ordinary routine of daily life, creating an even more visible "foreignness" in Red Lodge. For Croatian Christmas, celebrants would sing as they wandered from house to house eating and drinking and dancing. Slovenians gathered in the long

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[53]Wellington, Red Lodge Landmarks, 53-54.

[54]Picket, 8 June 1905, 1.

summer evenings to play guitars and sing in the grass meadows along Rock Creek. Finnish wedding parades danced their way through the sidestreets to raucous receptions at Workers' Hall or Finn Hall.[55]

Significantly, though, these foreign populations in Red Lodge and nearby Bearcreek in the early 20th century were tied together by some important shared traits, most importantly a shared European "whiteness." Although biological racialists of the day assigned Finns, Italians, Slavs and other "new" immigrant groups to "non-white" categories, by late 20th century standards the town was remarkably "white."[56] Almost no one of non-European descent lived within the town's borders. Neighboring Crow Indians sometimes wandered into the community, the town had a Chinese laundryman in the early 1890s, some African-American prostitutes worked in the red light district, and an African-American man worked as a shoeshine boy at the local barber shop.[57] But, otherwise, this was a strictly European community. According to the 1900 census, only 48 "colored" people ("Negro," Chinese, Japanese, Indian) lived in the

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[55]On grapes see Naglich Oral History, 27; Lillian and Loretta Jarussi Oral History, OH 363, MHS; Leslie Lyons Oral History, OH 301, MHS; Anderson Oral History; Mike Barovich Oral History, 10; Dimich Oral History, 8; Patten Oral History; Harboldt Oral History, 27; Daniel M. McDonald Oral History, OH 356, MHS. For picnics, see Naglich Oral History, 22; Lazelich Oral History, 12, Blazina Oral History, 18-19; Zupan Oral History, 26-27; Jarussi, 16. On ethnic celebrations, see Lazelich Oral History, 7; Picket, 29 December 1894, 3; 13 June 1896, 3; 5 March 1898, 3; 7 June 1896, 3. On saunas in Red Lodge, see Kallio Oral History. For saunas in Finnish American culture, see Cotton Mather and Matti Kaups, "The Finnish Sauna: A Cultural Index to Settlement," Annals of the Association of American Geographics 53 (December 1963): 494-499.

[56] "White" in the late 19th century did not have the same meaning that the term carries today. Americans made a variety of distinctions between different European groups, choosing to define only "Anglo" or "Nordic" types as "white." For contemporary examples of this see, for example, Edward A. Ross, The Old World in the New: The Significance of Past and Present Immigration to the American People (New York: Century Co., 1914), and Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 1996). For good historical discussions of the construction of "whiteness" see Noel Ignatiev, How the Irish Became White (New York: Routledge, 1995); David R. Roediger, The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class (London: Verson, 1991); and George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," American Quarterly 47 (September 1995): 369-387.

[57]"Non-white" residents appear only spottily in the public record of Red Lodge, including the local newspapers. In 1892, Chinese laundryman Ben Kee left Red Lodge to visit China, Picket, 30 July 1892, 3; a story in 1893 refers to prostitutes, "Miss Lulu and Miss Belle, both of African descent" being arrested in Red Lodge, Picket, 11 February 1893, 3; Lulu died two years later, Picket, 30 November 1895, 3; a "colored woman of unsavory reputation known as 'Old Mary' was arrested for drunkenness in 1893 before leaving town, Picket, 13 May 1893, 3; Pleasant Draper, a "colored boy who was employed as a second cook at the Spofford" left Red Lodge in 1895, Picket 1 June 1895, 3; a 'colored prospector' packed out of Red Lodge in 1896, Picket, 20 June 1896, 3;

entire county. When the Carbon County Republican listed in 1906 the "Conditions that Make Red Lodge Famous as a City," it started off with, "There is only one negro in the town—and that's a-plenty," and added "There is not a Chinaman within the boundaries of the city—and none are wanted." [58] In 1910, the census counted five "Negroes" in Red Lodge and no other "colored" residents.[59] In 1920 there were only two "Negroes."[60] Red Lodge looked "foreign" and diverse in the early 20th century, but that diversity stayed within very European boundaries.[61]

So, in the first few decades of its existence, Red Lodge emerged as an industrial mining town, coated in coal dust and peopled by a mixture of European immigrants, native-born Americans, workers, entrepreneurs, and managers. Coal slack and foreigners—the work and workers of the modern West—defined the public appearance of the little town built on coal and dependent on the machinery of the industrial economy.

Of course, there was more to Red Lodge's image and identity than the physical world that a visitor might notice in a few hours or even a few days of traveling through its streets and public spaces. Beyond the physical buildings, gardens, and railroad tracks, Red Lodge's public identity came also from the efforts of the townspeople themselves, who made their own, often deliberate, marks on the community's appearance and personality. Through publications, organized public activities, and politics, residents from across the community's social spectrum negotiated public images of the town that reflected both the dreams of the community's aspiring entrepreneurial class and the very real power of Red Lodge's hundreds of industrial workers. This more complicated public identity—the stuff of booster pamphlets, union parades, and politicians' speeches—reflected the town's industrial roots as much as did the NWIC's stacks, the fancy homes on Hauser Street, or the bodies of local miners.

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[58] Republican, 27 April 1906, 1.

[59] Thirteenth Census of the United States, Volume II, Population, 1160.

[60] Fourteenth Census of the United States, Volume III, Population, 585.

[61] In several oral histories, residents made note of the absence of nonwhites in Red Lodge. Tony Persha, a miner, recalled that there were no Chinese or colored people working at the mines; he knew that a few Mexicans worked in the Red Lodge mines at one time, but they did not stay long, Persha Oral History 1A. John Barovich noted that a few Chinamen lived in Bearcreek for a while, Barovich Oral History, 21.

In order to understand Red Lodge's developing public identity and image in the industrial cauldron of early 20th century, one must look beyond the physical landscape and return again (at least briefly) to the work of the town's entrepreneurial boosters and then to the politics of local labor organizations. The public activities of these groups, in particular, show how *perceptions* of industrial workers combined with the growing strength of workers to create a community whose public identity by the early 20th century centered around both business and labor.

The townbuilders, first of all, started boosting Red Lodge almost as soon as they started constructing their merchant houses and law offices. And, almost immediately they had to face the central problem in building a positive, progressive image for their budding coal metropolis: the physical presence of the miners who actually built and maintained the economy of the small town. For, in the game of selling Red Lodge's image to outsiders, the town's middle-class boosters ran smack into a basic tension within their industrial economy. The industrial wages that supported the town came along with industrial wage workers, whose very presence at the end of the 19th century could strike fear into potential settlers and investors. Local townbuilders, themselves did not so much fear the *actual* eruption of labor violence in Red Lodge, though; they feared a more general national apprehension about industrial workers that permeated the United States at the turn of the century. Middle- and upper-class Americans in the late 19th century (to whom Red Lodge boosters aimed their propaganda) feared the eruptions of violence that seemed necessarily to accompany industrial development. In the railroad strikes of 1877, the Haymarket Riot in Chicago in 1886, and the bloody strike at the Homestead steel plant in Pennsylvania in 1892, workers had proved their violent potential. The West seemed especially vulnerable to labor unrest, especially following the Couer d'Alene (Idaho) miners' strike of 1892 ,which was crushed by the mine owners using federal troops, and the Leadville (Colorado) miners' strike in 1894 in which the Western Federation (formed out of the Coeur d'Alene strike) fought back against repressive mine owners.[62]

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[62]Carlos A. Schwantes, The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 239-43; Richard Maxwell Brown, "Violence," in The Oxford History of the American West, 411.

Based on conditions, Red Lodge seemed ripe for just such a violent outbreak. Coal mining, after all, was a tough life that, even more than other industrial occupations, produced severe bust conditions and often violent struggles between miners and operators over working conditions, pay, and health issues.[63] Miners and their families lived daily with the threat of death or crippling injuries. They had to contend with new machines that dug coal more quickly without the skills that had once guaranteed workers at least some job security.[64] They also lived with the realities of economic fluctuations in an industry where a full paycheck one month might be balanced with only a few days of work in the next. When the trains ran less frequently or when the weather warmed up and people stopped putting coal in their furnaces, miners' work slowed down and sometimes stopped.[65] This dangerous, uncertain industry produced conditions that seemed ripe for explosions of worker frustration and anger. By the late 19th century miners, like other workers around the nation, were erupting into what T.J. Jackson Lears called, "periodic social upheavals [that] kept bourgeois hysteria at white heat."[66]

As an apparently inassimilable foreigner, a member of a potentially violent laboring class, and a symbol of the growing class differences in the United States, the miner was the figure most in need of social and cultural control in Red Lodge at the turn of the century—especially in the difficult operation of shaping Red Lodge's public image. Miners embodied a type of "Wild West" even more frightening than that which had been presented by cowboys or Indians. The miners' wildness threatened not only the local community and the town's image as a progressive, safe American place, but the very fabric of national society. Controlling the miners was more subtle, difficult and frustrating than dealing with the other western figures of the area. Unlike their efforts with the Indian, town leaders could not just dehumanize

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[63] Price V. Fishback points out that the contemporary press and general public blamed miners for this violence, while workers themselves blamed the coal operators. Violence was not actually the norm in mining camps, but what is important for this study is the common *perception* of great violence in the mines, Fishback, "An Alternative View of Violence in Labor Disputes in the Early 1900s: The Bituminous Coal Industry, 1890-1930," Labor History 36 (Summer 1995): 426-456.

[64] U.S. Congress, Industrial Commission, Report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration, Vol. XV of the Commission's Report (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 399-405.

[65] In 1899 bituminous mines in the United States operated on average 171 to 234 days a year, Report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration, 398.

the miners or make them disappear; the town depended on the miners' work and their wages. And, unlike the occasional cowboy, the miner's wildness could not be solved by the combination of Constable Johnson's fists and town ordinances. Ordinances and company policies sought to impose some order on the physical behaviors of local miners, but as an essential component in the town's continuing prosperity, miners could not simply be run out of town because they damaged the town's image. Instead, boosters had to focus on ways to control the *imagery* of the coal miners to make them as safe or distant as possible.

Initial efforts to control the imagery of the industrial miner took two forms. One was to ignore the *physical* miner and focus instead on the product of his work; the other transformed the potentially radical industrial laborer into a kind of "yeoman" worker—strong, industrious, wholesome, and safe.

The most pervasive early tactic was to simply ignore local miners. In many 1890s promotional stories, miners lost their physical presence in the town. They became disembodied. Red Lodge boosters drew attention away from the miners as flesh-and-blood, potentially violent workers by describing these men as simply part of the local industrial machinery and economy. In one lengthy story extolling the virtues of the town, the Red Lodge Picket summarized the value of the mine workers quite simply: "The army of men employed therein consume a large quantity of the products of the soil, and so the wage of the miner finds its way into every channel of trade in and around the county."[67] In the 1890s, the local paper ran a series of stories on the new farmers in the area and painted dramatic word portraits of the progress of agricultural expansion; these booster articles personalized Red Lodge by naming the proprietors of stores and giving bits of information about the progressive entrepreneurs of the area. [68] But, in almost all of these elaborate efforts to describe and sell Red Lodge, the miners and other laborers were little more than statistics of tons of coal loaded, numbers of men employed, and wages paid out: "The mines give employment to three hundred men, and when worked to their full capacity yield sixty carloads of coal per

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[66]T.J. Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 29-31.

[67]Picket, 24 October 1896, 3.

[68]Picket, 1 June 1895, 3; 8 June 1895, 3; 24 October 1896, 2; 5 December 1896, 2; also Meyer and Chapman Bank, "Red Lodge," n.d., CCHS.

day."[69] In such stories, miners were not men with families, solid residents with hopes about the future; neither were they radical laborers with fire in their eyes, clutching copies of The Communist Manifesto. They were simply objects that facilitated the production of a never-ending flow of coal and capital. Prospective settlers need not fear the industrial coal miners, these articles assured the reader, for the miners were invisible—except, of course, when spending their wages.

In opposition to the systematic obscuring of physical bodies, other town promoters sought deliberately to reshape the image of the miner so that he became, essentially, a farmer with a pickax. Stripped of their class and nationality, the miners in these images became workers who lived and acted according to middle-class standards of behavior. In 1892, the Northern Pacific booster publication, The Northwest Magazine, presented this portrait of idealized Red Lodge miners:

> The men are an orderly and intelligent class and there have been no labor troubles of too serious a nature to be settled by the tact, kindness and good sense of the manager. Some of the men live with their families in neat and comfortable houses built by the coal company and others live in little log cottages of their own. They support churches and are eager to secure for their children as good an education as the graded public school of the town affords. The troops of rosy-cheeked little ones that flock to the school every morning leave no room for doubt as to the healthfulness of this mountain climate.[70]

According to this promotional tactic, Red Lodge's laborers embodied the basic middle-class virtues of home, hard work, and education—they were nothing less than "yeoman workers." In covering the 1900 Labor Day festivities the Picket even used that term. Introducing a story on the miners' celebration, a reporter pointedly lauded the efforts of "the sturdy yeomanry of Red Lodge and Carbonado, the men who earn their bread in the sweat of their faces."[71] The Carbon County government's earliest stationary provided a visual image of these idealized workers. A small picture at the top of the paper displayed two miners who, working with pickax and wheelbarrow, their lights shining forward, resembled nothing so

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[69]Picket, 25 March 1893, 3; also 11 August 1894, 3;. Meyer and Chapman, "Red Lodge."
[70]E.V. Smalley, "Red Lodge, Montana," The Northwest Magazine 10 (August 1892), 21.

much as healthy, robust farmers earning an honest living through skilled labor in the mines before heading back to the fields.[72]

The ideal miners were not meant to lure people into Red Lodge, but instead to reassure them that these men were honest laborers, not the troublesome "savage" workers of the Haymarket Riot or the Couer d'Alene strikes. Such detailed descriptions and illustrations were the exception, however, to the more pervasive early depiction of the miners as simply disembodied wage-earning, consumer entities. Both types of efforts represented the dreams of the local entrepreneurs to remake the miner or somehow make him physically disappear without diminishing the flow of coal and capital running through the town.

By the early 1900s, however, the local newspapers had switched their coverage of area miners toward the reassuring, yeoman imagery. While promotional editions and special advertising pamphlets still did not highlight (or, often even mention) the town's working class,[73] the weekly newspapers began to include more personalized portraits of some of these individuals. In reports on mine accidents, particularly, the Picket, Gazette, and Republican, began to make a point of mentioning the miner's marital status, any children he may have left orphaned, and his length of residency in Red Lodge. Most stories also managed to include some description of the man as a good citizen and solid worker. The Republican, for example, lamented the 1906 death of miner J.E. Bracey, remembered as "a straightforward, industrious man [who] enjoyed the respect of all who knew him."[74] The Gazette, in a 1905 story described NWIC miner Anton Kivistokoski as a longtime Red Lodge miner "respected by all who know him."[75]

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[71] Picket, 15 June 1900, 3.

[72] Carbon County v. F.D. Beguette (1896), CCDC, Criminal Records.

[73] See, for example, the Picket's "Illustrated Industrial Souvenir Edition," 1907, CCHS, which, although it had a small drawing of a miner on the front cover, otherwise made little mention of miners or immigrants beyond a formal photograph of the Red Lodge Finnish Ladies' Band showing a dozen or so women in neatly pressed white shirtwaists and dark skirts. Also, a promotional story in the Billings Gazette on Carbon County written by the editor of the Carbon County Journal, circa 1905, made only passing reference to miners. Clipping in Vertical File, "Carbon County," Parmly Billings Library Collections.

[74] Republican, 8 June 1906, 1.

[75] Gazette (Red Lodge), 17 November 1905, 1.

Although some local business leaders, like timber contractor B.M. Rogers, continued to dismiss Red Lodge's workers as "a bunch of anarchists,"[76] the community newspapers preferred to paint a more benign, comforting public portrait of the local working class. Newspapers continued to be one of the town's primary organs of boosting; stories that touted the family habits of miners (many of them immigrants), their pattern of home buying, and their thrift, could only help to reinforce a positive identity of the town as a stable, safe, comfortable place to live and raise a family This version of local conditions, printed weekly and mailed across the country, created a reassuring image of Red Lodge as a thriving town with few of the disturbing problems that plagued the rest of industrial America. (And, since rival newspapers in the small town had to compete for local readers beyond the entrepreneurial class, stories sympathetic to miners might draw these workers to a particular newspaper. Increased readership equated to both immediate subscription revenue as well as higher advertising rates for that publication. Although no figures of local newspaper readership exist, some evidence suggests that these publications began actively to solicit working-class readers by the early 1900s. The Picket, for example, published news stories from Finland, while the Republican Picket actually began to print a page of news in Finnish in 1909.[77] Before they finally merged under common ownership, the Picket and Republican even waged a bitter feud in their pages over, basically, which paper was more supportive of unionism in general and local unions in particular.[78]) Workers had, by the early 20th century, established themselves both in the town's physical landscape and in its printed imagery.

Actually, in large part, this image of a peaceful, prosperous workers' town reflected the daily operation of the community by the turn of the century, particularly as unions gained an increasingly strong foothold in the town's economy and public identity. After some initial violent blowups—most particularly the murder of a mine manager by a union organizer in 1898—class-based tensions in Red Lodge subsided to a great extent as workers and their unions negotiated a stable, even powerful, position in the town's

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[76]Testimony in State v. Gust Jarvi, Erik Kanga, and August Hokolo (1911) CCDC, Criminal Records.
[77] The Picket, for example, carried stories from Finland on 7 December 1905 and 8 March 1906. The Republican Picket's Finnish-language page ran from May to July of 1909.
[78] Picket, 24 May 1906, 2; Republican, 6 July 1906, 1; 28 June 1907, 1.

mines, businesses, and public life. Red Lodge became a union town. As early as 1894, the Knights of Labor established the first union lodge in town with 87 members; they held Red Lodge's first Labor Day celebration a few months later.[79] Within a few years, many of the town's workers had unionized and gained important concessions from their employers. Union members were not only digging coal at the NWIC mines, they worked the switchboard at the town's Bell Telephone exchange, constructed the buildings along Billings Avenue, and ran the print works on at least one of the weekly newspapers.[80] The biggest group of workers, the miners, made the biggest advances. Working first with the radical Western Federation of Miners (1898-1903) and then with the larger, more conservative United Mine Workers of America beginning in 1903, miners obtained guarantees from the Rocky Fork Company that included a union-paid checkweighman to ensure the company weighed coal accurately, improved safety conditions, and set prices for work supplies. The town's other workers, including carpenters and joiners, also formed locals mainly through the American Federation of Labor (the parent organization of the UMWA), gradually winning some wage and hour concessions from their employers.[81] Through their different unions, workers carved out an increasingly important space for themselves in Red Lodge's public sphere, moving beyond immediate workplace concerns to shape the town's identity through parades, boycotts, buildings, and sheer financial clout.

Red Lodge, first of all, *looked* like a labor town by the turn of century because of the structures workers built for themselves. Union organizers, in fact, made sure that everyone entering the town could not miss the power of labor in Red Lodge. Although some union members grumbled at its location so far from the saloons of downtown, labor leaders in 1909 deliberately constructed a three-story brick Labor Temple almost directly across from the NPRR depot—right where it would confront (and impress) everyone who came into Red Lodge by rail. Built by the local miners and carpenters unions and financed

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[79] Picket, 5 May 1894, 3; 8 September 1894, 3.

[80] Red Lodge newspapers in the 1900s were filled with stories about local unions and union activities. See, for example, Republican, 8 June 1906, 1; 6 July 1906, 1; 15 March 1907, 4; 23 August 1907, 1; Gazette, 28 September 1905, 1; 8 December 1905, 1; Picket, 14 March 1907, 1; 17 May 1907, 1; 23 August 1907, 1.

[81] Gazette, 28 September 1905, 1.

in part by loans from the UMWA, the Labor Temple stood like a brick sentinel at the northern entrance to Red Lodge, one of the tallest and most imposing structures in the community.[82] Less impressively, the smaller, wooden Workers' Hall, one block off Broadway Avenue, imprinted the power of labor on Finn Town, while several co-operative stores that catered to workers also dotted the townscape.[83] These buildings made labor a prominent visual part of the town's public identity even as they became centers of the town's social and cultural landscape. The Labor Temple, for example, quickly became an integral part of Red Lodge social life, housing dances, club meetings, and other public events. Residents could shop at the Finnish Kaleva Cooperative on the street-level business space, browse through the library on the second floor, or wear down the heels of their dance shoes at the top-level dance hall. And Workers' Hall hosted Finnish-language dramas as well as English-language speeches, movies, and concerts.[84]

Labor's public presence extended beyond these structures and businesses. Periodic celebrations of labor also punctuated the town's public sphere, creating vivid, lively markers of the significance of workers in the little community. Red Lodge and Bearcreek miners and other workers celebrated a variety of labor holidays including Miners' Union Day (June), international labor day (1 May), American Labor Day (September), and the anniversary of the 8-hour day (April). Although workers did not celebrate each of these holidays every year, they took advantage of all of them at various times between 1895 and the

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[82] The Labor Temple cost $36,000 to build; in late August of 1909, District 22 of the UMWA agreed to loan the Red Lodge unions $10,000 needed to complete the project. Republican Picket, 23 September 1909, 7; 26 August 1909, 1.

[83] Finnish laborers built Workers' Hall in 1912. The Kaleva Cooperative operated from the early 1900s until 1923 when it was reorganized into the Blum and Company story. Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 183-84. There were a variety of co-operative industries in Carbon County in the early 20th century, but most had gone out of business by the early 1920s, as evidenced by the number of bankruptcy proceedings in these years, for example, In the Matter of Voluntary Dissolution of the Slavonic Co-Operative Mercantile Association, A Corporation (1919), and In the Matter of the Assignment of Farmers Co-Operative Elevator Company of Joliett, for the Benefit of Creditors (1921), CCDC, Civil Records.

[84] Workers' Hall housed community activities ranging from high school graduations and dances to funerals and gymnastics exhibitions; in 1916, Clarence Darrow spoke against prohibition in this venue, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 183-184. In the late 1910s and 1920s, Lillian Lampi and her husband produced plays that were held in the hall; they put on a "big play" once a month and a "small play" every second week, Lampi Oral History, 18-19.

1920s.[85] These festivities swept up the entire town in the fun and excitement of parades down main street, sports, orations, and fireworks. Sometimes owners closed the entire downtown area to honor the town's workers. In 1900, for example, the local unions put on an especially splendid production for the September Labor Day holiday with the full-out support of the town's business class and politicians. Merchants swathed the downtown in patriotic red, white, and blue bunting while politicians prepared speeches of support and congratulations for the workers. Alex Fairgrieve, president of the Red Lodge Miners Union, assumed the honorary marshal's position and led the parade down Broadway Avenue followed by a procession of workers, the Miners' City Band, the Rocky Fork Band, and the mayor riding in a carriage. Mercantile houses, the local dairy, and Hart's Barber Shop sponsored floats that added festive touches to the parade—the W.A. Talmadge Hardware float, for example, featured a mock-up of a mine entrance complete with a tin miner—while also making clear that these businesses cared enough about workers to support this celebration of labor. After the (relatively) long-winded, but expected speeches honoring workers, residents headed out to the ball field to catch the traditional baseball game.[86] Certainly as big as Red Lodge events got in those days, the Labor Day celebrations made very public the prestige held by labor in this mining town.

The influence of local labor power ran even beyond the public spectacle of parades and baseball games. Red Lodge's prominent labor strength influenced such aspects of public life as political speech, proclamations about phone service, and even the hanging of circus posters. In 1907, for example, union workers strode around town demanding that business owners remove circus posters because a non-union shop in Erie, Pennsylvania had printed the placards; the men met with little opposition from merchants anxious to comply with union policies.[87] In that same year, the Red Lodge Board of Trade passed a public resolution in support of "girl operators" on strike against the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company. The strongly worded proclamation denounced the company's attitude and low wages and

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[85] For example, see Picket, 18 June 1898, 3; 6 August 1898, 2; 7 September 1900, 1, 2; 6 September 1907, 1; Republican, 6 September 1907, 1. In 1898, the local chapter of the WFM also held a grand ball attended by over 200 residents, Picket, 26 February 1898, 3.

[86] Picket, 7 September 1900, 1,2.

urged all who had not done so to remove their phones in support of the striking workers.[88] Only a year earlier, when the Red Lodge Miners Union and the local of the Carpenters and Joiners union put the Billings Mutual Telephone Company on its "unfair" or "antiunion" list, half of Mutual's Red Lodge customers—including most of the town's business houses—requested disconnection of service within a week. The Billings company accurately summed up the workers' power in a formal complaint against the unions' action. Local merchants, the company's lawyer argued, had to withdraw from the phone exchange because, "a large number of members of said Miners' and Carpenters' Unions in Red Lodge trade with and buy goods of a large number of merchants and other business men at Red Lodge who are patrons of the plaintiff, and that their trade is of great value to said merchants and business men, and that the loss of such trade to said merchants and business men would be a great detriment and injury to them..."[89] Mutual and the Billings businessmen's association eventually gave in to workers' demands, and the Red Lodge unions, acting in the interests of worker solidarity, effectively and publicly demonstrated their strength within the local community.

Local politicians (often the same people as local businessmen) also understood all too well that public sympathy toward labor issues mattered. Political rhetoric, too, in this little town reflected general support of workers and their concerns. State Senator W.F. Meyer, for one, made sure to announce publicly his support for progressive labor reforms that directly benefited the workers of Red Lodge. Meyer, a partner in the Chapman-Meyer Bank of Red Lodge, spoke of labor issues even at non-labor celebrations; in his patriotic Independence Day oration in 1910, for example, Meyer, focused on the need for legislation on workplace safety and workers' compensation. To a crowd of locals deeply invested in these issues, he pointed out that such legislation was vital, for, "We who live in coal mining camps know the many frightful injuries sustained by the miner, resulting in death and cripples and leaving behind

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[87] Republican, 28 June 1907, 1; Picket, 28 June 1907, 1.

[88] Picket, 17 May 1907, 1.

[89] The Montana and Wyoming Telephone Co. v. The Miners' Union of Red Lodge, et al. (1906), CCDC, Civil Records. The Red Lodge unions' declaration came upon the request of Billings' workers who were fighting a local businessmen's organization led by the phone company manager that was trying to limit

destitute families to mourn and suffer."[90] Likewise, District Judge Frank Henry, whose court handled a series of wrongful death suits against the NWIC in the early 20th century, made it a point to state publicly his support in 1906 for the eight-hour day for all those who labored with their hands.[91] Such political rhetoric, while motivated, perhaps, by personal convictions about labor reforms, played well to workers and became an integral part of the town's public identity in these formative years. Red Lodge not only looked like a workers' town, it sounded like one too.

Not all western towns, of course, embraced labor and unionism quite so fully, as did Red Lodge—which only emphasizes the prominent role of labor in this community. In parts of the West, indeed, anti-union employers summarily ran suspected union organizers out of town, maintaining tight company control over workers and their wages. John D. Rockefeller's coal mines in southern Colorado, for example, were strictly company towns—houses, stores, and utilities run by the mining corporation—

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union wages in that city. Republican, 5 October 1906, 1; 23 November 1906, 1; Picket, 4 October 1906, 1; 1 November 1906, 1.

[90]Republican Picket, 7 July 1910, 1. Labor reform was part of a much wider progressive movement in the United States and Montana in these years. Between the turn of the century and 1917, the Montana legislature, for example, passed a series of laws meant to benefit industrial workers: maximum working hours, safety and health regulations, workers' compensation acts, and laws defining liability for industrial accidents. Specifically regarding miners, the state first guaranteed the eight-hour day only to those who worked in underground mines, only gradually extending that provision by 1907 to "all labor connected with mining, washing, reducing and treating of coal at coal mines from the mining of coal until it is ready for market." The UMWA and Montana coal operators, meanwhile, agreed to an eight-hour day for miners in 1903 in their first annual convention. In 1907, the legislature also mandated that every coal mine provide a wash house for miners; children would no longer enjoy the eerie sight of steaming miners striding up the streets as the bitter winter cold froze the day's sweat to workers' bodies. Richard B. Roeder, "Montana Progressivism, Sound and Fury—And One Small Tax Reform," in Montana's Past: Selected Essays, ed. Michael Malone and Richard Roeder (Missoula: University of Montana Publications in History, 1973), 394; Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 69; Picket, 14 March 1907; 10 May 1907, 1. For general works on progressivism, see Peter Levine, A.G. Spaulding and the Rise of Baseball: The Promise of American Sport (New York: Paragon Books, 1991), and Aileen Kraditor, The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920 (New York: Norton, 1981).

[91]Picket, 16 August 1906, 1. Support of labor, however, often took a patronizing form among progressive reformers. In Red Lodge, Senator Meyer, who so vocally supported the eight-hour day and improved wages, could not resist the chance at a Labor Day oration in 1909 to stress that workers should spend their additional leisure time in constructive ways. He warned his listeners not to waste that time in dissolution, but to work on improving themselves and better the lives of their children, Republican Picket, 9 September 1909, 3. Like so much of progressivism, the movement and its supporters took the moral highground, presuming to know what workers should do. See, for example, Paul S. Boyer, The Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

until miners finally exploded into violence that ended in the Ludlow massacre of 1914.[92] In Cripple Creek, Colorado, where union miners won a significant victory in 1893, vehemently anti-union mine owners managed to gain the support of town merchants who took up arms to arrest and deport organizers for the Western Federation of Miners.[93] Unionism had a mixed record in the West, strong in some areas and despised in others.

Red Lodge was a union town for several reasons. First, Red Lodge was a small town off the main line of the NPRR where labor was often somewhat scarce; workers felt more free to assert themselves because scabs and strike breakers were not immediately available. Second, labor contributed such a huge chunk of the town's economy that business men and women feared alienating workers and losing workers' business. Supporting unions made smart business sense. Thirdly, the unions' demands—which centered around wage increases, shorter work hours, and workplace safety—played well with the progressive mindset of the period. Finally, labor leaders themselves tended to be the more conservative workers in the pre-World War I years; for the town's business leaders, moderate unionism contrasted favorably with the more radical socialism embraced by some western miners. All these factors tied directly into the kind of the town and business climate that had become established in Red Lodge by the turn of the century.

Most significantly, perhaps, Red Lodge was just a long way from everywhere else, especially from the centers of power that owned and operated the Rocky Fork mines. Forty-two miles off the main line of the NPRR with only once-daily passenger service, Red Lodge never attracted workers in the kinds of numbers that would permit operators to fire readily large numbers of miners; they could not be sure of finding enough workers to replace them. And, although Red Lodge coal played an important part in maintaining the NPRR's rail service, Red Lodge itself was just one small cog in a much larger empire. Railroad officials in Tacoma and St. Paul sympathized with local managers who had to negotiate with unruly workers, but they could offer little substantive help. Mine managers whose responsibilities focused

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[92]A good account of conditions in Southern Colorado mines leading up to the Ludlow massacre is in Long, Where the Sun Never Shines, 172-304.

[93]Jameson, All That Glitters, 199-225.

on maintaining a steady supply of fuel for the company's locomotives made the compromises they had to in order to keep the coal moving. Although intricately connected to the avenues of corporate industrialism, this remote western place was also far enough away to maintain some degree of autonomy.[94]

Equally important, labor's prominent position in the local landscape also built upon the town's entrepreneurial aspirations. Although a single mining company dominated Red Lodge's economy for over 30 years, the place was never a "company town." A strong and vibrant business class flocked to the city as soon as work started on the mines, and capitalist investors like Samuel Hauser and Frederick Billings actually encouraged these smaller entrepreneurs. Hauser and his partners, who owned the townsite land around the Rocky Fork Mine, knew that they could make a lot of fast, easy money through the sale of town lots to business owners.[95] As part of the NPRR hierarchy, they also recognized that the railroad's long-term profits depended on settling and building the area's economic infrastructure; independent businesses in Red Lodge meant more business for the NPRR.[96] A strong entrepreneurial class, thus, emerged, in Red Lodge which gradually lent its support to the town's workers, whose purchasing decisions made them a vital part of the town's growth and development. Merchants liked steady workers such as Mikko Marttunen, for example, who bragged in 1912 that after nine months in the Red Lodge mines he had "paid my debts, sent $50 to Finland bought clothers [sic] for $32, and have $200 in my trunk." Unable

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[94] Managers complained about the "difficulty of procuring mining labor" as early as 1889, Report to Board of Directors, 16 December 1889, Northern Pacific Railroad Company Records, Secretary's Files, Rocky Fork Railroad and Coal Mines, 1889-1990, File 64, 137/I/19/6F, Minnesota Historical Society. For later managers' complaints about workers and responses from company officials, see "Minutes" of the Rocky Fork Coal Company for 1898, Rocky Fork Coal Company Records, 136/D/17/3B, Box 1, Volume 1, Minnesota Historical Society. Also, Edward Johnson to Edwin W. Winter, 5 February 1897; F.G. Prest to J.W. Kendrick, 23 February 1898; second vice-president to C.S. Mellen, 30 March 1900; C.R. Claghorn to Howard Elliott, 8 January 1907; B.F. Bush to Elliot, 27 February 1907; C.C. Anderson to C.R. Claghorn, 21 October 1907, 25 October 1907; Elliot to Claghorn, 18 November 1907; Claghorn to Elliot, 28 December 1908; Claghorn to Elliott, 23 February 1912; Charles Donnelly to J.M. Hannaford, 25 September 1920, Great Northern Railroad Records, 137/B/16/1B, Minnesota Historical Society.

[95] Samuel Hauser's correspondence with the Rocky Fork Town and Electric Company made clear his interest in the dividends from sales of Red Lodge properties. See, for example, D.G. O'Shea to S.T. Hauser, 13 August 1913, Samuel T. Hauser Papers, MC 37, MHS.

[96] Indeed, around 1908, several dozen Red Lodge citizens, including the mayor and most of the town's prominent businessmen, petitioned the NPRR protesting a rumored company store. The residents argued that it would be "manifestly unfair and contrary to public opinion and to the spirit of the times in which we

to resist the temptations of Red Lodge's saloons and other diversions, Marttunen soon spent the money in his trunk savings account also.[97] That kind of spending kept the cash registers of downtown Red Lodge busy and merchants happy.

Finally, Red Lodge's labor establishment remained fairly conservative. Labor power, not labor radicalism, marked the town's public identity during these early years of the 20th century. Indeed, only one short strike in 1912 marred the otherwise peaceful record of the UMWA in Red Lodge between 1907 and 1917; and although management frequently complained about labor demands, over this decade wages generally increased, work safety improved, and workers kept spending their money in local stores.[98] This was, in short, the kind of unionism most residents of Red Lodge supported. As a Picket reporter argued in a story on the 1900 Labor Day oration, local people wanted not flamboyant attacks on the capitalist system, but rather evidence of the "best side of unionism, with good will and patriotic fraternalism as the watchwords of the hour."[99]

The "patriotic fraternalism" that defined Red Lodge's public labor identity developed dually from the leadership of skilled, English-speaking miners in the local unions and from the increasing conservatism of the national and state UMWA organizations. First of all, the union hierarchy reflected the ethnic divisions that marked the town itself. English-speaking union leaders, skilled workers with conservative tendencies, early on took control over the locals and did much to negotiate a powerful, yet still nonthreatening, position for labor in the town in the years before World War I. English, Scottish, and Irish names dominated lists of Red Lodge labor leaders in the early 20th century to the extent that the town's Labor Temple was also known locally as the "English" labor hall. These same English-speakers also dominated the most highly paid and skilled positions at the town's mines.[100] As Erika Kuhlman found in

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live" for the company to "engage in petty retail business" in the community, Great Northern Railroad Records, 137/B/16B, Minnesota Historical Society.

[97]Translated and quoted in Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 116.

[98]Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 71.

[99]Picket, 7 September 1900, 1.

[100]In its 1901 report on coal mining, the U.S. Industrial Commission found that most UMWA delegates to state and interstate conferences as well as the leading officers in the union were Irish or Irish-American, Report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration, 407. See also, John H.M. Laslett, "British

her study of Red Lodge Finns, native-born Americans and English-speakers overwhelmingly held the highest paying jobs at the mines—engineers, blacksmiths, electricians, machinists, motormen, and foremen—while the eastern European immigrants (Finns were considered "eastern") worked at the lowest-paying and most dangerous positions.[101] Thus, although Red Lodge unions, particularly those affiliated with the WFM and the UMWA, seem never to have denied entrance to any of the town's so-called "new" immigrants, an entrenched labor elite did control much of the locals' activities and influenced the demands made in negotiations with management. More invested in their skilled positions, these English-speaking workers were more likely to accept moderate concessions from coal operators than would more transient, less-skilled miners.[102]

Moreover, the UMWA also helped to moderate local unions by negotiating basic improvements in miners' wages and working conditions that blunted the edge of workers' radicalism. Beginning in 1903, the UMWA started to negotiate working conditions and wages at annual conventions held with the Montana coal operators. Early agreements set the work day at eight hours for underground miners, provided that local operators would make doctor and hospital arrangements for workers, and set prices for

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Immigrant Colliers, and the Origins and Early Development of the UMWA, 1870-1912," in The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?, ed. John H.M. Laslett (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 29-50. Local sources support this observation of English-speaking leadership in the mines and in the unions. For example, Richard Mallin's father was an experienced Scottish miner when he went to work in the Red Lodge mines in 1911; he worked the mines in Red Lodge and Bearcreek until killed in the Smith Mine explosion of 1942, Mallin Oral History, 11-12, 23. William A. Romek, a mine supervisor, noted that Slavs simply were not very good mechanics, while the Welch made the best miners, Romek Anthony Romek, "Reminiscence," SC 1453, 9, 15, MHS. John Barovich, son of a Yugoslavian immigrant, recalled that the Scotch felt superior to other immigrants, held the better mine jobs, and mostly lived in the upper-crust neighborhood of Hi Bug, John Barovich Oral History, 23-24. Mildred Chesarek Harboldt, whose family came from Yugoslavia, also recalled that the Scotch held the higher positions at the mines, Cheserak Oral History, 12. Ollie Anderson noted that Scotch tended to be union members, Anderson Oral History, 3.

[101] Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 71. On Irish as labor leaders, see Robert D. Cross, "Irish," in Ethnic Leadership in America, ed. John Higham (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 186-188.

[102] Carlos A. Schwantes refers to these more invested workers as the "home guards," as opposed to the transient "bindlestiffs." Schwantes, "The Concept of the Wageworkers' Frontier: A Framework for Future Research," Western Historical Quarterly 18 (January 1987), 44-45. In her study of miners in Cripple Creek, Colorado, Susan Jameson found that union leaders tended to be "older and more experienced workers who could marry and establish homes and families" and thus less able than younger, rootless workers to pick up and move elsewhere." Jameson, All That Glitters, 78-84.

powder and blacksmithing.[103] Eager to preserve these gains and anxious to forestall potentially violent confrontations with managers, UMWA officials developed increasingly cozy relationships with coal operators. As historian Michael Nash argues, the UMWA leadership around the nation gradually distanced itself from the rank and file of union members, becoming more concerned with keeping management happy than with listening to the concerns of the workers.[104] Montana coal operators even came to depend on the UMWA as a sort of workers' disciplinarian, the party responsible for making sure miners kept in the tunnels and away from the strike lines. Northwestern Improvement Company Superintendent C.C. Anderson, for example, observed in 1917 that Montana miners "are restless and in a humor to strike, if they have a good excuse to do so, and it may take the District officers all their time to hold the mine workers to the agreement made. I think however, they can do so for the present..." Union leaders, as Anderson predicted, controlled their workers and prevented the possible strike.[105] This kind of control marked the conservative unionism that imprinted itself upon the public identity of Red Lodge in the pre-war decades.

The moderation of Red Lodge's union hierarchy becomes clear in contrast to the much more aggressive, class-based demands of radical labor activists whose voices grew increasingly strident in the West in the years leading up to World War I.[106] In mines and lumber camps around the region, socialists and members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) cried out for a change in the very structure of the country's capitalist economy. Bitter over harsh working conditions in the region's mining and logging camps and infuriated by the heartless treatment of laborers by operators, these radical voices refused to be

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[103]Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 69-71.

[104]Michael Nash, Conflict and Accommodation: Coal Miners, Steel Workers, and Socialism, 1890-1920, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 92.

[105] Quoted in Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 72.

[106] "Radical" is of course a relative term. I use it here to differentiate between the members of the UMWA locals in Red Lodge and the area miners who pushed beyond that union's moderate attempts to work with management to create gradual change in the industry. In Red Lodge the two main groups of "radicals" were socialists and IWW members. For a discussion of radicalism in the western labor force, see Jameson, All the Glitters, 161-196; Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); Phil Mellinger, "How the IWW Lost its Western Heartland: Western Labor History Revisited," Western Historical Quarterly 27 (Autumn 1996): 303-24.

silenced even in the face of violent opposition from capitalists, managers, and townspeople in surrounding communities. Believers to various degrees in the need for worker control and solidarity, western socialists sought, generally, to dismantle the practice of private ownership of major industries. Socialists shouldered class-based demands for more equitable distribution of wealth and resources.[107] The IWW, was even more ideologically amorphous. As historian Phil Mellinger puts it, the IWW was a melange of left-wing ideologies that was at once "syndicalist, and also slightly Marxist, anarchist, American Socialist, definitely egalitarian, very anti-capitalist, revolutionary, and even reformist."[108] Or, to put it more bluntly, the group believed that, "There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among the millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life."[109] In contrast to other unions that accepted laborers only from certain occupations or with specific skills, the IWW welcomed all wage workers into its "One Big Union." These Wobblies (as members of the IWW were called[110]) waged a variety of very public battles across the West, gaining fame, especially, for their sometimes violent clashes with conservative citizens' groups and for their struggles on behalf of free speech in cities and counties where officials jailed anyone daring to advocate socialist programs.[111] Never a dominant force in regional labor in terms of numbers, the IWW's radical positions, nevertheless,

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[107] Al Gedicks, "The Social Origins of Radicalism Among Finnish Immigrants in Midwest Mining Communities," The Review of Radical Political Economics 8 (Fall 1976), 1-31.

[108] Mellinger, "How the IWW Lost its Western Heartland," 303. For other works on the IWW, see Salvatore Salerno, Red November, Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of the World (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989); Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall Be All; Archie Green, Wobblies, Pile Butts, and other Heroes: Laborlore Explorations (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Philip S. Foner, ed. Fellow Workers and Friends: I.W.W. Free-Speech Fights as Told by Participants (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); Ann Schofield, "Rebel Girls and Union Maids: The Woman Question in the Journals of the AFL and IWW, 1905-1920," Feminist Studies 9 (Summer 1983): 335-358.

[109] The quotation is from the preamble of the IWW constitution, quoted in Philip S. Foner, "Introduction," in "Fellow Workers and Friends, 4.

[110] The origin of this nickname is unclear, but first appeared in 1914. Archie Green devotes a chapter to the name "Wobbly" in his Wobblies, Pile Butts, and other Heroes, 97-138.

[111] That violence included the notorious "Everett Massacre" of 1916 in which up to 12 people were killed, most of them Wobblies. Foner, "Introduction," 3-22; Schwantes, "Wage Earners and Wealth Makers," 444-45

made the group a specter, of sorts, among western industrialists and townbuilders who feared any kind of disruption in the smooth path of capitalist expansion.

Socialists and Wobblies both created niches for themselves in Red Lodge, especially among the town's substantial Finnish community where various socialist organizations took root in the pre-war years.[112] Although an important force among Red Lodge Finns, these radicals played a lesser role in the town's overall labor identity, which ran more toward the trade unionism of the Labor Temple than the syndicalism of the IWW Perhaps one of the key roles of socialists and Wobblies in the town's initial years was to make the American Federation of Labor locals appear conservative. Over time, though, socialists did make some imprint on the town's public identity. Moderate socialists, for example, won several city election races in 1906, including mayor, but implemented few reforms before being voted out of office in the next election. Finnish socialists initiated a town-wide crusade against gambling in 1913 that drove gaming underground and made Red Lodge a bit less publicly wild for a few years. And periodic scraps among the different factions of Finnish socialist created some public excitement from time to time.[113] Wobblies had even less impact than the town's socialists, except that they became a favorite target for mine operators and local business owners who feared the growing strength of local labor. A vocal minority in the mine work force, IWW members drew more attention than their numbers seemed to warrant, becoming a convenient scapegoat, it seems, for managers to blame any labor troubles on.[114] If,

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[112] Finnish immigrants, in fact, had a wide-spread reputation as radical agitators. In 1911, for example, an employer from the Lake Superior mining district testified before Congress that Finns were "good laborers but trouble breeders...and agitators of the worst type." Quoted in Gedicks, "Ethnicity, Class Solidarity, and Labor Radicalism among Finnish Immigrants," 136. On Finnish radicalism, see also Peter Kivisto, "Finnish Americans and the Homeland, 1918-1958," Journal of American Ethnic History 7 (Fall 1987): 7-27. Gedicks, "The Social Origins of Radicalism Among Finnish Immigrants in Midwest Mining Communities," 1-4.

[113] On the socialists' gambling crusade, see State of Montana v. Jalmer Kumpula (1913), State of Montana v. Steve Hanni (1913), and State of Montana v. Henry Niemi and Ed Vingren (1913), CCDC, Criminal Records. In 1906 townspeople elected a slate of socialists to city positions, but internal squabbling destroyed any power the party had and the members were not re-elected, Republican, 6 April 1906, 1; 21 December 1906, 4; 11 January 1907, 1; 5 April 1907, 1.

[114] The number of Wobblies in Red Lodge at any one time is difficult to determine. Coal operators and their supporters inflated the numbers to the point that at one time they estimated the number of local Wobblies at about ¾ of the mines' workforce. In 1918, the U.S. Attorney General estimated that of 15,000 miners in Butte—a much larger industrial city—less than 500 were Wobblies. Judging from the

as in 1917, workers seemed restless, it was easy for mine mangers like J.M. Hannaford to point the finger at "I.W.W. radicals who have secured a foothold among the miners."[115] Overall, however, socialists and Wobblies maintained a fairly moderate profile in this union town, tolerated, at least publicly, by many of Red Lodge's business and union leaders, but not much of a presence in the daily lives of most residents whose existence revolved around the steady productivity of the Northwest Improvement Company mines and miners.

And so Red Lodge hummed busily along into the spring of 1917. Never mind the dirt and dust, what was important was the wealth, the stability, the labor. As long as the trains needed coal and the wages kept flowing in, Red Lodge's "foreigners" and "coal slack" kept working together to create the public appearance of a prosperous, industrial, workers' community. Then, World War I cracked that public image, and the postwar years shattered it completely.

In April of 1917, Woodrow Wilson read his war message to Congress. The next six years rent Red Lodge's community's public persona in ways that altered the town's identity significantly and permanently. Red Lodge, like much of the United States, underwent fundamental transformations as the war forced residents to readjust their sense of themselves as Americans, as workers, and as members of a coherent community. In Red Lodge, this wartime process started with patriotic attacks on radical workers that quickly created a panic of fear among local immigrants who saw themselves in danger of being tarred with the brush of "radical" just because of their accent, name, or neighborhood. In self defense immigrant residents readjusted their public sense of themselves as hyphenated Americans, thus re-negotiating Red Lodge's public identity as a town of "foreigners."[116] Even more importantly, local and

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size of the Red Lodge workforce (less than 1,200) and evidence from a court case against an alleged Wobbly during World War I, I estimate the number of Wobblies in Red Lodge in 1917 and 1918 to be less than 50. Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 91; K. Ross Toole, Twentieth-Century Montana: A State of Extremes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 142; State of Montana v. Nels Lahti (1918), CCDC, Criminal Records.

[115]Quoted in Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 72.

[116]For general works on wartime hysteria directed toward immigrants and radicals see, John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1955); Ronald Schaffer, America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 13-30. For a discussion of World War I in Montana, one of the best sources is K. Ross Toole, Twentieth-Century Montana, 139-193.

national attempts to repress workers during the war resulted in postwar upheavals that ended in a series of strikes and ultimately in the closing of Red Lodge's mines. The industrial, foreign, workers' town of the 1900s and 1910s did not disappear overnight, but its light was fading.

The war, first of all, altered Red Lodge's identity as a town of "foreigners." World War I created a wave of "100% Americanism" that introduced a new impetus for reshaping the town's public displays of ethnicity. A national fervor during the war years, this drive for "Americanism" took many forms around the country—outlawing the German language in Montana, for example, or making it a crime to criticize the war effort. Essentially, though, as historian Gary Gerstle points out, the movement centered around public language. Those groups interested in any form of public power in their community had "to couch their programs in the language of Americanism."[117] In Red Lodge, as elsewhere, immigrants and others learned to speak in new ways as they publicly defined themselves and their actions in reference to Americanism. Although no officials went into ethnic neighborhoods to drive out foreign customs, clothes, or music, the war caused immigrants to rethink their public attachment to these traditions. Fear added impetus to some immigrants' adoption of the language and symbols of Americanism, as in Red Lodge, where immigrants and their children created a new American identity as a defense shield against the terror of "patriotic" organizations.

Interestingly, questions of "Americanism" and who was an "American" had not played much of a role in Red Lodge public life since the town's very early days. Only in the troublesome years immediately following the Panic of 1893 had local residents really wielded the rhetoric of Americanism as a weapon. In that case entrepreneurs used "American" to attack foreigners who fled the town during its economic downturn or, even worse, sent the earnings the town still provided back to the Old Country rather than spending these wages in Red Lodge. The language employed was typical of that coming from other towns and cities grousing about who was to blame for each community's tough times. Some places blamed African Americans, others attacked Chinese or Japanese immigrants. In Red Lodge, boosters targeted eastern European workers. "These people," the editor of the Picket argued in 1894, "are just precisely the

kind that have brought poverty and distress to the workingmen of this country and until congress passes a law to prohibit them from landing here we can expect to see American workmen remain in their present condition."[118] Local merchants became enraged, for example, at news that the Finnish community was forming a cooperative mercantile business that would take business away from established downtown stores. The Picket fumed against the Finlanders who received American wages and yet tried to confine their trade within their own nationality group. "This is not just," the editor stated flatly, "or in accordance with the principles of this government." He urged the mining company to deny the Finns employment if they persisted in this heinous pursuit, since, "There are plenty of competent men who would be glad to get employment and who have the welfare of this country at heart and hold our laws and customs inviolable."[119] "Americanism," at least according to the Picket, meant supporting the interests of the town's business class; the language of Americanism, thus, divided the town between good and bad, investor and transient, American and foreigner.

After good times returned, however, local demonstrations of Americanism tended to be inclusive rather than exclusive. The newspapers no longer used "American" to attack immigrant workers. Indeed, town and union leaders began to use Americanism to draw the community together rather than drive it apart. Workers, for example, draped their various Labor Day celebrations in the Stars and Stripes to emphasize the Americanness of labor organizations. Invariably Italian and Irish immigrants waved dozens of American flag as they marched en masse in main street parades. And Swedish-born Albert Budas, running for county treasurer in 1906, sold himself as the epitome of the American dream—a poor immigrant boy who rose to prominence in the freedom and capitalism of the United States.[120]

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[117] Gary Gerstle, Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 8.

[118] Picket-Journal, 24 March 1894, 2; see also 9 April 1892, 3. The hostility toward immigrants who returned to Europe after earning money in the United States was widespread, see Neil Larry Shumsky, "Let No Man Stop to Plunder!' American Hostility to Return Migration, 1890-1924," Journal of American Ethnic History 11 (Winter 1992): 56-75.

[119] Picket, 10 March 1894, 2.

[120] On unions using patriotic symbolism in parades, see Picket, 7 September 1900, 1, 2; Republican, 6 September 1907, 1. For Irish and Italian marching in Fourth of July parades, see Picket, 11 July 1896, 3; Republican, 5 July 1907, 1. On Budas, see Republican, 26 October 1906, 4.

Significantly, though, this kind of Americanism did not seem to exert much real pressure on residents to conform to an established public rhetoric. Unlike the Italians and Irish, for instance, most Finns and Slovenians chose not to demonstrate American patriotism at the Fourth of July celebrations, and their choice not to participate drew little overt criticism. Patriotism, while voiced and celebrated publicly, did not take on the sharp edge of passionate conviction. Even in the town's most prominent public expression of Americanism—the annual Fourth of July celebration—patriotism took a back seat to an overriding emphasis on boosterism and fun. For Red Lodge, like many working-class towns across the nation, used this holiday less for a solemn commemoration of grand national ideals, than as a chance to indulge in parades, baseball games, fireworks, and fun field sports.[121] Indeed, often the day seemed more about economics of selling the town than about Americanism. Event organizers simply wanted to create an enjoyable community event that would prove that Red Lodge was a "live" town, a place on the move.[122] (A more sanctimonious generation in 1919 dismissed these early celebrations as too commercial, held simply to "pry the visitors loose from the largest amount of loose change.")[123] Patriotism, in the pre-war years, remained a relatively minor consideration in the town's public life.

World War I changed this rather lax commitment to patriotism and Americanism. With the nation plunged into war, Red Lodge residents quickly adopted a much more aggressive public definition of Americanness that did not allow groups like the Finns to just "sit out" patriotic language and displays. Like the rest of the nation, local residents embraced an Americanism that demanded public conformity to an idealized version "Americanism." This conformity pivoted around public performances: always speaking positively about the war, ostentatiously buying war bonds, harassing those who did not ostentatiously buy war bonds, working for the Red Cross, and laboring diligently to provide the wartime

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[121] This kind of "frivolous" celebration of the Fourth of July was quite popular in the early 20th century. See, Raymond W. Smilor, "Creating a National Festival: The Campaign for a Safe and Sane Fourth, 1903-1916," Journal of American Culture 2 (Winter 1980), 611-622. Also, Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 105, 256; John Bodnar, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 83-86.

[122] See, for example, Picket, 23 May 1896, 3; 3 July 1897, 3; Gazette, 8 June 1905, 1; Republican, 10 May 1907, 1.

nation with essential products. Not engaging in these rituals of patriotism was tantamount to being a traitor, "un-American." Residents had to talk the talk and walk the walk—as publicly as possible. [124]

Ethnicity, interestingly, had little to do with this kind of Americanism, whose zealots targeted labor radicals and those critical of the war more than they harassed those with foreign accents. In fact, for many local immigrants, the war with its emphasis on making everyone good Americans actually made possible greater inclusion in non-immigrant community affairs As John Higham has pointed out in his classic study of American nativism, Strangers in the Land, to "a remarkable degree the psychic climate of war gave the average alien not only protection but also a sense of participation and belonging."[125] In the interests of community participation, Red Lodge civic leaders began for the first time to invite members of immigrant groups to participate in community activities, making them part of events like Liberty Loan drives and patriotic rallies. Foreign-born entrepreneur Albert Budas, for one, took charge of the county's Liberty Loan program,[126] and at least three dozen Finnish businessmen and workers, and a sizeable number of other immigrants signed onto the new "Liberty Committee" formed in the fall of 1917 to ferret out disloyal townspeople.[127] Some immigrant groups also seized the wartime opportunity to make their own community-wide statements in favor of America. Serbian-Americans, for example, staged several dramatic parades and rallies to display publicly their support for the American war effort; and, an Italian

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[123]Picket-Journal, 23 April 1919, 6.

[124]The Montana Sedition Act of 1918 actually made it a crime to speak against the war or conscription; Congress modeled its own federal Sedition Law on this Montana act. Toole, Twentieth-Century Montana, 139-156. In Red Lodge there were at least three court cases involving charges of sedition or "criminal syndicalism" against men who had allegedly spoken against the war. Ben Kahn, a salesman from Billings, was sentenced to up to 20 years in jail for stating that "This is a rich man's war and we have no business in it." Kahn also claimed that the United States was warned about the Lusitania carrying munitions. State of Montana v. Ben Kahn (1918), CCDC, Criminal Records. Also, State of Montana v. Nels Lahti (1918) and State of Montana v. Frank B. Rakstis (1918), CCDC, Criminal Records. On conformity to "100% Americanism," see Hans Vought, "Division and Reunion: Woodrow Wilson, Immigration, and the Myth of American Unity," Journal of American Ethnic History 13 (Spring 1994): 24-26; and Lawrence H. Fuchs, American Kaleidoscope: Race, Ethnicity, and the Civic Culture (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1990), 57-61.

[125]Higham, Strangers in the Land, 215.

[126] Picket, 11 April 1918, 1.

fraternity publicly expelled a member for criticizing the war, publishing its justification *in English* in the local newspaper.[128]

Significantly, though, for much of 1917, Finnish-American residents of Red Lodge as a group made little effort to announce publicly their "Americanness." Their lack of effort stands out not only because Finns were the largest immigrant population in the city, but also because of the contrast with Serbians and Italians, two other sizeable ethnic groups who made very prominent assertions of American loyalty as soon as the United States joined the war. Individually, Finnish-Americans helped out the Liberty Loan drives or joined other patriots in the Liberty Committee, but as a group the Finns did not really alter their pre-war apathy toward public displays of Americanism. Of course, the Finnish homeland, unlike Italy and Serbia, was not clearly an ally of the American side. Russia, one of the Allied Powers, had, after all, occupied Finland by force; Finns hated the tzar more than they disliked the kaiser and could not really be expected to embrace the war as joyously as did the local Serbs (who hoped for an independent Serbia) or Italians (anxious to prove Italian manhood on the battlefield).[129] So, Finns made no public group effort to announce local Finnish-American support for the war. There simply did not seem to be a need to do so in the early days of the conflict, when the campaign for public "Americanism" appeared fairly benign. By the end of 1917, though, the actions of the Liberty Committee would change all that.

Red Lodge's "Liberty Committee," formed in late 1917, represented the most concerted local attempt to impose a very public "100% Americanism" on the community. This group, like most of the

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[127] A list of the Liberty Committee members is in the papers of H.A. Simmons, former district attorney for Red Lodge. This list includes Finnish names like Emil Hekkola, M.T. Koski, and Nestor Makela. H.A. Simmons Collection, MC 204, 5/15, MHS.

[128] For the Serbians, see Picket 13 April 1917, 1; 20 April 1917, 1; 27 April 1917, 1; 8 June 1917, 1; 6 July 1917, 1. On the Italians see Picket 16 November 1917, 1, and Steve Roman v. Societa Italiana E Fratellanzadi Mutuo Soccorso, a Corporation (1918), CCDC, Civil Records.

[129] With the outbreak of the Bolshevik revolution in November of 1917, Finnish American loyalities were even more torn when a civil war broke out in Finland between the Reds and Whites, P. George Hummasti, "World War I and the Finns of Astoria, Oregon: The Effects of the War on an Immigrant Community," International Migration Review 11 (Fall 1977): 340-41. For the Serbians, see Picket 13 April 1917, 1; 20 April 1917, 1; 27 April 1917, 1. Local Italian Americans made a point of emphasizing the masculinity of

Americanism effort in Red Lodge, emulated a larger, national movement. From Maine to California, such organizations bullied or terrorized anyone who seemed to threaten the war effort, focusing particularly on socialist and IWW "agitators" who actually dared to disagree publicly with America's involvement in the conflict.[130] In Montana, almost every county and major city had its own Liberty Committee to take care of these dangerous, anti-war radicals. Some of their efforts, as noted by historian K. Ross Toole, were laughable. Committees, for example, investigated numerous reports of black, German dirigibles floating over the mountains of western Montana spying, apparently, on the state's sheep and cattle herds. Other groups denounced as German agents any residents who failed to contribute to Liberty Loan drives or pressed charges against those who conducted church services in German. Ridiculous as some of these allegations were, these groups and other, less formal vigilante-type organizations, had darker sides that rightfully frightened local residents who might be suspected of any kind of un-American wrongdoing. In Butte, for example, anonymous vigilantes seized IWW agitator Frank Little from his boarding house, tied him to a car, hauled him far and fast enough to take off his kneecaps, and then summarily hanged him from a bridge, leaving a message warning other radicals of similar treatment.[131] "100% Americanism" was serious, even violent, business.

In Red Lodge, as in Butte and much of the rest of America, ultra-nationalism translated largely into attacks on radicals, particularly members of the IWW, rather than on members of specific immigrant groups.[132] Indeed, the Red Lodge Liberty Committee took pains to assure the community that its efforts were not directed against immigrants. Their work, according to one spokesman, was not against "any particular race. The action of the committee will be directed against any man of whatever race or creed

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their soldiers; for a good example of this pride in combat, see the testimony in Steve Roman v. Societa Italiana.

[130]According to K. Ross Toole, almost every small town in the state had Liberty Committees, which became "the local arbiters of patriotism." Toole, Twentieth-Century Montana, 140. Other states also organized local and state-wide patriotic organizers created to ferret out opponents of war. Schaffer, America in the Great War, 17-23.

[131] Toole, Twentieth-Century Montana, 140-143, 148-154; Arnon Gutfield, "The Murder of Frank Little: Radical Labor Agitation in Butte, Montana, 1917," in Montana's Past, 370-390.

[132]Higham, Strangers in the Land, 215-218.

who is reported or thought to be a German sympathizer."[133] And, Wobblies, since they spoke out most stridently against the war, were clearly "German sympathizers" who needed to be crushed and driven out of Red Lodge. Committed to a vision of working-class brotherhood, these Wobblies actually insisted that the war was simply a capitalist ruse, nothing, certainly, that need draw workers into a death struggle with each other. Driven by their faith in world socialism, Red Lodge Wobblies, most of them Finnish Americans, publicly defied the demands of war-time Americanism. They handed out brochures on street corners denouncing the war and protesting the arrest of national IWW leaders; they even ventured onto the main streets of smaller towns in the county spreading their message against conscription.[134] Although their numbers in Red Lodge were never great—perhaps a few dozen active IWW members lived in Red Lodge at any one time—the Wobblies' public stance infuriated patriotic Liberty Committee members, particularly retired newspaper publisher Walter Alderson and former sheriff Fred Potter (who publicly estimated the number of local Wobblies at over 900, or about ¾ of the local mine workforce!). Alderson and Potter, who assumed the leadership of the local committee, focused the group's efforts specifically against these agitators, vowing to drive them all from Red Lodge.[135] Their actions, though, had much wider implications for the town and its residents.

Determined to quash the public presence of the IWW in Red Lodge, the Liberty Committee went to work in October of 1917 striking a series of blows against the town's "German sympathizers." Significantly, in spite of early assurances that ethnicity was not an issue, the committee almost invariably targeted Finnish-born workers for "questioning" and punishment. The group's actions started out simply enough; the Liberty Committee ordered a public boycott of the Finnish-owned Workers' Hall, reported to

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[133] Picket-Journal, 23 November 1917, 1.

[134] When Nels Tahti, one of the town's sidewalk orators, was arrested for criminal syndicalism in 1918, he had a list of those pledging financial support for Wobblies imprisoned during the war; the list and all the names on it were Finnish. In his trial and in Liberty Committee proclamations, Finns and Wobblies became publicly and prominently intertwined. State v. Nels Tahti.

[135] In an investigation of the Liberty Committee's accusations against the county draft board, the County Council of Defense concluded that the Liberty Committee "is an organization which was originally conceived through patriotic motives, but which has evidently deteriorated into a one or two man affair [led by Alderson and Potter] which is detrimental to the best interests of the Government and the community

be the headquarters of the town's IWW faction. But, the committee's activities quickly moved beyond such benign actions. Perhaps imitating the terror tactics of the Butte vigilantes, the Red Lodge Liberty Committee started to verbally then physically threaten local Finnish Americans. According to at least one Wobbly report, members of the Liberty Committee rounded up suspected IWW leaders one at a time, subjecting them to threats and abuse until they confessed their allegiance to the One Big Union and gave up the name of least one other member of the organization. When one man, Jalmar Winturri refused to give in under verbal threats, a selected committee took him to the basement of the Elks Lodge where they strung a rope around his neck and hauled him up three times before he finally admitted that he was a Wobbly and provided names of other members. Three men of the men so examined by the Liberty Committee—Winturri, Jack Ollila, and Jacob Lindquist—fled Red Lodge within the week; all three, according to IWW reports, were family men who had lived in Red Lodge for ten to fifteen years.[136] Their forced confessions initiated a new round of Liberty Committee harassment of supposed IWW radicals with tragic consequences to one family and significant consequences for the town's immigrant populations.

Angered by a continuing Wobbly presence in the town, the Liberty Committee gathered up a new group of suspected subversives in late November of 1917, among them Finnish-born miner Emile Koski. After a night of threats and questioning, Koski, who had lived in Red Lodge for 15 years, returned home to his wife and two children, shaken and frightened and unsure what would happen to him next. Scared, defensive, and armed, Koski would not answer the door when Liberty Committee men arrived at his house late on the evening of 28 November. In the aftermath of the violence against Red Lodge Wobblies, including his own "questioning," and the vicious lynching of IWW activist Frank Little in Butte, Koski's fear was understandable. When committee members forced the door down, Koski drove them back by firing his shotgun into the ceiling. In the ensuing gun battle the intruders fired at least two weapons at the house. Kaisa Kreeta Jackson, who rented several rooms from Koski, returned home late and walked into

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and should no longer exist." Council of Defense, "Report of Proceeding had at Meeting of Council of Defense, Carbon County, State of Montana, 1918," Council of Defense Records, MHS.

[136]Picket-Journal, 14 December 1917, 1.

this scene. Koski, believing her to be one of his attackers, shot and killed her. Then, distraught over his act, the weeping Koski surrendered to authorities.[137]

Public reaction to the shooting was immediate and wide-spread with long-lasting ramifications. Violence against suspected Wobblies spread fear among many residents, especially those in the working class and especially Finns. Overnight, immigrant residents readjusted how they and their children moved and acted within the town. Anyone, it seemed, could become the next victim of the crusade against radicals. Senia Kallio, whose Finnish-born parents ran one of the town's public saunas, recalled that the family quickly cleared everyone out of the bathhouse upon hearing the shots fired and "for a long time we couldn't go out at night after dark...the minute it got dark, my folks put the drapes down."[138] Parents were afraid to let their children out of the house or even to talk to outsiders, for fear of what the Liberty Committee might do next. Steve Blazina, a Croatian-born resident, told his son to just ignore any tormentors, to come straight home when he was taunted about being a "Hun" or a "Hunky." "Just don't say anything," Blazina instructed, "Keep quiet."[139] Residents remembered this sense of pervasive unease long after the war ended. For the first time, these ethnic community members feared for their welfare, even their lives, *because* of their ethnic identities.

The shooting finally shook the local Finnish-American community and other nationality groups into a new and long-lasting public stance on Americanism. Finnish-American leaders, especially, took decisive and immediate public action. They used the local newspapers, town meetings, and the court system to assert themselves as patriotic, loyal American citizens. Significantly, instead of condemning the actions of the vigilance group, local Finns strove to meet the committee's loyalty requirements, to prove to everyone that Finns were real patriots. In public, at least, the Finns did all they could to create themselves as "100% Americans." Finnish community leaders readily and publicly announced their cooperation with the Liberty Committee. "We have no other purpose," stated one prominent Finn, "than that of the Liberty Committee, to find out who is and who is not loyal to our country, and to pledge the rest in an obligation

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[137]Koski's killing of Jackson was ruled accidental, Picket-Journal, 21 December 1917, 1, 8.
[138]Kallio Oral History, 18-20.

that is binding." Anxious to prove their loyalty, Finns planned a giant rally to "demonstrate by words and deeds our fidelity to the government in its present important work of war, and its ultimate aim of peace." Organizers put a full-page advertisement in local newspapers announcing, in both English and Finnish, the "Meeting of the Loyal-to-America Finnish People." Over 400 "Finnish born patriots," all of them naturalized citizens, attended the meeting, made public pledges to support the American government, and denounced the "small minority of our race, that have been misled by agitators so far as to forget the fulfillment of their duties to their adopted country."[140] And, almost immediately after the shooting, moderate Finnish socialists ("respected citizens of the community, loyal and patriotic") initiated legal proceedings to remove title of Workers' Hall from the more left-wing socialists who had taken over its management and "permitted disloyal and unpatriotic meetings" to be held there.[141] Out of the fear created by the Koski shooting, Finnish residents created new and public avenues of ethnic expression that conformed as much as possible to the "100% Americanism" demands of the Liberty Committee and other patriotic organizations. The war, thus, changed public expressions of ethnicity in Red Lodge, altering how the town's "foreignness" looked and sounded. Nationality groups like the Finns, often for the first time, felt compelled to voice publicly their allegiance to America and to take part in community activities and performances that would reinforce and prove that loyalty.

Significantly, however, these changes were not as sweeping as they might at first have seemed. For, the town's hyphenated Americans (as the foreign born and their children were called) articulated an Americanism still rooted in the strong ethnic bonds of Red Lodge's Finnish, Italian, and Serbian neighborhoods. Although these immigrants and their children voiced a public "Americanism," they tended to do so as part of a specific ethnic group: the Italian *fraternity* declared its support of America, 400 Finnish Americans rallied to show their patriotism, the local Serbians marched *together* to prove their loyalty. Importantly, though, the larger community, accepted and even encouraged this kind of attenuated

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[139]Blazina Oral History, 23-24.

[140]Picket-Journal, 21 December 1917, 1.

[141] Solomen Homi, et al. V. Workers Building Association et al. (1918), CCDC, Civil Records.

Americanism.[142] It was all right for these immigrants to declare their Americanism as a group, as long as they declared it loudly and publicly. The Italian and Finnish Auxiliaries of the Carbon County Red Cross provide one example of this process. After the Koski incident, foreign-born women wanted to prove their loyalty through direct action, by joining the Red Cross. But, in many ways the local Red Cross was as much a social club as it was an aid organization—women gathered in the library basement to knit socks and stuff packages while chatting about neighborhood scandals and children's marriages. To sidestep the difficulties of working and socializing with people who could not communicate across language barriers, the Italian and Finnish women—with the blessing and support of the non-immigrant county organization—arranged to have their own separate, ethnic chapters. They worked for the patriotic cause, but they continued to speak Italian or Finnish while doing their own stuffing and knitting.[143] They made public their support for America even while remaining within the ethnic group.

World War I and the actions of the Liberty Committee, then, jolted local immigrants into announcing a public American identity and forming groups that, while separate from non-ethnic committees, initiated some of the first steps toward greater community cooperation and discourse. The Italian and Finnish women, after all, did associate with a traditionally Anglo group when they affiliated with the Red Cross—an important move toward integrating into the larger public life of the town. Another product of World War I, The Italian Girls Victory Club, a charitable and social organization composed of Italian-born women and their daughters, would stride even further. This group, devoted to raising money for cross-ethnic community causes, survived the war years to take the lead in forming ever stronger public alliances between immigrant groups and the rest of Red Lodge. Their work contributed to

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[142]Gary Gerstle found that in Woonsocket, R.I., too, the cultural diversity of immigrant residents and their children had begun to narrow by the 1920s, in part because of the sweeping anti-socialism/ Americanism movements that started during World War I. Gerstle, Working-Class Americanism, 1-4.

[143] In the 1 May 1917 organizational meeting for the Carbon County Red Lodge there was only one name listed that seemed Finnish, a "Miss Haaland." Mrs. Heikkala had joined the group by 8 October 1917 and she assumed the liaison position between the new Finnish auxiliary and the original Red Cross group. The older group assigned Mrs. Joe Romersa, Mrs. Julio, and Mrs. Curto "to see to the Italian ladies," and gave them charge of the Thursday evening workroom meeting. Red Lodge Red Cross, "Minutes," 1 May 1917, 8 October 1917, 3 January 1918, CCHS. The women of the Finnish association Kalevan Naiset Mielikintupa No. 1 took the initiative in forming the leadership for the new Finnish ladies' auxiliary to the

the formation of several multi-cultural festivals in the 1930s and eventually to the town's Festival of Nations in 1951, in which residents celebrated the unity of community purpose among the town's varied nationality groups. Through the Festival of Nations, as discussed in Chapter Four, local people would try to recapture a taste of the town's immigrant identity that was so tangible and pervasive in the pre-World War I years but which was already beginning to evolve into a more general "Americanness" by the 1920s.

World War I, thus, marked a key transition point in the development of Red Lodge's public ethnicity. However, an even more significant transformation of public identity grew out of the war years; shortly after the war, Red Lodge would start to lose its coal mines and its coal identity. Within a few years of the war's end, Red Lodge's identity as a coal town began to slip away, as workers' smoldering resentments against war-time repression destroyed the stable labor/management relationship of the town's earlier years. Starting in 1919, workers erupted into a series of strikes that ended, eventually, in the closing of the Red Lodge tunnels. The industrial workers' town of the early 20th century would be gone forever.

World War I prompted this transformation in several ways. First of all, the war provided the Northwestern Improvement Company with a golden opportunity to impose greater control over its workers than it had been able to attain through close relations with the UMWA. The company started the process by freezing or even reducing workers' wages, citing a patriotic need to produce coal more efficiently for the war effort.[144] Since the federal government had banned strikes in vital industries such as coal mining for the duration of the war, this unilateral decision by management left workers simmering with frustration but unable to retaliate while the country was engaged in its great struggle. Then, the operators went even further. Company officials pressured local leaders into restricting working-class

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Carbon chapter of the American Red Cross, Picket, 28 December 1917, 1. The Finnish and Italian auxiliaries marched in uniform in the 1918 Fourth of July parade, Picket, 4 July 1918, 1.

[144]This was part of a larger, national effort to control miners' wages. Joseph A. McCartin, Labor's Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations, 1912-1921 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 125; Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 73. Union leaders, of course, countered with the assertion that the patriotically celebrated "American standard of living" meant that workers needed to be paid well enough to enjoy that ideal. James R. Barrett, "Americanization from the Bottom Up: Immigration and the Remaking of the Working Class in the United States, 1880-1930," Journal of American History 79 (December 1992): 1009.

amusements in Red Lodge because the war demanded fit and able workers. The NWIC had long complained of men failing to show up for work "on account of certain places of amusement," specifically brothels that served alcohol. Spurred by the demands of the NWIC, town and county officials closed down places of prostitution and arrested all "vagrants and women of ill-fame" within the town limits.[145] When the NWIC requested that all saloons close at 10 p.m. so that miners would show up for work on time, local authorities jumped to attention, ordering not only the 10 p m closing but also shutting down all saloons and clubs that served alcohol (the Elks Club as well as the Workers' Club) from Saturday night until 1p.m. on Sunday.[146] Measures of social control that could not have passed earlier, now swept through the town and county councils under the rationale of "war work" and "necessary coal production" and the strong encouragement of the area's coal operators. Limiting workers' rights and pleasures—and thus making them more efficient laborers—was in the best interests of "Americanism," according to mine managers. And the workers—legally forbidden to strike and socially constrained from protesting against these restrictions—had to bide their time and wait for the chance to regain their former position of power.[147]

Local workers also recognized the hand of the coal operators behind the anti-radical activities of the local Liberty Committee and this too became fuel for the fire of resentment and disquiet that spread through the Red Lodge coal tunnels in the years after World War I. It did not take much to connect mine officials with the Liberty Committee's drive to terrorize the community's Wobblies or to see it as a first step toward silencing all labor protest at the mines. William Haggarty, the NWIC mine foreman, for example, led the Liberty Committee faction that dragged suspected IWW members to inquisitions at the Elks Lodge. Liberty Committee co-founder Fred Potter, a former sheriff, was widely known locally as someone with strong pro-company sentiments. The other co-founder, Walter Alderson, actually published in the local newspaper a letter from the NWIC superintendent that praised the Liberty

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[145] Picket, 19 September 1918, 1, 4. The local district attorney immediately began to close down alleged houses of prostitution, for example State of Montana et al. V. Lola Hannula, alias Blanch Webber (1918); State of Montana et al. V. Pearl Petrea, alias Pearl Davis (1918) CCDC, Civil Cases.

[146] Picket-Journal, 19 September 1918, 1.

Committee for purging the mines of Wobblies.[148] And, a year after the war ended, the NPRR provided $1000 to support Liberty Committee members defending themselves against a civil suit brought by a Finnish Wobbly.[149] Local people readily noted these links between management and the Liberty Committee. Daniel S. McCorkle, for example, a minister who lived in nearby Chance, Montana fingered a "a few of the worst labor hating employers" for sponsoring most of the violence in their desire to destroy labor organizations.[150] The coal operators' public crackdown on workers' pay and pleasures combined with their behind-the-scenes endorsement of the Liberty Committee created a new, dangerous tension among local workers that would snap almost as soon as the war ended. As Red Lodge miner William Glancy put it, the miners *had* to fight back against the owners because, "See, the coal miners really got the book throwed at them during the First World War."[151]

And, in the postwar years, local miners saw their chance to fight back. Between 1919 and 1922 Red Lodge workers' strikes closed down the local mines three times, with one strike lasting almost half a year. In this, local miners actually joined in a national wave of strikes after the war ended. In 1919 John L. Lewis, a towering figure in union leadership, assumed presidency of the UMWA and led the union on a long, sometimes contentious, struggle against the nation's coal operators.[152] Red Lodge workers, many of whom idolized Lewis, readily followed the UMWA leadership, sometimes going even further than the

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[147] Glancy Oral History, 53-54, and Anderson Oral History, 18.

[148] Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 95-97; Picket, 14 December 1917, 1.

[149] After the Koski shooting and the Finnish town meeting, the Liberty Committee degenerated into a one- or two-man operation led by retired newspaper publisher Alderson and former sheriff Potter. These men largely discredited themselves in 1918 when they called upon state authorities to investigate the local draft board on charges of bribery and corruption. Attacking prominent local authorities—Sheriff George Headington, County Clerk H.P. Sandels, and physician E.M. Adams—was not so easy as intimidating Finnish Wobblies, State Council of Defense Records, MHS; Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 99-100.

[150] Daniel S. McCorkle to Frank P. Walsh, 11 January 1918, Daniel S. McCorkle Papers, MC 59, MHS; also Anderson Oral History, 18-20, and Glancy Oral History, 53-54.

[151] Glancy Oral History, 53-54.

[152] On John L. Lewis, see Alan J. Singer, "'Something of a Man': John L. Lewis, the UMWA, and the CIP, 1919-1943," in The United Mine Workers of America; Long, Where the Sun Never Shines, 323-331.

national union thought necessary. [153] In the 1922 strike, for example, local workers, outraged by the hiring of a non-union man, stayed out of the NWIC mines almost two weeks longer than their counterparts in other parts of the country.[154] The men seemed eager to strike back against the "coal barons." Ollie Anderson, for example, weathered all three strikes and spoke bitterly against the operators who kept pushing workers to produce more for less so the "big boys" would have more money to put in their pocketbooks.[155] And miner Mikko Marttunen called the prolonged 1922 work stoppage "a splendid strike" against "owners [who] want to break the union and lower wages by half."[156] Red Lodge, the stable union town, became a warzone of sorts, a place of almost continual fighting between management and workers.

In the end, though, the miners' radicalism and united strength backfired on them. Marttunen's joy in the miners' victory in 1922 did not last long. A relatively minor player in a much larger national operation, Red Lodge miners had clout only so long as they provided a needed material for the operation of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Frustrated by workers' demands and the high cost of taking coal out through underground tunnels, the Northern Pacific decided to shift part of its operations in the early 1920s to Colstrip in Southeastern Montana. Coal near the surface there yielded more easily to mechanized strip-mining techniques that required fewer workers. Also, in this new operation the railroad company could subcontract for the coal through a separate firm, skirting union agreements and establishing Colstrip

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[153] In their oral histories, former Red Lodge miners remembered John L. Lewis as a hero of the workers' cause. Ollie Anderson, for example, credited Lewis with improving conditions in the nation's coal mines. Anderson, who had a photograph of Lewis displayed in his home, told an interviewer that, "You can thank ol' John L. Lewis, the miners can, for everything that he done for 'em." Anderson combined his admiration for Lewis with contempt for coal operators "Well, you're always supposed to work to produce as much as you can. The more you produce, that means the more money for the big boys to put in the pocketbook." Anderson Oral History, 19-22. Tony Persha, likewise, admired Lewis greatly, informing his interviewer that, "He was something!" Persha not only had a picture of himself with Lewis, he also owned a copy of Lewis' biography. Persha Oral History. Mine manager William A. Romek recalled Lewis less fondly, maintaining that Lewis maintained a tight grip over the national and state union organizations. "John L. Lewis," he stated, "was the czar over the coal industry in the entire nation." Romek Oral History, 17.

[154] Picket-Journal, 30 August 1922, 1; 27 September 1922, 1; Kuhlman, 75-76.

[155] Anderson Oral History, 21.

[156] Letters translated and quoted in Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage," 75-76.

as a firmly non-union operation. [157] In 1924, then, the Northwest Improvement Company closed down the Westside Mine and Red Lodge lost a large chunk of its corporate payroll. Some miners found work at the Eastside Mine or over the hill at the Bearcreek and Washoe operations; many had already given up after the prolonged series of strikes. Red Lodge, the Coal Metropolis, began to shrink and draw in upon itself. The Eastside Mine held out until 1932, but then the NWIC pulled out of the little town completely.

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By the 1930s, Red Lodge, though still surviving in part through the work of mines in Bearcreek, was no longer a mining town. Company employees removed working equipment, razed some remaining buildings, boarded up mine entrances, and moved out of Red Lodge. The company left behind a town of workers and businesses that had depended on the mines' payroll. It also left two towering piles of coal slack, a maze of tunnels beneath the streets of Red Lodge, coal miners with broken limbs and black lung disease, and the memory of a time when the town had boomed, wages were high, and times were good. For much of the 20th century, town leaders would strive to replicate the corporate industrial complex that had built and maintained Red Lodge for over 40 years. Such efforts remained futile, though. Plans for new coal mines, a chromium mine, a coal crude plant, and oil wells would fall through one after another, leaving local businesses and workers increasingly dependent on tourism and the business of being a county seat.

But, in its first four decades, Red Lodge's identity was, indeed, grounded in "foreignness" and coated in coal dust—dirty grime that enveloped the city and all its inhabitants. In the boom years of coal, few had minded the visible dirt of the industry or the obvious foreignness of the workers who brought the coal to the surface. While coal ruled Red Lodge, the grimy coat marked the town's industrial heart; only when that heart stopped pumping capital through the community would residents look at the soot as something dirty and undesirable. As boosters turned to tourism—the next golden economic hope—they

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[157] William B. Evans and Robert L. Peterson, "Decision at Colstrip: The Northern Pacific Railway's

would gradually begin to erase the physical remnants of the town's industrial past, adopting instead a Wild West heritage of rustic log cabins, cowboys, and ranches, and a public ethnicity of peasant skirts, kolas, and krumkaka.

Open-Pit Mining Operation," in Montana's Past, 445-460.

CHAPTER THREE

EVERYONE'S A COWBOY: THE "WILD WEST" IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Tourists coming into Red Lodge expect to see a certain amount of western atmosphere in keeping with the true western setting of Red Lodge. By looking the part, you are advertising the city to the ultimate benefit of the entire population.[1]

In 1961, John Barovich, a Montana insurance man born in Niksich, Yugoslavia, returned to the land of his birth to re-acquaint himself with relatives he had not seen for 40 years. Barovich's father had moved his seven-year-old son to Montana in 1921. There the older Barovich dug coal in the Bearcreek fields outside Red Lodge for 20 years while young John grew up in the modern, industrial world of mechanized, unionized mining. As a teenager, Barovich played basketball in coal-dust laden air, took it for granted that everyone's father was a miner, and learned to distrust the greed of coal operators. A graduate of Montana State University, a high school history teacher, and eventually a full-time insurance salesman, Barovich's adult life, like his childhood years, had everything to do with the modern West of technology, innovation, and salesmanship. His background lay in a much different West than that embodied in the mystique of the cowboy and rancher. Yet, when he returned to Yugoslavia as a middle-aged man Barovich wore not a miners' cap or a fashionable fedora, but rather a broad-brimmed cowboy hat—a physical symbol of his claims to the West's pastoral, ranching heritage.[2]

The immigrant coal-miner's son in the cowboy hat raises some interesting questions about how public western identity developed in the 20th century. Why did Westerners with no clear roots in the pastoral heritage of ranching begin to adopt visible symbols of the cowboy and rancher? When did modern

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[1] Carbon County News (Red Lodge), 6 June 1941, 1.

industrial towns in the region start to acquire the trappings of log-cabin frontier villages? Why by the mid-20th century did so many Westerners dress like cowboys? The answers to these questions are wrapped up in a national obsession with the mythic West, Westerners' own desires to embrace that mythology, and the developing demands of regional tourism. Like hundreds of other small western towns in the 1920s and 1930s, Red Lodge residents, including John Barovich, plunged feet-first into the modern game of acting "Western"—that is, assuming a public identity of "Westerness" defined not so much by the West itself as by the nationally created, mythic West. Of course Westerners always were western just by living in the West. But Americans who lived West of the Missouri River in the mid-20th century learned how to look like the kind of Westerners *other* Americans expected them to be. This new regional identity pulled the imagery of popular Western movies and novels into specific western places.[3]

The developing tourism industry produced the most immediate impetus for this very public assumption of cowboy Westerness by local Westerners. In many places around the region, Westerners began to dress like cowboys and cowgirls in the 1920s and 1930s because town boosters noticed that the "Wild West"—cowboys in particular—"sold" well to tourists. As small towns in the West began to lose their economic base in extractive industries. local leaders sought, almost desperately, to buoy up sagging economies through infusions of tourism revenue. Most visitors, however, did not really care about seeing a West of immigrant miners, corporate industrialism, and insurance salesmen. Tourists preferred western places that met their expectations—shaped by movies and novels—of what the West *should* look like: log

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[2]Oral History of John Barovich, OH 1482, Montana Historical Society Collections (MHS).

[3]For discussions of the "mythic West," see Richard Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America (New York: HarperPerennial, 1992); Richard G. Athearn, The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986); Earl Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1957); Anne M. Butler, "Selling the Popular Myth,"in The Oxford History of the American West, ed. Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 771-801; Hal K. Rothman, Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century West (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998). For general discussions of how people use history in public performances, see Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (New York: Random House, Inc., 1991); David Lowenthal, The Past is a Foreign Country (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Lowenthal, The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); John Bodnar, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

cabins, horses, Indians, and cowboys. So, catering to the demands of tourists, Westerners began to re-create their towns and themselves to appear appropriately western for their visitors. They constructed log cabin facades for brick buildings, held rodeos, and dressed themselves up in neckerchiefs, blue jeans, and cowboy hats.

Although not the only impetus for looking "western" in the early 20th century, tourism promotion pressured many residents into remaking their local worlds (including themselves) into the kind of West most appealing to tourists. The "West" itself became a production in the western United States. Indians in full-feathered headdresses erected tepee camps next to highways, charging fifty cents for guided tours; women in calico sunbonnets drove buckboards down main streets behind stagecoaches full of local dignitaries dressed as "rollicking cowboys and cowgirls"; and town buildings acquired a coating of cedar shakes to make them appear appropriately rustic and western.

But, this drive to adopt the mythic West into modern western identities never revolved completely around tourism. Local Westerners drew from their own pasts—or their neighbors'—to affirm their claims to represent the best of the Old West. Townspeople celebrated their own local cowpunchers, ranchers, and any other kind of "pioneer" they could find to ground their acquired identities in the soil of the "authentic" past. In Red Lodge, residents could look to old-time cowboy Packsaddle Ben Greenough and his stories of Liver-Eating Johnson and Calamity Jane to confirm the reality of the town's connection to the real Old West—the West of popular myth that reaffirmed the residents' place in the heroic struggle to settle and conquer the continent. Rejecting (for the moment) the town's vibrant industrial mining heritage, local people reached back to grab at any tenuous relation they could find to the pastoral, ranching heritage that stood at the heart of the nation's western mythology. There they found the Red Lodge cowboy.

At the heart of this drive to appear "Western" stood the powerful image of the cowboy, a deceptively simple figure with a variety of modern-day representatives in the West. By the mid-20th century, the Cowboy stood unchallenged as the quintessential hero of the American West, and indeed of the entire nation. Easterners and Westerners alike strove to borrow some of the glamour of this national hero, dressing in cowboy hats, boots, and pearl-buttoned shirts to emulate the western icon. But, in the

process of adopting the cowboy as a regional and local symbol of Westerness, Westerners had to address the complicated contradictions of this working-class drifter who had come to represent the twinned values of freedom and responsibility. Was a real "cowboy" a rodeo rider, rancher, wrangler, movie star, or poorly paid cowpuncher? In Red Lodge and other western places, residents chose between a variety of local and national figures to select the most appropriate modern representatives of the idealized 19th-century cowhand. Westerners essentially transferred the glamour of the working cowboy onto capitalist ranchers and eventually—through their own performances as cowboys and cowgirls in annual rodeos and Wild West parades—onto themselves.

Through various public performances—most prominently rodeos, dude ranches, and parades—Westerners created what Richard Slotkin calls "mythic spaces."[4] Residents carved out arenas of performance and exhibition in which they reproduced selected historical narratives, grounded in the local past but drawing from larger myths of the West and the frontier, particularly the strains of Buffalo Bill Cody's theatrical "Wild West." As residents acted out mythic roles in these productions of "Westerness," they gradually expanded the stage upon which they performed—adding more background, enlarging certain roles, and pulling some of these theatrical acquisitions into their own lives. Log cabins and rustic storefronts began to dot western townscapes, movie-inspired cowboy drawls crept into local accents, and the son of an immigrant coal miner (who might never, ever, have contemplated chasing a cow) made the cowboy hat part of his own claim to a western identity.

By the early 1940s a western patina had descended over towns like Red Lodge. Clothing, building styles, advertising images, even the style of local speech reflected the "Westernization" of these places as local people created a "Westerness" that readily mixed myth with modernity or, as an area dude rancher put it, "reality" with "unreality." In towns around the region, Westerners began to acquire a new public identity based on the formerly despised symbols and characters of the Wild West, and particularly around the multi-layered imagery of the greatest of all American heroes: the cowboy.

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[4]Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 61-62.

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In Red Lodge, as in other western towns, the process of becoming "Western" did not have an exact starting date. As early as the 1890s, after all, town leaders sought to make Red Lodge "Western" at the fringes through the promotion of local links to the masculine "mountain man" figure. In the early years of the 20th century, however, the desire to make Red Lodge modern and progressive clearly overwhelmed any efforts to associate the community with the mythic Wild West. Some popular "Westerness" crept into the town—local leaders invited nearby Indians to perform at a Fourth of July celebration in 1909 and a local paper used a mounted Indian as a masthead in the 1910s—but, in the boom years of coal mining, local residents embraced modern technology and the image of an eastern-style city rather than the symbolism of a rough and wild frontier. By the early 1920s, however, conditions had changed, both nationally and locally. The Northwest Improvement Company closed down the Westside mine in 1923 at the same time that an extensive drought devastated local farms and ranches.[5] Nationally, travel restrictions during World War I, improved transportation, and a large-scale propaganda campaign to "See America First" persuaded many Easterners to tour the West in ever greater numbers.[6] These new tourists arrived eager to experience the "real" West of horses, cowboys, Indians, and ranch life. So, just as towns like Red Lodge began to see their economic base in extractive resources slip away, tourists arrived at their doorsteps with money to spend on experiencing the Wild West. Tourism and economic need combined

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[5]Picket-Journal (Red Lodge), 26 May 1920, 4.

[6]In addition to the actual "See America First" movement, railroads also actively promoted western tourism in these years. Anne Farrar Hyde, An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920 (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 244-245; Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West, 135-36, 153-165; Marguerite S. Shaffer, "'See America First': Re-envisioning Nation and Region through Western Tourism," Pacific Historical Review 65 (November 1996): 559-582.

fortuitously in Red Lodge and other western places where residents discovered that one of their most valuable resources was being "Western."[7]

Nothing marked the increasing fascination of Easterners with all things western like the remarkable growth of the dude ranching industry in the 1920s. Dude ranchers spearheaded 20th-century efforts to fashion the West according to cinematic and literary visions of the area. The dude rancher created a personal fantasy West: a three-dimensional replication of the mythic West full of "real" western experiences in beautiful, rugged settings. And, visitors ate it up.[8] Of course, Westerners had run dude-ranch operations for decades, but the post-war demand for guest ranching spurred ranchers and businessmen to create romantic, rustic lodges and cabins on working ranches and leased Forest Service lands. By 1930, there were over 100 dude ranches in Montana alone, four of them headquartered out of Red Lodge.[9] Guests or "dudes" typically stayed at these ranches for at least a week, working themselves into a cozy routine of communal meals in the lodge and outdoor activities that ranged from "just loafing" to week-long pack trips into the mountains.[10] It was the Wild West of the gentleman rancher made simple and comfortable, even "picturesque."

Dude ranches assumed such great popularity in the 1920s because dude ranchers hit upon the ideal combination of image, ambiance, and comfort. To achieve this effect, proprietors and promoters easily mixed history and movies, myth and modernity. As western dude ranchers showed, the "real" and "fantasy" did not necessarily have to contradict each other; rather, one could see them as two sides of the

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[7]For stories on local interest in tourism, see Picket-Journal, 17 March 1920, 6; 18 August 1920, 1, 4; 3 July 1924, 1; 28 June 1923, 4.

[8]Jesse Lynch Williams, "Joy-Ranching and Dude-Wrangling," Colliers 51 (9 August 1913): 22; Athearn, The Mythic West, 137; Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West, 167-172; William Cronon, "Landscapes of Abundance and Scarcity," in The Oxford History of the American West, 630; Butler, "Selling the Popular Myth," 787-789.

[9]Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang, Montana: A History of Two Centuries rev. ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 340.

[10]In the early 20th century, "dude" had not yet acquired the negative connotations that would later induce dude ranchers to rename their businesses as "guest ranches." In the 1920s and 1930s, "dude" simply referred to someone who paid to stay at a western ranch. Variations included "dudine" or less commonly "dudette" for a female guest. Lawrence R. Borne explains these distinctions in his celebratory history of the industry, Dude Ranching: A Complete History (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 8, 38.

same coin. Fantasy served to make the real more, well, real. Dude ranch buildings and clothing illustrated this mixture. Dude ranch cabins and lodges, for example, even if constructed only last year, had to look as if they had been built by pioneers who had only "native materials" to work with. Nothing marked the authenticity of a western dude ranch like the boast of Red Lodge's Al Croonquist, who assured guests that his new ranch, Camp Senia, was "So wild and rugged...that everything that went into the building of the picturesque log cabin tucked away among the lodge pines had to be packed in on horseback."[11] Here was "Western" as dudes wanted to see it. No matter that modern Westerners in Red Lodge, Cody, and Billings were building bungalows of stucco and wall board; dude ranches had to eschew 20th-century construction materials and machines to capture the 19th-century illusion of a rustic West that visitors demanded. Playing to this illusion, dude ranchers also dressed up in movie-star western outfits—big hats, fancy boots and loud shirts—instead of the blue denim overalls worn by working cowpunchers. As one dude ranch promoter admitted, the costume was necessary: "we have to do a little advertising and have to carry on the heritage of the movies in respect to having a little unreality."[12] "Reality" and "unreality" intertwined in the world of dude ranching where participants spurned modernity and "reality" to create an idealized past—in the service of a modern industry. And, it succeeded tremendously. By 1926, Red Lodge's four dude ranches continued to expand to accommodate the growing demand for Old West living.[13]

Rodeos presented a more fast-paced, thrilling version of the Wild West than did the dude ranch. But, like the dude ranch, the rodeo established itself as a distinctively western form of entertainment that played upon the popular images of the mythic Wild West. Rodeo developed out of the cowboy's work of roping cattle and breaking wild horses, but added some of the glitter of 19th-century Wild West shows.

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[11] Picket-Journal, 8 July 1926, 6.

[12] M.M. Goodsill, "What Dudes Tell the Railroads; Remarks on their Vacations," Minutes of the Fourth Annual Dude Ranchers' Meeting held at Billings, Montana, November 18, 19, 20 1929 (Casper: S.E. Boyer and Co., 1930), 61-75. The Dude Ranchers' Association represented dude ranchers from around Wyoming and Montana; Red Lodge rancher Al Croonquist was a founding member of the organization in 1927 and its first vice-president; he also served as executive secretary for many years. Shirley Zupan and Harry J Owens, Red Lodge: Saga of a Western Area (Billings, Mont: Frontier Press, Inc. 1979), 280.

[13] Picket-Journal, 3 June 1926, 1.

The great western showman, Buffalo Bill Cody himself, took credit for "inventing" the rodeo in 1882 when he presented a show of "Cow-boys' Fun" that included "Bucking and Kicking Ponies" and "Roping, Tying, and Riding the Wild Texas Steers."[14] Cody's show attracted thousands of viewers and soon towns throughout the West were hosting rodeos with events ranging from saddle-bronc riding and bulldogging to trick riding and "Roman racing" (riding two horses by putting one foot on the back of each).[15] Women excelled at these competitions; they rode broncs, raced horses, and attracted viewers fascinated by their skills as well as their cowgirl outfits of bloomers or split skirts.[16] In the early 20th century, more and more towns around the West held rodeos. Small community competitions drew mostly local cowboys and cowgirls, while larger events—the Pendleton Roundup, Calgary Stampede, and Cheyenne Frontier Days—attracted competitors and fans from around the West. The excitement soon moved east. In 1926, Madison Square Garden began holding an annual rodeo, and in 1932 Boston Garden introduced its own rodeo championships.[17] Rodeos gained in popularity because promoters gave American spectators what they wanted: cowboys, cowgirls, horses, and excitement without danger to spectators.

Together, the rodeo and dude ranch adapted Cody's Wild West performances to the modern tourist's West. By reinforcing the popularity of the Wild West among Easterners and showing its potential profitability among Westerners, dude ranchers and rodeo promoters blazed a wide path for others to follow. Many towns tagged along. Not all Westerners, of course, took part in these efforts to redefine

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[14]Kristine Fredericksson, Rodeo: From Buffalo Bill to Big Business (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), 140-41.

[15]Fredericksson, Rodeo, 13.

[16]Women in early 20th-century rodeos frequently came to the sport either from Wild West shows or from work on family ranches. Most contracted for their appearances but also competed against other women in events such as saddle bronc riding and wild heifer riding. Mary Lou LeCompte argues that actor/ rodeo promoter Gene Autry played a key role in shifting women's rodeo performances away from bronco events when he took over the major eastern rodeos in the 1940s. Although women continued to ride broncs in All-Girls rodeos from the 1940s on, in mainstream rodeos they served primarily as "sponsor girls" who carried corporate flags. Mary Lou LeCompte, Cowgirls of the Rodeo: Pioneer Professional Athletes (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 137, 142-43, 114-116. On woman rodeo riders, see also Teresa Jordan, Cowgirls: Women of the American West (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 187-275; Liz Stiffler and Tona Blake, "Fannie Sperry-Steele: Montana's Champion Bronc Rider," Montana the Magazine of Western History 32 (Spring 1982): 44-57; and Doris Loeser, director "I'll Ride that Horse: Montana Women Bronc Riders (Rattatosk Films, n.d.).

[17]Fredericksson, Rodeo, 36.

themselves and the local townscape as "Western." Some refused to participate in the rodeo activities or cooperate in efforts to appear "Western" for tourists. Others, however, especially a business class anxious to cash in on the growing tourist economy, vigorously embraced and encouraged the development of this new, "Old" Western identity. Under the guidance of an enthusiastic middle class and with the help of old-timers eager to share memories and memorabilia, local communities reshaped themselves, at least on the surface, into "Old West" towns.

Cody, Wyoming, which entered the rodeo business several years before Red Lodge, seemed especially adept at this re-creation of Western mythology in a living townscape. Of course, as the former home of Buffalo Bill Cody, the Wyoming town had a natural lead-in into the business of selling the mythic West. In the 1920s, Cody businessmen actually initiated a concerted campaign to turn the entire downtown business area into what was essentially a giant dude ranch complete with all the props and characters that dudes might expect from the Wild West. Businessman Jacob M. Schwoob summarized the Cody efforts at a 1929 meeting of the Dude Ranchers' Association. His message: Give the dudes what they want—the "big hat, the old stage coaches, the relics of the trapper and trader, the Indian things with cowboys and cowgirls at hand and the horsey air of a western town everywhere." When the dudes stepped off the train, Schwoob told his audience, "they should step into a western atmosphere" that embodied the "days of the range, the cattle and the wild life of the real west." Why should the West provide these things? The answer was simple: money.[18] To succeed in the modern world—to tap into the wealth of the Eastern tourist—the West needed to turn itself into a popular version of the Old West.

Much of the local staging of the Old West revolved around money. Most Red Lodge boosters readily admitted that they instituted their first annual rodeo competition in 1930 to keep up with merchants in other towns. They wanted to be as successful at attracting tourists as was Cody. Town leaders jumped on the rodeo bandwagon when they noted the effects of rodeos in other communities, particularly on the summer's biggest holiday, the Fourth of July. In 1927, the Picket-Journal's editor observed that hundreds

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[18]Jacob M. Schwoob, "Relation of the Retailer to the Dude Rancher," Minutes of the Fourth Annual Dude Ranchers' Meeting, 53-59.

of locals had gone to Cody over the Fourth for its annual Stampede festivities,[19] and by 1929 the town was clearly losing holiday business to the "Rodeo exhibitions, stampedes, celebrations and Fourth of July pageants" held in outlying communities from Bridger and Absarokee to Livingston and Cody. On the defensive, the Picket-Journal contended that "No rodeo spirit in the world could compete with the fishing which impels hundreds of local folks to seek the stream bank or the lake shore today."[20] But, by the next year local citizens conceded that rodeo was the wave of the future and laid the groundwork for a Red Lodge rodeo, which the paper optimistically predicted would be "one of the most successful public events held in this community in years."[21]

And, indeed, the rodeo proved to be a great success. Hundreds of visitors flocked to Red Lodge to watch what the local newspaper dubbed a re-creation "of the great West which still lingers in recollections of the romantic and blood-stirring past."[22] The rodeo committee made sure the day was packed full of fun and excitement. After an early morning baseball game, a grand rodeo parade entertained residents and visitors alike with the colorful spectacle of rodeo riders, Indians in "all the variegated regalia of olden days," and dozens of local business men and women dressed up as cowboys and cowgirls. When the parade had looped back up Broadway Avenue for a second time, a steady stream of people followed the "great West" procession up the low bluff overlooking Red Lodge. Some walked, a few rode horses, but most motored up the hill in cars and trucks. They knew where they were heading; the marker was hard to miss. Under a massive 75-foot tall mound of glistening coal slack—topped by a 42-foot flagpole flying the Stars and Stripes—stood a raw, hastily constructed arena with bleacher seats. While most fans climbed up the stands of the brand-new rodeo arena, others simply drove up to their reserved "auto stall" to enjoy the town's "Old West" competition from the comfort of their Chevy or Ford. From there the entire family could watch local cowgirl Alice Greenough take on one of the meanest broncs around, Crow Indians from Pryor compete in relay races, and a stunt plane dropping parachuters into the dirt arena.

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[19]Picket-Journal, 7 July 1927, 1.
[20]Picket-Journal, 4 July 1929, 1.
[21]Picket-Journal, 26 June 1930, 4.
[22]Picket-Journal, 2 July 1931, 1.

Cowboys wrestled steers, got bucked off broncos, and tied up calves. The gorgeous Beartooth Mountains formed a stunning backdrop to the West's "most scenic rodeo grounds" (although those parked right next to the giant slack heap missed out on the view of real mountains). As the competition drew to a close, residents gave a last cheer for their favorite cowboys and headed down to the Labor Temple, thrown open by the local miners' union for post-rodeo music and dancing (cowboy boots optional). Thus ended the first day of what boosters would soon call Red Lodge's "truly inspiring reincarnation of the early days of the old west."[23]

All in all, the event confirmed the appeal of Wild West entertainment. The town almost burst with visitors who filled up not only the local hotels but all the nearby campsites as well. Instead of just passing through town en route to mountain hikes and picnics, cars from Billings paused in town for a day or even two as visitors soaked up the fun of the rodeo, parades, baseball games, and dances. Boosters' chests swelled with pride as regional newspapers congratulated Red Lodge residents on the fine and crowd-pleasing spectacle.[24]

The annual rodeo brought the western imagery made popular by the dude ranches directly and very publicly into the local community. Rodeo boosters found that the Wild West sold well. Although townspeople struggled in the first few years of the depression to finance the event, the rodeo always drew crowds and it quickly became the town's major vehicle for boosting its other tourist attractions, primarily the Beartooth Mountains.[25] By 1937, the rodeo itself gained financial stability and boosters rejoiced at the thousands of visitors swarming to the event each year.[26] The crowds could never get big enough, however, and rodeo promoters continually pushed townspeople to work harder at making Red Lodge more "Western." If a little Wild West got such good results, then a whole bunch must be better, and Red Lodge boosters soon sought to expand the Wild West atmosphere of the two- or three-day rodeo into a summer-long affair. In 1934, the Rodeo Association announced its intention to keep the rodeo at the

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[23]Picket-Journal, 22 June 1933, 1.
[24]Picket-Journal, 17 July 1930, 1
[25]Picket-Journal, 10 July 1930, 1; 21 June 1934, 4; 12 July 1934, 1; 11 July 1936, 1.
[26]Picket-Journal, 6 July 1937, 1; 4 July 1939, 1.

forefront of the town's attention throughout the year, so that "every citizen will do nothing but think rodeo, talk rodeo, eat rodeo, and sleep rodeo next June and July."[27] In that way, residents could convince visitors that the town's summer entertainment really *did* mark a "revival of the early range and roundup days of the cattle country here."[28] Like the Cody businessmen, rodeo boosters tried to create within Red Lodge the kind of western fantasy world they believed tourists would pay for.

As the popularity of the rodeo grew, the Wild West facade of the dude ranch and rodeo expanded to include not only local residents but also the very buildings in which they lived and conducted business. First of all, starting in the 1920s, the Red Lodge townscape gradually acquired a rustic veneer—a smattering of log-cabin houses and rough-wood storefronts meant to convince observers of the town's "western" identity. Not coincidentally, dude rancher Al Croonquist took the lead in establishing this Wild West architecture within the town borders. Employing skilled Finnish craftsmen, Croonquist built several log-cabin-style homes throughout the town, modeled after the dude ranch cabins at his Camp Senia. Croonquist's own Red Lodge residence exemplified the incorporation of rusticity into the contemporary townscape. Perched against the town's western bluff, the Croonquists' winter home boasted a log frame, rock fences, wide verandah, and massive chimneys. Looking like a novelist's description of a cattle baron's abode, the log-cabin house stood in stark contrast to the elaborately decorated Victorian and Queen Anne mansions from the mining-boom era, standing just two blocks away. Croonquist's architecture caught the notice of the Red Lodge town council; when the town built a camp for tourists in the early 1930s (with New Deal funding), the council chose to use this same rustic, log-cabin style of construction, complete with rock fences and chimneys.[29] Gradually, other business and home owners would begin to incorporate Old Western features into local buildings: covering brick walls with cedar shakes or adding a rubble of

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[27]Picket-Journal, 12 July 1934, 1.

[28]Picket-Journal, 29 June 1933, 1.

[29]Beverly Rue Wellington, Red Lodge Landmarks (Red Lodge: The Carbon County News, 1992), 95-97; newspaper clipping, "Camp Senia" collection, n.d., CCHS.

moss rock to a storefront to achieve an appropriately rugged look.[30] To the despair of later historic preservationists, residents masked much of the town's elegant, turn-of-the-century brickwork with the facade of a more popular version of the Old West—wood rather than brick, rustic instead of industrial. They covered the modern with an illusion of the old.

Like the "rugged" cedar shakes over industrial brick, what Westerners actually produced in places like Cody and Red Lodge was not so much a re-creation of the Old West (hardly surprising), but a fascinating melange of myth and modernity, commercialism and nostalgia, salesmanship and pride. For, residents' efforts to turn Red Lodge into a real Western town reflected not just a desire to attract more tourists, but also a deeper need to valorize their own sense of belonging in the American West. To many residents, the Old West meant pride, heritage, and roots; they participated in the local rodeo and parades because they wanted to display and share a vital part of their lives and their history. Westerners adopted and promoted the national mythology of the West because it told a story they wanted to believe.[31] According to the myth, Westerners built America and maintained its democratic institutions by settling and taming a wild land. Such people had to be tough, resourceful, and fiercely independent to conquer the West. Westerners, then, represented the best of a strong, courageous people. That's not a bad way to remember your grandparents, parents, or even yourself. Even recent transplants might cloak themselves with the glory of the myth that only special, hardy people survived in this hard, beautiful, wild place. Celebrating the Old West through rodeos, parades, dude ranches, and rustic storefronts reinforced the glamour of that mythologized past and made people proud of themselves and their place.

This meeting up of local history and economic needs with national mythologies and economics revealed some interesting, vital tensions about the Wild West and concepts of "authenticity"—especially those surrounding the images of the western cowboy and Plains Indian. Locals insisted on a production of Westerness that met the national expectations of the West. If that Westerness could be grounded

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[30]Michels Raffety Architects and Carbon County Historical Preservation Office, Red Lodge Commercial Historic District Revitalization Master Plan (Livingston, Montana: Michels Raffety Architects, 1986), 47-48

somehow in real characters or events, great. But the "authentic" in local Wild West celebrations came increasingly to be defined not on historic or present conditions, but rather against nationally produced images of the West. Like the new, rugged facades on downtown buildings, the quest to celebrate the Wild West tended to cover up the real West while creating a new "authenticity" in its place.

This process of creating authenticity can be seen most clearly in Red Lodge residents' efforts to incorporate "authentic" representatives of cowboys and Indians into the annual rodeo celebration. As residents struggled to "re-create" the Wild West in Red Lodge, they laid bare the complications and contradictions at the heart of the national myths enveloping the most popular regional characters. Determined to people their landscape with "authentic" (mythic) Western figures, local residents consistently rejected working-class or Indian cowpunchers as adequate representatives of the cowboy hero. "Real" cowboys and Indians—whose lives were substantially more complicated (and interesting) than those of, say The Virginian or Tonto—simply would not do. While publicly celebrating, even venerating the romanticized cowboy and Indian, local residents gradually moved away from identification with the flesh-and-blood representatives of these groups, who were too modern and complicated to fit into the simple categories of the Wild West mythology. Instead, local people created paper and neon images of Indians (or their tepees) and invested rancher/capitalists with the mystique of the independent cowherder. They stripped away the complexities of history and modernity to create simple, easily comprehensible versions of these popular figures. As "authenticity" butted up against the myth, local townspeople redefined "authentic" so that it matched the expectations of the mythology.

Perhaps the deepest irony in Red Lodge's embrace of the Wild West lay in its twinned celebration/ rejection of the mythology's most representative figures: the Cowboy and the Indian. Indians, especially, had many modern and historical identities other than the mythic roles of "brave," "chief," and "squaw." Crow Indians, for example—to hit at the heart of western contradictions—were also cowboys. Indeed, some Crow had more legitimate claims to a cowboy past than did most Red Lodge residents. By the time

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31 See, for example, Malcolm S. Mackay's memoir, Cow Range and Hunting Trail (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), the correspondance of Ben Greenough in the Greenough Collection, CCHS, and the "Montana" Vera Buening Oral History, OH 358, MHS.

of Red Lodge's founding in 1887, many of the cowboys in the area actually were Indians—a historical fact not recorded by Frederic Remington or Theodore Roosevelt, who championed the image of the heroic Anglo cowpuncher. Photographs from the 1890s show several Indian cowboys who worked the range around Red Lodge. An 1897 photo of the Dilworth outfit delivering cattle to Miles City included at least two Indian cowboys, each with long braids, but otherwise dressed in "typical" cowboy fashion—long-sleeved shirt, neckerchief, vest, broad-brimmed hat, and six-gun strapped to the hip.[32] Twentieth-century Crows continued that cowboy tradition, raising cattle and horses on the expanses of the reservation. In the 1930s, tribal leader Robert Yellowtail began building up the reservation's cattle herds even further, taking back up to 40,000 acres of leases from white ranchers so that even more Indian cowpunchers could work the land.[33] The Crow also possessed a proud history as rodeo cowboys dating back to 1903 when Sam Bird-in-Ground won a world championship in bronc riding at Miles City. Indian rodeo champions like Bird-in-Ground and Nez Perce cowboy Jackson Sundown had a great influence on Indian youngsters who admired and emulated these heroes. Bird-in-Ground's legacy lived on among his family, including his grandson, Dan Old Elk, who in his early years "went to rodeos, broke horses, and did all the things an Indian boy would do."[34] Cowboys were Indians and Indians were cowboys in the American West.

Red Lodge residents, like other Americans, rejected much of this intertwined Western world of Indian cowboys/ cowboy Indians. In the first few years of the Red Lodge Rodeo, however, some of this fascinating melange of modern western identities pushed through more studied displays of the mythic Wild West. When the rodeo organization was new and its structure more fluid, Indians participated more fully in the entire production and their performances reflected this more complicated western history that Wild West shows and popular movies rarely addressed. At the 1930 rodeo contestants were somewhat scarce

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[32]Photograph Collections, CCHS.

[33]Constance J. Poten, "Robert Yellowtail, the New Warrior," Montana, the Magazine of Western History 39 (Summer 1989): 36-37; Peter Iverson, When Indians Became Cowboys: Native People and Cattle Ranching in the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 63

[34]Iverson, When Indians Became Cowboys, 190-91. Famous Indian rodeo cowboys like Jackson Sundown wore much the same attire as non-Indian cowboys did, right down to the woolly chaps and ostentatious belt buckle; unlike most cowboys, however, Sundown wore long braids tied under his chin.

so Indians participated in a variety of events that two years later they would not take part in. At the rodeo itself, for example, Sampson Bird Hat won not only the Indian relay on 5 July, he also placed second in the Roman Race on the Fourth and won the wild cow milking contest on 6 July. Other Indians placed in the cowboy race, calf roping, and the half-mile free-for-all. Outside the immediate rodeo activity, Indians also assumed important "non-Wild West" roles at the 1930 celebration that would not be repeated in later years. Most prominently, the Indian team from Hardin took on the Red Lodge and Bearcreek baseball teams with Chief Russell Whitebear (a Haskill Institute graduate) providing the dual role of umpire and war dance performer.[35] Further muddying distinctions between "Indian" and non-Indian, an anonymous "Indian boy" won first prize for being the "Best Dressed junior cowboy" at the 1932 parade and two "local boys" received honors as "Toughest dressed junior cowboy" for running through the parade wearing nothing but Indian make-up. This fluidity between all-American sport and Wild West performance, cowboy and Indian costumes, Indian and non-Indian rodeo competition, soon gave way, however, to more clearly set distinctions between Indians in feathered headdresses and white cowboys roping calves. While Red Lodge's rodeo board made no public proclamation about Indian roles and events, there is no evidence of other Indians dressing as cowboys in later parades, non-Indian boys playing at being Indian, or Indian baseball teams playing the local nine. According to local newspaper coverage of the rodeo, Indians did not exist after the first few rodeos, except as participants in specific "Indian" events and as exotic additions to the Fourth of July parade. The boundary-shifting cowboy Indian faded from the rodeo's public identity, replaced by the more familiar imagery of the Plains Indian "warrior" and "squaw."[36] Indeed, rodeo boosters consistently emphasized the point that the visiting Crow Indians would dress "appropriatly" for

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Rowena L. and Gordon D. Alcorn, "Jackson Sundown, Nez Perce Horseman," Montana, the Magazine of Western History 33 (Autumn 1983): 46-48.

[35]Picket-Journal, 3 July 1930, 1.

[36] The Picket-Journal listed the top placers (up to four or five) in all of the rodeo events. After 1931, Indian names did not appear in the lists for the "non-Indian" events, although some may have participated in these categories. Rodeo promoters, though, created specific "Indian races" and other events exclusively for the visiting Crow, in part to assure the Indians that they would be guaranteed a certain amount of the event's prize money. Picket-Journal, 1 June 1937, 1.

the occasion, that is in the "feathered head-dresses," buckskins, and moccasins that would lend "color and vividness to the early picture which this annual event presents."[37]

Indeed, Crow Indians themselves often catered to this more mythic vision of "Indianness." As historian Philip Deloria points out, Indians by the 1920s and 1930s had become quite adept at "imitating non-Indian imitations of Indians."[38] Modern Indians, just like Red Lodge boosters, recognized the economic value of playing to the expectations of tourists. This practice of Indians "playing Indian" actually had a long history dating back to Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West show. Since the late-19th century, American Indians had contracted with showmen of various types to perform as "Indians." These professional performers, called "show Indians" by reservation agents, accepted money and other forms of compensation for acting the role of wild or primitive Indians. Most show Indians took roles in productions like Buffalo Bill's Wild West, playing out the dramatic Indian attack scenes for which the Wild West became famous. Others traveled to exhibitions such as Chicago's 1893 Columbia Exhibition and the 1909 Alaska-Pacific-Yukon exhibition in Seattle; there they set up camps displaying "primitive" Indian cultures. Indians who did not get positions in the grander shows often agreed to attend off-reservation fairs and Fourth of July shows in return for food and other items.[39] Many Indians actually competed for the privilege of performing at such events. As historian L.G. Moses has shown, these shows and celebrations provided Indians, whose cultural practices were actively suppressed by well-meaning reformers and agents, the opportunity to "play" at being Indian—dressing like warriors and performing war dances. For all that

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[37] Picket-Journal 22 June 1933, 8; 11 July 1935, 1; 5 July 1938, 1; 27 June 1939, 1.

[38] Philip Deloria, Playing Indian (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 123.

[39] L.G. Moses, Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 1-8, 205-06. Red Lodge residents had invited show Indians into town for celebrations long before the 1930 rodeo, but on a very irregular basis. In 1909, for example, the town council paid Crow Indians six steers, 50 pounds of coffee, 1000 pounds of sugar and some other items in return for the presence of Chief Plenty Coups and 200 other Indians at the annual Carbon County Fair. These Crow not only competed in special Indian relay races, but also demonstrated sham war dances and camped in "full regalia" to entertain curious visitors. Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 5-6.

their performances perpetuated stereotypes of Indian behavior, show Indians took advantage of Wild West shows and small-town fairs to express part of their cultural identity.[40]

By the 1930s, Crow Indians knew the value of "playing Indian" for tourists in search of the "authentic" Wild West. Crow member Max Big Nose (who once gave a seminar on tourism promotion to the Red Lodge Commercial Club) even established his own Indian camp at Laurel, Montana, about 40 miles north of Red Lodge. There he and his wife demonstrated Indian crafts for curious tourists and let them poke around the couple's buffalo-skin tepees. Dressed in an imposing full-feathered headdress, Big Nose used his own "Indianness" as a source of income. Like Red Lodge rodeo promoters, Big Nose and his followers understood the economic value of reproducing the mythic Wild West for the inquisitive tourists who thought they touched a part of the Old West when they opened the buffalo hide interior of a "genuine" Crow tepee. But, they played the roles that tourists wanted to see. Red Lodge boosters and Max Big Nose alike advanced an image of the traditionally "Indian" Indian, not the boundary shifting figure of the cowboy Indian.

So, when Red Lodge started its rodeo, local Crow Indians had long practice in "acting Indian" for outsiders, and readily contracted with the Red Lodge Rodeo Association to provide these services for a set price. Under the contract with the rodeo association Indians agreed to dress "authentically," ride in the daily rodeo parades, compete in specific Indian events, and also to establish a tepee camp alongside the arena that was essentially an open museum for curious observers. The Crow agreed to play Indian for the Red Lodge crowds. Unfortunately for local rodeo organizers. though, "authentic" Indians were in high demand in the 1930s. The Crow Indians, in fact, became so adept at playing "Indian" for tourists by the end of the decade that Red Lodge boosters began to have trouble luring them into town for the annual rodeo. Local histories have often assumed that Red Lodge leaders chose to stop including Indians in the

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[40]Moses, Wild West Shows, 8. As Moses points out, even in the Wild West shows, where they portrayed a "defeated but colorful people," Indians were never simply victims. "Instead they were portrayed as worthy adversaries, for how else could the showmen-entrepreneurs like Cody validate their prowess in battle?" Disturbed by this glamorization of the "old-time habits and pagan ways," reformers and concerned Indian agents fought against the practice of "show Indians." Moses, Wild West Shows, 131-142, 253-257. See also Jeffrey Steele, "Reduced to Images: American Indians in Nineteenth-Century

celebration, but the opposite, in fact, took place.[41] Year after year in the 1940s, rancher and rodeo promoter Lou Tunnicliff sought to bring Indians into Red Lodge for the rodeo, hoping to add Indian "color" to the show; but the Crow spurned his efforts, preferring to perform at Cody, Laurel, and other communities where, apparently, they received more remuneration for their performances as "authentic" Plains Indians.[42]

Red Lodge rodeo promoters, then, had to look elsewhere to obtain the validating presence of "authentic" Indians for their annual celebration. Discouraged, perhaps, by the Crows' intransigence (and costly demands), townspeople solved the problem, in part, by turning to symbols and images to create an Indian "presence" in Red Lodge. The symbolic Indian—whose authenticity lay in the town's claim to an Indian pre-history—proved a suitable alternative to the capitalistic, expensive Crow. Although not as aesthetically satisfying as actually seeing, and maybe touching, a "real, live Indian," Indian images proved much more convenient and manipulable and town leaders readily adopted them. Residents especially favored the Indian tepee, which by the late 1930s became recognized as the symbol of Red Lodge, "the land of the red tepee."[43] "Red Lodge," as local promoters pointed out, referred to Indian dwellings or tepees. Thus, businesses and organizations began to use the red tepee as shorthand for Red Lodge, putting it on bumper stickers, pennants, and Chamber of Commerce brochures. The town, in this way, secured an "Indian" presence without having to negotiate with the Crows. (Nearby dude ranches, like Richel Lodge, settled for labeling cabins with "Indian Names" or at least, as wrangler Marcella Littlefield put it, "English names that sound Indiany." Guests could have their choice of such cabins as "Mishe Nahma" (King of the Fishes), "Singing Arrow," or "Shadow of the Forest"—all meant to give dudes a feel

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Advertising," in Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, ed. S. Elizabeth Bird (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 46.

[41] See, for example, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 6.

[42] Picket-Journal, 9 May 1935, 1, 8; Carbon County News, 1 May 1947, 1; 24 June 1948, 4; 24 May 1949, 1.

[43] Carbon County News, 11 April 1950, 1.

for being in Indian country without the trouble or expense of actually bringing Indians onto the ranch itself.[44])

Significantly, Red Lodge residents chose to emphasize Indian *objects*—particularly the tepee—rather than images of human Indians. The Red Lodge tepee, as usually depicted in the 1930s and 1940s, stood empty. Although occasionally occupied, by a "buck" and his "squaw" (especially in the 1920s), more often the tepee remained vacant, but with the flap door open as if someone had just left. Some pictures even included smoke rising from the top of the dwelling, signaling that someone (presumably an Indian) was nearby but just out of view.[45] Figures of Indians remained around town—on store signs and advertisements—but the empty tepee developed into the Indian symbol of choice for area merchants. The vacant tepee stood for Red Lodge, the town named after Indian houses not Indians themselves. The name "Red Lodge" meant that Indians had once inhabited the area, *not* that Indians actually still lived in the town. Local people enjoyed the joke of outsiders inquiring after the town's nonexistent American Indian population: "What, No Red Men in Red Lodge?" the Carbon County News teased after one visiting salesman expressed disappointment that the town had no Indian inhabitants.[46] Historical blurbs in local pamphlets in the mid-20th century reinforced the idea of the disappeared Indian. These accounts of the past, meant for visitors passing through, rooted local history in the area's original Indian occupants, but these Indians had simply disappeared, leaving Red Lodge and the symbolic tepee behind. As a 1930s pamphlet phrased it, the Crow moved on to let "the pale faced successors to the red skin ferret out the underground riches in the mountains near Red Lodge and Cooke City."[47] In the frozen image of the abandoned tepee, Red Lodge residents found a satisfying, uncomplicated representation of the Wild West.

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[44]Marcella Littlefield to Mrs. Herbert Richel, 22 March 1931, Richel Lodge Collection, CCHS.

[45]A 1929 Beartooth promotional pamphlet had a cover design with "a view of an Indian buck and squaw beside a 'Red Lodge' tepee pitched on the shore of a mountain lake." Picket-Journal 4 July 1929, 1. The unoccupied tepee showed up on the cover of other brochures, such as a "Beartooth Forest" pamphlet, circa 1930, the "Welcome to Red Lodge," brochure for the 1949 Fraternal Order of Eagles Convention, and "Howdy Folks," Red Lodge Cafe pamphlet, 1949, CCHS.

[46]Carbon County News, 10 May 1959, 8.

[47]"Beartooth Forest." See also "Welcome to Red Lodge," "Howdy Folks," and "Have Fun... Relax in Red Lodge, Montana," 1953 brochure, CCHS.

Now local boosters had to figure out the best way to channel the appropriate imagery of the Wild West's other major figure: the cowboy. Like the Indian, the cowboy represented a complicated, somewhat troublesome figure for rodeo promoters, although on the surface he seemed just as simple as the image of the Plains warrior. Red Lodge promoters could not simply trot out local cowboys to enhance their summer celebration because, well, these real cowboys did not exactly live up to the nationally venerated image of the heroic rider of the plains. The root of the cowboy's problem lay in his one essential contradiction: the mythic cowhand who symbolized American independence was a paid employee, and not very well paid at that. Cowboys were working-class men whose only independence, as historian Robert G. Athearn has pointed out, "was the right to quit at the drop of a hat."[48] "Real" cowboys simply could not assume the heavy cultural weight heaped on them by western mythology. America's most beloved hero, the cowboy presented a paradox that most modern observers simply chose to ignore and which Red Lodge leaders controlled by transferring the cowboys' glamour to other, safer figures.

The "cowboy," of course, was a hero in Red Lodge as he was nationally by the 1930s.[49] People around the world readily recognized the cowboy as the symbol not only of the West, but of America. Squinting into the sun, clad in leather chaps and vest, the figure of the cowboy evoked masculinity, freedom, and love of open lands; he was the man that other men wished they could be. In movies and novels, the cowboy embodied the ideal hero. Owen Wister created the mold in The Virginian (1901), which other writers and film makers tirelessly re-created. Zane Grey's immensely popular books, like Riders of the Purple Sage (1912), painted cowboys as honest, forthright men who recognized right from wrong and commanded the knowledge of the natural world to ensure that right triumphed. In a world where men and women felt themselves increasingly confined by walls, cities, and social structures, the cowboy riding across the sage represented independence and wholesome, simple values. No matter that

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[48]Athearn, The Mythic West, 265-66.

[49]From "Rider of the Purple Sage" (1919) to Tex Ritter's "Hitting the Trail" (1937) and Gene Autry's "Gold Mine in the Sky" (1946), cowboy movies made regular appearances at local movie houses. Local newspapers like the Picket-Journal also ran serialized versions of works by Zane Grey and other Western writers, catering to the demand from readers for these tales of the Wild West. Picket-Journal 12 March 1919, 10; 20 September 1934, 4; 3 August 1937, 5; Carbon County News 29 March 1946.

cowboys were actually paid employees of corporate enterprises, their celebrated aura of freedom was more important than mundane realities. Image overwhelmed the physical cowboy.

The national mythology of the cowboy swept up Westerners as well as Easterners in its powerful embrace. Even "real" cowboys were not immune to the mythic figure of the "Cowboy." Carey McWilliams witnessed first hand the "mimicry and imitation" that made up much of "Western spirit, so-called." He recalled that

> My father had no end of difficulty, as a pioneer cattleman in northwestern Colorado, in keeping his cowboys from playing the role of Cowboy. They spent long hours in the bunkhouse on dull days devouring cheap romances of the West and insisted on dressing and acting and talking like the characters in their favorite romances.[50]

Indeed, many cowboys as early as the 1890s had taken up the profession because they dreamed of living like their heroes from Wild West stories. Inspired by dime novels, 15-year-old Art Wahl headed out to Montana from Norway in 1907 to "become a cowboy and kill Indians." With typical youthful confidence, he did not worry about taking up a strange, new profession because, "I knew all about it through those books."[51] Western townbuilders, too, accepted and reinforced the media-generated image of the romantic cowherder. Indeed, to many Westerners movie cowboys were more "real" than the actual cowpunchers

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[50]Carey McWilliams, "Myths of the West," The North American Review 232 (November 1931): 428. See also, "The Real, Not the Reel, Cowboy," The Literary Digest 22 (20 May 1922): 56. Cowboys, as Richard Slatta points out, were voracious readers. Slatta, Cowboys of the Americas (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 121-22. In one small Texas town, ranchmen and cowboys snapped up every Western novel bookstore owner Eulalia Turner ordered in the early 1930s. When the Western books arrived, Turner reported, "I dropped my cowboys and ranchmen postal cards. In they came, hard, bronzed faces eager, great sombreros held shyly in hand as they fumbled through the books. Their great, coppery hands snatched them up and away they went back to their ranches." Favorites included the rough-riding stories of Zane Grey, Friend, Mann, Hoffman, Gregory, and Celtzer. Ernie Phillips, "Cowboys Like to Read Westerns," The Publishers' Weekly 122 (13 August 1932): 509.

[51]Jo Rainbolt, The Last Cowboy: Twilight Era of the Horseback Cowhand, 1900-1940 (Helena, Montana:
American and World Geographic Publications, Inc., 1992), 25; see also, Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, 9-10. The romantic appeal of cowboying actually hurt those cowpunchers who tried to make a profession of riding the range. According to David E. Lopez, "Cowboys were perhaps the first occupational group to suffer directly from mass media romanticization." Ranchers took advantage of the popularity of cowboying to stifle attempts by ranch hands to strike for higher wages; for every cowboy who went out on strike, three or four eager greenhorns stood ready to take his place as mounted "nobility." David E. Lopez, "Cowboy Strikes and Unions," Labor History 18 (Summer 1977): 327-29.

who worked the region's ranges. When town leaders in Billings (about 60 miles from Red Lodge) chose to commemorate their city's connection to a ranching past with a statue of a "range rider," they chose not a specific local cowboy, or even an anonymous cowhand; their statue actually depicted William S. Hart, the man whose movie characters seemed best to epitomize the heroic, noble cowboy.[52]

But, in local, Western places, the stigma attached to the rough, working cowpuncher of the 1890s never faded away entirely. Movie cowboys like Hart proved much more appealing than their real-life counterparts. Cowboys in the West remained paid employees, seasonal workers whose place in local society was unclear. Some ranch hands stuck to a single ranch for several years, but many others moved on at the end of the season, looking for employment further south when snow closed off the ranges in Montana. These "real," drifting cowboys retained a rough image in places like Red Lodge. In 1937, for example, a Red Lodge judge summed up one unsavory character as "more or less of the cowpuncher type, the Western type, that sometimes gets boisterous or maybe even mean."[53] The cowboy was a tough, potentially dangerous character. Cowboys, indeed, may have cultivated some of that "boisterous" image. McWilliams blamed much of the wild antics of his father's cowpunchers on their desire to imitate the free ways of Western romance heroes. Such behavior, however, even in the 1930s, still played better in fiction than in a "civilized" community. Boosters and residents valorized the cowboy-hero of the movies and paperbacks—fictional figures brought to life mostly by Easterners—but remained suspicious of the rootless drifter of the cattle range.

Fortunately, however, Westerners soon learned how to create appealing, local representatives of the "authentic" (mythic) cowboy by the 1920s and 1930s. Westerners created their own images of authentic Westerness. Western dude ranches and rodeos, especially, worked to build up the romanticized, Hollywood vision of the cowboy. Dude wranglers, first of all, helped to perpetuate the image of cowboys as clean, polite, helpful figures—romantic in the way of summer vacation heroes. "Wranglers," or horse handlers, helped dude ranch guests live out their fantasies of life in the Old West. Although some purists

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[52]Majestic Montana: Land of Mountains, Lakes and Streams - Yellowstone and Glacier National Park (Billings: Reporter Printing and Supply Co., circa 1940), n.p., CCHS.

would insist that wranglers were not "cowboys" because they did not work cattle, dude wranglers readily assumed the aura and costume of the cowboy, helping to tie the dude ranch to the romance of Hollywood and fictional Westerns. These "cowboys" soon found out that being courteous to guests, telling then yarns around the campfire, or even learning to play the guitar, would enhance both their job security and their pay. They were a far cry from the rough and dirty working-class hooligans who had terrorized decent Red Lodge residents in the early 1890s. A whole romance eventually developed around the cowboy wranglers at dude ranches. They became heroes in popular novels like Mary Roberts Rinehart's Lost Ecstasy, Caroline Lockhart's The Dude Wrangler, and Gene Hoopes' books on Jim Dawson, a former cowhand and army scout turned wrangler. According to historian Lawrence R. Borne, Dawson epitomized the ideal of the dude ranch wrangler: "He was an expert horseman, cook, guitar player, singer, and storyteller; he possessed excellent health, loved wide open spaces and disliked cities, was a crack shot with a pistol, and, of course, was exceedingly attractive to women."[54]

Rodeo riders, even more than the dude wrangler, combined the worlds of the "real" cowhands with the imagery of the popular cowboy hero. Red Lodge's first and most famous rodeo cowboys and cowgirls, the "Riding Greenoughs," grew up working cattle and horses, but they learned how to dress from movies and Wild West shows. Marge, Alice, Turk, and Bill Greenough, like other rodeo riders, had to do more than just stay on a bucking horse; they had to cater to a public that expected to be entertained. Anxious to draw an interested, paying audience, rodeo riders and promoters played with the same extravagant western imagery that had made Buffalo Bill's Wild West so popular. Cowgirls, especially, cultivated a fanciful western image in the eastern cities. In the 1930s, rodeo women relied on contract work. Rodeos hired them to perform trick-riding stunts and compete on broncing horses and steers. As Mary Lou LeCompte has pointed out, women quickly recognized that flashy, exotic outfits would get them more contracts. Cowgirls like Marge and Alice Greenough found sewing deftness almost as vital to their success as their roping and riding skills. Traveling with their sewing machines, these women whipped

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[53]State of Montana v. Herbert Moon (1937), Carbon County District Court Records (CCDC), Criminal Records.

[54]Borne, Dude Ranching, 110-111.

up glamorous costumes with billowing silk sleeves and flowing neckerchiefs to emphasize their femininity along with their western identity.[55] Like Little Annie Oakely of the Wild West show and Calamity Jane of Edward L. Wheeler's Deadwood Dick series, women riders made exotic "Western" clothing a vital part of their personas.

The worlds of Hollywood and rodeo had actually intertwined for years by the time Red Lodge held its first rodeo Rodeo riders not only dressed like movie cowboys, they also played cowboys and cowgirls in many of the early Western movies. Turk and Alice Greenough, for example, both actively sought work in Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s. Alice played some small parts in a variety of movies, including *The Californians* in 1937. Her Hollywood work also included teaching Dale Evans, Roy Roger's new cowgirl love interest, how to ride. The most famous cowgirl in movies, as Alice soon found out, had never even been on a horse.[56] Alice's brother, Turk, a world-champion saddle-bronc rider, also got a few small parts in films, mostly performing stunts. In movies like John Wayne's *Angel and the Badman*, Turk played any number of good and bad guys shooting at each other and falling off horses in countless chase scenes.[57] Turk made an even bigger splash in the non-rodeo entertainment world through his 1942 marriage to fan-dancer Sally Rand, whose nude "bubble dance" had been the sensation of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair.[58] Turk's marriage captivated Red Lodge residents, some of whom kept scrapbooks of the couple's courtship and wedding, recording every event in their public life.[59] Like most "fairy tale" marriages, this one lasted only briefly, but long enough to reflect the glamour associated with top rodeo riders in the 1940s. Though rooted in the world of real ranch work, these local cowboys and cowgirls did

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[55]LeCompte, Cowgirls of the Rodeo, 33-336; Picket-Journal 14 December 1937, 3. For photographs of the dashing outfits of woman performers in Wild West shows in the early 20th century, see "Daring Beautiful Western Girls: Sweethearts of the Wild West Shows," American West 22 (July/August 1985): 44-48.

[56]Jordan, Cowgirls, 214-15.

[57]Michael Amundsen, director, Take Willy With 'Ya: The Ridin' Greenoughs and the Golden Age of Rodeo (Snowflake, Arizona: Rodeo Video, Inc., 1989).

[58]Amundsen, Take Willy With 'Ya; Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 211-212; David L. Cohn, A History of American Morals and Manners as Seen through the Sears, Roebuck Catalogs, 1905 to the Present (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1940), 398-99.

[59]Several of these scrapbooks are housed at the Carbon County Historical Society.

their part to glamorize the image of the rodeo rider and create the rodeo cowboy as one of the most popular local versions of the nation's beloved hero.

The alluring call of the rodeo, however, took these performing cowboys and cowgirls away from the very West that the rodeo seemed to celebrate. Most rodeo performers in these early days, like the Greenoughs, came out of ranching families, but their profession took them out on the road for much of the year; they became professional wanderers. Except for the very top riders, few cowboys and cowgirls made much money on the rodeo circuit, which kept performers continually on the move in the hopes of earning a stake at the next show down the road. Even top money makers like the Greenoughs spent much of the year living out of trailers, traveling around the nation trying to catch as many rodeos as possible. And, after so many years away, many of these riders never settled back into the small-town life of places like Red Lodge. Marge and Alice Greenough frequently visited Red Lodge, but they eventually chose to live permanently in Arizona; Turk decided to retire in Nevada. Local residents claimed these exciting, attractive rodeo riders as their own, but such performers no longer seemed completely rooted in Red Lodge or the real cowboy's ranching life.

So, although the glamorous rodeo cowboys and wranglers assumed the role of "authentic" cowhands for the touring public, Westerners, themselves, had to look elsewhere for a satisfying representative of the golden days of the Old West. They found this figure in the person of the established rancher, the man with ties to the free and easy ways of the cowboy, but with solid roots in the national ideals of capitalism and private property. These were men like Ben Greenough and Malcolm Mackay, stable scions of the local community who also happened to be living representatives of the town's ranching and cowboy history.

Ranchers like Greenough and Mackay, more than wranglers or rodeo riders, reconciled the contradictory symbolism of the American cowboy. Ranchers, whether they worked cattle or dudes, combined the cowboy's outdoor work—the "freedom" of the range—with the responsibilities and independence of capitalistic land ownership. An employer rather than an employee, the rancher enjoyed, theoretically, the independence that Thomas Jefferson had believed to be the basis of a democratic society (although debts owed to local banks often compromised that vaunted independence). With most of the

physical glamour of the cowboy—horse, hat, boots, jeans, belt buckle—the rancher added steadiness and responsibility. As Robert G. Athearn has pointed out, the rancher was actually much more appealing to most Americans than the cowboy. If one looks closely, at the Marlboro Man, the most ubiquitous "cowboy" in mass media in the late 20th century, Athearn argues, one will notice "that in most of these advertisements he is no mere cowpoke. He is a stockman, a mature American with the proper wrinkles around his eyes to prove that he has been out of doors, but his dress is that of an owner, not of an employee—a businessman with roots, with property; and he is not a drifter. He is solid and conservative; and beyond all doubt he votes the straight Republican ticket."[60] Even cleaned up and presentable, the cowboy remained a wage laborer or an athlete competing for prize money. In the 20th century, local ranchers took on the role of the settled cowboy, the organizer who stayed in one place and assumed responsibility for making sure everything worked; he was the "sticker" who invested his time, money, and heart in the community; he was the "real" cowboy.[61]

And, local ranchers actually did much to promote this connection between themselves and the romantic imagery of the cowboy and the Old West. Enthusiastic about using the Red Lodge rodeo as a celebration of Wild West imagery, Mackay and Greenough assumed leading roles in the creation and support of the local production. Mackay served as the first president of the Red Lodge Rodeo Association and donated hundreds of dollars to the event. Greenough, meanwhile, channeled his energies into promoting the rodeo: marching in regional parades with a string of packhorses bearing signs and placards reminding people to attend Red Lodge's big celebration. Neither profited much from the transference of the Old West into the modern town, but both remained convinced that this kind of living history played a vital role in maintaining this proud heritage not only for Red Lodge but for the entire country. These two former cowboys did not want the nation to forget what the Old West stood for: freedom, democracy,

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[60]Athearn, The Mythic West, 269.

[61]Frederick Errington, "The Rock Creek Rodeo: Excess and Constraint in Men's Lives," American Ethnologist 17 (September 1990): 629.

opportunity.[62] The Old West—and the cowboy/rancher—represented the best of America, the most prized values of an energetic, masculine nation.

Significantly, Mackay and Greenough represented two different types of cowboys who came out West in the late 19th century—one the heir to a huge Eastern fortune, the other an impoverished orphan. Both, however, were determined to share their Old West memories, to make sure the younger generation would not forget, as Mackay put it, "the folks that 'fought it through.'"[63] Their stories of life on the range provided the kind of grounding local civic leaders needed for their annual re-creation of the Wild West. The presence of these two old cowpunchers validated Red Lodge's claims to a cowboy heritage. Although their lives as Carbon County ranchers could not have been more different, Greenough and Mackay shared a love of the grand mythology of the cowboy West, a mythology that they wrapped around their own tales of ranching and cowpunching in the early days of Carbon County. Together they not only strengthened local ties to the Old West, they also helped to transfer the symbolism of the mythic cowboy from other representative figures into the person of the stable, responsible rancher.

Of all the "pioneer" cowboys still in Red Lodge in the 1930s, Ben Greenough did the most to keep alive the Old West "spirit." Greenough, the bearded and grizzled patriarch of his rodeoing family, reveled in his role of old-time rancher and pioneer, and he possessed all the stories, connections, and memorabilia to support his position as Red Lodge's most popular old cowpuncher. An orphaned newspaper boy from New York City, Ben moved to Montana in 1886 to work as a cowboy and eventually settled down on a homestead. While working the range at the end of the 19th century, Greenough ran into such well-known figures as Calamity Jane and Liver-Eating Johnson—encounters that would later establish his claims to represent the real Old West. A teetotaler who swore to whip any of his kids who took up drinking or smoking, Greenough had no part with the antics of wild cowhands. Instead

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[62]Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, vii.

[63]Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, vii.

Greenough struggled his whole life to hang onto the ranch he established at the foot of the Beartooths and on which he and his wife, Myrtle, raised their eight children.[64]

By the 1930s, though, with four of his offspring established as rodeo luminaries, Ben had some time to enjoy his local notoriety as a remnant of the Wild West. He did all he could to keep his vision of that West alive in the community, playing the role of "cowboy" much as area Crows played "Indian" at annual rodeo. With his full beard and wide-brimmed hat, Ben *looked* like an old-time cowhand and he relished the nickname of "Packsaddle Ben," which he had acquired from Liver-Eating Johnson in the 1880s. He recounted lively stories of all-night horse rides, fleeing from Indian warriors, and working for Calamity Jane—tales worn smooth with repeated telling, but which continued to captivate audiences to the end of his life.[65] An active member in several regional pioneer and cowboy associations, in 1939 Greenough was elected "wagon boss" at the organizational meeting in Billings of the Montana-Wyoming Cowboys' Association of the '80s and '90s. Greenough also organized a local Carbon County pioneer society with membership criteria that a person had arrived in the County by 1900 and lived most of his or her life in the area.[66] Packsaddle Ben was a permanent feature not only at Red Lodge rodeo parades but also at Billings's annual rodeo and "Go West Days." Parade watchers could count on seeing Greenough leading a team of mules in these events, cheerfully conversing with the crowd in between cussing at his animals. Greenough also welcomed visitors into his log-cabin home, eagerly showing off his growing collection of Western relics—Indian arrowheads, old tools, plows, guns. An appealing, friendly old coot, Packsaddle Ben charmed New York City reporters when he visited his children at the Madison Square Garden rodeo in 1939. The New York World-Telegram followed his visit to his old family home, his participation in the rodeo parades, and the hit he made at a local children's hospital, where he regaled

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[64]Amundsen, Take Willy With 'Ya; Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 208-209.

[65]C.E. Thompson, the interviewer and compiler of a WPA project on the regional cattle industry, included several of Greenough's stories in his collection. On the first story, Thompson noted, "an excellent source, should get more if possible." WPA Writers' Program Records, Reel 15: "Western Range Cattle Industry Study," MF 250, MHS. Also, Picket-Journal, 28 November 1939, 1; Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 208-09.

[66]Carbon County News, 13 July 1948, 1.

young patients with stories of the wild characters of the Old West.[67] A local radio station, enchanted by the colorful old Westerner, even offered to make him a permanent guest on one of its shows.[68] New Yorkers, apparently, liked the interpretation of the Old West cowboy that Packsaddle Ben brought to the East. Like his stories of the Wild West, Greenough's portrayal of the old-time cowhand grew ever smoother and more appealing the more he played it out for public consumption.

If Ben Greenough personified the solid, gruff working-class cowpuncher turned small rancher, then Malcolm Mackay typified the fun-seeking, noble cowboy of the vanishing range turned grand rancher and scion of elite western society. Son of a prominent Wall Street banker, young Mackay headed out West in the late 1890s, arriving in Red Lodge in 1901. He was one of hundreds of young adventurers from the East, often wealthy men from established families who came west to take part in the "wild, free life" of the vanishing cattle frontier.[69] Texas cowpuncher Teddy "Blue" Abbott recalled that the Montana range was crawling with this type by the 1890s—young men seeking to live out the western adventure stories of Theodore Roosevelt and Frederic Remington.[70] And Mackay found in the West what he had expected to find. Buffered by money, connections, and respectability, Mackay led a carefree life of hunting big game and riding the range, where he met "picturesque" folk and lived through the type of ranch adventures that his friend Charlie Russell, the "Cowboy Artist," later captured in sketches and paintings.[71] He delighted in witnessing "Western" events such as a bank robbery and shoot-out in Red Lodge, a dramatic episode which "added a zest and charm to things for us, for we were full of longing for real adventure in any of the western molds."[72] But although Mackay relished the wild life of the western range, he was not wild himself; he readily settled into the comfortable life of rancher and big game hunter

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[67] Picket-Journal, 7 November 1939, 8.

[68] Greenough's enjoyment in playing this role of Wild West cowboy is clear in his letters from New York to his wife Myrtle, who remained at the family ranch just outside of Red Lodge. See, for example, Ben Greenough to Myrtle Greenough, 5 October 1939; 9 October 1939; 19 October 1939. Greenough Collection, CCHS.

[69] Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, vi.

[70] E.C. Abbott and Helena Huntington Smith, We Pointed Them North: Recollections of a Cowpuncher (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939, 1989), 191.

[71] Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, 28.

once he had enough fun playing cowboy. With money inherited from his family, Mackay eventually established one of the largest ranches in Carbon County, maintained a winter residence in New Jersey, and served as president of the Red Lodge Rodeo Association in the 1930s.

With their wealth and gentility, "gentleman cowpunchers" like Mackay fit readily into Owen Wister's romanticized image of The Virginian, the aristocrat of the prairies. And, they had the money and time to cultivate that imagery. Mackay embedded his vision of the West in his 1925 memoir, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, a first-hand account of his cowboy adventures. Written to widen Americans' "conception of the cattle country and enhance...respect for the folks that 'fought it through,'" the book recalled a West of hard-working women, rugged men, and enough colorful characters to provide sidekicks for dozens of B-Western heroes. Mackay's cowboy (himself) lived a life filled with "happiness and hardihood [and] a great love for the open places, and the folks I met there."[73] Mackay's first-hand account of Red Lodge's cowboy heritage never strayed very far from the established mythology of the heroic cattle frontier. Charlie Russell even illustrated Mackay's book, grounding the work even more fully in the popular Wild West.[74]

Mackay's and Greenough's vision of the ranching heritage of Carbon County, so similar to that described by Theodore Roosevelt and his compatriots, became an important source for the developing Western pageant of the Red Lodge rodeo in the 1930s when the demands of the tourism industry called for the resuscitation of the cowboy as hero. Ranchers like Greenough and Mackay self-consciously created themselves not only as ranchers but as successful and romantic cowboys. But, they were the cowboys who had become property owners and respected members of the community. Secure in their positions, both men could afford to embellish the exploits of their youth and use their connections to the cattle frontier to establish their authenticity as representatives of the Old or Wild West. And through these men—living representatives of the golden years of the West—Red Lodge residents laid claim to a Wild

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[72]Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, 10.

[73]Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail, vii..

[74]Frederic G. Renner, ed,. Paper Talk: Illustrated Letters of Charles M. Russell (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art), 115.

West past that they actively tried to stage within the town itself as a way to attract and please tourists. Mackay donated money and time to making the Red Lodge rodeo a success, and in so doing established the idea that area ranchers should take a lead in creating and maintaining this annual event. Greenough's own children grew into top-flight rodeo riders who carried old Ben's name around the country and brought the glamour of the modern rodeo into Red Lodge on an annual basis. Both men served to tie Red Lodge into an idealized vision of the old-time cowboy, who was rapidly becoming the symbol of choice for town boosters.

Unfortunately, though, such "authentic" representatives of the Old West were few and far between by the 1930s. Red Lodge had many more miners, clerks, and housewives than it had rancher/cowpunchers. Ranchers like Mackay and Greenough provided vital validation of the town's ranching heritage and they developed into convenient receptacles of the nation's reverence for cowboys. But tourists wanted to see more than just two old men, no matter how colorful and authentic they might be.

Red Lodge boosters valued the participation of local ranchers in the annual Western celebration, but they needed much, much more obvious Westerness around town during this summer celebration.[75] Even with Mackay, Greenough, dude wranglers, and rodeo riders lending their efforts toward staging the Wild West in Red Lodge, boosters quickly recognized that these "real" cowboys simply could not contribute the necessary mass of cowboyness needed to project the image of Red Lodge as a convincingly Wild West town. All the complicated unraveling of layers of the "authentic" cowboy aside, the town simply needed more *visible* cowboys in order to please the paying tourists. But, where was this town of immigrant miners and shopkeepers going to find more cowboys? The solution, which boosters pounced upon quickly, was to turn Red Lodge's industrial and white-collar workers into convincingly "western" Westerners (i.e. cowboys and cowgirls) by dressing them up in appropriately western clothing. To be convincingly western, the entire town would have to dress up like cowboys and cowgirls.

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[75] Almost every summer rodeo promoters started pleading with residents to "dress western" to make Red Lodge look more appropriately western for the tourists. See, for example, Picket-Journal, 9 July 1931, 1;

So, in the 1930s, Red Lodge civic leaders initiated a strident, persistent campaign to cajole, browbeat, and shame residents into looking like genuine cowboys. Ironically, like much else about Red Lodge's "re-creation" of the authentic Wild West, this "cowboy" fashion that boosters began to press upon residents had much of its roots in eastern perceptions of western clothing. Indeed, eastern influence on western-style clothing dated back at least to the turn of the century. Several sources suggest that cowpunchers around the West self-consciously modeled themselves after the cowboys from popular fiction and movies. Even the well-known cowboy attire borrowed liberally from a version of American cowboy garb created by showmen, actors, and writers. Cowboy aficionados have made much of the practicality of "cowboy" clothes, but, according to Laurel Wilson, photographs of cowboys actually at work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries showed only occasional use of such "typical" cowboy attire as chaps, bandannas, and revolvers. She argues that cowboys learned to emphasize certain distinctive types of clothing, modeling themselves after descriptions of cowboys in dime novels and on the cowboy performers in Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West shows. An astute showman, Cody gave his audiences what they wanted to see—exaggerated woolly chaps, guns, and big neckerchiefs that identified the Wild West cowboy of the popular imagination. In their formal pictures, working cowpunchers drew upon these popular images of the cowboy, often tricking themselves out in their best and finest, deliberately adorning themselves with holstered guns, bandannas, chaps, big hats, and other attire readily recognized as "cowboy" wear by Americans.[76] For many cowpunchers, these clothes become part of a costume, a way to set themselves off from other, lesser workers. Early-20th-century cowboy actors such as Tom Mix, who wore finely tooled boots, ostentatious hats, and elaborate vests both on and off screen, made this look even more famous.[77] Mix and rodeo riders who dressed to please the crowds, established the flashy "western" look that Easterners expected to see from all Westerners. The cowboys' fancy-dress outfits

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28 March 1935, 1, 8; 16 April 1936, 1; Carbon County News, 6 June 1941, 1; 20 June 1946, 1; 10 June 1948, 1; 1 July 1948, 8..

[76] Laurel Wilson, "The American Cowboy: Development of the Mythic Image," Dress in American Culture, Patricia A. Cunningham and Susan Voso Lab, eds. (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993), 80-93.

[77] Richard W. Etulain, "Changing Images: The Cowboy in Western Films," Colorado Heritage 1 (1981): 40.

entered the national and regional imagination as an identifying feature of "Westerness" that Westerners themselves would eventually begin to adopt as their own.

The "Western" fashion adopted by Westerners in the 1930s and 1940s was even refiltered through eastern tourists and fashion houses before landing on the heads, feet, and torsos of local Westerners. Many items on the approved list of "western" clothing checked off by rodeo boosters—"Loud shirts, handkerchiefs, 10 gallon hats, cowboy jeans, leather jackets and cowboy shoes"[78]—were the same items that Easterners wore during their stays at dude ranches. Dude ranchers, indeed, had done much to convince Americans that true Westerners had to dress in a certain way. The process began simply enough. Dude ranchers advised guests to bring comfortable, warm clothing—"outing togs"—with them to the West.[79] What started out as sensible "outing" togs and "democratic" dressing down, however, quickly became a fashion trend of its own, a popular mixture of romanticized western clothing and eastern chic. Dude ranchers' own fancy, dress-up duds (the bit of "unreality" indulged in for visitors) set the tone. By the early 1930s, dude ranch guests who shucked fashionable city clothes for the trip out West agonized over choosing the most fashionable and attractive dude clothes. Anxious to achieve the right western "look," Easterners found advice in magazines like Vogue, which in 1936 compiled a list of appropriate clothes for dude ranching that ran from silk neckerchiefs to practical underwear. Although recommending that dudes buy some of the "logical and necessary" attire from merchants in western towns, Vogue also listed New York City stores that carried dude ranch clothing in a "better selection of colors" than was available in the less-refined West.[80] The magazine offered such invaluable tips as to avoid shirts "with the inside white collar band; you wear them with the neck open, and it's unsightly." Color also was important: "Clear yellows, blues, and white are especially handsome with jeans," Vogue's fashion advisers

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[78]Carbon County News, 6 June 1941, 1.

[79]At Camp Sawtooth, F.I. Johnson (a Red Lodge pharmacist who presumably understood the dangers of hypothermia) warned dudes to bring plenty of wool clothing so they could enjoy trail rides, fishing, and hiking in comfort. "Remember," he told guests, "we are one and five-eighths miles above sea-level. There are no formalities at camp and outing togs are the rule." To Easterners, western clothes were democratic and liberating, and ranchers emphasized this connection. As Al Croonquist assured his guests at Camp Senia: "There are no formalities or conventionalities. You don your boots, breeches and a flannel shirt, fill your lungs with pure mountain air; and all out doors is yours." Picket-Journal, 17 June 1926, 2-3.

decreed, but "Pastels look feeble." The result, considered dressing like "the local cowboys" by Vogue, often astounded Westerners. One unsympathetic Red Lodge high school student scoffed that "A dude is first recognized by his elaborate costume, very unsubstantial for the rugged life on a Western ranch."[81] But, not everyone laughed. Where Vogue and Hollywood met at the western dude ranch there sprang a ready market for a new style of western clothing that Westerners themselves would eventually learn to wear.[82]

Town promoters, who understood that eastern tourists expected to see Westerners dressed like cowboys, worked with merchants to sell these "western" outfits to townspeople. Latching onto Schwoob's advice and the Cody experiment with western appearances, Red Lodge boosters tried almost desperately to get local residents to look like real "Westerners"—to make them over into fantasy cowboys. For residents were simply too disappointingly modern to suit the tastes of visitors. One "prominent visitor" in 1931 expressed dismay that instead of the "skirts and trousers, the spurs and boots, the hats and kerchiefs, the jackets and riding habiliments which distinguished the old day" he confronted "the most incongruous sight [of] the presence of parlor pajamas in the grandstand and on the streets." Anxious to please the paying tourists, the local newspaper editor warned residents that unless everyone worked "to restore here the atmosphere of the carefree west of a generation ago, without that atmosphere the annual western entertainment will wither and die."[83] Parade organizers routinely gave prizes for "best-dressed" cowboys and cowgirls and sometimes handed out free rodeo passes to children who rode horses up to the rodeo gates. In 1935, the Rodeo Board even formed a specific committee on "cowboy regalia" to

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[80]"Dressing the Dude," Vogue 87 (1 May 1936): 140-41.

[81]Helena Warila, "A Dude's Idea of the West," Carbon Review 5 (May 1934): 15.

[82] See, for example, Jacob M. Schwoob's 1929 address, "Relation of the Retailer to the Dude Rancher." Westerners, Schwoob contended, needed to cater to dudes. Schwoob praised Cody, Wyoming merchants who let themselves be "guided by the dude rancher in the selection of his stocks" so they would appeal to eastern visitors. Nothing, he concluded, was more "pitiful than to see the old western storekeeper, who won't change his methods," 55, 59.

[83]Picket-Journal, 9 July 1931, 1. Rodeo promoters in other areas have also regularly urged spectators to "get into the spirit" of the festivities by wearing western-style clothing. In the 1970s, for example, Calgary Stampede officials gave prizes to visitors for "dressing Western." Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence, Rodeo: An Anthropologist Looks at the Wild and the Tame (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 93.

encourage western-style dress during the summer.[84] This committee sponsored not only a "kangaroo court" to fine those not dressed western during the summer months,[85] but also beard-growing contests to encourage businessmen to add a grizzled look to their faces.[86] Pressed by the need to generate a real Wild West atmosphere about Red Lodge, boosters set out on a campaign to make everyone in town dress like a "Westerner" from a Hollywood movie or maybe an Eastern dude loafing around at Camp Senia.

Westerners, however, did not eagerly adopt this "western" look for themselves. Modern lifestyles, poverty, or sheer reluctance to dress up for boosters led many residents to resist the call to cowboy clothing. While some Red Lodge locals eagerly participated in the parades and took home trophies for best-dressed something, others attended the rodeo in their most stylish attire or in the clothes their parents got for them from the town's relief office.[87] Into the 1940s, the chair of the Rodeo Regalia Committee continued to plead with residents to wear "western duds" because "Tourists coming into Red Lodge expect to see a certain amount of western atmosphere in keeping with the true western setting of Red Lodge."[88] As a committee member explained, visitors "from the east expect to see western garb, and it is not a policy of the city to disappoint their guests...."[89] Residents needed to co-operate so that the town would be "attractive to tourists."[90] By 1948, though, organizers who urged residents to "show our visitors a real western time in a true western atmosphere" were content if people would wear only *one* article of western regalia, "either a scarf, boots, shirt, or frontier pants."[91] Although some townspeople plunged into the rodeo's Wild West celebration with gusto, others resisted boosters' concerted efforts to transform them into "Westerners."

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[84]Picket-Journal, 28 March 1935, 1, 8.

[85]Carbon County News, 10 June 1948, 1.

[86]Picket-Journal, 16 April 1936. Bernard DeVoto lamented at this kind of civic pressure to make Westerners look the way the Chamber of Commerce wanted them to look. The beard grower, he groused, "is just a coerced advertiser." DeVoto, "The Anxious West," Harper's Magazine 193 (December 1946): 485.

[87]Oral History of Tony and Shirley Zupan, 35, OH 1479, MHS.

[88]Carbon County News, 6 June 1941, 1.

[89]Carbon County News, 1 July 1948, 8.

[90]Carbon County News, 20 June 1946, 1.

Gradually, however, many residents adopted at least some of the boosters' suggestions about dressing Western. Business owners, especially members of the Chamber of Commerce who were desperate to promote the rodeo, embraced the effort to make townspeople look more like cowboys. These middle-class men and women ran the kangaroo court and participated most actively in the various beard-growing and costume contests. They became the most visibly "cowboy" of the town's residents. Ironically, then, by the 1930s and 1940s, the imagery of the cowboy in Red Lodge was transferred from the dangerous, transient cowhands of the 1890s to not only established ranchers but also to the respectable, bourgeois elements of the little coal town. The settled proprietors of the mid-20th century—townspeople and ranchers alike—appropriated the (adapted) clothing and proud wildness of the formerly detested cowpuncher.

This incongruous appropriation of cowboy imagery by bourgeois Westerners produced, of course, some fascinating inconsistencies that residents smoothed over as well as they could. Most significantly, the settled proprietors of downtown business houses had to find ways to mix the "wildness" of the Wild West with their own comfortable stability and desire for modern conveniences. Most residents, and tourists, wanted the pleasures of the rustic West but without the messiness, odor, inconvenience, and even danger that had marked the Old West. For, much as Westerners might want to recapture the Old West—for themselves as much as for tourists—no one really wanted to (or ever did) go *back* to the "good old days." It took a week or so, after all, (and usually a heavy rain) to clean all the horse manure off the main street after a good-sized rodeo parade. And who really wanted *real* hooligans firing off weapons within the town limits? Town leaders had to balance their wild Westerness with their own place within the established order. A 1926 Radiola advertisement illustrated this American attitude toward wildness and comfort beautifully. The advertisement shows a man stretched out against a fallen log, before a crackling campfire in a beautiful Western location; alone in this wild place, he is comforted by the presence of his Radiola radio—conveniently small enough to carry anywhere, even into the woods, and "sealed against summer heat and moisture." "There is no loneliness where there is a Radiola," the

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[91]Carbon County News, 10 June 1948, 1.

manufacturers assured a nation poised to head into the wilds for summer camping trips.[92] The forest without the radio, this ad suggests, was boring, inconvenient, old-fashioned. The West, like the woods, needed a boost of modernity to make it come alive, to make it interesting and appealing to outsiders and locals alike. What residents and visitors wanted was an appealing staging of the mythic West in at least some of its splendor and glory, but without sacrificing the modern conveniences and comforts upon which the new "leisure class" depended. They wanted the "Wild West" without any real "wild" in it.

Local ambivalence about "wildness" in the modern West highlighted the tension between myth and modernity in the presentation of the Wild West within the community. "Wildness" proved a double-edge sword to Red Lodge residents in the 1920s and 1930s. Unlike the 1890s, when boosters feared the very real wildness that surrounded Red Lodge, there was not much wild about the town by the early 20th century. But, once wildness was controlled, it became appealing. So, instead of reassuring newcomers and visitors that the West was "safe," local people actually began to emphasize its dangers, highlighting any possible wildness. In 1934 a young Red Lodge student, Helena Warila, described the delight dude ranch wranglers took in "razzing" guests, relating wild tales that only confirmed the Easterners' "already distorted ideas of massacres, Indian raids, and outlaws." Instead of shrinking from such stories of danger, however, the dude drank it all in gleefully. "He is so elated at actually being in the midst of this wilderness," Warila related, "that he goes about with mouth open, eyes staring, soaking up all the preposterous stories told him."[93]

Aware of the appeal of wildness in the modern age, rodeo boosters worked even harder than local teenagers to convince outsiders that the West remained wild enough to be exciting. Local businessmen and women, for example, sought to convince outsiders of the "wildness" of Red Lodge's Western celebration through a raucous publicity campaign. In the mid-1930s, boosters organized car caravans that carried "lusty cowboys and cowgirls" through the region to advertise the Red Lodge show. By letting off "pistol shots and cowboy shouts," Red Lodge civic leaders disguised as "A grizzled band of howling

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[92]Advertisement for RCA Radiola in The Literary Digest 89 (29 May 1926): 1.
[93]Warila, "A Dude's Idea of the West," 15.

westerners" tried to create a feeling of wildness, if not quite danger, around the annual rodeo.[94] And the rodeo itself became not just an afternoon's entertainment, but a life-or-death struggle between man and beast. Instead of Indians, modern cowboys battled animals. As the Picket-Journal announced breathlessly, Turk Greenough and the other riders "engaged in [a] struggle with the outlaw horses,"[95] pitting "their strength and skill against some of the toughest, most wiry, twisting, sun-fishing outlaws that ever bolted from a rodeo chute."[96] All this before an audience that sat safe in the stands, observing but not participating, taking in the spectacle of wildness without the accompanying danger.

Indeed, if most tourists preferred to experience their western wildness from a safe distance, so did Westerners themselves. However much they might relish the fun of wild rodeo imagery and teasing dudes about savage Indians, many Westerners bristled at the implication that the West might *really* be dangerous in some way. Playing at the Wild West was fun, but the prestige of wildness—feeling superior from living in a rough place—had to be balanced against not only the modern realities of the West, but also the resentment against being labeled as "backward" by a superior Easterner.[97] Although she thought telling tall tales to Easterners was funny, for example, Helena Warila insisted that the West was not "uncivilized and barbarous as it was in the days when first settled."[98] And dude ranchers who lauded their rough and natural accommodations and surroundings were also quick to assure guests that "comfort" was an essential feature of dude ranch life. Dudes always had plenty of blankets, good food, and hot water; the West, after all, was a civilized, settled place.

Interestingly, boosters seemed to object only to *certain* types of modernity in Red Lodge during rodeo time. While promoters lamented that residents' refusal to dress appropriately distracted from the Old West flavor of the rodeo, in many other cases, "modernity"—like the slack pile that made such a convenient flag-pole site—seemed only to enhance the town's celebration of the Wild West. Ironically, the

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[94]Picket-Journal, 27 June 1935, 1; 16 June 1936, 1.
[95]Picket-Journal, 12 June 1930, 8.
[96]Picket-Journal, 10 July 1930, 1.
[97]See, for example, Gerald P. Nye, "Speaking of Backward States," North American Review 229 (April 1930): 406-413.
[98]Warila, "A Dude's Idea of the West," 15.

same Red Lodge Rodeo Association that rebuked locals for wearing "pajama outfits" saw nothing contradictory in combining parachute jumps, remote-control automobiles, and golf tournaments with their "characteristic revival of the Old West."[99] Like the ancient Roman sculptors who combined mature heads with youthful bodies to create the perfect male image—the wisdom of age joined with the vigor of youth—so Red Lodge rodeo promoters mixed the best of the old West with the modern technology and conveniences of the new Visitors jarred by modern attire in the rodeo stands made no similar objection to the presentation in 1935 of a "phantom car" driven around the arena "without driver or passenger, honking its horn and obeying all the dictates of a man in the grandstand holding a radio key."[100] The residents of Red Lodge incorporated modern technology and modern pastimes into their celebration without hesitation. Golfing, for example, became an important part of the rodeo program, and by 1931 a golf committee was a permanent part of the Red Lodge Rodeo Association. The rodeo arena featured auto stalls in which spectators could watch events from their parked cars. Publicity for the show also noted the modern movie theaters in town with "two of the best sound-equipped stations in the northwest." And, one of the big features of the initial celebration was the stunt flying of a Sheridan pilot, who would also give adventurous people aerial tours of Yellowstone Park in his plane.[101] Later rodeos included carnivals with mechanized rides, boxing contests, and an airplane parachute jump. Although the Red Lodge Rodeo Association never ventured so far into the future to attempt aerial bulldogging (a failed experiment from a 1920s Wild West show),[102] for several years in the 1930s Bill Greenough wrestled steers from the running board of a speeding car.[103]

In the mythic space of the 20th-century Wild West, nothing made more sense.

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[99]Picket-Journal, 9 July 1931, 4.

[100]Picket-Journal, 11 July 1935, 1.

[101]Picket-Journal, 3 July 1930, 1.

[102]"Dismal Moments in the American West," Forbes 156 (23 October 1995): FYI 128.

Like the facades on downtown buildings, the Old West spread a thin coat over the community in the middle years of the 20th century. By the 1940s and 1950s, that veneer had settled, becoming deeper and harder through repeated coatings. Log-cabin style houses, like that belonging to Al Croonquist and the new tourist camp, joined with the cowboy hats and neckerchiefs of rodeo supporters to mark the expanding mythic spaces of the Wild West in Red Lodge. The "western" veneer extended from the rodeo grounds to include much of the town, especially its businesses, which began to add items such as Indian jewelry and moccasins to local gift shops' inventories and frontier jargon to advertisements.

Perhaps the most painful indicator of the pervasiveness of "western" imagery in the modern West was the re-invention of the cowboy drawl. While some southern-born Westerners may have spoken in a slow drawl in the 19th century, this speech pattern had mostly faded from the region by the 20th century—until relearned from movies and books. Returning to the West in 1946, Bernard DeVoto lamented the revival of this drawl as "the West began to succumb to the most damaging of its illusions, the notion that it is universally a race of cowpokes."[104] Westerners, he observed, no longer used the assumed drawl simply as part of a joke, but as part of their desire to "dramatize themselves to strangers." The assumed "Westerness" of the dude ranch and rodeo began to move into the everyday lives of western residents.

From the 1920s through the 1950s, Red Lodge promotional booklets readily mixed a kind of cowboy drawl with corny Indianesque phrasing. The effort produced incongruous results like the following description of Red Lodge from a Red Lodge Cafe menu in 1949:

> Maybe you hone for local color that smacks of the old time West. Waal now, Podnah, our atmosphere ain't laden with powder smoke any more and lead isn't the common malady it used to be. Our best citizens claim that packing six guns interferes with their golf swing but we have local color, lots of it.[105]

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[103]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 204.

[104]DeVoto, "The Anxious West," 481-82.

Or this, from a 1949 Fraternal Order of Eagles booklet for a state convention in Red Lodge:

> Welcome to the land of the Shining Mountains and the Old Red Tepee! It's shore been many a moon since we've seen you around our wigwam, and we are more than proud to have you stop in at our diggin's. We've cooked up a few pots of stew and laid some extra bedrolls around the village to make your stay comfortable....So climb off your hoss, toss your saddle on the corral fence, and we'll have a pot of coffee brewing for you right soon. Welcome, Podner, you're no stranger here after you sit once.[106]

Local residents designed these pamphlets to appeal to grown men and women. The Red Lodge Cafe, amazingly, even received a national award from the Chicago Advertising Club for its "Howdy Folks" menu.[107] And, this kind of pseudo-western schlock appealed to more than just Chicago ad men. The Eagles targeted their "Welcome to the land of Shining Mountains" at men and women *from Montana*—fellow Westerners who knew that Montanans didn't really talk like that in the mid-20th century, if they ever had. "It's shore been many a moon since we've seen you around our wigwam"? This sort of down-home drawl came out of movies and cheap cowboy novels, not the typical greeting of one middle-class fraternal brother to another. Westerners had adopted the persona created by Hollywood and writers of Westerns, to the extent that they were even using it on themselves, as a fun kind of game or promotional gimmick.

Popular "Westerness" had so imbedded itself into the physical West by the mid-20th century that Westerners themselves adopted its markers to claim their place in the region. What started out as a marketing program turned into something much more personal and pervasive than a Chamber of Commerce "Go West" promotion. Westerners who had no roots in a ranching past incorporated the speech, clothes, and memories of that past—filtered through popular movies and novels—and turned them

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[105]"Howdy Folks," 1949, CCHS.

[106]Fraternal Order of Eagles, "Welcome to the Land of the Shining Mountains," 1949, CCHS.

into a modern western identity. Westerners began to dress, talk, and "act" like cowboys in their everyday lives. Motivated by the expectations of visiting tourists and bolstered by the presence of authentic "cowboys" in the region—capitalistic ranchers—western residents convinced themselves that they were, indeed, the heirs of the 19th-century mythic West.

Like John Barovich, the immigrant coal-miner's son in the cowboy hat, "western" identities in the mid-20th century abounded with ironies and contradictions. Repeated public performances, however, smoothed out these ironies or made the contradictions seem humorous rather than significant. Brochures, such as the "Howdy Podnah" booklet deliberately played on the incongruities of modern western identity; contrasting six guns with golf swings was funny and effective because such a pairing flew in the face of eastern expectations about Westerness. But, of course, the brochure itself presented and reinforced the very "Westerness" that it poked fun of. And, that reinforced Westerness established a hold on many of the region's residents. When Barovich was a young man, cowboy hats became a popular symbol of Westerness at local rodeos and Go West parades; as he grew older, such hats—which evoked the strength of the self-reliant rancher—became an accepted part of a Montana businessman's attire. By the time he was a middle-aged man Barovich had worn his cowboy hat so often that it became part of his identity as a Montanan and a Westerner. Where the scrutinizing outsider might find irony in the coal-miner's son assuming the heritage of a long-gone era, Barovich and others like him saw simply a statement of who he was—a Westerner.

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[107]Carbon County News, 17 March 1948, 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

"HARDY PIONEERS, AMERICAN AND FOREIGN:" PUBLIC ETHNICITY IN THE WEST

The Festival has been very important to the development of Red Lodge. Many years ago we had many little small ethnic groups that sort of kept to themselves, but with the Festival it started bringing us all together and appreciating the wonderful cultures that we had here....[1]

In August of 1951, when the dust from the annual Fourth of July rodeo had completely settled, Red Lodge residents took off their cowboy hats, boots, and Levis to go public with a different interpretation of local heritage. From 18 to 26 August, the town transformed itself from a remnant of the Wild West into a model of international harmony and American multiculturalism. Residents pulled out old German leiderhosen and Norwegian bunas, dusted off accordions and bagpipes, learned ethnic folk dances, and re-formed ethnic choirs and orchestras. Guided by a particularly energetic set of community activists, townspeople produced and performed a nine-day festival of dancing, singing, free food, and craft displays. Finns, Scandinavians, Britons (Irish, Scots, and English), Italians, Yugoslavians (Serbians, Croatians, and Montenegrins), Germans, and "Montanans" each took charge of a given day to present their particular ethnic traditions (to fill up the nine days, Montana had two days in the first years, and everyone participated in the final day's events). Each group emphasized the colorful and entertaining aspects of its "nationality," handing out free samples of leftsa and ravioli, playing accordions and harps, and dancing kolas and lendlers before curious onlookers. In the evenings, the Civic Center filled with ethnic dancers and singers for an hour of free entertainment. On the first night, the Finns, "in a blaze of colorful costumes," displayed not only singers and dancers but also "elderly ladies [who] worked at the home crafts

or spinning, carding, and churning." Montanans arranged a community campfire, Yugoslavians performed a "Slovenian pillow dance," and the Italians "presented a picture of an out of door polenta party complete with wine, song and dancing."[2] Enthusiastically received by locals and visitors alike, the Festival of Nations quickly established itself as a permanent feature of Red Lodge life. Residents began what would become a half-century long tradition of public celebration of the community's European and Christian immigrant roots, an annual non-profit venture designed "to help bring a closer understanding among people of all nationalities."[3]

Along with the rodeo, the Festival became one of the premier tourist events of the Red Lodge summer. And, like the rodeo, the Festival played an important role in the development of the town's public identity. Fashioned variously out of Cold War tensions, community pride, perceptions of the past, and the demands of a tourism-based economy, the Festival grew into one of the defining features of Red Lodge life.[4] Through the Festival, residents incorporated into their public sphere an appealing, classless, cleaned-up version of European ethnicity without reference to socialism, racialized discrimination, or labor strikes. Like the "cowboy," the Red Lodge "ethnic" became a local symbol with somewhat tenuous

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[1] Bob Moran, Comments at the Festival of Nations All-Nations Day program, Red Lodge, Montana, 11 August 1996.

[2] Carbon County News (Red Lodge), 23 August 1951, 1; 30 August 1951, 1.

[3] Carbon County News, 13 August 1953, 1. Although a few Jewish families lived in Red Lodge over the years, the Festival of Nations and Red Lodge's local histories make little if any reference to Jews in the town. One reference to local Jews is in the "Family Sketches" section of the town's 1979 published history, which has a few paragraphs on I. Joe and Henrietta Hasterlick, "First Jewish Family of Red Lodge." The Hasterlicks moved to Red Lodge in 1906. Shirley Zupan and Harry J. Owens, Red Lodge: Saga of a Western Area (Billings: Frontier Press, Inc., 1979), 321.

[4] For work on memory and history, see Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (New York: Random House, Inc., 1993); John Bodnar, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). For historical festivals, see David Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990); for ethnic festivals, see Victor Turner, ed. Celebration: Studies in Festivity and Ritual (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982); Ray B. Browne and Michael T. Marsden, ed., The Cultures of Celebrations (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994); Ramon A. Guitierrez and Genevieve Fabre, ed., Feasts and Celebrations in North American Ethnic Communities (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Stephen Stern and John Allan Cicala, ed., Creative Ethnicity: Symbols and Strategies of Contemporary Ethnic Life (Logan: Utah State University, 1991); Michael D'Innocenzo and Josef P. Sirefman, ed., Immigration and Ethnicity: American Society--"Melting Pot" or "Salad Bowl"? (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992).

connections to actual historical conditions. Red Lodge, through the Festival of Nations, presented "ethnicity" as a kind of timeless peasant culture, full of brightly embroidered dresses, exquisite pastries, and pretty songs about edelweiss. The immigrant miners' messy work, so evident in the huge slack piles on either side of town, became, like the class tensions that had divided the community, a muted background to the larger celebration of sauerkraut, saunas, dirndls, and tourist revenue.

Although tourism was (and is) an essential part of this annual performance, the Festival of Nations was never simply a production for tourists. The Festival became an annual staging of local heritage that provided an important "narrative structure" around which residents fit stories of the town's immigrant past and through which they presented local identity.[5] To some residents, of course, the Festival was mostly an event that filled up their motels or restaurants with paying guests. But the celebration's influence on the community ran much deeper than that. Residents who developed the Festival in the 1950s created a powerful sense of modern and historical ethnicity as one of the key factors in the town's development and identity. This sense of ethnicity continued to shape the ways in which local people thought of their town and their past. Through the Festival, local people learned to regard their town as peculiarly "ethnic"—different from other places because of its immigrant heritage and because of the Festival itself, which publicly celebrated that ethnic background every year. Beyond the present-day awareness of ethnicity, the Festival produced a popular interpretation of local history centered on the divisions between early immigrant populations.[6] By focusing on past ethnic differences now overcome, residents forged a comforting, celebratory story of local unity. In 1996, on the last night of the nine-day event, the Festival coordinator (the local librarian, who had held the position for over 40 years) gave a succinct version of the celebration's historicized message of community harmony. "The Festival has been very important to the development of Red Lodge," he informed the audience with obvious emotion.

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[5]John Bodnar discusses "narrative structures" in "Power and Memory in Oral History: Workers and Managers at Studebaker," Journal of American History 75 (March 1989): 1201-1202.

[6]See, for example, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 169-198; Leona Lampi, "Red Lodge: From a Frenetic Past of Crows, Coal, and Boom and Bust Emerges a Unique Festival of Diverse Nationality Groups," Montana, the Magazine of Western History 11 (July 1961): 20-31; any of the historical "blurbs" in the Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce "Visitor's Guide" from the 1950s to the present, including the 1996-1997

"Years ago we had many little small ethnic groups that sort of kept to themselves, but with the Festival it started bringing us all together and appreciating the wonderful cultures that we had here....We have such a wonderful community here, and such wonderful people, and in the diversity that we find here and the appreciation of cultures we just are very fortunate."[7]

The Festival, performed over decades, helped to create and then reinforce a particular version of the local past. But histories, including public pageants such as the Festival of Nations, themselves have histories, and the history of these histories can reveal much about how local, western identities are created.

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Public celebration of Red Lodge's ethnic diversity developed in fits and starts in the 1930s, when Americans as a whole became more interested in immigrant cultures and more willing to celebrate ethnic contributions to the nation. Immigration policies, national demographic shifts, and reactions against the frightful xenophobia of the war years all influenced the acceptance of American pluralism. World War I and the new immigration laws of the 1920s drastically reduced the numbers of new aliens in the country, alleviating many of the tensions produced by millions of newcomers streaming into the nation every year. At the same time, the number of second-generation immigrants in the United States swelled to over 26 million by 1930, creating a new population of European "ethnics" much more acculturated into American society than were their parents.[8] In Red Lodge itself, the proportion of foreign-born residents dropped from 43% to 29% of the total population between 1920 and 1930 while the number of residents with

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edition, 16, Carbon County Historical Society (CCHS); also the Carbon County News from 1950 to the present, CCHS.

[7] Moran, Comments, 1996.

[8]Richard Weiss, "Ethnicity and Reform: Minorities and the Ambiance of the Depression Years," Journal of American History 66 (December 1979): 569-571, 582

foreign or mixed parentage increased from 31% to 40%.[9] National and local leaders noted these changing demographics and responded to them. Hollywood and the federal government, both intent on diffusing nativist sentiments, teamed up in the 1930s to foster positive national images of European ethnicity. Movies like Black Legion villainized phobic native Americans while Franklin D. Roosevelt's Office of Education radio broadcasts stressed the "rich heritage" of the nation's immigrants.[10] A significant segment in the public school community also worked to include cultural diversity in education training and curriculums, while an ethnically diverse national intelligentsia promoted pluralism through its plays, articles, and books. Although the acceptance of America as a nation of immigrants would not really take hold until U.S. entry into World War II, European ethnicity was less threatening to most Americans by the 1930s than it had been a decade earlier.[11] Immigrants, like cowboys and Indians, could become a prominent part of the town's official public heritage when they no longer seemed much of a threat.

Driven by these national cultural changes as well as by local conditions, Red Lodge residents began to incorporate selected aspects of immigrant culture into the town's public identity from the 1930s into the early 1950s. "Unity" was the byword for this process of incorporation. Significantly, as townspeople struggled to keep their town alive through the closing of the Eastside Mine in 1932 and the ongoing national Depression, they began to think differently about what "unity" meant. While the local business classes continued to ground their concept of community identity in assumptions of the sanctity of American culture and government, public definitions of "American" and "Red Lodge" expanded to include selected, safe facets of immigrant cultures. Through festivals and other performances, residents began to display European crafts, dances, costumes, and music as vital parts of Red Lodge's public culture. This expansion of public identity met several immediate needs. Concerned residents who dreaded further emigrations from the shrinking town recognized that public displays of ethnicity might bolster commitment

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[9]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1920, Population, vol. III (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 585; Fifteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1930, Population, vol. III, part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932), 31.

[10]Weiss, "Ethnicity and Reform," 568-570.

[11]Bodnar, Remaking America, 70; Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry, 232-234.

to the community among Red Lodge's large first and second-generation immigrant populations. Public ethnicity, others argued, might also boost the tourism industry, providing the town with some cultural interest that could draw curious visitors. Organized ethnic groups, especially those with large second-generation memberships, like the Italian Girls Victory Club,[12] facilitated this process of incorporation to help secure their own cultural and social positions in the town. Working closely with non-ethnic community leaders, these groups helped to redefine the role of the "nationalities" in the town's public sphere through public displays of certain Old World cultures and traditions. In the process, Red Lodge residents began to establish the parameters of "appropriate" public ethnicity in the community.

Public displays of ethnicity could be a community asset, but only if presented properly within an established context of Americanism. Two Depression-era festivals made this point clearly. The 1932 Red Lodge Woman's Club Community Fine Arts Festival started the process of drawing the "nationalities" into the town's public image in ways that complemented rather than threatened American values. Designed to demonstrate the depth and breadth of Red Lodge's cultural resources, the Community Fine Arts Festival showcased the town's diversity, producing an interesting melange of local cultures and interests that highlighted, in particular, the "foreign born residents of the community."[13] In the festival's crowded showroom, displays of fossils and minerals from the Beartooths sat next to family heirlooms from Finland and Slovenia; the Italian Girls Victory Club performed alongside the Finnish Orchestra and the Red Lodge Ladies' Glee Club; community members read essays and poems about George Washington and skiing; local craftspeople exhibited handmade furniture and jewelry. The festival, which attracted almost 1,000 attendees, presented Red Lodge as a place rich in resources and culture—with at least part of the town's strength lying in its diversity of ethnic heritages.[14] A second ethnic festival, Dr. J.C.F. Siegfriedt's 1939 Beartooth Highway Opening Day Ceremony, made clear not only the past contributions of "nationality" groups to Red Lodge, but also the *present*-day potential of ethnic celebrations to lure tourists into the

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[12]A group of young Italian-American women formed the Italian Girls Victory Club during World War I to support the war effort at the local level. After the war, the club continued as a community-service organization and still exists.

[13]Picket-Journal (Red Lodge), 7 April 1932, 1

community.[15] The event, held in late May on a grassy meadow just outside of town, featured costumed residents performing Old World folk dances and songs against the backdrop of the magnificent Beartooth Mountains. A sprawling carnival of sorts , the celebration combined presentations by the Slovenian chorus, Finnish choir, Italian Girls Victory Club, and Austrian string orchestra with boxing matches and food booths. The deliberate combination of ethnic music groups, sporting events, and beautiful scenery created a pleasing spectacle of diversity and strength rooted in the American landscape.

The display of cultural diversity in these shows assumed a set of shared values. Nothing strayed very far from middle-class American convictions. All performances and presentations became part of a larger structured whole established by the Woman's Club and Dr. Siegfriedt. Ethnicity was colorful and entertaining, but largely decorative. It enhanced the town's image and became a source of community pride. The Finns, for example, played music and displayed embroidered dresses for the assembled audiences; they did not discuss Finnish ties to socialism or the arrests of local Finns who had supported the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) during World War I. This type of selective portrayal of ethnicity carefully confined ethnic differences to what John Bodnar refers to as a "narrow band of cuisine, dance, and dress."[16] Performances and displays constructed a depoliticized version of Finnish ethnicity that, apart from clothing styles and some specific (and harmless) traditions, actually did not stray very far from American middle-class values. Siegfriedt himself argued that his event—billed as a celebration of cooperation between the "nationalities"—was really about maintaining American community values. Community celebrations such as his, he proclaimed, were the only way "to keep alive the old country mores and traditions, and learn to link them with *our own* customs for better cooperation and understanding between groups."[17] Siegfriedt valued immigrant cultures, but only so far as they fit with mainstream beliefs. "Cooperation" and "understanding" meant linking the nationalities ("them") with "real" Americans ("us").

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[14]Picket-Journal, 7 April 1932, 1; 14 April 1932, 1, 8; 28 April 1932, 1, 4.
[15] Picket-Journal, 16 May 1939, 1.
[16]Bodnar, Remaking America, 70-77.
[17]Picket-Journal, 23 May 1939, 1, emphasis added.

Of course, Siegfriedt and the Woman's Club could never simply impose these notions of "acceptable" performances on the community. "Ethnic" residents had their own reasons to present depoliticized Old World traditions like folk dancing, songs, and crafts as representative of their immigrant cultures. Not surprisingly, members of the "nationalities" who chose to participate in community cultural events *preferred* to present their ethnicity in ways that would gain them applause and acceptance from the larger society.[18] Folk dancing, for example, a popular American pastime in the early 20th century, was a favored form of public ethnic expression for second-generation immigrants.[19] Through dance, these young people could find joy both in participating in their parents' culture and also in the admiration they received from onlookers. Positive response from outsiders, in turn, often reinforced the performer's own sense of ethnic group attachment and desire to continue performing traditional dances.[20] Similarly, the increasing popularity of ethnic music, particularly polkas, in the 1930s and 1940s created a ready audience for Red Lodge's various ethnic bands, whose repertoires featured a mixture of American and Old World tunes. "Nationality" choirs in Red Lodge chose to present easily comprehensible songs, sometimes in English, at these public events. At the Woman's Club Festival, for example, the Finnish girls sang "Among the Trees" and "A Song of Kuijalo" to an appreciative audience, while the Finnish mixed quartet added the eminently respectable "A Song of Finland" and "Our Country."[21] Finns played Finns in the same way that Indians played Indians at the 1930s rodeos and ranchers like Ben Greenough and Malcolm Mackay played the heroic cowboy/rancher. The process of public performance reinforced the presentation of safe and popular aspects of immigrant cultures; ethnic residents presented what they and their visitors wanted to hear and see, and the audience encouraged this selection of performances with applause and admiration.

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[18]Bodnar, Remaking America, 70-77.

[19]Community reform groups like the YWCA and the Playground Association of America began promoting international folk dancing at the turn of the century as a moral and healthy exercise for young people. Victor Greene, "Old-time Folk Dancing and Music Among the Second Generation, 1920-50" in American Immigrants and Their Generations: Studies and Commentaries on the Hansen Thesis after Fifty Years, ed. Peter Kivisto and Dag Blanck (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 144-148. For an example of the popularity of folk dancing, see the books from the 1940s series, Handbooks of European National Dances, such as Louise Witzig, Dances of Switzerland (London: Max Parrish and Company, 1949).

[20]Greene, "Old-time Folk Dancing and Music," 147-48.

[21]Picket-Journal, 14 April 1932, 1, 8.

Even the "nationality" costumes worn by ethnic residents at public performances reflected a process of cultural negotiation—a drive to present an appealingly picturesque vision of European nationality. Early immigrants to Red Lodge had rarely if ever worn these fancy-dress outfits that came to symbolize the folk roots of urbanizing new nation-states in Europe. Indeed, many European countries in the 19th century were in the process themselves of adopting certain local kinds of peasant dress as "national costumes."[22] Some immigrants brought various versions of these elaborate folk costumes with them to the United States, but wore them in public only infrequently. Photos of immigrants in Red Lodge from the 1890s through the 1920s and 1930s show only the very rare individual clothed in what might be called "traditional" or "national" dress. When dressing up to pose for carefully arranged group photographs, ethnic residents inevitably chose to dress in "American" suits or shirtwaists; even formal wedding and family portraits would include almost no hint of "nationality" clothing. In Red Lodge's photographic history, "Old World costumes" began to appear only in the mid-20th century as public ethnicity gained acceptance through local ethnic festivals and as adaptations of picturesque folk outfits—particularly dirndls and "peasant" blouses—made their way into popular fashion at a national level.[23] A growing American fascination with European ethnicity, thus, led Red Lodge ethnics to adopt publicly a version of Old World "folk" culture created to meet the nationalistic needs of an urban bourgeoisie and popularized by a mass fashion industry. This same pattern happened with the western attire borrowed from the East; once eastern tastes sanctioned this style of dress, local people began to incorporate such costumes into the town's public identity. These colorful "nationality" costumes soon became one of the most prominent markers of Red Lodge's public ethnicity as local civic leaders set out to put this popular version of ethnicity to work for the community. And, Dr. Siegfriedt, the town's most energetic booster, led the effort to promote a picturesque version of Red Lodge's costumed ethnicity as a tourist attraction.

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[22]Linda Degh, "Grape-Harvest Festival of Strawberry Farmers: Folklore or Fake?" Ethnologia Europaea 10 (1977/78): 114-131; Phyllis G. Tortora and Keith Eubank, Survey of Historic Costume: A History of Western Dress 2nd ed. (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1994), 6.

[23] Patricia Williams, "From Folk to Fashion: Dress Adaptations of Norwegian Immigrant Women in the Midwest," in Dress in American Culture, ed. Patricia A. Cunningham and Susan Voso Lab (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993), 95-108.

Connected explicitly to the town's major visitor attraction—the Beartooth Highway to Yellowstone National Park—Siegfriedt's 1939 festival marked not only the opening of the summer tourism season but also the beginning of efforts to use Red Lodge's "ethnic" identity as a tourist attraction. Siegfriedt pointed out that ethnicity, properly presented, might join the "cowboy" of the "Wild West" as a tool of community promotion. Alert to any possibility to enhance the town's business, he argued early on that Americans' increasing interest in their own and others' ethnic backgrounds could be put to good use locally. Siegfriedt told Red Lodge residents much the same thing that sociologist Dean MacCannell would later write about tourists: they would take interest in anything that stood out "from the others in their class for reasons of being foreign, old fashioned, weird or futuristic."[24] Tourists might stop for an extra hour or day to look at beautiful costumes or listen to tambouritza music that was familiar enough to be nonthreatening but different from the everyday routine at home. Those extra hours spent in Red Lodge could add thousands of dollars to the local economy each year.

Even if Siegfriedt's Highway Opening festival did not evolve into the annual spectacle he hoped to create, his event proved an important turning point. Siegfriedt showed that local people would willingly perform as "ethnic" for special events much in the same way that residents already performed as "western" for the annual rodeo. In fact, Siegfriedt managed to get locals to perform both identities at his gala event. Although the festival highlighted ethnic performances, Siegfriedt included "western" as a type of ethnic identity for non-ethnics; he stipulated that all local residents had to wear "old country ... or western costume" to gain entrance to the festivities.[25] The requirement served dual purposes. First, the "western" outfits rooted this ethnic event in a familiar cultural practice of donning fancy dress to please tourists. Siegfriedt used the already established pathway of the annual Wild West rodeo to introduce European ethnicity as a tourist attraction. Second, the addition of "western" attire ensured that all residents could participate in the gala regardless of ethnic background. For the benefit of tourists, everyone had to play at dressing up in idealized versions of the past—be it the romantic Westerner or the

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[24]Dean MacCannell, The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class (New York: Schoken Books, 1976), 168.

[25]Picket-Journal, 16 May 1939, 1.

romantic European peasant. The brightly clad "immigrant" thus began to assume a public place in the town's identity alongside the sanitized "cowboy," both of them welcoming tourists to Red Lodge in the warm sunlight of a May afternoon.

"Ethnicity" began to work itself into the town's public identity in the 1930s as residents adapted certain Old World traditions to the current needs of a changing community, in effect inventing a new kind of ethnic identity in Red Lodge. Public displays of ethnicity drew community members together in common celebrations of town unity, allowed second-generation immigrants to present part of their cultural heritages to admiring audiences, and promised to boost the local tourist industry. Celebrations of public ethnicity, however, faded into the background in the 1940s, as Red Lodge residents found themselves pulled into the national patriotic fervor of World War II and the Cold War.

In the cauldron of this patriotic decade, European ethnicity actually became less important in the public lives of most Americans, including those living in Red Lodge.[26] But, ironically, dramatic shifts in population and economic resources in this turbulent period left local residents clutching at public ethnicity as a way to secure the town's cultural and economic survival in the postwar years. By the late 1940s, local people needed something to hold their town together; they found their "glue" in an annual "Festival of Nations" that celebrated not only Red Lodge's ethnic diversity, but also a new interpretation of the town's past that fit comfortably into emerging national narratives about ethnicity in America. In the process of making public ethnicity a community asset in the 1940s, residents re-imagined their local history to reflect contemporary interpretations of the role of ethnicity in the town. Through the Festival of Nations, invented in 1951, local people constructed a powerful interpretation of local history that privileged past ethnic differences over any other divisions, particularly racial and class, that had marked the town's past. The message of the Festival of Nations—annually reinforced through printed brochures, public addresses at performances, and published accounts in the local newspaper—created an appealing history of local pluralism: Red Lodge had been a town once sorely divided by ethnic factionalism, in which, *through their own efforts*, local people overcame their differences to embrace diversity and find peace, happiness, and

success in a prosperous, shared community. At once a cultural performance of community unity and history, an assertion of the town's identity in a Cold War world, and an entertaining program for tourists, the Festival of Nations tied together a variety of local concerns. It became an ongoing celebration that would annually reaffirm the town as a unique and special place.[27]

The Second World War played a key role in creating the conditions that would shape the town's creation of the Festival of Nations as a public expression of local ethnic history. The war had united the community more completely than could craft shows and town picnics.[28] It brought Americans together and further diminished any negative associations about European ethnicity that may have lingered through the Depression years.[29] In popular culture, writers and movie producers emphasized the bonds that united Americans across ethnic lines. John Hersey, for example, in his popular 1944 novel A Bell for Adano, explained to his readers that "America is the international country. Our Army has Yugoslavs and Frenchmen and Austrians and Czechs and Norwegians in it, and everywhere our Army goes in Europe, a man can turn to the private beside him and say: 'Hey, Mac, what's this furriner saying?...And Mac will be able to translate."[30] War movies also routinely depicted American platoons as ethnically diverse, with various characters representing the Jew, Irishman, Hispanic, and other ethnic "types."[31] America, in these patriotic depictions, typified the classic "melting pot" in which people might retain some ethnic traits (like speaking a foreign language), but where European ethnicity no longer overwhelmed the "Americaness" of acculturated immigrants and their children.

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[26] Richard Polenberg, One Nation Divisible: Class, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States Since 1938 (New York: Penguin Books, 1980).

[27] Carbon County News, 16 October 1950, 1.

[28] Carbon County News, 1 May 1942, 1. Larger ethnic celebrations were popular in other parts of the country where people feared a replay of the xenophobic actions that had occurred during World War I. Polenberg, One Nation Divisible, 54.

[29] Ronald Takaki, A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), 399.

[30] Quoted in Polenberg, One Nation Divisible, 51.

[31] Richard Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992), 322, 326.

Local conditions reflected and reinforced national culture. In Red Lodge, families from all ethnic groups sent sons and daughters to Europe and the Pacific to fight for America. Joined together in a patriotic cause, residents cast off some of the public markers of ethnic difference that had stuck with the community through the 1930s. Most noticeably, people less often made note of ethnicity in public forums. Newspapers less frequently described residents according to their heritage, "a daughter of Finland" or "the Italian." The large posters in downtown windows displaying the photos of local men and women in the armed services offered no commentary on ethnicity. When servicemen with names like Tony Zupan and Willie Zaputil sent letters home from Italy or France boasting of their affection for Red Lodge, the local newspaper readily published these epistles—without pausing to make reference to the authors' background as second-generation immigrants. Newspaper stories, indeed, proudly played upon the men's "Montana" identities rather than their ethnic heritages. Zupan's army buddies from Brooklyn, the Carbon County News joked, had "never even heard of Montana, much less Red Lodge" until Zupan, the "one-man commercial club," set them straight with grandiloquent descriptions of Red Lodge with its "26 streets. Mind you, man, 26." Zupan, the hometown boy, overwhelmed Zupan, the son of Croatian immigrants. As with Hersey's fictional G.I.'s, ethnicity no longer marked these local second-generation immigrants as "furriners."[32]

Economic crises in Red Lodge further shook up local notions of ethnicity and community membership. When Zaputil, Zupan, and other local soldiers returned to Red Lodge's "26 streets" in the mid-1940s they might well have been shocked. The home these American soldiers bragged about to their eastern buddies had changed dramatically during the war years. The town was smaller and poorer than it had been since the early 1890s. Like many other little mining towns around the state, Red Lodge's economic infrastructure was collapsing. Increased use of natural gas and strip mines, and a devastating fire at the Smith Mine in 1943, all but closed down the remaining Bearcreek mines. By 1950 only 89 men and three women in Red Lodge continued to earn their livings from mining. Local businesses foundered as corporate wages disappeared and improved highways led rural shoppers away from Red Lodge to

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[32]Carbon County News, 22 March 1945, 1; 21 June 1945, 1.

bigger and less expensive stores in Billings and Laurel. The median annual income per family in Red Lodge plummeted to $1,580, or roughly half that of comparably sized towns in the state. The number of town residents dropped more than 40% from the 1920 level and significant gaps appeared in the population as those between the ages of 15 and 25 fled the community for urban areas that beckoned with promises of jobs and educational opportunities.[33] As the price for local houses dropped to $300 or less and businesses boarded up windows on main street, Charles W. Stevens, owner of the Red Lodge Cafe, groused that the town's motto was "No future here!" "Most of our young folks," he complained, "say the same thing—no future—no opportunity here! Our younger generation is migrating to greener fields." Frightened by the loss of jobs and population, Stevens posed the question that hit at the core of local anxieties in the immediate post-war, post-mining years: "Are we to become a ghost town? A city populated by old people?"[34]

Red Lodge was not alone. To the despair of small-town inhabitants and concerned social observers, broad demographic and economic changes swept the nation during the war and its aftermath, transforming America into a more fully urbanized nation by the late 1940s. Over 15 million Americans moved during the war, most of them to cities where they could find jobs in war industries or stay close to family members in the armed services.[35] The end of the war slowed this trend, but the nation remained a people on the move—mostly away from small towns and rural areas in search of economic opportunities in the cities. Many small towns simply could not survive this national mobilization. In Bearcreek—the example closest to Red Lodge—the few remaining residents in the early 1950s put their houses on wheels and rolled them to Red Lodge and Billings, or simply burned them down and moved on. Bearcreek practically ceased to exist, even as a ghost town. Little towns like Bearcreek and Washoe (both of which

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[33] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, A Report of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States, Census of the Population: 1950, vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, part 26, Montana (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1952), 44, 46.

[34] Carbon County News, 2 February 1948, 2.

[35] Allan M. Winkler, Home Front U.S.A.: America during World War II (Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1986), 43; Polenberg, One Nation Divisible, 17; Gerald D. Nash, The American West in the Twentieth Century: A Short History of an Urban Oasis (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), 213-14.

had once rivaled Red Lodge in terms of population) continued to wither and disappear in the 1940s and 1950s, victims of a changing world that made little effort to respond to the needs of these dying communities.

Red Lodge survived the 1940s and 1950s through luck, location, and the grit of local people determined to keep the town alive. Buffeted by national, even global, demographic, economic, and social forces, Red Lodge residents chose, out of necessity, to focus on *local* projects and people as they negotiated a path of community survival in the postwar years. Community activists fixed their attention on the local manifestations of national trends and local solutions to those problems.[36] When, for example, McCarthyism-inspired "wild" rumors about local communist organizations swept through the community, civic groups held Americanism programs to promote patriotism at the grass-roots level; residents sought to secure themselves against the global "menace" of Communism through sing-alongs and skits exposing the lie of Russia's "classless society."[37] Rather than simply resigning themselves to the inevitable transference of industrial jobs from rural to urban areas, the Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce regeared its boosterism machine, reaching out to area ranchers for local support, while setting out to convince any company it could to extract every mineral conceivable—oil, gas, chromium, gold—from the Beartooth Mountains.[38] Merchants also redoubled efforts to build Red Lodge's tourism industry, hosting two successful state-wide conferences in 1949 and trumpeting the Beartooth Highway as the "pre-eminent approach" to Yellowstone National Park.[39] And, fearing that the town was losing money and population to cities like Billings that had hospitals and large recreational facilities, town leaders in the late 1940s

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[36]Carbon County News, 11 April 1950, 1. On "saving" Red Lodge, see also the series of newspaper ads run in the Carbon County News in 1950 by Charles W. Stevens of the Red Lodge Cafe touting civic improvements and enthusiasm.

[37]Carbon County News, 28 September 1950, 1; 12 March 1948, 1; 30 May 1950, 1.

[38]Carbon County News, 2 March 1950, 1; 22 December 1949, 1.

[39]Carbon County News, 17 May 1949; 5 July 1949, 4. The quotation is from Northern Pacific Railroad's brochure, "The Spectacular Red Lodge Highway over the Rockies," (Northern Pacific, Yellowstone Park Line, n.d.), CCHS.

obtained federal and local funding to build a new hospital and community center for Red Lodge.[40] Boosted by the symbolism of the "fine New Civic Center," local merchants, like the owner of the Ford dealership, began once again to invest in the town, modernizing businesses "to keep abreast of Civic Progress in Red Lodge."[41] The editor of the Lewistown Daily heralded Red Lodge as "a city that refused to die."[42] Red Lodge was not the "coal metropolis" envisioned by 1890s boosters, nor was it the thriving coal town of the 1910s. But, shrunken and battered though it may have been in the early 1950s, the town survived while other communities dried up and blew away. The Festival of Nations emerged out of this frenzied period, when community members fought to ensure the survival of their small town in a world that seemed to be running out of places for rural communities.

The first Festival of Nations, in fact, evolved out of the popular celebration marking the opening of the town's new Veterans' Memorial Civic Center in late 1950. The key part of this celebration, a historical pageant of Red Lodge, vividly illustrated the focus on local initiative and ethnic cooperation that would undergird the developing Festival of Nations. Thousands of people from around the area packed the domed building in mid-November to participate in the grand pageant of Red Lodge performed through a series of tableaux. Homesteaders, cowboys, and mountain men placed the town firmly in the triumphant narrative of the Old West; scenes of miners and farmers showed the work that built the community; and folk dances by ethnic performers highlighted the diversity of the town's immigrant community. At the pageant climax, a 100-voice Community Choir burst into song. With many of its members in ethnic costume and at least one song sung in four different languages, the choir posed an attractive picture of local harmony.[43]

The 1950 historical pageant presented entwined narratives of progress. First, townspeople who had been historically divided by language and ethnicity had overcome their differences to build a common

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[40]The town received a federal subsidy for rural hospitals. At the launching of the hospital-construction campaign, Governor Sam Ford noted that "A modern hospital keeps money at home." Without a hospital, he observed, Red Lodge would become a "dying community." Carbon County News 17 May 5 1948, 1.

[41]Carbon County News, 19 October 1950, 6; 27 April 1950, 1.

[42]Carbon County News, 6 September 1949, 4.

[43] Carbon County News, 26 October 1950, 1.

"roof," the new Civic Center. Named after all the men and women who had served their nation during World War II, the Civic Center (like the pageant itself) symbolized local unity across ethnic lines. At the same time, the performed history insisted that local people through their own *local* efforts had not only created this remarkable ethnic harmony, but they had simultaneously invented, maintained, and saved Red Lodge. In this story, the local people did everything themselves, from exploring and settling the land to building the local ski area. The events depicted stood by themselves, without references to larger trends of capitalism and modernization that had influenced what happened in Red Lodge. Tellingly, pageant directors chose *not* to include depictions of mine officials, federal bureaucrats, or eastern capitalists. These larger forces did not fit into a historical narrative that explained local progress as the result of people of different backgrounds learning to work together. To deal with the forces that seemed to be tearing their community apart, local residents turned in upon themselves, creating a performed history in which they, not powerful outside forces, were in control. Inspired by this triumphant performance of local initiative and cultural diversity, town activists made plans for a separate festival of ethnic harmony to be held during the summer tourist season.

From the beginning, a small group of people gave form and direction to the Festival of Nations, shaping the celebration to reflect their ideas about the community, its past, and the nature of "ethnicity." Significantly, several of the most energetic Festival organizers—Congregationalist minister Don Scanlin, newspaper columnist R.S. Davis, and high school art teacher Lucile Ralston—were not particularly "ethnic," or even "local." Some organizers, like John Lampi, a Finnish immigrant who directed Finnish-language theatricals, were long-time residents actively involved in "ethnic" activities, but most members of the original Festival steering committees had Anglo-American names and backgrounds.[44] Scanlin, who served as the original General Coordinator and Festival master of ceremonies for several decades, had only

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[44]According to the Carbon County News, the original steering committee for the Festival was made up of Mrs. Joe Bailey, Mrs. J.H. MacDonough, Mrs. J.H. Patten, and Miss Lucile Ralston. Since all the women assumed their husbands' names, ethnic affiliations are difficult to ascertain, but all appear to be native-born women of Anglo-American descent. A second steering committee, composed of Laura Weaver, Roger Davis, and John Lampi, included members of two older, Anglo families and Lampi, a Finnish immigrant who moved to Red Lodge from British Columbia in 1917. Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 307-08, 336-38; Lillian Lampi Oral History, OH 303, Montana Historical Society (MHS).

moved to Red Lodge in 1948.[45] In a way reminiscent of the 1930s multi-ethnic events, Anglo-Americans took charge of the broad direction of the Festival. The various ethnic groups played large roles in the Festival of Nations, but originally they focused more on their individual "Nationality" day performances and exhibits, while the steering committees and coordinators (Scanlin and Ralston) set the broader parameters of the celebration.

The presence of so many Anglo-Americans on the committees served to imprint a certain understanding of ethnicity and multi-culturalism on the celebration. The Festival became not so much about *European* immigrants, as a celebration of *American* success at integrating so many different types of peoples into a harmonious national community. Like the 1932 Woman's Club event, the first Festival focused on presenting the resources of Red Lodge—which included ethnic diversity—in order to show its strength and resilience. But ethnicity only served this larger purpose. Ralston, for example, emphasized the *cultural* aspects of the Festival of Nations. She organized a series of art shows during Festival week and encouraged local people like 80-year old "Grandma" Webber to demonstrate "crafts in action" behind the windows of downtown shops. Although enthusiastic about the idea of a multi-ethnic event, Ralston saw it more as a backdrop that provided "something a little different" to intrigue passing visitors and make them want to look at the paintings and pottery produced by local residents.[46] By insisting that ethnicity was simply one part of the town's cultural landscape, organizers like Ralston helped to shape a consensus message for the Festival—the message that European ethnic diversity symbolized the best of American freedom, egalitarianism, and justice for all.

Significantly, though, organizers like Ralston never had the kind of control that the Woman's Club or Dr. Siegfriedt had over their ethnic productions; by 1950, immigrants and their children were more fully intertwined in the social fabric of the town than they had ever been before. Non-ethnics assumed important leadership roles that shaped the theme and structure of this grand community production, but they could not control how the Festival would develop and the meanings local people would give it. Ralston and Scanlin could not maintain control over the Festival as residents made it part of their lives and

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[45]Billings Gazette, 5 August 1996, clipping in "Red Lodge" vertical file, Parmly Billings Library.

local identity. Nor could organizers completely manage the influence that tourism would have on the Festival and its message of international harmony.

The Festival of Nations had much deeper roots and motivations than just tourism, but from the beginning tourism intertwined with the Festival and the meanings given it by local residents. Festival organizers in the early 1950s recognized the validity of Siegfriedt's assertion that ethnicity, like coal and cowboys, could be a community resource if packaged correctly. Residents realized that they could use "ethnicity" to strengthen the town's economy, in much the same way as they had used the rodeo and the Wild West. Performed ethnicity might attract a whole different set of tourists into town. Festival planners, like newspaper columnist R.S. Davis, had noted the success of other ethnic events around the nation, especially the annual Dutch Tulip Festival in Holland, Michigan—a celebration, one organizer argued, which brought visitors and newsreel teams to that town each year. Americans, it seemed, were willing, even eager, to plan trips around displays of ethnic folk dances and crafts. If Holland drew so much attention by featuring just one ethnic group, what might a festival of eight *different* nationalities do for Red Lodge?[47] As the local newspaper editor pointed out, "The idea of festival draws attention." The Festival of Nations, he predicted, "can develop into an annual attraction if our first year is a good one."[48]

Driven by the desire to make the Festival both culturally and financially successful, residents self-consciously adapted the event's structure and content to the perceived needs of the traveling public. They presented the Festival of Nations as a product for outside consumption. Organizers, for example, chose to hold the event over two weekends during the notoriously "quiet" month of August when motels and businesses most needed a tourism boost.[49] They adjusted the hours when residents would present active crafts in downtown windows so that they would be seen by as many visitors as possible, who might then pause to purchase local products. Participants and organizers alike strove to dress up residents and the town in as many bright colors as possible to catch the interest of those passing through. Local activists

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[46]Carbon County News, 19 April 1951, 1; 21 June 1951, 1.
[47]Carbon County News, 11 April 1950, 1.
[48]Carbon County News, 2 August 1951, 4.
[49]Carbon County News, 11 April 1950, 1; 5 July 1951, 1.

continued to emphasize the moral and social benefits of the community festival, but they also grew increasingly focused on what they might do to bring ever more tourists into Red Lodge. In 1955 some participants even suggested restricting the free samples of ethnic food to tourists only. (It seems local youngsters were helping themselves to too many of the goodies). Indignant Festival directors insisted that the Festival was not just for tourists. But the suggestion itself showed how focused organizers had become on the tourist industry, which provided not only some financial support of the event (through donations) but also hearty encouragement for this community project and public ethnicity it celebrated.[50]

The directors were right; the Festival was not *just* for tourists, but the publicity of the Festival, which was directed at tourists, made Red Lodge regionally renowned for its ethnic diversity. In promoting their community's nationality celebration, town leaders achieved some measure of outside recognition for their Festival and the town's immigrant heritage. For years, the Festival of Nations received a coveted place on the official State Highway Map's "Points of Interest" section; the blurb directed visitors to Red Lodge in August to participate in the town's annual celebration of ethnic harmony. The Festival's publicity machine (a fairly modest mechanism) churned out leaflets and brochures that gained the event mention in various magazines and travel guides as well as in newspapers ranging from the Spokane Spokesman-Review and Great Falls Tribune to the New York Times.[51] Buoyed by the positive reception of the Festival, business leaders started to include pictures of ethnic performers in local visitors' guides, often displacing the ubiquitous cowboy in favor of full-color shots of international flags and residents dressed up in fancy ethnic costumes. Visitors, state residents, and locals alike learned to associate Red Lodge with ethnic diversity. Through the Festival and its publicity, "ethnicity" became part of the town's public identity. Other Montana towns—particularly mining communities like Belt, Stockett, and Roundup—also had large numbers of immigrant groups, but Red Lodge's early publicity about the Festival of Nations secured its reputation as Montana's "ethnic city," behind only Butte, which had always been a much larger and more prominent player on the state's economic and cultural stage.

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[50]Carbon County News, 8 September 1955, 1, 8.

[51]Carbon County News, 26 August 1954, 1; 18 July 1957, 1.

Festival directors deliberately shaped Red Lodge's ethnic celebration for consumption by a touring public, and tourism played a vital role in the development of the Festival and its place in the local culture. Tourists affected not only the existence of the Festival, but also its content and the meanings given it by local people. Scholars of tourism have long noted the ability of tourism to influence local people and their cultural practices.[52] As locals learned to meet the needs of tourists, they began to "commodify" their culture, to produce it for sale to tourists in pursuit of "authentic" experiences and objects.[53] Thus, in the process of their interaction with the "authentic" cultural practice, tourists necessarily influenced that practice and what it meant for local performers. But, as cultural products like the Festival of Nations became more commodified for tourists, they did not simply lose meaning. For local people these commodified practices could become, as Erik Cohen has argued, "a diacritical mark of their ethnic or cultural identity, a vehicle of self-representation before an external public."[54] In Red Lodge, performance before tourists made residents more aware of their ethnic heritages while also marking Red Lodge, itself as a special place *because* of these ethnic performances. Tourism reinforced ethnic associations, not only for individuals, but also for the whole town.

The emphasis on Red Lodge's "unique" ethnic harmony developed largely out of the success the Festival had in attracting tourists from around the state and eventually around the world. The numbers of people flocking to the shows and exhibits and the positive comments about the pretty dances and costumes elevated residents' views about the importance of the Festival of Nations and their own ethnic identification. The local newspaper and Chamber of Commerce brochures contributed to this process by reprinting only the most positive of praise from visitors, such as that repeated by exhibitor Ben Greenough, who observed in 1951 that tourists "were plumb amazed that a town this small could produce such a show," or the 1955 assertion by the Festival coordinator that several persons had told her "that the Festival

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[52]MacCannell, The Tourist.

[53]While the Festival of Nations never presented an "authentic" presentation of Old World culture, many visitors eagerly accepted this re-creation as the real thing. Most tourists, Erik Cohen argues, do not demand "total authenticity," and are content if "they perceive part of the whole as authentic." Erik Cohen, "Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism," Annals of Tourism Research 15 (1988): 377-78

[54]Cohen, "Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism," 383.

restored their faith in humanity because they didn't think people did things like that any more."[55] Local residents became convinced that their Festival was less a celebration of what made their town and themselves special, than the source of their uniqueness. Encouraged and flattered by the large and positive response to the celebration—many of the shows were standing-room-only by the second year—organizers and participants presented increasingly grand pronouncements about the Festival and what it represented. In the first three years, the theme of the Festival of Nations quickly evolved from being about community talent and cooperation (1951) to "an adventure in friendship" and American multi-culturalism (1952), to an event meant to "help bring a closer understanding among people of all nationalities (1953)."[56] The hyperbole built upon itself until by 1974 the local newspaper could readily state that the Festival of Nations should inspire world leaders with the "stunning realization that a melting pot of people have been celebrating their differences and living so peacefully—for 25 years!"[57]

But, Red Lodge, of course, was not the unique example of ethnic harmony that enthusiastic residents and newspaper editors might want to proclaim. The very narrative of "nationalities" uniting in the New World (the "melting pot" metaphor from the 1974 editorial), in fact, lay at the core of consensus-era American immigration history. Cold War Americans displayed and preserved ethnic differences, in part, as a way of celebrating and reaffirming the nation's cherished traditions of freedom and egalitarianism against the looming spectre of international communism. Conveniently obscuring other deeper tears in the national social fabric, particularly divisions of class and race, Americans pointed to ethnic integration as proof that the United States, indeed, exemplified democratic pluralism and opportunity.[58] By the 1950s, Americans accepted and celebrated themselves as a nation of Swedes and Italians and Finns and Irish. According to consensus historians, this diversity had made the nation strong and vibrant and rich. If the United States could successfully incorporate so many diverse ethnicities into its body politic, then American democracy must be working.

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[55]Carbon County News, 30 Aug. 1951, 1; 25 Aug. 1955, 1.
[56]Carbon County News, 17 January 1952, 1; 27 August 1953, 1.
[57]Carbon County News, 1 August 1974, 4.
[58]Bodnar, Remaking America, 138-39.

In Red Lodge, the Festival of Nations wove this selective version of ethnic adaptation into a triumphant historical narrative of American superiority rooted in a specific place. Residents created themselves as "uber-Americans" by celebrating their community's ethnic heritage. In true consensus fashion, the Festival emphasized what made America, and the community, strong, not what really divided them. For, in spite of the display of international flags and European costumes and ethnic performances, a conviction in American superiority permeated the Festival of Nations. Americanism shouted its presence at every turn, never letting visitors or residents forget that *Americans*—and, more particularly, local Red Lodge residents—had achieved this amazing display of international harmony. Each evening performance began (and still does) with a salute to the American flag and the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner" or "America the Beautiful." The international flags along Broadway included an American flag prominently placed in the center of each cluster of five. Hints that other nations might be treated with more respect than the United States could draw immediate criticism. In 1962, a local woman complained that the American flag had not been positioned prominently enough in the flag display at the Civic Center, and the Flag Chairman agreed that it would be "unfortunate" if visitors left the Festival thinking that the U.S. flag had been neglected.[59] In a similar manner, Festival organizers gradually reduced the prominence of the United Nations flag in the 1960s, until, like the other international flags, it too was overwhelmed by the omnipresence of the Stars and Stripes.[60] The Red Lodge festival's celebration of diversity could not threaten even the symbolism of the superiority of the American way of life. In fact, "diversity" itself had to be contained within some fairly strict boundaries in the postwar years to ensure its compatibility with the dominant consensus paradigm.

Cold War American pluralism, as presented by the Festival of Nations, showcased timeless, classless, raceless ethnicity. The Festival organizers' neat arrangements of nationality "groups"—"Yugoslavian," "British Isles," "Finnish"—presented ethnicity as something easily grasped by American

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[59]Gary W. Glantz to Mrs. Berver, 28 December 1962, Red Lodge Festival of Nations Collection, CCHS.

[60] References to the United Nations flag, so prominent in the first few Festivals, became increasingly rare in newspaper stories about the Festival of Nations in the late 1950s. By the mid-1990s the U.N. flag was simply one of the hundreds of flags displayed in the Civic Center and not included at all among the flags displayed along Broadway Avenue.

viewers. Stripped of race, class, and historical change, ethnicity became an inviolate concept—it was a kind of core identity brought pure and good from the Old Country and eventually accepted as good by other Americans. Ethnicity, in this view, had always been the same; what had changed was people's ability to understand, appreciate, and celebrate the different traditions and customs of these groups. Americans, and Red Lodge residents in particular, were special because they had learned how to do this. Easily comprehended and presented, static ethnicity fit readily into assumptions both of personal ethnicity and American pluralism.

The notion of "timeless" ethnicity shaped much of the town's preconceptions about the meaning of the Festival of Nations and its place in local history. Like other Americans, Red Lodge residents by the 1950s preferred to imagine ethnic groups in Werner Sollors' words, "as if they were natural, real, eternal, stable, and static units."[61] They wove this belief in "authentic" ethnicity into the Festival itself, continually insisting on the authenticity of the celebration's dances, foods, costumes, and crafts. Organizers assured residents that "'Authentic' is the watchword and on that basis the Festival is growing."[62] "Genuine" or "authentic" suggested a graspable ethnicity, something readily verified against a presumably stable, historical model—and more significantly, something that could be learned or, if need be, purchased. "Authenticity" came from ancestry, but also from information from older members of the ethnic group, and through costumes, recipes, and dances obtained from those with trusted claims to knowledge. One could even buy "genuine" ethnicity, as Festival organizers did, from European or American costume and craft shops that catered to an international interest in Old World folk traditions.[63] By wearing the right costume, dancing the correct steps, or shaping the polenta in some "traditional" way, Americans believed they could re-capture vital pieces of their parents' or grandparents' Old World culture. One could find and communicate a "Yugoslavian" ethnicity, as it were, by playing polka music composed in the Balkans on an accordion brought over from Europe by a grandparent or uncle. Insistence on authenticity denied the

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[61]Werner Sollors, ed. The Invention of Ethnicity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xiv.
[62]Carbon County News, 25 August 1955, 4; 30 August 1951, 1; 19 July 1956, 1; 29 August 1957, 1.
[63]Carbon County News, 11 June 1959, 1; 6 August 1959, 1; 23 July 1959, 1; "Minutes," 1 August 1960, 17 November 1982, Red Lodge Festival of Nations Collection, CCHS.

negotiated nature of American ethnicity, smoothing out the tangled strands of shifting immigrant group identification through a mutual agreement that a real, core ethnic identity existed to be purchased, learned, performed, sold.

"Ethnicity" was, however, a much messier concept than the simplified structure of the Red Lodge festival, and the broader pluralistic narrative, implied. Neatly compartmentalized nationality groups like "Yugoslavians" were, in fact, very recent inventions still in the process of definition and redefinition in the 1950s. Rather than the timeless construction presented in the Festival, ethnic creation, as scholars like Kathleen Neils Conzen have shown, had always been, and still was, very much an untidy *process* of individuals and groups figuring out what it meant to "be Finnish" or "be Croatian" in a race- and class-conscious America.[64] At the turn of the century, when most of Red Lodge's immigrant population came to the United States, "national" identifications were not fixed in much of Europe, let alone among immigrant groups living in America. The 19th century had witnessed a burst of nation-making movements in which victorious nationalists forced political unity on diverse groups whose members identified more with local surroundings than with larger creations such as "Italy" or "Austria." When these "Italians" and "Austrians" immigrated to the United States, they did not necessarily define themselves according to these broad political or national designations. Some of the shifting boundaries of immigrants' "national" identification could be seen in the 1910 Red Lodge census data. In this enumeration, "Finns" were sometimes Russians and sometimes not; Poles divided themselves (or were divided by the census taker) into "Russian" and "Austrian;" "Austrian" included "Servians," Croatians, Slovaks, Bohemians, Slovenians, and Montenegrins; and "Italian" encompassed a disparate group of northern and southern immigrants who could barely understand the each other's language or culture.[65] Gradually, these immigrants began to

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[64]See, for example, Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the USA," Altreitalie 2 (April 1990): 37-62; Russell A. Kazal, "Revisiting Assimilation: The Rise, Fall, and Reappraisal of a Concept in American Ethnic History," American Historical Review 100 (April 1995): 437-471; and Oliver Zunz, "American History and the Changing Meaning of Assimilation," Journal of American Ethnic History 4 (Spring 1985): 53-72.

[65]J.N. "Buck" Cornelio, a second-generation Italian, reported that Red Lodge had different Italian "factions." Most, he said, were from Northern Italy, some from Rome, but there were no Sicilians in Red

negotiate new "ethnic" identities in the United States, created in part by "outside" conceptions of who they were. To Americans, as Conzen points out, the "provincial and village identities, so important to the immigrants, were meaningless; these were lumped together into ethnonational categories, Irish Catholics, Italians, or Poles (or more likely, Micks, Wops, and Polacks)."[66] This "lumping," meant that diverse groups of people often ended up as "ethnic" brothers and sisters in the United States. These imposed labels, of course, required some adjustment before members began to accept them as comfortable or natural.[67] But eventually, third- and even second-generation immigrants accepted ethnic identities like "Yugoslavian" as meaningful, even "authentic," designations.

Ongoing tensions within some of the "ethnic" categories created by the Festival of Nations point out the shifting nature of these constructed identities. "British," for example, originally combined Scots, English, and Irish into a single category. Although not divided by high passions (as were their Old World compatriots), the local "British" always separated their performances at the Festival instead of attempting a unified presentation. At the 1951 program, for example, the Scots began with bagpipes and the Highland Fling, the English followed with Madrigal singers, and the Irish closed the show with a demonstration of the Irish jig.[68] Combining these divergent cultural practices did not seem to make sense; "British Isles" had more meaning as a geographical and political designation than as a cultural category. In the 1960s, the Scots, their numbers boosted by the participation of Caledonian societies from Billings and Miles City, finally demanded and received a "day" of their own which focused on Highland games, bagpipes, kilts, and Robert Burns—without the distractions of Irish stepdancers and English heraldry.[69] Although a handy term for grouping together residents for performance, "British Isles" made less sense to people who had not learned to think of themselves according to this broad title.

Lodge. Oral History of J.N. "Buck" Cornelio, OH 546, MHS. See also, Conzen, *et al.* "The Invention of Ethnicity," 48-49; and Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 177-179.

[66]Conzen, *et al.*, "The Invention of Ethnicity," 42-43.

[67]For example, Italians testified about the profound distinctions between Tyrolian Italians and other Italians in Steve Roman v. Societa Italiana E Fratellanzadi Mutuo Soccorso, a corporation (1918), Carbon County District Court (CCDC), Civil Records.

[68]Carbon County News, 23 August 1951, 1.

[69]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 171-73.

The "Yugoslavians" had even more difficulties creating themselves as a unified "ethnic" group. Croatians, Montenegrins, and Slovenians all came from countries that were once part of the Austrian-Hungarian empire, and which were later combined into "Yugoslavia" by international fiat after World War I. Following this larger model of inventing nations, Festival directors designated a single "Yugoslavia Day" to encompass this big, diverse group. Cultural distinctions within this designation remained prominent enough in the first festivals that the "Yugoslavians" had to create separate programs on their "Day." The Croatians and Slovenians, especially, simply could not work together to produce a unified program; they performed separately not only on their own night, but also at All Nations Day, which was created in 1960 specifically to celebrate the "amazing" harmony evidenced by the cooperation of all these different nationality groups in a single festival.[70] Such tensions gradually faded, however, as the various groups grew accustomed to the shared "nationality" designation and as ties to Old Country cultures grew fainter with time and distance. The description of Yugoslavia Day in the official 1971 Festival of Nations program did not even mention Serbs, Croats, and Montenegrins: from the original immigrants to the present-day performers, all had become simply "Yugoslavian."[71] In the four decades since the first Festival of Nations, Red Lodge "Slavs" forged a benign public definition of "Yugoslavian" ethnicity—centered around tambouritzas, kolas, and pig roasts--that obscured previous distinctions between Slavic immigrant groups and presented "Yugoslavian" itself as a timeless, natural "ethnicity." In 1997, though, the group changed its name to "Slavic," reflecting the years of brutal warfare and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans that had destroyed any international fiction of a united Yugoslavia. Significantly, however, group members did not consider splitting up their own local pan-Slavic designation. In fact, Red Lodge "Slavs" publicly chided their Old Country brethren for not learning how to get along as well as did the Festival of Nations' Serbs and Croats.[72] Glossing over the bitter ethnic divisions within the former Yugoslavia, Red Lodge residents blithely pointed to themselves as proof that "Slavs" really were brothers, capable of harmonious reconciliation.

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[70]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 172-73.

[71]"21st Annual Festival of Nations, Special Souvenir Edition," 1971, 12, CCHS.

What Red Lodge "Slavs" and other Festival of Nations participants overlooked, of course, was race. Race played a critical, though rarely acknowledged, role in the construction of European ethnicity in the United States. By the mid-20th century, most Americans recognized European ethnics as "white." In a racialized society, "whiteness" mattered. As "not-black" and "not Indian," white ethnics secured their positions within the dominant culture, even if they chose to ignore (as did most Americans) the importance of what George Lipsitz calls their "possessive investment in whiteness."[73] Mid-century conceptions of timeless ethnicity assumed the common "whiteness" and middle-class aspirations of European immigrants—assumptions that served well the middle-class descendants of these immigrants. Established themselves as "white" Americans, Red Lodge's ethnics assumed the whiteness of their ancestors, weaving this racial construction into their histories, including the Festival of Nations. Later-generation ethnics preferred, perhaps, not to investigate too deeply their own historic claims to this racial designation.

In the first two decades of the century, however, Slovenians, Italians and other "swarthy" immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe could not take their "whiteness" so much for granted. In the heyday of biological racism, "white" was not just a skin color, but a reflection of culture, social behaviors, and even the shape of one's face. Sociologist Edward A. Ross, one of the most prominent academics in the country in the early 20th century, maintained, for example, that the newcomers from Southern Europe were "sub-common" stock. Framing his argument in the language of scientific sociology, Ross concluded that these immigrants—whose numbers included many of those who settled in and around Red Lodge—were "hirsute, low-browed, big-faced persons of obviously low mentality."[74] Other educated observers agreed. Social reformer Jacob Riis, a champion of the lower classes, noted a variety of traits, both good and bad, among newer immigrant groups which he attributed to their "blood" rather than to learned cultural behaviors. Riis described the "Italian," for example, as "hot-headed" and a "born gambler," but also "gay, lighthearted and, if his fur is not stroked the wrong way, inoffensive as a

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[72]"Slavic Day" program, Festival of Nations, 9 August 1997, Red Lodge, Montana.

[73]George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," American Quarterly 47 (September 1995): 379.

child."[75] Other Americans took a much less benign stance toward the influx of "swarthy" newcomers. Artist Frederic Remington, a popular and vociferous champion of the Anglo-West, readily added southern Europeans to his list of inferior peoples worthy only of extinction: "Jews, Injuns, Chinamen, Italians, Huns—the rubbish of the earth I hate—I've got some Winchesters and when the massacring begins, I can get my share of 'em...."[76] No one in Red Lodge publicly echoed such racist blatherings, but many early residents clearly saw southern and eastern Europeans as a race apart. Rocky Fork Coal Company manager Daniel O'Shea, for instance, an Irish immigrant himself, informed disgruntled stockholders in 1913 that the townsite company made less money that year in part because of the "change in the type of coal miner employed in the mines in this vicinity." "There has been," O'Shea argued, "a large influx of the Slavonian, Serb and other southern European races to these coal fields, and such people do not build, do not improve real estate; rather are they disposed to herd in large numbers in cheap places."[77] Where later residents would see simply "white" ethnics, earlier inhabitants observed racialized, even bestialized, distinctions in the town's immigrant populations.

Racialized arguments about immigrant groups dropped out of celebratory local histories such as the Festival of Nations, though, overwhelmed by the subsequent creation of these immigrants as "white." Gradually as historian Noel Ignatiev has shown, European immigrant groups learned to identify themselves as white, creating "a new solidarity based on color" by setting themselves off against African Americans and others whose skins were more clearly darker than their own.[78] White workers in the East defined themselves as "not Blacks," while immigrants in Red Lodge set themselves off against the few Chinese, Mexicans, and African Americans who dared attempt to find opportunity in the mines and businesses of

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[74]Edward A. Ross, The Old World in the New: The Significance of Past and Present Immigration to the American People (New York: Century Co., 1914), 117-118.

[75]Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 94-95.

[76]Quoted in Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 97.

[77] D.G. O'Shea to S.T. Hauser, 13 August 1913, Box 9, Folder 10, Samuel T. Hauser Papers, MC 37, MHS; Zupan and Owen, Red Lodge, 368.

[78]Noel Ignatiev, How the Irish Became White (New York: Routledge, 1995), 96. David R. Roediger, The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class (London: Verso, 1991, 1993), 179-80. See also, Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 370.

the burgeoning town. Immigrant miners, with the assistance and encouragement of workers' organizations like the Western Mining Federation, fought to secure their own position in the mines and in the local community through a racialized construction of themselves as "white" workers. From the town's earliest years the local miners' unions enforced restrictions against Chinese workers at the Rocky Fork mines and issued statements in support of legislation ending Asian immigration entirely. During the frequent boom periods, the mines hired freely almost any man whose back could bear the work; but invariably those employed were of European background. A few Mexicans worked around the mines in the early years, but not for long, and the town's only longtime African American resident found employment shining shoes, not digging coal.[79] The mines became the province of "white" workers, and the town's European immigrant laborers increasingly defined themselves as "white." The overwhelming presence of foreign-born residents in Red Lodge—43% of the population in 1910—aided this process. The sheer number of "Italian" and "Hunky" miners ensured that merchants and other professionals dependent on mine wages could not blatantly discriminate against these workers and their families as "non-white." The immigrants' "whiteness" grew ever more accepted, especially in the 1920s as Red Lodge adopted its Wild West imagery and business leaders encouraged all residents to don the costume of the white conquerors of the West. "Swarthy" immigrants dressed in cowboy boots and hats stood in marked contrast to the "red-skinned" Indians who participated in the seasonal Western pageantry clad in their "own" Wild West costumes of breechcloths and feathers. By the 1950s, the process of "whitening" had proceeded so far that race, even historically, no longer seemed to touch the town in a public sense. Descendants of the "hirsute, low-browed" immigrants readily constructed consensus narratives, like that embodied in the Festival of Nations, that let racial distinctions drop away entirely, leaving simply "strong-willed Americans [and] ambitious and determined immigrants" to people the community's celebratory local history.[80]

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[79]Old-time miner Tony Persha recalled that, "We didn't have any Chinese, or, we never had any colored people there, working in the mines or even living there. I understand at one time here in Red Lodge they did have one negro living here for quite a number of years." This was Jack White who had a little shoe shine parlor on Main street. Persha added that at one point there were a few Mexicans in the Red Lodge mines, but they didn't stay long. Tony Persha, OH 305, Tape 1, side A, MHS. See also, Edward Blazina, OH 1485, 7, MHS.

[80]Lampi, "Red Lodge," 24.

The addition of "Montana" as a "Nationality" equal to all the other ethnicities underscored the assumptions made in the Festival, and at the national level, about the place of European ethnicity in American society and culture. Decked out in cowboy boots and spurs, "Montana Day" offered the same kind of "Western" imagery that local residents had known for over 20 years of rodeo performances. This imagery had generously wrapped up any resident who agreed to dress up and play along with the town's energetic rodeo promoters. Ethnic background had never precluded participation in rodeo events; local business leaders did not care where residents were born, just that they dressed up for the tourists. The more people who went Western—beards, loud shirts, cowboy boots and hat—the better for the town's old West image. Encouraged by boosters and the demands of tourism, local "ethnics" had already gained entrance into the public "Montana" identity by 1951, and they readily took part in the Festival of Nations' version as well; names like Matt Sironen, Paavo Huovinen, and Olavi Kainu showed up regularly on "Montana Day" programs.[81]

Identification with the "whiteness" of Montana Day, however, ran deeper than the simple act of pulling on a pair of jeans or growing a beard for the annual rodeo. "Montana" marked an investment in a "West" of American conquest and domination. By the 1950s, European ethnics were well entrenched as beneficiaries of westward expansion. They lived and worked on land that had sustained thousands of Crow Indians before a succession of broken treaties pushed the original inhabitants out of the area. Red Lodge itself was predicated on the 1887 dislocation of the Crow from their established reservation. European immigrants had claimed this inheritance of racial conquest as they set pick to coal in the black tunnels of the Rocky Fork mine, hewed the trees of the Beartooth forests, or served customers at the local merchant cooperative. Even though only a fraction of the area's wealth passed through their hands, Red Lodge immigrants established themselves as rightful inheritors of what Patricia Nelson Limerick has called the West's "Legacy of Conquest."

A little tidbit in the local newspaper points out how pervasive the assumption of immigrant inclusion had become in the dominant narrative of the West. In 1950 columnist Roger S. Davis, a third-

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[81]Carbon County News, 21 August 1958, 3.

generation immigrant, lavished praise on the town's grand Civic Center opening gala. In his regular Carbon County News column, Davis informed readers that the show was an "excellent example of the type of entertainment that is possible in a multi-cultural society. It defied an 'impossibility.'" A few paragraphs later, however, Davis launched into a racist story about the Crow Indians. He suggested that instead of painting Indians around the tepee in a new town mural, the artist should just wait until next Fourth of July and "he may have some genuine ones around it. If the Redmen get some firewater, there may be three or four resting near the mural after several attempts at running headlong into the tepees door flap."[82] This weak little anecdote, common enough in a western culture that perpetually ridiculed American Indians, stands out mostly for the juxtaposition between the celebration of "multiculturalism" and the continuing derogatory attitude toward Indians in public forums. "Dumb Finn" jokes, doubtless, still made their way through the community, but not into the local newspapers' coverage of the town's ethnic festivities. These events, especially the Festival of Nations, were somehow too special, sacred even, to permit so much as a hint of bigotry against European ethnics. Indians, however, stood outside the town and outside the local definition of "multi-culturalism." Although their ancestors had lived in the region longer than had anyone else, Indians were not "Montanans." They were the conquered, not the conquerors. Their continued exclusion from public assumptions of "Montanan" only highlighted the successful incorporation of European immigrants into the culture of white conquerors.

Residents whitewashed Red Lodge's ethnic past in the Festival of Nations and other local histories, blurring or eliminating the very real racial distinctions that still shaped local culture and identity. In much the same way, residents chose to ignore the deep class distinctions that had defined community life during the mining years and which continued to mark local society. Focusing on safe and attractive ethnic traditions, the Festival's historical message obscured the town's history of socialism, unionism, and bitter strikes: class-driven movements that had divided the community more completely than differences of clothing or cooking styles. For a variety of reasons, residents preferred not to remember publicly what had divided them most deeply.

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[82]Carbon County News, 26 October 1950, 7.

Like race, class was a national problem best ignored in the 1950s when the rhetorical battle of one-upmanship raged between the United States and the emerging Communist bloc. Attacked by communists for the great disparity of wealth in their nation, Americans began to stress a pluralistic model of American society that denied the persistence of class divisions. According to this model, the United States did not have fixed classes that determined a person's identity and destiny. Refuting studies done in the 1930s that suggested the presence of a real, vital class system in the nation, sociologists in the early 1950s, argued that class, if present in communities, was fluid and Americans were continuously moving upward.[83] These ideas, which tended to ignore or gloss over the connections between race and opportunity, assumed popular form. As early as 1940, a Fortune magazine survey found that 47% of Americans considered themselves middle class, while 10.6% thought of themselves as "working, laboring," 2.9% as "upper," and only 4% defined themselves as "Lower."[84] In 1949, Life magazine published a story on Rockford, Illinois that defined and examined the town's six classes, but with an emphasis on the advancement between classes. Most of the representative figures from each class had moved up at least one rung ("upper-lower" to "lower-middle" or "upper-middle" to "middle-upper") in his or her lifetime. Even the "lower-lower" class resident, Sam Sygulla, who lived in a trailer court and had not graduated from high school, saw himself on the move. As the reporter put it: "Sam is at the bottom of the ladder. But he has dreams. He is excited about an air-conditioning training program in Chicago which he may join."[85] The only thing standing between Sam and "upper-lower"—or even "lower-middle"—status was hard work and determination.

Red Lodge's Festival of Nations embraced this pluralistic model at the local level. Residents publicly denied the town's very real class divisions—past and present—to emphasize, instead, their triumphant tale of ethnicity united. This erasure of class as a community division showed up clearly not only in the Festival of Nations' performances of timeless ethnicity, but also in the printed and spoken

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[83]Polenberg, One Nation Divisible, 101-104. For 1930s studies on class, see, for example, Earl H. Bell, "Social Stratification in a Small Community," The Scientific Monthly 38 (February 1934): 157-164.
[84]"The People of the U.S.A.—A Self-Portrait," Fortune 21 (February 1940): 14.
[85]"A Sociologist Looks at an American Community," Life 27 (12 September 1949): 110.

histories of the Festival.[86] The best example of classlessness as a historical creation was provided by local author Leona Lampi's 1961 article, "Red Lodge: From a Frenetic Past of Crows, Coal and Boom and Bust Emerges a Unique Festival of Diverse Nationality Groups," published in Montana, the Magazine of Western History. A Red Lodge native and second-generation Finnish immigrant, Lampi made ethnicity the key point of historical community division. Relying on wishful booster literature about the town's turn-of-the-century working class, Lampi painted a portrait of Red Lodge laborers that fit exactly with the messages conveyed by the Festival of Nations. Describing local miners at the turn of the century, for example, Lampi quoted directly from an 1892 article in the Northern Pacific Railroad's Northwest Magazine:

> The miners are an orderly and intelligent class and there have been no labor troubles of too serious a nature to be settled by the tact, kindness and good sense of the management. Some of the men live with their families in neat and comfortable homes built by the coal company and others live in little log cottages of their own. They support churches and are eager to secure for their children as good an education as the graded public school of the town affords. The troops of rosy-cheeked little ones that flock to the school every morning leave no room for doubt as to the healthfulness of this mountain climate.[87]

Class lines barely mattered in early Red Lodge; everyone in the community shared the same basic middle-class values of home, church, and school. The only divisions that counted, in Lampi's history, as in the Festival of Nations, lay within the "often-seething melting pot" of the town's various "nationality" enclaves. Immigrant groups maintained their boundaries so thoroughly, Lampi maintained, that "if there was crossing of the 'line,' at dances and other gatherings, contact would almost invariably end in fist fights and

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[86]Festival of Nations brochures have routinely described these European immigrants as "pioneers" of Red Lodge. See also, Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge. The town's 100th Anniversary edition of the local newspaper ran a section on long-lived residents, "Profiles of Red Lodge area pioneers," that included several second-generation immigrants as well as the 101-year old Blaz Sneider who had been born in Fuzina, Croatia. "Red Lodge: Tales of the First 100 Years," 44-48, CCHS.

[87]Lampi, "Red Lodge," 22.

brawls."[88] By the 1940s, however, she argued, these divergent groups finally broke down the walls dividing them and joined equally in claiming a sense of place and roots in this western landscape. The story, like the Festival, ended triumphantly—with local people eliminating prejudice and intolerance from the community through the agency of a public festival. Even history became inclusive. In Lampi's story all Red Lodge residents could be proud to call themselves, "The descendants of our hardy pioneers, American and foreign, who found their way to the banks of a rocky stream at the foothills of the Beartooth Mountains."[89] By depoliticizing class and ignoring race in their local history, residents like Lampi proudly claimed their immigrant parents and grandparents as Red Lodge "pioneers"—peers of the town's original business class, who in the 1890s had implicitly denied this title to miners and immigrants.

But, much as Americans might deny its presence, class had mattered in the late 19th century and it still mattered in the middle years of the 20th century. Red Lodge residents had woven class into the town's nomenclature as surely they had ethnic distinctions. If there was in Red Lodge a "Finn Town" and "Little Italy," there was also a "Hi Bug"—the small-town equivalent of a Nob Hill. Business people, doctors, professionals, and mine officials made their homes in Hi Bug at the north end of town, on a stately tree-lined street away from the smoke of the mines and the garlic-scented homes of the immigrant miners.[90] Although local histories might lightly touch on "Hi Bug" as simply the place where "affluent native Americans clustered," longtime inhabitants understood the neighborhood in more personal ways.[91] In an industrial mining town marked by the struggles between corporations and labor unions, class distinctions ran deeply enough that residents could still recall them with bitterness after 50 or more years. If the Festival of Nations created a specific public memory that ignored class, it did not supersede or eliminate *personal* memories of this local hierarchy.

Miners, not surprisingly, remained most emphatic in their memories of local class differences. For many miners, in fact, class stood as the key social division in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Against the

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[88]Lampi, "Red Lodge," 25.
[89]Lampi, "Red Lodge," 31.
[90]Zupan and Owen, Red Lodge, 36-37.
[91]Zupan and Owen, Red Lodge, 30.

perceived inhumanity of the industrial system, workers formed a sense of class that subsumed ethnic differences. Interviewed in the 1980s and early 1990s, former coal miners who had grown up in Red Lodge's small ethnic enclaves continued to structure their memories more around work and class than along ethnic lines.[92] Their working lives had not followed Leona Lampi's tale of happy, contented laborers, and they made clear distinctions between management and labor, capitalists and workers. Miners united across ethnic lines to work, create unions, and face down the operators who, as one miner's son noted, did not care about nationality and language, only that laborers "were over here and they could make them do the hard work."[93] Looking back at the heyday of Red Lodge mining from the distance of the early 1980s, retired miners like Tony Persha still insisted that mine operators always found good jobs for their own family members, but would willingly sacrifice other workers' lives in the name of profit: "They don't care about a man's life; they can always replace that man; a lot of men looking for work." Persha, like other old-time miners, continued to structure his personal memories around class divisions decades after the local mines had closed down. These miners insisted that the multi-ethnic unions were the only protection the workers had against the power of mine managers. Even when questioned specifically about ethnic differences in the community, miners like John Kastelitz, whose parents were both born in "Austria" (Slovenia), emphasized class instead. The miners were different nationalities, he admitted, "but we were all 'brothers' and worked together."[94] As another retired miner insisted, "nationality made absolutely no difference" in the working-class neighborhoods, where all would "come to help" a neighbor building a house or putting up a garage.[95] Ethnicity played a great role in these men's lives—many of them, like Persha and Kastelitz had grown up speaking "Austrian" and other Old World languages—but as industrial laborers they had formed such a strong sense of themselves as workers that class cohesion overwhelmed memories of ethnic differences.

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[92]This tendency to insist on class rather than ethnicity was evident both in a 1980s oral history project by Laurie Mercier, "Montanans at Work," and one done in the early 1990s by Anna Zellick, which focused primarily on South Slavic immigrants and their children. All interviews are at the Montana Historical Society.

[93]Walpas Koski Oral History, OH 359, MHS.

[94]John Kastelitz Oral History, OH 1478, MHS.

Ethnic differences mattered in the lives of working-class immigrants and their children, but class mattered also. Gender and ethnicity intertwined with class to create boundaries, both real and imagined, in the town's social and cultural life. Indeed, for many long-term residents, class has stood out as the most painful marker of difference in their memories of the town's early days. Not all felt the pain equally, of course. For many ethnic boys in the 1920s and 1930s, for example, class was evident but not that important. Tony Zupan, who graduated from Carbon County High School in 1939, recalled few problems getting along with boys from different ethnic groups or from Hi Bug. A talented athlete, Zupan, like many other second-generation immigrant boys, built alliances on the ball field, where athletic prowess overwhelmed ethnicity and class. Even the Hi Bug boys recognized the leveling of the baseball diamond, where the "rough" boys from the south end of town often held the upper hand. Zupan recognized class divisions, but insisted that sports eliminated such distinctions. "We were on teams together. We were team mates through the high school years, and we just liked each other."[96] Red Lodge did not have any girls' sports teams in those years, though, and even if the boys all played together, the girls, such as Zupan's sister Liz, were always "acutely aware" of differences between their family and the residents of Hi Bug who wore nicer clothes and hired the poor girls to do their work.[97] In the 1920s and 1930s, Slavic, Finnish, and Italian girls, dressed in the outcast clothing their families received from the local relief office, walked daily from "Lo Bug" to the more affluent homes of the town's north end to clean house and do laundry. Little social interaction took place between the daughters of the Hi Bug and the "foreign girls" who cleaned their houses.[98] Some, like Rose Jurkovich, harbored resentment for decades against the better-off townsfolk who thought "they could get the foreign people to work and slave for them for absolutely nothing."[99] Although the Festival and printed local histories may have ignored the class dimension of past community divisions, these young women could not. Almost a half century later, these

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[95]Daniel M. McDonald Oral History, OH 356, MHS.

[96]Tony and Shirley Zupan Oral History, OH 1479, MHS. See also, Alice and Richard Mallin Oral History, OH 1481, MHS.

[97]Zupan Oral History.

[98]Senia Kallio Oral History, OH 357; Rose Jurkovitch Oral History, OH 1486; Zupan Oral History, MHS.

[99]Jurkovitch Oral History.

now middle-class women continued to feel the residual humiliation of having once been forced to play the role of servant, inferior to the town's upper crust.

The most vivid class distinctions faded as the mines closed and the population shrank, but they did not disappear. Even into the 1950s, as townspeople celebrated their annual festival of unity and friendship, county leaders continued to publish in the Red Lodge newspaper the names of all those receiving general relief payments from the state welfare system. In defiance of established state policies, local civic leaders insisted that those getting assistance should be publicly shamed.[100] American pluralism, after all, presumed that people would work their way up the ladder on their own, not take government aid to get by. Other signs of continuing class divisions manifested themselves over time. In the 1970s, middle-class residents mobilized against the presence of inexpensive mobile and modular homes in certain neighborhoods, requesting that mobile homes "and houses that look like trailers" be restricted to a tract of land near the local landfill.[101] Inexpensive housing had its place—out by the dump. Likewise, a federally funded low-income housing project was acceptable only on the fringes of town, beside the local "See 'Em Alive Zoo."[102]

The Festival of Nations, organized and promoted by a concerned group of middle-class activists, ignored these lingering class issues, creating instead a joyous celebration of classless immigrants united in a story of American progress and success. And, immigrants and their children, many of whom considered themselves "middle class" by the 1950s, supported this interpretation of local history that privileged benign ethnicity over now-painful memories of deference and service to a local upper class. Through the Festival of Nations, Red Lodge residents constructed a vision of classless, raceless ethnicity which they used to create an appealing local heritage; they celebrated diversity to create and commemorate local unity. Centering on cultural divisions that were no longer divisive, Festival participants generated their own "consensus" history of Red Lodge; they envisioned a past in which differences ultimately united local

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[100]V.A. Burr to Joseph H. Roe, 11 June 1947, Director of the Division of Public Assistance's Responses to State Field Supervisors' Field Reports, Central Counties, 1/3, Montana Department of Public Welfare Records, RS 236, MHS.

[101]Carbon County News, 6 November 1975, 1.

residents rather than dividing them.[103] Significantly, this unity ultimately assumed that European immigrants simply grafted their traditions onto an already established and strong American culture. As in the 1930s ethnic pageants, only those differences nonthreatening to the mainstream American capitalist tradition became part of the "amazing display of diversity" that was the Festival of Nations.

Of course, too much "unity" could be a problem if it threatened to turn into homogeneity. Festival promoters needed *difference* , lots of it, in their annual public display of diversity. The Festival of Nations, after all, was not simply an expression of local cultural values; it also had developed into a major tourist attraction by the mid-1950s. Ironically, however, just as Festival organizers began to promote the Festival of Nations as a living example of international brotherhood, the examples of international harmony supposedly embodied in the Festival were visibly fading from the community. By the 1950s ethnic differences were "safe" enough for public celebration, in part because Old World customs and flavors had ceased to be part of the visible everyday life of the town. Fewer and fewer residents spoke the old languages on the streets of Red Lodge, the trainloads of grapes for homemade wines had long since stopped arriving, and "Finn Town" had become a geographic rather than an ethnic designation. Within the first few years of the celebration, some Festival tourists began to complain that the people of Red Lodge appeared disappointingly "American." And, the town's homogenous American identity grew only more pronounced over the years, as the original immigrant generation inevitably continued to age and die. As one observer noted in the 1980s, a large percentage of the population claimed Italian descent, but the local grocery stores did not carry olive oil in anything other than small, specialty containers.[104] Residents proudly announced their ethnicity to strangers, but their accents, clothes, customs, and even foods seemed to be generically white western American. The town no longer needed a Festival to unite residents across ethnic lines; it needed the Festival to reinforce those lines publicly.

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[102]Carbon County News, 6 November 1975, 1.

[103]For more on consensus history, see Peter Novick, That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 333.

[104]Frederick Errington, "Reflexivity Deflected: The Festival of Nations as an American Cultural Performance," American Ethnologist 14 (November 1987), 662.

Even as Festival promoters presented an increasingly grand message about their celebration by the mid-1950s, they had to work harder to produce visible displays of ethnic difference. In order for the Festival to demonstrate harmony among different peoples—and remain successful as a tourist attraction—it had to display to visitors and locals the differences among town residents that life in Red Lodge had gradually erased. This contradiction in presentation and message meant that local leaders had to plead continually with residents, especially those who worked downtown, to appear ethnic for the tourists. Appearing ethnic usually meant wearing costumes, but also included playing instruments like the accordion, or learning and performing Old World folk dances. Festival leaders tended to emphasize costumes as the easiest way to convey ethnic differences. Almost anything would do. "A simple gathered skirt and dirndl blouse, or a vestee, bonnet or sash will do wonders to make your ordinary clothes look like a costume," begged the organizers in 1955 as they sought to please visitors who wanted residents to appear at least a little exotic.[105]

Every year Festival organizers publicly praised the great community spirit and deep ethnic heritages that embodied the all-volunteer Festival of Nations. But, for many residents, as indicated by the ongoing pleas for people to dress up, "ethnicity" did not necessarily mean putting on a costume and performing in public. Hundreds of residents took part in the Festival every year, proudly showing off the costumes, dance steps, and recipes that made them feel particularly "Finnish" or "Norwegian" or "Italian." But other first-, second-, and third-generation immigrants simply did not see the point of buying or sewing European peasant outfits, learning folk dances, or cooking food for crowds of tourists. "Ethnicity" had certainly shaped the lives of most Red Lodge residents—the town was still 21% foreign born in 1950[106]—but, except for the nine days of the Festival, that ethnicity took more private forms of expression. The local undertaker read Finnish prayers at funerals, residents spoke Slovenian or Italian to their parents, visited family in Norway, or longed for the good Finnish bread the local bakery used to supply.[107] *Public*

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[105]Carbon County News, 26 May 1955, 1; 5 June 1952, 1;27 July 1967, 1; "Minutes," 19 July 1960, Red Lodge Festival of Nations Collection, CCHS.

[106] Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1950, vol. II, part 26, 44.

[107]See, for example, Zupan Oral History, Mallin Oral History, Blazina Oral History, Persha Oral History.

ethnicity, however, was a burden that not everyone wanted to assume in the cause of trying to make tourists satisfied with their experience in the town. For Festival workers desperate to make Red Lodge live up to some idealized vision of a multi-cultural European peasant village, ethnicity was not what it should be.

As Festival organizers struggled to make Red Lodge "look" ethnic, they found themselves increasingly dependent on the efforts of "symbolic" ethnics: residents whose connection to the ethnic group was not always strong, but who desired to express their ethnic heritages in public ways. Like many other Americans in the 1960s and 1970s, these local people continued to identify with certain ethnic groups long after cohesive ethnic communities had fallen apart. Herbert Gans called this "symbolic ethnicity." Looking at later-generation ethnics, he observed that ethnicity created no demands or restraints upon individuals, who felt free to choose attractive, easy, and convenient aspects of an ethnic culture to celebrate. Individuals chose to be ethnic, in part, to differentiate themselves from an American society that seemed increasingly homogenous and bland.[108] As a respondent in a study done by Mary C. Waters put it: "...we feel uneasy before the prospect of becoming just Americans. We feel uneasy before the prospect of becoming as undistinguishable from one another as our motel rooms are, or as flavorless and mass produced as the bread many of us eat."[109] According to Werner Sollors, that blandness of American culture actually made possible such a notion as "symbolic ethnicity." "It is," he states, "ironically, because Americans take so much for granted among themselves that they can dramatize their differences comfortably."[110] Symbolic or voluntary ethnics wanted their ethnicity to be "comfortable," easy to put on and making no real demands on their lives, but serving to make them feel special. Public performances, like ethnic festivals, served as easy ways for later-generation immigrants to retain a feeling of ethnicity. Such festivities did not make great demands on individuals, but could be fun and interesting ways of

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[108]Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America," Ethnic and Racial Studies 2 (Jan. 1979): 1-19.

[109]Mary C. Waters, "The Construction of a Symbolic Ethnicity: Suburban White Ethnics in the 1980s," in Immigration and Ethnicity, 88; see also, Waters, Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

setting themselves off against a homogenous American culture.[111] Unlike the downtown workers who had to be coaxed into donning "dirndls and vestees," some residents took great pride and pleasure in dressing up in Old World costumes and performing complicated dances or displaying family treasures from Norway or Serbia. The praise and encouragement that such performances received from admiring audiences only reinforced this sense of pride and enjoyment.[112] Spurred on by Festival promoters and the ready audiences of the celebration, local residents formed ethnic bands, dance groups, and choirs, often practicing year-round for the annual summer Festival.

The Festival became so successful in reviving certain types of ethnic performances that Red Lodge actually began to export its public ethnicity. Red Lodge bands and dance groups, resuscitated by the Festival's annual presentations, gained some regional notoriety in the 1960s and 1970s. The Yugoslavian Tambouritza Band, a small string orchestra, attained the greatest success. The eleven-man group cut two records after it officially reorganized in 1961 to perform at the Festival of Nations. Although labeled as "an outgrowth of the early Yugoslavian musicians who came to Montana in the early part of the 20th century," the group admitted that it was not entirely of "Yugoslavian descent" anymore. All members, however, shared "a familiarity with the guitar and mandolin-like tamburitza instruments"—a rather vague definition of "ethnic" affiliation.[113] Other groups found themselves in demand at cultural events and festivals around the region. In the 1980s, a strong "Scandinavian" folk dance troupe performed at various Oktoberfests and other Autumn celebrations in Montana and Wyoming. Another good example of an invented "ethnic" group—"Scandinavians," after all, had fought each other bitterly over the centuries—Red Lodge's dancing Norwegians, Danes and Swedes traveled regularly to folk seminars in Colorado to learn new dances and brush up on techniques.[114] Individuals also sparked

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[110]Werner Sollors, Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 14

[111]Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity."

[112]Degh observed this process with Hungarian-American folk dancers performing at the Smithsonian Folk Festival, "Grape-Harvest Festival of Strawberry Farmers," 129.

[113]"Festival of Nations," 1974 program, 12, CCHS.

[114]"Minutes," 19 September 1984, 26 November 1984, 16 October 1985, Red Lodge Festival of Nations Collection, CCHS.

interest and excitement in certain "nationalities." Finnish-American singer Sue Maki faithfully performed year after year at the Festival of Nations, a central figure at that nationality's evening program. "Montana" Vera Buening, similarly, led the "Montana Day" entertainment for decades; dancing around the floor in her hand-sewn cowgirl outfits, squeezing out tunes on her accordion, Buening almost single-handedly kept "Montana" Day alive through the 1980s. Such dedication ebbed and flowed, though. The Tambouritza Band dissolved in the 1980s, only to be reborn again in the 1990s (no records cut this time around), and an aged Buening no longer had the strength to perform by the mid-1990s.

As newcomers took the place of those who quit or moved on, the Festival retained the same structure and messages given it by concerned residents in the early 1950s. Each generation, however, added its own meanings to the public ethnicity it chose to perform each August for the town and for itself. Deeply felt ethnic affiliations did not necessarily have much to do with these continuing performances. Rather than exemplifying the peaceful coexistence of diverse peoples, the Festival really showcased residents who had the time and interest to learn about ethnic traditions, practice them, and present them in public. One young participant in 1996 explained her varied performances this way: "I dance the Scotch-Irish because it's really peppy and upbeat. Also, my grandfather is Scotch. The Yugoslavian I dance just because I like it and I dance German because my great-grandparents came from Germany."[115]

The Red Lodge Festival of Nations, a cultural product of the anxious years of the early Cold War, continued to exist largely through the efforts of a firm core of "symbolic ethnics," both from within and outside the community, who enjoyed their ethnic affiliations and relished the opportunity to show off costumes, songs and dance steps to receptive audiences.

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Red Lodge's public celebration of immigrant cultures played like a reversal of the famous Americanization pageant presented by the graduating class of Henry Ford's English School during WWI.

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[115] Billings Gazette, 5 August 1996, "Carbon County" vertical file, Parmly Billings Library.

In Ford's drama, immigrant workers marched on stage "dressed in their national garbs" and then poured themselves into "the Ford melting pot" from which they emerged "dressed in their best American clothes and waving American flags."[116] In the Festival of Nations, American descendants of immigrants performed the flipside of this ritual by symbolically reappropriating the "national garb" that the Ford workers had stripped off decades earlier. In this act of reappropriation, Red Lodge "ethnics" publicly reclaimed their parents' and grandparents' European clothing, dances, and foods—emerging from their own local melting pot as timeless, classless ethnics whose traditions and customs fit comfortably into American middle-class society. In so doing, they reflected current conceptions of "Americanism" and America as a land of immigrants.

The Festival of Nations quickly assumed a prominent place in Red Lodge's public presentation of itself. "Ethnicity" joined the "cowboy" of the Wild West as a marker of local identity. Like the "cowboy," the symbolic "ethnic" was an ahistorical figure, stripped of class and racial context and remodeled into a representation of what modern residents wanted that figure to be. Inspired by national propaganda efforts and other international festivals, Red Lodge inhabitants created a public "ethnicity" which was both attractive to tourists and reaffirmed the place of immigrant forebears in the town's history. Drawing selectively from the town's past, residents generated a historical narrative to support this attractive vision of ethnic difference and progress. Tourists did not want to be confronted with messy race and class issues in Red Lodge's ethnic festival; locals wanted to include their families in the progressive story of American pluralism. In the best Cold War fashion, Festival organizers produced a Festival of American pluralism, of differences combined into a joyous, peaceful celebration of democratic opportunity.

The simplicity and power of this message of triumphant ethnic diversity contributed to the appeal of the Festival of Nations for both participants and visitors. The Festival of Nations was Red Lodge's embodiment of the national motto—*E Pluribus Unum*. From the many are made one. Its performance commemorated the conviction held by many Americans by the middle of the 20th century that (European) immigrant history lay at the very heart of American identity. America was a nation of immigrants who

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[116]Quoted in Zunz, "American History and the Changing Meaning of Assimilation," 55.

came together, overcoming differences, in the pursuit of common dreams of liberty and democracy. From many different peoples were made one strong, vibrant nation. The Festival of Nations, locals believed, exemplified this harmonious development. They held up the Festival as a model of success to which other nations should pay heed: the rest of the world should be more like Red Lodge, more like America. Like a set of mirrors, the Festival reflected not only America in Red Lodge, but also Red Lodge in the Festival of Nations. Through a display of European ethnicity and rhetoric about international cooperation, Red Lodge residents presented themselves as a living embodiment of what had made America great. And this ideal of ethnic pluralism, in turn, became part of the Red Lodge identity. Because European ethnicity has been displayed and celebrated so prominently every year, it has become a integral part of how residents think about their community and their own place within it.

CHAPTER FIVE

NATURE'S WEST

Man's conquest of raw nature is the subject of all history....[1]

Let's get this straight. Red Lodge is a stunningly beautiful place. Although the town itself may sometimes seem run-down, shabby around the edges, or a bit ticky-tacky touristy, the scenery that surrounds the community more than makes up for any aesthetic untidiness in the town proper. Standing in the shadows of the Beartooth Range of the Rocky Mountains—which includes the highest peaks in Montana—Red Lodge is only a few miles from what many Americans consider the archetype of "beautiful nature." Soaring mountain peaks, vast forests, rushing streams, dramatic waterfalls, wild animals, *and* Yellowstone National Park, itself lie in the "backyard" of the little mining town. In terms of physical beauty, Red Lodge stands in sharp contrast to the region's largest city, Billings, only 60 some miles away. Travel less than a dozen miles east over the sheltering benchlands of Rock Creek and it's almost like dropping into a different world. In Red Lodge, mountain breezes carry the coolness of snowcapped, glaciated peaks. Billings, in contrast, feels more part of the desert than of the mountains, more prone to the chill Canadian winds in the winter and the shimmering stillness of scorching summer days. Billings is part of the high plains of Eastern Montana, characterized by dry, brown prairies, winding coulees, and dramatic rimrocks that are intriguing, but hardly as pretty as the green mountains and fields of wildflowers one finds around Red Lodge. That beauty ensured Red Lodge's survival. Americans, it turned out,

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[1] Montana Power Company advertisement, "Official Program of the Red Lodge Rodeo, 1934," 1, Carbon County Historical Society Collections (CCHS).

would pay to vacation in a town like Red Lodge with its sweeping views, its trout streams, and its location at the end of a highway access to Yellowstone National Park.

From its founding to the present, the natural world has always been a prominent part of Red Lodge's image and identity. The mountains towering south and west of town, the rich coal carried out of its meandering mine tunnels, the mild summers and long winters, all shaped what Red Lodge looked like, what it meant to residents, and how visitors perceived it. In key ways, the natural world also became an integral part of the town's deliberate creation of its public identity. Coal, wild animals, the beauty of the Beartooths all worked their way into the vocabulary, the townscape, the very definition of what it meant to be of Red Lodge. Coal, of course, dominated the town's initial identity, but in the 1930s, when the Northern Pacific Railroad closed down its last Red Lodge mine and the federal government constructed the spectacular Beartooth Highway from Red Lodge to Yellowstone National Park, the town's identification with the natural world would make a seismic shift. Red Lodge ceased being the "Coal Metropolis" and became instead a "gateway" to nature's "Wonderland." With the construction of the Beartooth Highway, the surrounding mountains and forests became an integral part of Red Lodge's public sense of itself. Even before the road, local promoters used "Beartooth" to mark the town's connection to the wilderness and residents used the natural world for their own recreation and survival. But the highway, the increased popularity of national forests in the 1930s, and the demise of the local coal industry, transformed local identity so that the natural world became an ever greater part of the town's image and reason for being.[2]

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[2] For historical studies on the interactions between communities and the environment, see William Cronon, "Kennecott Journey: The Paths out of Town," in Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past ed. William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin (New York: W.W. Worton & Company, 1992), 28-51; Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 69-90; Anne F. Hyde, "Round Pegs in Square Holes: The Rocky Mountains and Extractive Industry," in Many Wests: Place, Culture, & Regional Identity, ed. David M. Wrobel and Michael C. Steiner (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 93-113; John M. Findlay, "A Fishy Proposition: Regional Identity in the Pacific Northwest," in Many Wests, 37-70; Richard White, Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980).

Of course the transformation did not take place overnight. Many residents continued to mine in the Beartooth fields five miles out of town into the 1950s; even into the 1990s, some local people would still cling to the old hope that coal mining would return to Red Lodge. The change was, however, permanent. Mining was dead. Long live scenery and fishing and camping and hiking. The natural world that used to provide sustenance through the wages of digging coal would now begin to provide economic well being through the thousands of tourists and outdoor enthusiasts who would seek out "nature" in Red Lodge, the Beartooths, and Yellowstone Park. And, as the economics of resource extraction in the community moved from coal mining to nature tourism, so too did local ideas about the very meaning of "nature" and the place of the "natural" in and around Red Lodge.

"Nature" as historian William Cronon points out, "is a human idea, with a long and complicated cultural history which has led different human beings to conceive of the natural world in very different ways."[3] In the 20th century, Red Lodge residents became, quite literally, part of shifting national ideas about what "nature" was, how it should be valued and enjoyed, and whose conceptions of the "natural" should take precedence in the West's millions of acres of federal lands. In many ways, local concerns and definitions of the "natural," or "wilderness," coincided with those of popular culture. In fact, Red Lodge residents made a living out of catering to the popular notions of enjoying "wilderness" experiences: creating dude ranches, highways, and motels to entice nature tourists into the community. Sometimes, though, local people created their own ideas about the place of "nature," based on very intimate economic and personal concerns about work and quality of living. But, from the 1930s into the present, all residents had to adjust to a basic transformation in the role "nature" would play in the town's economy and identity as Red Lodge lost its mining industry and gained a highway into Yellowstone National Park.

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[3] Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness," 20.

In the beginning, Red Lodge was defined by nature, but nature was seen as little more than the coal that created its economic infrastructure, its industrial population, its very reason for being. Coal, rock, and timber built the physical world of Red Lodge at the turn of the century and thousands of local residents used their hands, backs, and sweat to dig, cut, and cart these natural resources from the earth. Most of Red Lodge's inhabitants in those early years knew the natural world through their work in it.[4]

Miners, most significantly, worked intimately with nature, digging rock hundreds of feet below the streets of Red Lodge. As much as 65% of the adult male population labored in the coal mines during the boom years of the early 20th century.[5] The dark, dangerous mine tunnels had none of the aesthetic appeal of the region's picturesque alpine vistas, but they were just as much part of "nature" as the mountains and trees up above. And, knowledge of the natural world—the acquired skills of years of working with rock and dirt—conveyed power to experienced workers who took pride in knowing where to place explosives, of how much powder to use to open up a coal vein, and when to flee from pockets of deadly gasses. They always, always respected the environment in which they worked. They could ill afford not to: those who did not respect the mines died in the mines. Mining was tough, demanding work that not everyone could do; miners knew this. When local coal operators called in the United States Army to dig coal during a prolonged 1922 strike, miners simply watched with amusement. They knew unskilled workers—those who did not understand the underground world of dirt, rocks, and coal seams—would never be able to dig much coal out of the mines. And, they were right. In a few weeks of work, the soldiers managed to extract only a carload or two of coal, or about as much as an experienced miner and his helpers could dig in several hours. As old-time miner Ollie Anderson recalled gleefully, the soldiers

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[4] On knowing nature through work, see Richard White, The Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 30-58, and "'Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?': Work and Nature" in Uncommon Ground, 171-185; also William Dietrich, The Final Forest: The Battle for the Last Great Trees of the Pacific Northwest (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 26-46.

[5] Erika A. Kuhlman, "From Farmland to Coalvillage: Red Lodge's Finnish Immigrants, 1890-1922," (Master's thesis, University of Montana, 1987), 22.

"couldn't even mine enough coal, you know, to keep a stove hot."[6] An intimate knowledge of the natural world marked the skilled miner and gave him some economic stability in a volatile economy.

This working relationship with the natural world, like most relationships, was never simple or easy. Miners who labored in the tunnels both loved and hated what they did for a living. In their oral histories, old-time miners only rarely recalled their years of mining with the hazy fondness characteristic of many other reminiscences. The long, backbreaking hours of work, months without seeing the sun, and the dust and danger of machinery seemed to overwhelm occasional stories of jokes, songs, or camaraderie underground. Mostly, the men remembered the hard work and the darkness. Leo Michelcic said he used to recite the same phrase every time he emerged from the tunnels: "I'm sure glad to see the sun again, I hope I see it again."[7] Miner Tony Persha swore that given the choice, "I wouldn't do it again ... It isn't worth it, crazy to work like we did."[8] But, there remained among the shrinking cadre of former Red Lodge miners the lingering pride in work well done, in the labor and knowledge and luck that kept them alive and in Red Lodge during the hard years of the 1930s, 40s and 50s. Loading coal, Daniel McDonald, mused, was a "back-breaking job I'll tell ya...[but] she was a great life....I ain't kidding ya, if I had my life to live over, I'd go right back." Mining, he concluded, just "gets in your blood or something."[9] The sweat, skill, and danger of mining bestowed a certain dignity upon the men who had survived and prevailed.

As machines replaced human skills and human contact with the coal seams, local coal workers gradually become more distanced from the natural world. In the late 1910s and early 1920s, mine operators began to bring in joy-loaders and other mechanized equipment that dug and loaded coal ever more quickly and efficiently. Steam and diesel engines replaced animal and human labor, and miners could no longer count on their skills as muleskinners, diggers, or powdermen to guarantee them work in the tunnels. Machines removed men from the direct contact and knowledge they had once had with the rock

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[6] Ollie Anderson Oral History, OH 302, 19, Montana Historical Society Collections (MHS).
[7] Leo Michelcic Oral History, OH 304, MHS.
[8] Tony Persha Oral History, OH 305, 2B, MHS.
[9] Daniel McDonald Oral History, OH 356, MHS.

and coal; mechanical drills and loaders kicked up so much dust and made such noise that men could barely see where they worked or hear the creaking of support timbers. Eventually, the new strip mines at Colstrip in eastern Montana completely removed men from the coal tunnels. At Colstrip huge earth-scrapers dug away at the soil to expose seams of coal, which were removed by other big machines—without a man ever having to touch the coal itself. Red Lodge miner Daniel McDonald dismissed such operations as not *real* mining. "It wouldn't be a mine would it?" he asked. "You're out in the open all the time, you're out in the weather, the sun shines, stuff like that."[10]

But, real mining or not, Colstrip's non-union operation sounded the deathknell to the Red Lodge mines. As the Northern Pacific shifted its operations to these distant strip mines, and away from the deep underground works of the Red Lodge field, labor in the natural world no longer defined the town or its people. This is not to say that Red Lodge residents stopped working in the natural world, or that the natural world ceased to provide the foundation of the local economy. Rather, in the mid-20th century, local residents' work with the natural world—and, thus, their identification with that world—shifted. Nature became more about play than about work. Instead of digging coal out of the earth or felling trees for mine timbers, workers started to create jobs out of helping outsiders *play* in and with nature. They became pack guides, hotel maids, bus drivers, restaurant waiters, soda-fountain jerks—all serving the needs and desires of the thousands of tourists who would start coming through town as Red Lodge created itself as a gateway to the "wonderlands" of Yellowstone National Park and the Beartooth Mountains. The town's industrial identity, centered around black-faced miners, corporate wages, and unionism, faded away as the mines stopped working. In turn, Red Lodge residents' sense of themselves changed as they distanced themselves from the work of mining and tied their town more closely into the mystique of the Yellowstone region and as they, themselves assumed the role of selling the beauties of the Rocky Mountains.

Although the shift toward Red Lodge, "the gateway" town, occurred rather quickly in the 1930s—when the Eastside Mine closed down and left the town with only the Beartooth coal fields for its

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[10] Ibid.

economic survival—the roots of local attempts to sell the area's natural beauties ran much deeper. In fact, almost since the town's inception, boosters and other residents had recognized the potential economic value of Red Lodge's picture-perfect setting; and some local people had always thought of the natural world less as a place of work than as a site for leisure. Boosters, especially, had worked hard to establish the beautiful outdoors as part of the town's public identity. By the time Red Lodge was founded in the late 1880s, after all, the notion of nature as a place for play and spiritual fulfillment had already swept through the upper and middle classes of the nation. American elites in the years after the Civil War had embraced the ideas promulgated by 18th and 19th century Romantics that in "nature" human beings might find the "sublime" and "picturesque"—views and experiences that could uplift the soul and bring a person closer to seeing God. The increasing industrialization of the post-war years only reinforced this proclivity toward favoring nature. Machines and cities, it seemed, endangered the nation's founding masculine virtues: self-sufficiency, independence, valor. Feeling uneasy about a perceived overcivilization, upper-class Americans created a new mystique about the outdoors, turning to the natural world to cure many of society's ills. Wealthy urbanites built summer cabins in the Adirondacks to renew themselves and sponsored the creation of various youth camps to inspire the right kind of morality in the nation's youth. Nature enthusiasts started organizations such as the Campfire Club (1897), the American Boy Scouts (1907), and YMCA boys camps to encourage youngsters to develop their own affinities for the natural world.[11] As part of this growing veneration for the "outdoors," Americans also began to take an intense interest in the preservation of natural areas, promoting the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, Yosemite National Park in 1890, and the Adirondacks state forest preserve in 1892. By the turn of the century, "nature" had become something to be enjoyed, admired, and saved (at least certain parts of it) from industrial development.[12]

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[11]Earl Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 142-43; Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, rev. ed., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 147.

[12] John F. Sears, Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Anne Farrar Hyde, An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920 (New York: New York University Press, 1990); Richard West Sellars, Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Alfred

Red Lodge promoters and business owners quickly realized that the Beartooth Mountain region just southwest of Red Lodge was almost exactly what many Americans described as the ideal natural landscape: mountains, forests, lakes, streams, flowers, and lots of big animals. And, although they always banked on the region's coal and agriculture to build Red Lodge, entrepreneurial townbuilders in the 1890s recognized the power of the "picturesque" and readily incorporated popular language about the natural world into their effusive descriptions of Red Lodge's surroundings. It is not surprising, in fact, that Red Lodge boosters and other residents used the same kinds of phrasing and images as the various nature writers whose work made its way into mass-produced books, magazines, and prints by the turn of the century. Even if they had not waded through the great Romantic works of William Wordsworth or Henry David Thoreau, many of Red Lodge's townbuilders had probably read some of the popular nature stories of Ernest Thomas Seton, the hunting exploits of Theodore Roosevelt, or the travel narratives of Mary Roberts Rinehart and Helen Hunt Jackson—some of which were published in such widely distributed magazines as Ladies Home Journal or Atlantic Monthly or were even serialized in regional newspapers.[13] These authors not only helped popularize the scenery of the West, they also gave Americans the language to describe this dramatic environment. In 1883, for example, Helen Hunt Jackson published this description of a sunset on Mount Rainier: "In many years' familiar knowledge of all the wonders which sunrise and sunset can work on peaks in the Rocky Mountain ranges, I had never seen any such effect. It was as if the color came from within, and not from without; as if the mighty bulwark were being gradually heated from central fires....The spectacle was so solemn that it was impossible to divest one's self of a certain sense of awe."[14] She echoed the observations of Isabella L. Bird, published a few years earlier, upon viewing the sunset at Green Lake in the Rocky Mountains: "I had come up into the pure air and

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Runte, National Parks: The American Experience (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979); John F. Reiger, "Wildlife, Conservation, and the First Forest Reserve," in Origins of the National Forests: A Centennial Symposium, ed. Harold K. Steen (Durham: Forest History Society, 1992), 79-92.

[13]Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 147.

[14] Helen Hunt Jackson, "Puget Sound," Atlantic Monthly 51 (February 1983): 220.

sunset light, and the glory of the unprofaned works of God."[15] These prominent writers' effusive descriptions of the area gave, as Earl Pomeroy put it, "a certain literary and historical sanction" to the mountainous West.[16]

Although Red Lodge would not aggressively enter the business of nature tourism until the 1920s and 1930s, as early as the 1890s, boosters recognized the power of the "picturesque" and eagerly endeavored to best the popular nature writers by distributing lavish descriptions of Red Lodge's own mountains and forests with the goal of attracting wealthy tourists, health seekers, and hardy recreationists to the area. In 1892, for example, a story about Carbon County invited readers (ideally potential settlers or investors) to, "Imagine, if you can the summer loveliness of this free, wide open country where no fences mar the face of the landscape, where every prospect is an outlook over a vast flower garden, where stately mountains suggest mystery and aspiration and where a vivid blue heaven bends over all."[17] One year later, another story praised the Beartooth region for being "as pretty a country for the tourist as there is in the world. It is all beautiful parks, lakes, and forest and a natural home for big game. This place will some day come into prominence as the finest place in America for tourists and others who are in search of health and recreation."[18] Picturesque scenery and sublime vistas showed up over and over again in booster descriptions of the land around Red Lodge. In 1907 the editor of the Red Lodge Picket painted this picture of a particular lake in the nearby mountains: "On the placid surface of this sheet of water are reflected the frowning outlines of the cliffs surrounding the amphitheater. Nature herself has appropriated this spot for castle building, and the dream castles she builds are focused on the retina of this lake in exquisite design and gradually merging into the dark shadows of the banks."[19] Using the popular language of picturesque wilderness, Red Lodge boosters tried to entice Easterners to the little town (who

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[15] Isabella L. Bird, A Lady's Life in the Rock Mountains (Norman. University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 194.

[16] Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West, 201.

[17] E.V. Smalley, "Red Lodge, Montana," The Northwest Magazine 10 (August 1892): 21-22.

[18] Picket (Red Lodge), 6 May 1893, 3.

[19] Picket, 1907 "Special Edition," 1.

might, once there, choose to invest in local business ventures). More interested in the financial profit to Red Lodge than in the aesthetic profit of tourists, local promoters laid their rhetoric on thick.

More than the purple prose of boosters and newspaper editors, Red Lodge benefited from its very location on the edge of the newly established Yellowstone Forest Preserve, and only 50 some miles (as the crow flew) from the border of Yellowstone National Park. By the turn of the century, Northern Pacific Railway promotions had made *Yellowstone* synonymous with "wilderness" and "spectacular nature." Dubbed "Wonderland" by these early promoters, the nation's first national park quickly emerged as a cultural icon in America's growing fascination with rugged, beautiful wild lands. The park, remote though it was to much of the nation, drew nearly ten thousand visitors a year by the late 1890s.[20] Theodore Roosevelt, himself toured Yellowstone National Park in 1903, celebrating the place as a bit of "the old wilderness scenery and old wilderness life...."[21] Other visitors were more vocally ecstatic about the "marvelous formations of nature" and "vast collection of marvels" that made up the park.[22] "Yellowstone" came to epitomize the spectacular natural world, and fortunately enough for local boosters, the Yellowstone Forest Preserve, set aside in 1891, extended at least the name "Yellowstone" almost to the border of Red Lodge. The little mining town, as it were, practically touched "Yellowstone" itself, or so promoters would have one believe. Later designated as the Beartooth Forest Reserve and then the Custer National Forest, this vast expanse of government land running south and west of Red Lodge to the park's boundaries, remained relatively untouched through the 1920s—too remote and mountainous to attract much development or exploration, but ideal, according to local boosters, for adventurers seeking a touch of the "strenuous" life and the glamour of "Yellowstone" by hunting or camping in the wilderness.

From the town's earliest years, these images of Yellowstone and the Beartooths made their way into the public identity of Red Lodge as local residents formed their own attachments to these wild lands. Through pictures, articles, and advertisements the surrounding landscape established itself in the local townscape. By the 1890s, professional photographers were taking pictures of the lakes, streams, and

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[20] Hyde, An American Vision, 245-254.

[21] Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 150-51.

peaks of the Beartooth region, which businesses printed as postcards and published not only in the town's newspapers, but also in the high school literary magazine and yearbooks. The 1909 Carbon County High School Annual, for example, featured photographs not of downtown buildings or mine works, but of area waterfalls, creeks, and cliffs. Advertisers reinforced this identification with local forests and mountains by pitching their new outdoor merchandise to students and parents alike. "Take a Kodak and fishing rod and spend your vacation right," the Talmadge mercantile company advised readers about to enjoy three months of summer weather.[23] Such images became part of Red Lodge's identity; part of what it meant to be of Red Lodge was seeing these kinds of photographs and advertisements in most of the town's public forums. It also meant taking Talmadge's advice to head into the woods for the summer—although maybe without the expensive camera and fancy fishing gear.

Indeed, from the early 1890s through the 20th century, local people ventured out into the "nature" around Red Lodge with great frequency. Experiences with the natural landscape varied widely according to class and gender, but all reflected in some way Americans' increasing desire to move outside urban areas and enjoy contact with nature. Those wealthy enough threw themselves into nature for weeks at a time. In the early 1890s, the local paper made note of dozens of Red Lodge residents who packed into the Beartooth Mountains for a month or more, many of them journeying into Yellowstone National Park to enjoy the scenic wonders. Known as "sourdough tourists" (as opposed to the Pullman tourists who came by train), these local vacationers—men and women alike—might camp for a week or more at some particularly amenable spot, fishing and hunting amidst the splendor of nature's beauty.[24] By the early 1900s, residents on these camping tours carried their own cameras into the wild, capturing lakes, mountains, streams, and geysers on film, and then carefully pasting them onto the heavy black paper of formal scrap books. Some even interspersed the poetry of Keats, Wordsworth, and Emerson with the photos, embellishing the still shots of sublime nature with the printed words that had helped shape

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[22] Hyde, An American Vision.

[23] "Junior Wa-Wa: Annual of the Carbon County High School, 1909," CCHS. Admittedly, this annual went out to only the more affluent members of the community; although the sophomore class in 1909 started out with 24 students in eighth grade, it had only 11 students by 10th grade.

Americans' understandings of the natural world.[25] As these residents went into the woods and carried stories and images away from their adventures, they helped to establish a connection between Red Lodge and the wonders of the surrounding mountains.

And, the outdoors was not reserved for the well-to-do. Local workers also enjoyed nature, even if they could not afford to spend weeks exploring the far reaches of Yellowstone National Park. Rock Creek, which ran right along the east side of town, quickly became a favorite retreat for the community's laboring class. Many residents took advantage of any holiday from mine work to gather at picnic sites along the creek where they fished, gathered berries, and enjoyed the mild summer weather. Slovenians established the Happy Brothers Camping Ground for picnics and outdoor dancing, while the Finns set up their own Kaleva picnic area for group excursions. Women, as well as men, participated in these community events, even though the former often had to carry household chores such as cooking and cleaning out to the popular picnic grounds. Fishing, the other favorite outdoors pastime, was, however, much more of a male activity. Many of the miners spent the slow summer months fishing in the creek, wandering up and down the banks to find the best spots. And workers who wanted to stay out drinking past the midnight saloon closures often headed out to water's edge to share "funny stories" along with a bottle of wine.[26]

In some way or another, most local residents made the effort to leave the "urban" environment of Red Lodge to enjoy the beauty, resources, or privacy of the natural world. Although motivated by a variety of personal reasons to venture "into the woods," part of the appeal of the natural world probably came from the changing attitudes of eastern elites. Indeed, although some Westerners preferred to think of these outdoor excursions as a legacy of their hard, frontier heritage, historian Earl Pomeroy has attributed

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[24] Picket, 10 September 1892, 3; 24 September 1892, 3; 10 August 1895, 3; 7 August 1897, 3.

[25] Several of these scrapbooks, with pictures from the 1900s through the 1940s, are on display at the Carbon County Historical Society archives.

[26] Red Lodge oral histories are full of stories about picnics at these various campgrounds. See, for example, Walpas Koski Oral History, OH 359, 12; Lillian Lampi Oral History, OH 303, 23; Edward Blazina Oral History, OH 1485, 18, MHS. The local newspaper also made note of large picnic gatherings outside town, for example, Picket, 10 August 1895, 3 and 25 June 1898, 3. The "funny stories" is from

the growing appeal of outdoor recreation in the West rather to influences from the East.[27] Even though some residents still feared the towering mountains and the raging waters of Rock Creek, local people picnicked and hiked and camped in the Beartooths for enjoyment not only because the woods were a convenient and close place for recreation, but also because by the late 19th century Americans had learned to regard such places as appropriate vacation and recreation sites. In any case, local people went into these places and thus created connections between their town and the natural world around it.

Significantly, however, for most Red Lodge residents in the early years of the century, experiences with the great outdoors stopped at these pleasant excursions and day-long picnics, or with an angry fist raised against piles of snow that blocked doorways and caused accidents on icy sidewalks. Aside from the miners who worked all day in the bowels of the earth, most local people lived lives that were increasingly separate from direct experiences with the natural world. These, after all, were modern folk living in a corporate, industrial town. Popular stories of the Wild West still extolled the hazards of mountain travel, the dangers of fighting bears, and the struggle to live off the land. In the modern, industrial West, though, people traveled by train when they really needed to get somewhere; they ate meat out of cans and bought clothes from the downtown mercantile. Packhorses, big game hunting, and buckskins were part of the fun of playing in the outdoors, not necessities for everyday life. Because they lived closer to rugged mountains and lovely meadows, Westerners had easier access to the beautiful nature extolled by eastern writers, but that did not make much difference in the day-to-day grind of mining, boosting, and caring for boarders. Residents ventured into the natural world, and brought some of it back in the form of pictures and stories, but the forested lands outside of town had not yet worked their way into prominence in the small town. Red Lodge's public identity remained much more about industry and mining than about mountains and wild animals. But, for a very few residents the wonderlands of the Beartooth Mountains and Yellowstone National Park translated into economic opportunity and survival. These few people—guides and packers like Liver-Eatin' Johnson and E.E. VanDyke—created a space

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State v. Gust Jarvi, Erik Kangas, and August Hokolo (1911), Carbon County District Court (CCDC), Criminal Records.

[27]Pomeroy, In Search of the Golden West, 141-43.

within Red Lodge that celebrated the frontier skills of hunting and scouting through the sale of these skills to tourists. Eventually this space would expand as more local residents provided outdoor services to visitors and as the town itself transformed into a "gateway" to outdoor recreation.

As early as the 1890s, some local people began to earn their livings by facilitating tourists' play in the mountains and forests of the greater Yellowstone region. They translated their knowledge and skills of the outdoors into businesses, inventing themselves as stereotypical rugged Westerners adept at surviving in an "uncivilized" landscape and sharing these abilities—for a price—with their more civilized clients. Before the advent of automobiles and highways, expeditions into the Rocky Mountains were just that—expeditions. Residents as well as tourists who wanted to spend a month or so in the woods hired men and horse teams to pack their gear and set up heavy canvas tents and cooking appliances. Those trekking over the mountains had to know the land well or hire guides because there were few trails to lead them. The very earliest trappers and hunting-guides, like E.E. VanDyke, definitely took pride in the way "effete" Easterners depended on his tracking skill to bring down big game and to survive in the Beartooth Mountains. VanDyke, indeed, remained so convinced of the ineffectiveness of dudes that he routinely took his own shot at the big game his clients aimed at, to guarantee a trophy even if the poor Easterner could not shoot straight.[28] Such guides were very few in number through the 1910s, but by the 1920s, as playing in the wilderness gained ever greater popularity amongst urban Americans, a new industry—the dude ranch—began to offer even more local people the chance to show off their skills and prove themselves as the kind of outdoorsy Westerners Easterners seemed to admire most.

Dude ranches spearheaded Red Lodge growing identification with the natural world in the 1920s, much as they facilitated the community's appropriation of Wild West imagery in this same period. Through dude ranching—the *work* of facilitating visitors' play in nature—a growing number of local residents learned about the surrounding mountains and, more importantly, learned to compare their outdoor knowledge with that of visitors from back East. The dude ranches that became so popular in the

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[28]Shirley Zupan and Harry J. Owens, Red Lodge: Saga of a Western Area (Billings: Frontier Press, Inc. 1979), 7-9; Malcolm S. Mackay, Cow Range and Hunting Trail (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), 118.

late 1910s and early 1920s catered to people who wanted their leisure in nature to be more intimate than a few nights at a resort like Monterey's Hotel del Monte, but also more comfortable than just camping in the woods. So, dude ranching depended on the skilled labor of area ranchers and wranglers who interceded between guests and the dangers (or discomfort) of wild nature. Hired wranglers, local workers, thus gained a growing sense of themselves as special because of their understanding of horses, mountains, trails, and camping.

The new dude ranches—Camp Senia, Richel Lodge, Camp Sawtooth, and Camp Beartooth—worked their way into the local identity as Red Lodge residents took jobs as wranglers guiding "dudes" and "dudines" into the backcountry of the Beartooth Plateau and Stillwater region. Interestingly, many of these wranglers were actually very young friends or relatives of the ranch owner (who, apparently, realized the economic advantages of hiring youngsters for summer jobs). These local youth, many of them "city kids" from Red Lodge who gained their own horse and trail skills working at these ranches, quickly found that eastern dudes lacked even basic knowledge about nature and animals—a condition that reinforced their own developing positions as skilled western outdoorsmen and women. It did not take much to stand out as more knowledgeable than the naïve dudes who stepped off the air-conditioned express trains from Chicago or New York City. Edward Nordstrom, for example, a Red Lodge high school student and wrangler at Camp Sawtooth, quickly took it for granted that dudes would ask "dumb" questions like, "Doesn't it hurt the horse when you're shoeing him?" Outwardly patient with guests who refused to take advice on saddling horses, the teenaged Nordstrom inwardly reveled in his role as competent Westerner who knew more about riding and fishing than any of the "dudes" he met.[29] Marcella Littlefield, likewise, enjoyed a sense of resigned superiority toward the rich dudes who made up her so-called "little white fleet" of followers who dared not venture out alone along the trails her uncle had cut into the valley of Rock Creek.[30] The admiration, and dependence, of these dudes shaped the ways in which local wranglers understood themselves and their role in the natural world; pride in these outdoors experiences lingered for

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[29] Edward Nordstrom, "The Art of Dude Ranching," The Review (Carbon County High School) 3 (1932), 24.

[30] Marcella Littlefield to Vera, 23 January 1932, Richel Lodge Collection, CCHS.

years after local dude ranches closed their doors. Esther Johnson, for one, readily recalled in later years how she used to guide dudes up the slide rock trail to the top of Beartooth Plateau before the federal highway made the area readily accessible.[31] The experience stood out as a highlight of her life. And young workers like Johnson, Littlefield, and Nordstrom did not keep these stories and experiences to themselves. Tales about dudes and dude ranches became part of local lore, to the delight of Red Lodge residents who seemed to enjoy the stories of local skill contrasted with dudes' ignorance of nature and animals.[32] Such personal pride in basic outdoor skills—wranglers, after all, followed well-marked trails and usually "camped out" at the ranch—would gradually broaden to a more general local pride and identification with the rugged outdoors. As more dudes and other nature tourists came through Red Lodge in the 1930s and 1940s, and as more local people interacted with these dude ranch visitors, residents would begin to acquire a public identity more closely associated with the mountains and forests of the Beartooth area.

But, the significance of dude ranches in shifting the public identities of Red Lodge and other western communities should not be overrated. Yes, these establishments played a key role in the early phases of the region's tourism business, but they only spearheaded what would become a much broader regional and local phenomenon of "Wild West" and wilderness identification. Dude ranches, after all, attracted only a small and select clientele and only a few local people ever worked at them. And, these ranches remained outside of Red Lodge, actually in the "wilderness;" their relative distance from the community lessened their influence on the town. Red Lodge's growing identification with the natural world was nurtured in the atmosphere of the dude ranch but really blossomed only with the introduction of automobiles into the mountains of the Beartooths. Through roads connecting the town to the Beartooths and Yellowstone, residents would actually start to pull nature into Red Lodge. As automobile tourists

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[31] Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 329.

[32] For example Nordstrom's article "The Art of Dude Ranching" was published in the high school literary magazine, The Review, in 1932. In 1934, Helena Warila wrote both "Entertaining Dudes" and "A Dude's Idea of the West" for the high school publication. Carbon Review 5 (May 1934), 2, 15. When Marcella Littlefield left for college in Bozeman, she maintained a steady correspondence with local residents in which she frequently mentioned her dude ranching experiences. Littlefield's correspondence is in the Richel Lodge Collection, CCHS.

started to explore the nation's forests and parks, Red Lodge responded by re-creating itself as a component of that natural world; townspeople started businesses within Red Lodge that catered to nature tourists, took jobs serving these visitors, and even adjusted the physical appearance of the town to meet the expectations of those in search of beautiful vistas and scenery. Significantly, instead of residents actually going *out* into the wilderness to serve tourists, locals would increasingly serve these tourists *in* Red Lodge as they drove through on their way to and from "wonderland." Cars and highways, not horses and dude ranches, would fuel the town's developing affinity with the wilderness.

Roads and automobiles, indeed, reshaped much of the West in the 1920s and 1930s. The advent of the automobile and the accompanying drive to create new highways to accommodate the popular machines "opened up" the remaining wild areas of the West like never before. The machine created ever greater access into the nation's gardens of park and forest reserves and local communities adjusted themselves to the new phenomenon of the auto-tourist. [33] More and more, Americans did not have to content themselves with simply viewing the wonders of the West in photographs and paintings or experiencing the mountains through strenuous pack trips, dude ranch excursions, and hunting expeditions; they motored there with their families, taking along tents and other camping gear to make the journey cheaper and more convenient.[34] Towns along these new highways scrambled to provide amenities such as camp sites and tourist camps that might attract these visitors (and their spending money) into their communities.[35] Even the national parks began to cater to the automobile travelers. Yellowstone National Park held out against the automobile hordes longer than some other parks—officials argued in 1911 that cars and motorcycles on its roads would be "dangerous to persons passing over the roads on horseback or in vehicles drawn by horses"—but by the mid-1910s, tourists in cars had conquered even the

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[33] I have borrowed from Leo Marx for the metaphor of the machine in the garden. Marx, The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[34] For a good overview of American autotourism, see Warren James Belasco, Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

[35] Belasco, Americans on the Road; Robert G. Athearn, The Mythic West in Twentieth-Century America (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986).

oldest national park, and they never looked back.[36] In 1926, of 187,000 visitors to the park, more than 140,000 came in private automobiles, traveling over the parks' 300 miles of dirt roads, which were designated as one-way routes to control the growing streams of traffic. By 1928 so many cars clogged the Yellowstone park roads that officials found themselves fighting a losing battle against the "ever-increasing dust devil" kicked up by these automobiles.[37] With cars entering the park at a rate of one per minute, Yellowstone had become, as park superintendent H.M. Albright noted in a 1928 understatement, "a very popular place for visitors."[38] National parks and forests truly became "national playgrounds" as millions of Americans and foreign visitors loaded up their cars and trucks to drive through one, two, or even a half dozen reserves in their tours of the West. And thousands of these auto tourists began to find their way to, and eventually through, Red Lodge by the 1930s.

Locally, Red Lodge's growing identification with the Beartooths and Yellowstone National Park in the 1930s had everything to do with the automobile and the new culture that developed around the personal motor vehicle. Cars, and the roads that federal and state governments built to accommodate them, threw open the Beartooths and the park like never before. Forest Service roads to Camp Senia and up the Rock Creek drainage and the federal highway over the Beartooth Plateau transformed Red Lodge into a gateway to natural wonders, a recreational thoroughfare. As more roads pushed their way into the forests and as more and more tourists drove into the wilderness past Red Lodge, the town began to associate itself ever more closely with the mountainous lands of the Yellowstone and Beartooth regions. Indeed, Red Lodge would quickly start to remake itself into an extension of sorts of these natural treasures: the gateway to wonderland.

In the Red Lodge area, the Beartooth Highway stands both as the great monument to this era of "opening up" the wilderness to cars and as the local marker of the town's switch from mining to nature tourism, from work in nature to serving those who played in nature. Authorized in 1931 and completed in

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[36] U.S. Congress, Senate, Use of Automobiles in National Parks, Letter from the Acting Secretary of the Interior, 2, Senate Document 433 (62-2) SS 6181.

[37] U.S. Congress, House Hearings, Roads: Hearings Before the Committee on Roads, Part I (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1928), 424.

1936, this $2,500,000 project ran through a section of land that had been all but inaccessible in prior years. Only the most athletic of visitors, accompanied by experienced guides, made the arduous, albeit stunningly beautiful, trek up and over the Beartooth Plateau. After the official opening in 1936, thousands of tourists each year drove the zigzagging highway up the Rock Creek Valley, across the Beartooth Plateau, almost 10,000 feet above sea level, down to Cooke City and into Yellowstone National Park. Upon completion, the highway became Red Lodge's greatest visitor attraction, the cornerstone of its summer tourism season, and a major reason why the town managed to survive through the hard years of the 1930s, 40's and 50's. Although open only three months a year, the highway created a physical connection to the wonders of Yellowstone and the Beartooths that changed the year-round identity of the little community, tying itself more tightly into national ideas and concerns about nature, wilderness, and the place of human beings in both.

For, the Beartooth Highway—like Yellowstone National Park—was always more than just a local concern. The highway represented a variety of complicated, often contradictory, American and local attitudes toward the natural world in these middle years of the 20th century. Unraveling the different arguments and attitudes about the highway, descriptions about its usefulness, and its place in local identity, one finds a complex mix of ideas about people's place in nature—and nature's place in American and Red Lodge society. The Beartooth Highway marked an era of vast government projects in the western forests spurred on by the conviction that "opening up" the wilderness was an unmitigated good for the nation's inhabitants. It also revealed a certain arrogance toward the natural world prevalent in the post-Enlightenment western world: the belief that human beings could tame or shape nature to meet their own needs. Finally, construction of the highway, and Red Lodge's new connection to Yellowstone National Park, showed how class continued to shape the ways in which Americans interacted with nature—for even though the type of work changed, many working-class Westerners still survived through their labor in the natural world.

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[38]Ibid, 540-41; Athearn, The Mythic West, 150.

The Beartooth Highway, first of all, was a Depression-era "make work" program justified by Americans' increasing demands for access into the national parks and forests. Although not technically part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program, the highway reflected the philosophy that created such agencies as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Construction on the Highway created jobs while the road itself added a northeast entrance to Yellowstone National Park, or, as the Picket-Journal put it, a "new and thrilling scenic gateway to nature's wonderland."[39] Or, to put it another way, human beings (through government agencies) *improved* upon nature through human effort and technology. A modern highway over a 10,000 foot "pass" made nature better by opening up the Beartooth Mountains and the Park for the greater enjoyment of the American people who could drive through this area in comfort. The national government had started building such access roads and trails in the forests in the 1920s, but the New Deal greatly expanded these efforts, combining make-work construction with nature "enhancement" in programs like the CCC. The CCC, one of the most popular of the New Deal programs, hired young men to do conservation work on the nation's public lands. "Conservation" in this case meant not only planting trees and fighting fires, but also constructing roads, clearing trails, and building new campgrounds that would make nature better and serve the needs of the nation's automobile tourists.[40]

Agencies like the CCC, which used machines and human sweat to improve nature and make it more accessible, served local as well as national goals. Municipal leaders in cities all over the West fought each other to secure CCC camps in their areas. Town leaders saw advantages not only in selling supplies to the camps and their workers, but also in the agency's campaign to open up lands for recreational visitors: new campgrounds and roads, built with government funds, would increase the area's accessibility and attractiveness to tourists. In Red Lodge, for example, the local chamber of commerce lobbied relentlessly for a CCC camp in the late 1930s. As the chamber explained to Montana Senator Burton K. Wheeler, a nearby camp could do much needed work to help the region's developing recreational

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[39] Picket-Journal (Red Lodge), 29 January 1931, 1, 8.

[40] Richard White, The Organic Machine, 57; White, It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 475.

economy. "Work," the club suggested, "would consist of road building, to open summer home sites, building trails and public camp ground, and a general cleanup of this section of the Custer Forest as a recreational area."[41] The Forest Service, although harassed by constant requests for new camps, saw its CCC work as valuable public relations as it competed against the National Park Service for the affection of the American people. As one ranger noted in 1938, projects in the Red Lodge area—roadside cleanup, campgrounds, recreational trails—would be "a wonderful chance to do a real piece of PR work" for the thousands of Americans who were turning to the mountains for recreation.[42] Americans wanted to enjoy the natural world, and the government (with the encouragement of local boosters) was making it easier and more comfortable for them to do so.

But, the Beartooth Highway and the various other government projects in the forests and parks were much more than just ways to get more Americans, and their cars, into the natural world. Like many of these other projects, the highway embodied the hubristic conviction that human beings could control and shape nature according to their own needs. Although sometimes voiced in the language of conquest, this re-shaping of nature also reflected Ralph Waldo Emerson's conviction that human beings could "mimic" nature to improve upon it; that is, they could finish what nature had started to make the natural world the way it *should* be. The Brooklyn Bridge, the Panama Canal, and hundreds of other grand structures proved that human beings could overcome almost any natural obstacle to make the world a better place to live. Grand Coulee Dam, constructed in the early 1930s, stood as the epitome of humans' ability to improve nature—to use human ingenuity to "finish," as it were, the natural state of the world. As engineer Carl Magnusson reflected, the immense structure actually re-created the vast glacial lake that had

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[41]Edgar W. Allen, The Red Lodge Commercial Club, to Senator Burton K. Wheeler, 26 April 1938, United States Forest Service Records, Msla-CCC, RG 95, Box 37/5, National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region, Seattle, WA.

[42]Memorandum, 12 May 1938, United States Forest Service Records, Msla-CCC, RG 95, Box 37/5.

covered the region thousands of years earlier: "After being dry and arid throughout almost all the history of mankind," he observed, "the Grand Coulee once more will be a waterway."[43]

More locally, residents of Red Lodge had long sought to "improve" upon nature, to reshape it to fit their own needs, although admittedly with far less dramatic results than the Grand Coulee Dam. For example, local people had in the town's early years substantially altered the animal populations in and around Red Lodge. In the town's first two decades, some area residents actually made their living killing wolves, coyotes, and other "pest" species, drawing their wages from state and federal bounties created to encourage this reshaping of wildlife populations to make the natural world safer for sheep and cattle herds.[44] In addition to removing undesirable animals, residents also brought in favored species. Hunting and fishing became key features in the town's early identification with nature, but sportsmen needed the right kinds of game in order to enjoy fully this association with the natural world. Local hunting groups, for example, imported European pheasants into Carbon County to provide a better variety of game for sportsmen, while area sport fishers planted selected species of fish in Beartooth streams and lakes.[45] The Red Lodge Rod and Gun Club even helped the state construct a fish hatchery 12 miles above Red Lodge in 1922 to ensure the steady propagation of the right kinds of fish for local waterways. These sportsmen knew that the beautiful lakes of the Beartooths *should* have fish in them, so they brought in golden, rainbow, and brook trout to make these waterways even better than nature had created them.[46] They "finished" the work that nature had started. Improved technology made the process ever easier. By 1939, sports fishers applauded the new technique of dropping fish fry from airplanes into the more remote lakes of the region; now when pack trippers ventured into even the farthest reaches of the Beartooths, they

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[43] Quoted in White, The Organic Machine, 57. See also, Wesley Arden Dick, "'When Dams Weren't Damned: The Public Power Crusade and Visions of the Good Life in the Pacific Northwest in the 1930s," Environmental Review 13 (Fall/ Winter 1989): 135, 121.

[44] For local bounty hunters, Picket, 10 February 1894, 3 and Republican Picket (Red Lodge), 13 May 1909, 1. For government agencies sponsoring elimination of "undesirable" animals, see Thomas Dunlap, Saving America's Wildlife (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), and Bonnie Christensen, "From Divine Nature to Umbrella Species: The Development of Wildlife Science in the United States," in Forest and Wildlife Science in America: A History, ed. Harold K. Steen (Forest History Society, 1999), 212-213.

[45] Sports fishers were planting fish in the area as early as 1898, see Picket, 26 February 1898, 3.

[46] Picket-Journal, 12 April 1922, 1; 30 August 1922, 1; 31 March 1932, 1, 8.

could enjoy the "natural" thrill of catching and frying up fresh golden trout imported from California to enrich the Montana wilderness experience.[47] The improvement of nature reached far beyond birds and fish, though, to touch almost every aspect of the "natural" in the area. And few had anything but praise for these sometimes dramatic alterations. Modern highways, dams, mines, and irrigation systems not only made life for residents more comfortable and convenient, but even added grandeur to an already picturesque region. As a 1930s Billings booster magazine observed about the Shoshone Dam (just southeast of Red Lodge): "Man Creates Beauty in Harnessing Nature." For most Americans in these years, human technology and machinery did not detract from nature; these tools only made it better.[48]

Considering the proclivity with which Americans had dammed, graded, and mined the western landscape, it is not surprising that from the early 1890s on Red Lodge boosters believed that all they needed was enough money and machinery to build a four-season road over a 10,000 foot high, snow-bound plateau to reach Yellowstone National Park. The natural world presented obstacles to human progress, but human technology (with enough capital backing) could easily overcome such barriers. The question of snow, for example, met with easy assurances from local boosters who believed that modern machinery could take care of any problem; men who were skilled enough to construct a 10,000 foot high road were also smart enough to find routes that could be easily cleared year round. Such arguments confidently assumed that "nature" had already provided a ready route between Red Lodge and Cooke City and that knowledgeable humans had simply to determine where that "natural" route lay and thus finish the connection between the two communities. In 1893, boosters contended, for example, that they had found a way from Red Lodge to Cooke City so "natural" that there was "no point on the route where the snow piles up so as to block travel in winter."[49] Testifying before Congress over 30 years later, Red Lodge newspaper publisher O.H.P. Shelley reassured the Highway Committee that engineers had planned the

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[47] The newspaper reported that in three trips from Billings the airplane carrying the young fish had dropped over 15,000 fish into three isolated, unnamed lakes. Workers dropped the fish from a height of 150 feet. Planted species included California golden trout, albino eastern trout, and rainbow trout. The golden trout, though scarce in California, were still thriving in Beartooth lakes into the 1970s. Picket-Journal, 17 October 1939, 1; The Villager (Red Lodge), 12 June 1975, 6.

[48] Billings Gazette, "Land of Shining Mountains, Scenic Grandeur Supplement," 1936, n.p., CCHS.

roadway so that with just "a little bit of assistance" Red Lodge men could keep the road open year round "because the very natural contour of the country there on the plateaus is such that the snow blows off."[50] Like the Grand Coulee Dam that "re-created" a long-vanished lake, the proposed Beartooth Highway would simply fulfill nature's original plan for a route over the mountains between Red Lodge and Yellowstone Park. All the engineers needed from the federal government was $2,500,000 to find that route and build the road. Human beings tamed nature with machines and knowledge, and tamed nature—which actually "cooperated" in its submission—made human existence more comfortable, convenient, and leisurely.

But nature, of course, was never so easily "tamed" as Americans liked to believe. In the process of being reshaped, the natural world had an irritating tendency to stick out at odd angles beyond the boundaries set by progressive engineers, reformers, and boosters. As anyone familiar with high-elevation highways so far north might guess, the Park Service and Forest Service were never able to keep the Beartooth Highway open more than three months out of the year. Interestingly, however, Red Lodge boosters only reluctantly admitted that this limited highway season might reflect limits on human technology. Rather than accepting this setback, in fact, boosters attacked the government for the road's problems—federal bureaucrats, according to local accounts, *chose* not to try harder to open up the highway earlier in the spring or keep it open later into the autumn. Modern machines *could* open the highway earlier if officials would only make the effort to do so. Thus, even while local residents had to admit that they could not shape the world exactly as they wished, many retained the faith that more money, and cooperation from the federal government, could create the highway they wanted.[51]

Even with its limited season, however, local residents and regional boosters celebrated the Beartooth Highway as a technological and engineering feat. Like Shoshone Dam, the highway harnessed nature and made it more impressive. The highway itself, in fact, became part of the wonders of the

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[49]Picket, 6 May 1893, 3; 22 July 1893, 3.
[50]U.S. Congress, Roads, 548.

Beartooth Region. Local, regional, and even national promotions of the highway sold it not only as a scenic entrance to Yellowstone, but as an impressive technological achievement in its own right.[52] A local high school student summarized this rhetoric nicely in a 1934 description of the new "HiRoad." The highway, he argued, did not simply open up a "new paradise" isolated for centuries, but also invoked wonder at the people who had built it. Man's "extensive effort and ingenuity" had created a road that twisted itself "ever onward and upward to heights that excel that of any engineering accomplishment in the vast country that is ours."[53]

The message of the 1930s and the triumph of the Beartooth Highway was that nature provided what people needed and human beings used technology to make nature even better. Significantly, the presence of the machine did not detract from the natural beauties of the world it altered. Machinery and nature combined into a pleasing aesthetic whole, a view exemplified in a 1934 editorial celebrating the new highway. In this article, the writer readily mixed enthusiasm for natural beauty with glowing descriptions of smoking smelters and mines. The roadway, "already acclaimed one of the most scenic in America," he gushed, would "open up a vast scenic and recreational area to the American public." At the same time, the road would also make accessible the rich fields of the New World mining district, leading to the construction of "mills, smelters and concentrators in this new bonanza mining area." Most importantly, the new "steel and chemical plants located here" (in Red Lodge) would guarantee that three to four hundred men "will find productive employment."[54] Smelters and smokestacks and factories at the edge of Yellowstone National Park and along the route of the scenic highway did not detract from the wonders of the natural world opened up by the road. Instead—like the highway itself, which invaded square miles of

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[51] D.W. Columbus, Red Lodge Mayor, Resolution No. 849, 14 March 1967, Lee Metcalf Papers, MC 172, 112/14, MHS; William H. Browning to Local Chambers, 31 March 1958, and E.T.S., National Park Service, to Mike Mansfield, 1 April 1958, Montana Chamber of Commerce Records, MC 199, 1/11, MHS.

[52] The Northern Pacific Railroad, for example, published a nationally distributed brochure on "The Spectacular Red Lodge Highway Over The Rockies, Newest Gateway to Yellowstone Park;" a copy is in the collections of the Carbon County Historical Society. The Billings Gazette routinely extolled the "scenic grandeur" of the Beartooth Highway; see for example "The Land of Shining Mountains" supplements from the Gazette, CCHS.

[53] Edward Weydt, "The New Road," Carbon Review 4 (1934), 2.

[54] Carbon County News (Red Lodge), 21 November 1934, 4.

pristine wilderness—they worked together to make life better for everyone concerned. Human accomplishment and natural beauty mixed easily and readily in this vision of the Beartooth Highway: the machine that made itself a rightful part of nature's garden.

With the machine firmly in the garden, it was easy for many local residents to see the highway as simply another way of working with nature to generate a wage. The timing was important. Construction of the highway—approved in 1931, started in 1932 and finished in 1936—coincided with the shutdown of the town's Eastside Mine in 1932. Red Lodge boosters promoted the highway into the wilderness because they were losing their own mechanized industry from within the town. Although some local miners continued to find work in the small mines of the Beartooth area, Red Lodge itself ceased to be a mining town. The town limped along as a trade center for farmers and as the county seat, but the economic mainstay of the community disappeared almost overnight and town promoters sought desperately to replace mining with increased revenues from tourists bound for the Beartooth Mountains and Yellowstone Park. And workers were desperate to find any kind of job to keep their families fed and clothed. Arguments about technological achievements, scenic grandeur, and wilderness values faded, reduced to the promise of jobs for people who needed work in order to survive.

For working-class residents of Red Lodge, nature's offer of jobs overshadowed its picturesque vistas and invigorating hikes. For many residents of Red Lodge, in fact, Yellowstone National Park might as well have been 6,000 miles away as 65 miles distant. They had little of the time or money needed to rent a car to drive to Yellowstone, let alone take a vacation at a dude ranch. Class, in fact, had much to do with the ways in which Americans, including Westerners, experienced the nation's parks and forests in the years before World War II. Wealth, to a large extent, determined who drove through places like Yellowstone National Park and the Beartooth Plateau, and who made the beds and served the meals for these nature tourists. The new roads and automobiles certainly democratized American tourism; many middle-class people who could not afford to stay at the grand Old Faithful Inn could afford to drive their cars into the park and camp out at the adjoining campground. But auto tourists were still people whose incomes exceeded the national average. Millions of Americans, and hundreds of local residents, simply could not afford to see places like Yellowstone National Park. They did not have cars, leisure time, or the

money to travel even 100 miles to see mountains and geysers and lakes full of (transplanted) fish.[55] And, in spite of earnest assertions that public projects like the Beartooth Highway helped America's working class by "open[ing] up to tourists and campers a highly scenic region now reserved because of its inaccessibility to those of more than average wealth,"[56] the "public" remained a very class-defined term. Indeed, O.H.P. Shelley, one of the most strident supporters of the Red Lodge access road to Yellowstone Park, testified in 1925 that the park's entrance fee—set at a relatively high rate to fund needed road repairs—should not be lowered to accommodate poor tourists. If they could not pay the price, Shelley stated coldly, "they ought to be at home at work, because I don't see how they can get through the park if they can't pay the $7.50 entrance fee. I don't see any injustice in that at all....I would say that anyone that could not afford to pay the $7.50 had better be doing something else."[57] (As an active booster for Red Lodge, Shelley probably recognized also that someone who could not afford the park's entrance fee would also not be spending much money on Red Lodge's new tourist services.) A well-off newspaper publisher, Shelley epitomized the assumption held by many in the early 20th century that the national parks were there to be enjoyed only by those who could afford them.

It is not surprising, then, that many local residents ordered their memories of the Beartooth Highway not around effusive descriptions of beautiful scenery and rich mining resources—the stuff of newspaper stories and booster publications—but rather around the jobs and money that construction of the new road and the connection to Yellowstone National Park brought to friends and family. Even 50 years later, many residents recalled construction of the highway not as something that improved the town's image or attractiveness as a tourist site, but as something that gave work to fathers, uncles, brothers, neighbors. Highway jobs saved many families who might not have had the time or money to explore the Beartooths by car. Trying to work out the chronology of the town's economy, Tony Zupan, for example,

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[55]Auto touring in this period, as Warren James Belasco points out, "remained predominately middle class," Belasco, Americans on the Road, 115.

[56]U.S. Congress, Senate Hearings, Highway From Red Lodge, Mont., to Cooke City, Mont., 20 April 1928,1, SS 8831.

[57]U.S. Congress, Senate Hearings, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Public Lands and Surveys, Part 16, 29 August 1925 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), 4558-59.

recalled that the Eastside Mine "had to close before the mid thirties because my Dad worked on the Cooke City highway. He didn't have a job at the mine. The mines were closed."[58] Likewise, Red Lodge native Senia Kallio placed the construction of the Highway around "'33, '34 something like that. I think Leo worked there....Mrs. Paavola's brother worked up there and he got killed while he was working for Morris Knutsen."[59] Zupan and Kallio remembered the highway primarily through jobs because work was so important to their families' survival in Red Lodge. Zupan's family, even when his father did find work, was so poor in these years that he and his sisters had to get their clothes and some of their food from the local relief office.[60] Driving trucks and operating bulldozers on the government highway offered real work, money, and pride to these local residents. In spite of all the rhetoric about the beauty, accessibility, and spirituality of the national parks and forests, for many Red Lodge residents nature and machinery still meant work and survival.

But, the highway took only four years to build and the hoped-for boom in the Cooke City mines never materialized. After completion of the Beartooth Highway, local residents had to find other employment to keep them in Red Lodge. What they found was a series of jobs and businesses serving the tourists who headed into the region looking for fun, leisure, and recreation in the playgrounds opened up by the Beartooth Highway and the other new roads in the mountains around Red Lodge. For these workers, the new road and Americans' growing interest in outdoor recreation meant development of a new identity. These local workers found themselves experiencing the nation's changing relationship with nature secondhand as they negotiated new positions as part of a *service* economy dependent on the whims and interests of those with the money to spend traveling among the beautiful areas of the West.

So, for Red Lodge residents, the new connection to Yellowstone National Park expanded job opportunities in the tourism industry even while it reinforced the nation's class-defined experiences in the natural world. Men, especially miners whose working-class identity had formed out of the crucible of

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[58]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 19.

[59]Senia Kallio Oral History, OH 357, 31, MHS. See also Michelcic Oral History, 1B, and Koski Oral History, 23.

[60]Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 35.

union activism, resented these distinctions. Many miners, for example, took summer jobs driving buses in the Park, and quickly found out that drivers were a different class than tourists. Park concession operators, for example, threatened to fire any driver who entered one of the big tourist hotels; drivers had to sleep in their busses. "They didn't want employees mixing with the people who paid good money," explained J.N. "Buck" Cornelio, who drove a bus there in the 1930s.[61] Nature tourism reinforced class distinctions without offering the pride and solidarity of working-class unionism that these men had grown accustomed to in the mines.

This work of serving tourists moved into Red Lodge by the 1930s, creating new problems, opportunities, and identities for local residents. As the community's economy transformed from coal to tourism, local people needed to adapt themselves and their town to these new demands. They had to create a new public identity for the town, a cleaned-up appearance, and a different set of jobs. For, the highway, as it were, brought "nature"—or at least the tourists who sought out nature—through and into Red Lodge; and that made all the difference. Instead of exporting their raw materials to unseen consumers, townspeople were now in the business of importing customers into Red Lodge, itself to consume the resources of scenery, mountain air, and fishing streams and the services of local people. While serving these motor tourists, local residents would learn new ways of looking at the natural world around them and new ways of thinking about themselves as Westerners who lived amidst such natural splendor. Red Lodge, in short, would start to look more like a tourist town and less like a mining community.

Most immediately, the *road* itself became a prominent marker in the town's public identity. Even though open only a few months each year, the highway assumed a prominent year-round presence in the community. Red Lodge residents, for example, readily appropriated the various nicknames for the road (Beartooth Highway, Hi Road, Top of the World) into the local culture and townscape. There soon popped up groups like the Red Lodge Highroad Ski Club, the Bear Tooth Boosters Club, the Beartooth

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[61]J.N. "Buck" Cornelio Oral History, OH 546, 2B, MHS. Other Red Lodge area miners who worked in the Park included Frank DeVille (bus driver), Ollie Anderson, and Leo Michelcic 1A ("sanitation engineer"). DeVille Oral History, 2B; Anderson Oral History, 9; Michelcic Oral History, 1A.

Mountaineers band, and the Hi-Road Harmonizers.[62] And pictures of the road appeared everywhere, inevitably enhanced so that the highway would stand out clearly against the background green of pine trees: a snaking line of sharp switchbacks working its way up to the "top of the world," as boosters quickly dubbed the Beartooth plateau. Flash's Studio, the local photography store, advertised its collection of scenic murals of the "Spectacular Hi-Road" and large pictures of sites such as Twin Lakes "as seen from U.S. Highway 12."[63] Pete's Riverside Restaurant Club featured pictures of the highway on its menus; not to be outdone, the Red Lodge Cafe owners actually painted a mural of the highway on a wall of their restaurant. At the very first productions of the Festival of Nations, residents performed their kolas and waltzes in front of a large, painted backdrop showing the mountains behind Red Lodge with the Beartooth Highway prominently marked out.[64] Even the cover of the Carbon County High School annual magazine featured the highway switchbacks.[65] The Beartooth Highway, nationally acclaimed and promoted, quickly emerged as Red Lodge's claim to fame, and residents got used to using the highway as a marker, not only of the town's connection to Yellowstone National Park, but also as part of Red Lodge's defining identity.

Beyond these images of the zigzagging switchbacks, the completion of the Beartooth Highway brought even greater physical changes to the Red Lodge townscape. The town's built environment took on a new appearance, one centered less around coal mines and more around making visitors comfortable and well supplied with amenities. By the 1950s, the town boasted three service stations and several motels such "Harley's Cottage Motel," with small "cabinettes" that catered specifically to motorized tourists heading up over the Beartooth Highway at the rate of about 12,000 per year by 1949.[66] Instead of working in mines or taking in boarders, residents pumped gas into touring Fords and Chevys or dished out food at the Busy Bee Café. Some old miners still wandered the streets, but more people made their living

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[62] Carbon County News, 21 August 1952, 8; "Montana" Vera Buening Oral History, OH 358, 1A, MHS.
[63] Have Fun ... Relax in Red Lodge, Montana (Red Lodge: Carbon County News, 1953), np., CCHS.
[64] See, for example, the picture in the Carbon County News, 14 August 1952, 5.
[65] Carbon County High School Carbon Review 5 (1934), CCHS.
[66] Have Fun ... Relax in Red Lodge, Montana. Visitation figures based on visits to the town's tourist booth are from the Carbon County News, 15 September 1949, 1.

serving tourists. Even the town's original buildings began to look different; some residents, caught up in the desire to create a "Wild West" feel to the town had already begun to mask the brick and pressed-metal facades of the mining days with rustic shakes and pine beams that looked more rugged and "natural" than the original materials. And, even the buildings that were not covered up, looked cleaner—either through the elbow grease of their owners or simply because the fine haze of coal dust no longer coated the town. Either way, the community was taking on a new public appearance.

Actually, community activists worked long and hard in the 1930s to convince residents to start removing the physical remnants of coal mining from the town. These town leaders realized that re-creating Red Lodge as "nature's town" would take more than a few murals and singing groups named after the highway. In the 1930s the town just did not *look* the part of a gateway to nature's Wonderland. Years of mining had, quite literally, imprinted itself on Red Lodge: coal dust, grime, slack piles, and dying vegetation attested to the long decades of smoke and pollution that had accompanied the town's boom years. And suddenly looks were starting to matter. Customers who bought Rocky Fork coal had never cared if Red Lodge was a dirty, dusty town. Indeed, most coal customers never even saw Red Lodge; coal arrived for their locomotives or home stoves without any acknowledgement that this resource came from a physical town with a public image. But, nature tourism was a different business. In transforming itself into a service economy catering to recreational tourists, the *appearance* of Red Lodge itself began to matter. As a gateway to Yellowstone and the Beartooths, Red Lodge had to sell itself as a part of nature, as an "appropriately beautiful and distinctive" gateway to Yellowstone National Park.[67] Although local organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and Woman's Club had long urged residents to clean up and prettify Red Lodge, construction of the highway created a new impetus and focus for the work of making Red Lodge beautiful by "cover[ing] unsighty [sic] relics of man's handiwork."[68]

In a writing contest held in early 1933, local eighth graders neatly summarized the problems facing Red Lodge as its residents tried to make the transition from mining to tourism town. Responding to the topic "Beautify Red Lodge—Gateway to Yellowstone Park," students stressed the need to make Red

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[67]Picket-Journal, 29 September 1932, 1, 8; see also, 15 June 1937, 4.

Lodge, the town, worthy of the natural beauty that surrounded it. The challenges of such a feat, however, loomed large. "Tourists travel around to see beautiful things," one student pointed out bluntly, "Therefore, they would not care to travel through Red Lodge." Almost a half century of coal mining had made the town seem "dismal and dirty among such surrounding," observed another student Smokestacks had spewed soot all over the community, destroyed vegetation along the stream bed, and made the town, as a whole, look and feel too industrial for a proper gateway city. As part of its transformation to nature's town, students recommended that Red Lodge residents wash off the reminders of the mining past, plant greenery, and cater to tourists who expected certain amenities from the towns they patronized.[69] Shedding its older, industrial image, Red Lodge needed to "green" itself up, bring nature into the townscape. Now that it had a highway to Yellowstone National Park—and had lost its mining industry—Red Lodge needed to prove itself worthy of tourism by creating its own garden within the city.

The success of Red Lodge's "See 'Em Alive Zoo," demonstrated this new impetus not only to associate the town with nature, but also to bring nature into the town. Developed in the early 1930s as a curiosity for tourists driving along the Beartooth Highway, the zoo quickly turned into one of the town's premier attractions: the "biggest" zoo in Montana and a physical marker of how Red Lodge embraced, displayed, and marketed, the natural world. The establishment's founders, D.W. Columbus and Les Lyons, self-consciously set out to re-create a microcosm of the state's wilderness right in Red Lodge. Columbus and Lyons acquired a variety of Montana animals—elk, black bears, deer, antelope, beavers—placed them in "surroundings simulating the natural," and sold the experience to visitors for ten cents apiece.[70] Situated at the south end of town right alongside the Beartooth Highway, the zoo, in effect, created a "natural" space within the town itself and for over 40 years Columbus and Lyons sold it as

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[68]Picket-Journal, 27 October 1932, 1.

[69]The local newspaper printed the three prize-winning essays. Picket-Journal, 18 May 1933, 1, 5.

[70] Federal Writers' Project, Montana: A State Guide Book (New York: Hastings House, 1939), 342; Leslie Lyons Oral History, OH 301, MHS; Picket-Journal, 18 May 1933, 1, 8; Leslie Lyons Collection, MHS; Photograph Collection, CCHS; Zupan and Owens, Red Lodge, 62-63. For more on the commodification of "nature" see Jennifer Price, Flight Maps: Adventures with Nature in Modern America (New York: Basic Books, 1999), and Susan G. Davis, Spectacular Nature: Corporate Culture and the Sea World Experience (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

something as good as (or better than) the wild lands around the town. Here visitors could wander among fields of wildflowers (carefully planted and tended by Lyons) and gaze upon the most appealing wild animals the state had to offer, caught and caged for the convenience of the paying tourists.

And people loved it. The zoo quickly became one of the town's defining features, drawing not only tourists passing through to Yellowstone Park, but also repeat customers from Billings and Laurel who would drive up to Red Lodge for the day to visit the zoo. Americans, it seemed, were fascinated by wild animals. Animals, after all, were one of the major attractions of the national parks and forests. But, the See 'Em Alive Zoo was easier than the wilderness. Looking at the animals in Red Lodge's zoo did not entail the chance involved in spotting wildlife along the Beartooth Highway or one of the park roads; there, seeing a bear or mountain lion was a hit or miss proposition. Here, in Red Lodge, Columbus and Lyons provided easy, convenient, *landscaped* access to these animals. It was nature, but better, more reliable. Not that the establishment—which was really little more than a "trap zoo"—would necessarily seem so "natural" to modern observers. Pictures of the See 'Em Alive Zoo from the 1930s and 1940s show animals penned in cages with little room to move let alone run. Some cages fit together like pieces cut into a pie; the animals had only a triangle in which to live with mesh fences between them and inhabitants on either side so visitors could walk around and around the structure, examining first a mountain lion, then a bear cub, then a beaver. To the operators and the visitors who flocked to the exhibits, however, such a display seemed not horrific but enlightening, even beautiful. Red Lodge mayor J.C.F. Siegfriedt, for one, declared that there was "really a veritable thrill to be enjoyed by being in close proximity to the wild life native to the State of Montana...in a beautiful setting perfectly contented with their surroundings."[71] The zoo, like the Beartooth Highway, became simply part of nature, but improved, of course, by human ingenuity and machinery.

And, indeed, the zoo depended on the Beartooth Highway for its very existence. Like the campaign to clean up the town as a suitable "gateway" community, the zoo was part of the local

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[71] Picket-Journal, 9 June 1936, 1, 4. Of course, many Montanans actually don't mind "Seein' 'Em Dead" either, as evidenced by the preponderance of mounted, stuffed animals in many of the state's public

transformation created by the highway. The road made all the difference, Lyons pointed out. "We didn't have tourists before the Highway. This was a dead-end road. Of course they didn't come up here."[72] The highway and zoo, in fact, worked together. As the highway connected the town to the natural world of the Beartooths and Yellowstone, the zoo pulled the images, and physical creatures, of that nature into the town where there were now tourists who would pay to see such re-creations of the wild. Co-founder Lyons even advertised the zoo locally as something that would improve Red Lodge's developing identity as "nature's town." The zoo, he argued, would "prove a valuable item in promoting the attractiveness of this region for tourists enroute to or from the Yellowstone Park."[73] In Red Lodge's public identity, town and nature had begun to intertwine.

This mixture of nature and machinery, the acceptance of humans "finishing" nature, marked the initial phase of Red Lodge's transformation into "nature's town." In the 1930s and 1940s, as residents started to clean up their coal-dusted identity, the machine in the garden seemed to be the local ticket to economic survival. Very few voices emerged criticizing the efforts to open up the wilderness or to cage the wild within Red Lodge. Rather, as townspeople adapted to the town's new economy, they embraced these efforts to build into the Beartooths and to extract the scenery, wild animals, and other natural amenities that tourists wanted to see. Switching from coal mining to outdoor tourism, boosters now referred to Red Lodge as "Just What the Doctor Ordered": a place where people could find spiritual fulfillment amidst the beauty and grandeur of the natural world. Never mind if the natural world were seen at a zoo or through the windshield of a speeding car.

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This attitude began to change, however, in the years after World War II, when advocates of "wilderness"—of natural areas where machines would not be permitted—started to gain a wider audience.

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establishments; the Great Falls and Missoula airports, for example, display dozens of these "trophy" animals—perhaps to show incoming tourists what they can expect to see in their national park visits?

[72] Lyons Oral History, 1B, MHS.

By the 1970s and 1980s, Red Lodge the former mining town had shifted more completely into Red Lodge, nature's community; and the town's public stance on the role of the machine had changed also. For Red Lodge's public identity as nature's town altered not only the physical appearance of Red Lodge, but also the very population of the small community as newcomers moved to Red Lodge simply because of its proximity to national forest and park lands. The town created out of coal dust had become a place where fewer and fewer people would accept intrusions into the forests and mountains now considered Red Lodge's premier natural resource. In this, Red Lodge was part of a much larger national phenomenon of Americans moving away from the cities and into the country, creating value in undeveloped lands. But, Red Lodge's identification with wilderness also grew out of very close personal and economic considerations as shown in the public debates over the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and the expansion of Red Lodge's ski area.

As these examples show, Red Lodge residents' increasing identification with the surrounding landscape combined with popular ideas about wilderness to create a new public rhetoric about "nature" and "natural" and the place of machinery in the garden around Red Lodge.

Of course many of the ideas about "pristine wilderness" that gained popularity in the 1960s and 1970s were even older than the Beartooth Highway. Some Americans had long spoken out against the use of machinery to open up and improve nature. In the first half of the 20th century, foresters Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall spoke and wrote for people across the country, urging Americans to value "roadless" areas where machinery did not distract humans from their peaceful interaction with the natural world. In 1921, Leopold explained this vision of Forest Service Wilderness Areas: "By 'wilderness' I mean a continuous stretch of country preserved in its natural state, open to lawful hunting and fishing, big enough to absorb a two weeks' pack trip, and kept devoid of roads, artificial trails, cottages, or other works of man."[74] Leopold's arguments helped to convince Forest Service officials to begin setting aside so-called "primitive areas" from the nation's forest reserves in the late 1920s and 1930s. By 1939 there

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[73] Picket-Journal, 18 May 1933, 1, 8.

[74] Quoted in Louis S. Warren, The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists in Twentieth-Century America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 112.

were almost 15 million acres so designated, including the Beartooth Primitive Area outside of Red Lodge. Meant to appeal to wilderness recreation enthusiasts, the regulation authorizing creation of primitive areas restricted roads, settlement, and economic development in designated areas, but was broad enough not to exclude potential industrial development in these places. The new regulations did establish, however, official agency recognition of the need to conserve "the values of such areas for purposes of public education and recreation."[75] The formation of the Wilderness Society in 1935 marked another key step in the nation's developing interest in wild lands. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Wilderness Society's stated mission was "to integrate the growing sentiment which we believe exists in this country for holding wild areas *sound-proof* as well as *sight-proof* from our increasingly mechanized life...."[76]

1930s Red Lodge, however, had little place for this kind of sentiment among residents busily constructing a public imagery centered around 62 miles of oiled road running smack through the center of one's of the nation's most beautiful "wild" areas. Like most other Americans of the period, they focused more on making the wilderness accessible—"finishing" it in the appropriate ways—than in preserving nature from development.

Interestingly, there was one regional group that early on took a very public stand about the need to save roadless wilderness. In the 1920s and 1930s, dude ranchers, who had already established a certain economic niche in the Beartooth region, vigorously opposed the construction of the Beartooth Highway. The last thing a dude rancher needed was a two-lane highway carrying gawking tourists into lands that had once been accessible only through the services of his wranglers. Dude ranchers, of course, had always depended on a certain amount of mechanization—electricity, phones, mass-produced sheets and blankets—but they fought to limit the extension of machinery into *their* wilderness. Dude ranch promoters in the 1920s protested that the proposed highway would penetrate "the last virgin wild area reached by pack outfits in the United States." Further, they argued that Americans preferred to have some wilderness available for such activities, which were becoming increasingly popular every year. The "interest of the

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[75]Quoted in Craig W. Allin, The Politics of Wilderness Preservation (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), 74.

[76]Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 207.

public," industry representatives informed Congress, "will be best served in maintaining this area for that purpose."[77] The interests of this little group could not compete, however, with the more strident economic arguments of Red Lodge and Billings boosters who insisted that a highway through this "virgin wild area" would increase regional tourism on a broad scale and provide automobile tourists (an important lobby group) with a convenient, scenic entrance into Yellowstone Park. The machine won, hands down, in this early contest over the place of roads and cars in the wilderness. Only gradually would local people start to adopt a new attitude toward the natural world. And like the early dude ranch protest, much of the new argument about wilderness would revolve around an already established niche into the greater Yellowstone area, specifically Red Lodge's very own gateway to Yellowstone: the Beartooth Highway.[78] In the 1930s, though, the dude ranchers were a lone voice against a deafening local call for construction of ever more roads and amenities in the greater Yellowstone area.

By the 1950s and 1960s, however, things began to change. Nationally, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and other environmental groups gained increasing popularity as Americans turned against industrial development of the nation's remaining wild lands. Even as the nation was vastly expanding its industrial base in the postwar years, Americans underwent a fundamental shift in how they lived and how they viewed the natural world. "After World War II," as historian Samuel P. Hays argues, "extensive changes in human values gave these intangible natural values far greater influence."[79] As Americans enjoyed higher standards of living and increased levels of education, they began to esteem wild nature more highly than developed nature. These changing attitudes came through in public support for the

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[77]The Cody Commercial Club representative summarized these points on behalf of dude ranchers at the 1928 Hearings on the Beartooth Highway, Highway from Red Lodge, Mont. to Cooke City, Mont., 407. For a general discussion of dude ranchers as stewards of wild lands, see Lawrence R. Borne, Dude Ranching: A Complete History (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), esp. 143-158.

[78] Area dude ranchers continued to lobby for wilderness areas. In 1958, for example, the Dude Ranchers' Association sent a resolution to the Montana Chamber of Commerce opposing "Multiple Use" interpretations for wilderness areas that would permit the construction of access roads around and leading to these areas. The ranchers did not want more cars driving up to and around the wilderness areas. "Resolution: Wilderness Areas, Trails, and Access Roads," 1958, Montana Chamber of Commerce Records, MHS.

[79]Samuel P. Hays, Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 1987), 22.

efforts of the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society in 1950 to prevent the damming of the Green River at Echo Park near the Dinosaur National Monument.[80] Opponents of development argued passionately about the need to restrict encroachments on public lands; they also began to develop powerful arguments about the value of wild lands for all Americans. George W. Kelley, for example, who represented the Colorado Forestry and Horticultural Association, contended that Americans needed "wilderness areas" as "a spiritual necessity, an antidote to the strains of modern living." And Bernard DeVoto, writing in the Saturday Evening Post, drew from the work of Aldo Leopold when he declared that Dinosaur was important "as wilderness that is preserved intact...for the field study of...the balances of Nature, the web of life, the interrelationship of species, massive problems of ecology—presently it will not be possible to study such matters anywhere else."[81] Environmental lobbyists brought the pressure of American public opinion to bear on the Echo Park decision and in 1956 Congress finally squelched the proposal. In 1964, environmentalists followed up their Dinosaur victory when Congress passed the Wilderness Act, which established the mechanism for withdrawing millions of acres of "pristine" land from the National Forest system and preserving it as "roadless" areas—places where machines were not permitted.

"Wilderness," however, remained a complicated idea that generated intense feelings in the late 20th century. Americans battled each other over how to balance "preservation" of natural areas with public accessibility to what were, after all, *public* lands. How much, in short, should the government value roads like the Beartooth Highway that let thousands of people a year gaze upon spectacular scenery? And how much should agencies value the spiritual, ecological, scientific, and aesthetic worth of roadless areas that most Americans would never see?[82] In Red Lodge these questions struck very close to home. National ideas about "wilderness" that could remain somewhat ephemeral for urbanites in Boston or Seattle or even Billings, had very real effects on local people's economic security, quality of life, and plans for the future. Red Lodge, after all, had come to rely on the tourism business generated by building roads

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[80] For a comprehensive discussion of how the Echo Park controversy influenced American conservationists, see Mark W.T. Harvey, A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994).

[81] Quoted in Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 213-14.

and businesses in the Beartooth Mountains; it had a long history in using machines to get what local people wanted out of the natural world. Yet, by the 1960s and 1970s, the very definition of "local" had started to change, and so had the town's public position on machinery in the wilderness.

World War II and the closing of the region's mines had transformed the community, creating a new kind of "local" in the post-war years. While a core of "old timers" remained in the little town, Red Lodge lost many of its miners in an initial wave of migration after the Eastside Mine closed, and even more when the war lured away men and women into the armed services and the war industries of the West Coast. Even as these residents moved away, however, Red Lodge started to attract a new kind of inhabitant. Most of the town's residents into the 1980s were older, retired folks living on social security. But, slowly at first, and then more rapidly by the late 1970s and early 1980s Red Lodge drew new residents looking for a place that combined small-town life with proximity to beautiful mountains and forests. By the 1980s, these new residents had finally started to reverse the decades-long population decline in Red Lodge and Carbon County.[83] The new "locals," what Hal R. Rothman calls "neolocals," did not share the town's history of coal mining; they moved to Red Lodge not for high-paying jobs or the promise of prosperity, but because they wanted to live in a small community in a beautiful area near millions of acres of national forest and park lands. They came because of Red Lodge's identity as a gateway to nature.[84]

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[82] Harvey, A Symbol of Wilderness.

[83] By 1970, the median age of residents in Red Lodge was 51.5 years, the highest for a town its size in Montana; 27% of the town's population was over 65, the second highest average among towns with a population between 1,000 and 2,500. U.S Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1970 Census of Population, Volume I, Characteristics of the Population, Part 28, Montana (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973), 28-60.

[84] Hal K. Rothman, Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 26. On population statistics, see Carbon County Planning Board, "Carbon County Comprehensive Plan," (c. 1972), 33-34, 45-50, CCHS. This transition in the population and concern about the environment can also be seen anecdotally in a series of town meetings held in 1994 and 1995 by the Beartooth Front Community Forum. In these meetings residents defined perceived problems with the community and laid out goals to address these concerns. One of the concerns voiced at the 3 August 1994 meeting was the high number of seasonal homes in and around Red Lodge; there were 170 seasonal homes in Red Lodge according to the 1990 census and 700 such homes in the immediate vicinity of Red Lodge. Videotapes of these meetings are available through the Beartooth Front Community Forum in Red Lodge.

Dismissed by some as long-haired hippie-types, these newcomers created an important new force in the town that strengthened Red Lodge's public identification with the natural world. The Brokedown Palace Project (BPP), a social justice group founded in the early 1970s, reflects the energy and direction some of these new residents brought into the community. Made up of a "roughly even proportion of indigenous [long-time] residents and recent immigrants" to the County (according to its literature), the BPP's goals included maintaining the rural character of Red Lodge and its surroundings. In pursuit of that goal, project members stressed the need for "locally capitalized, multiple ownership businesses and light industries that emphasize intensive use of labor." Far from endorsing a return to the "good old days" of coal mining, BPP members encouraged residents to "change our hardware and our habits" by investing in "clean" energy that would not pollute "this spaceship earth." While working to attract environmentally friendly businesses to town, organizers tackled a remarkable array of community concerns from a "Green Thumb" gardening program to employ the elderly to writing proposals to obtain Department of Housing and Urban Development support for rehabilitation of local housing. "There is no better stage," they concluded, "upon which to begin this important work than on the local level, where, particularly in rural and agricultural communities, people mingle with the environment's interdependencies on a daily basis."[85] Although the Brokedown Palace Project lasted only a few years, these new ideas about "spaceship earth" and "environmental interdependencies" gained an important public forum among residents who viewed the natural environment as a primary reason for living in Red Lodge.

The prominence of these new voices came through in the debate over the creation of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness area in the 1960s and 1970s. Caught in the middle of a prolonged national and regional struggle between pro- and anti-wilderness forces, Red Lodge residents negotiated an environmental path on regional wilderness that would have surprised prior generations of Red Lodge boosters, although it made great sense considering how the community had changed by the early 1970s. When the National Forest Service and Congress began to hold public hearings in the early 1970s on the creation of a wilderness area in the Beartooth Mountains it was hard to hear a dissenting voice in Red

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[85]Brokedown Palace Project, "Annual Report, Program Year 1974-1975," 14, and "Sunbind," (1976), 33,

Lodge. For the most part, Red Lodge residents who voiced opinions favored not only creating a wilderness in the Beartooths, they supported environmentalists' efforts to more than double the Forest Service's proposed wilderness designation. Instead of 516,815 acres separated by two non-wilderness "corridors," local people demanded a "unified" Absaroka-Beartooth wilderness of over a million acres.[86]

Not that local opinions necessarily made much difference in this conflict. The fight over nearly a million acres of land in the Absaroka and Beartooth ranges—some of which lay only a dozen or so miles from Red Lodge—lay largely outside the purview of local residents. National organizations like the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, the Cattleman's Association, and the Inland Forest Resource Council, contributed lengthy statements about how much wilderness was too much or not enough. Private citizens from Illinois, California, and Pennsylvania added their voices. Across the nation, groups and individuals wrote letters, attended hearings, and talked to their representatives about the Absaroka and Beartooth wilderness in Montana. Their arguments about wilderness rarely considered specific local concerns. Those in favor of wilderness created impassioned arguments about the scientific and spiritual value of wild lands; they made pleas for their children and grandchildren's rights to see and experience "virgin" woods and mountains. Opponents made equally intense arguments about the values of free enterprise, the nation's need for timber and minerals, the dangers of "locking out" development in an economically strapped state, and citizens' rights to ride snowmobiles across federal lands.[87] Red Lodge voices were largely drowned

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CCHS.

[86]For an overview of the wilderness plan, see U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, "A Proposal: Beartooth Wilderness," 1974, CCHS. For Red Lodge's response, I used the local newspaper, the Carbon County News, looking at both articles and letters to the editor, all of which favored unified wilderness. Microfilmed copies of the wilderness hearing process include much testimony from Big Timber residents opposed to the unified wilderness, but few Red Lodge voices. One local voice in favor of the unified wilderness was rancher William R. Mackay, Jr. who argued that, "In this age of constant change and disruption, surely we can find room in the nation for preservation." U.S. Congress, House and Senate Joint Hearings, Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, State of Montana, 79, Billings, Montana, 1977, 78 S311-12. Red Lodge resident Kenneth Shesne testified in 1984 that the wilderness bill favored by the Forest Service (with the corridors) was "unbelievably bad" and "skewed strongly toward the competing exploitative and mechanized recreationist factions." U.S. Congress, Senate Hearings, Montana Wilderness Act of 1984, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Reserved Water of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on S. 2850, Washington, D.C., 643, 1984, 85 S311-28.

[87]Few of the public hearings on record contain input from people identified as Red Lodge residents. See, for example, the 1977 hearing, Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, State of Montana, and U.S. Congress, Senate Hearing, San Antonio Missions National Historic Park, Texas; Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness,

out of this process; even so their position on the wilderness reflected some significant developments in the local community.

Timing had much to do with local residents' reactions to the proposed wilderness area. First of all, not all residents who supported the unified Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness were necessarily against all machinery in the nation's forests; but they *were* against new development in this particular forest. By the early 1970s, Red Lodge residents who lived off the tourist trade coming through town on the Beartooth Highway—a federal project that could never have been built in a wilderness area—supported the concept of keeping machinery out of the Beartooth Mountains because *more* machinery and roads threatened the economic niche and association with wild places they already enjoyed. Their support of *unified* (i.e. bigger) wilderness made sense when one considered the purpose of the splintered wilderness proposal. One of the non-wilderness "corridors" that would break up the single Absaroka-Beartooth wilderness had only one real purpose: to provide for the future construction of an access road between the town of Big Timber and Yellowstone National Park. As Red Lodge business owners and others quickly pointed out, any new park access road would divert traffic from the Beartooth Highway and cut into Red Lodge's tourism base. A unified Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness would eliminate this corridor—and the competition of another gateway to the Park.[88]

The Absaroka-Beartooth debate drew together residents' spiritual, aesthetic, and economic arguments about development of the area's natural resources. Looking out for their own self interest, Red Lodge residents meshed the language of environmentalism and economics into their own, local argument about the wilderness proposal. The editor of the Carbon County News summarized this position in a series of articles in favor of wilderness written in early 1974. His argument easily combined an environmental defense of the wilderness with a practical economic appeal to local readers. A joint Absaroka-Beartooth

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Montana; and Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Georgia, Washington D.C., 1977, 78 S311-15. See also, letters to U.S. Senator Lee Metcalf regarding the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, Lee Metcalf Collection, 30/4, 25/1, 24/5, MHS.

[88]Big Timber business interests lobbied forcefully for the creation of their own gateway highway to Yellowstone National Park; the National Forest Service vigorously supported the town's efforts to bisect the proposed wilderness area with a road. Arne M. Petaja to Senator Lee Metcalf, 10 May 1965, Lee

Wilderness, he argued, was necessary to "preserve as much as possible of the remaining unspoiled land in the U.S., to provide adequate domain for migrating elk and other wildlife, and to safeguard the area's resources in event that some future generation may need them more desperately than we do." More significantly, the unified wilderness would also help Red Lodge businesses. A three-part wilderness according to the editor would "be a severe blow" to the county's economy dealt by "shortsighted" Big Timber businessmen who would create a "corridor of pavement, hamburger stands, and litter-strewn campgrounds." The interests of the conservationist and the local businessmen, he argued, coincided in the push for a single, unified wilderness.[89] Red Lodge's own highway to the park, built during the heady New Deal days of "conservation" construction, apparently did not damage the amenities of the region; it had the certain dignity that time (and a possessive interest) lent to such intrusive structures. Not that everyone, of course saw the road as a splendid addition to nature: one (non-resident) supporter of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, after all, referred to the Beartooth Highway as "an insult, intruding inappropriately into the sensitive alpine tundra."[90] But, the Beartooth Highway was an established fact and the Big Timber road was simply a dream; assured of the permanence of their own machine in the garden, Red Lodge residents could readily accept and promote a wilderness designation that would prevent Big Timber from building a competing highway to the Park—and halt any other kinds of developments that might hurt Red Lodge's growing economic interest in nature tourism.[91]

Metcalf Collection, 112/14, MHS. Testimony of Conrad B. Fredericks and the Big Timber City Council, Joint Hearings, Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, State of Montana, 47-50.

[89]Carbon County News, 7 March 1974, 2. For an example of more stridently environmentalist arguments about the wilderness, see The Montana Wilderness Association, "Wilderness Hearing Alert: Absaroka-Beartooth Primitive Areas," Lee Metcalf Collection, 25/1, MHS.

[90]Bob Anderson, Beartooth Country: Montana's Absaroka and Beartooth Mountains (Helena: American & World Geographic Publishing, 1994), 57.

[91]Anderson, Beartooth Country, 90. In a Forest Service community meeting, Red Lodge residents in 1977 voted in favor of a forestry management option that emphasized "amenity values including wildlife, recreation, visual and water resources" over a plan favored by the Forest Service that stressed "balanced development," including timber, oil, gas, and livestock use. Carbon County News, 24 November 1977. In 1986, Phillips Petroleum, which was investigating oil and gas sites in the area, complained that Red Lodge was a "hot area" because the Forest Service had "received vocal complaints from local people which sways their feeling about the activity." Phillips asked the town's Chamber of Commerce to speak to the Forest Service about local attitudes. "Minutes," 31 October 1986, Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce, Red Lodge Visitors' Center Collections.

This, of course, is not to say that all Red Lodge residents wholeheartedly supported the unified Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, or even the idea of federally protected wilderness. Indeed, into the 1990s, some local people would argue that extensive coal mining and oil exploration in the national forests was the best solution to the town's economic woes.[92] But, the voices that gained *public* notice—those with the time, money, or energy to testify before Congressional committees, submit editorials to the local paper, and attend Forest Service meetings—overwhelmingly favored the creation of a large, coherent wilderness and grounded their arguments both in ecological and economic language. Red Lodge, the mining town, still lingered in residents' economic rationalization for resource use; even those who wore their environmental politics on their sleeve—like the editor of the Carbon County News—realized that in the lean years of the mid-1970s money talked. But, Red Lodge, "nature's town," had generated a strong public presence also.

By the 1980s and 1990s Red Lodge had moved even further from its roots in mechanized mining. Red Lodge residents had acquired an ever-more strident public voice about the environment, and they no longer necessarily framed their arguments in the language of economics, as they had in the debate over the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. By this time, most of the people who lived in Red Lodge had not known the old days of coal; they supported the town's identification with nature, but they did not understand its industrial, machine-driven past.[93] Increasingly, public opinion turned against the intrusion of the machine into the natural areas of the Beartooths and residents made fewer apologies for their positions.

Where the construction of the Beartooth Highway marked notions about the place of humans and machines in the wilderness in the 1930s, and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness debate pointed out the demands of the town's new economy, the creation and expansion of Red Lodge's ski area illustrated the town's increasing emphasis on the importance of "wild" nature. The controversy over enlarging the area's ski resort highlighted changing ideas about the appropriate roles of capitalism, the federal government, and machinery in the natural world from the 1960s into the 1990s. Built in the early 1960s,

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[92] For example, see Lloyd Schweizer's letter to the Editor, Montana Free Press (Red Lodge), October 1991, 5-7.

[93] "Carbon County Comprehensive Plan," 33-34, 45-50.

Red Lodge Mountain ski area (originally called Grizzly Peak ski area), like the highway, offered a technologically enhanced way to experience the natural environment; it, too, became a tourist attraction, although never to the extent of the nationally renowned Beartooth Highway.[94] Although residents initially embraced the ski area as an economic boon, that enthusiasm waned over the years as local people adopted a new public attitude toward the role of the machine in the national forest. Unlike the highway, the ski area attracted a snowfall (so to speak) of criticism and condemnation from residents who by the 1980s challenged Red Lodge Mountain (RLM) on everything from water use and sewage disposal to disruption of vegetation and interference with wild animal migrations.[95]

Things had been much different in the late 1930s, when boosters first proposed construction of a ski area near Red Lodge. Then townspeople cheered the use of machinery to further develop the region's forest land; a ski run, after all, promised to enhance the town's growing tourism business by making nature more accessible—and enjoyable—in the winter months. Enthusiastic boosters from Red Lodge and Billings created ski clubs to promote winter sports and the Chamber of Commerce readily pitched in money and volunteers to help the clubs construct lifts and buildings at a site on Willow Creek, about three miles southwest of Red Lodge. As skiing became more popular around the United States, ski boosters grew more and more aggressive and grandiose in their plans, especially as the numbers of skiers in Billings increased in the 1950s. The state's second largest city needed a nearby ski hill to satisfy the demands of affluent recreationists. In 1955 Billings and Red Lodge business leaders created Grizzly Peak, Inc. and obtained a Forest Service permit in 1956 to start building a grand new ski area on the mountain peak just southwest of Red Lodge. In February of 1960, the area opened with fanfare, billing itself as the "highest

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[94] Television journalist Charles Kuralt, for example, listed the Beartooth Highway at the top of his list of most beautiful highways in the United States. See Harry J. Owens to Charles Kuralt, 27 February 1980, "Kuralt and Other Celebrities" file, CCHS; see also almost any Red Lodge booster publication from 1980 to the present; the Kuralt listing is a topic constantly brought up whenever there is mention of the Beartooth Highway. Red Lodge Mountain, as far as I know, has not topped any comparable lists of beautiful ski areas.

[95] See, for example, Dick Overturf to Linda Ward Williams, District Ranger, n.d., Carbon County Clerk's Office File; U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region, "Record of Decision for the Expansion of Red Lodge Mountain Ski Area Master Development Plan," January 1996, Chapter V: Response to Public Comment. Mark Harvey makes clear in his study of the Echo Park fight that these legal weapons—environmental

and sunniest" ski slope in the United States. Although it struggled for some years as dry winters and recessions dissuaded people from spending money on ski vacations, Grizzly Peak, renamed Red Lodge Mountain in 1971, gradually expanded its runs and became an entrenched part of the local establishment and an essential player in the town's winter tourism.[96]

The ski area quickly became part of the town's public identity. In the years right after the opening, for example, the local yearbook featured the freshman and sophomore class officers in various poses around the ski area, and residents promoted a winter carnival to showcase the new lifts and runs. Physically, the carved-out ski runs etched themselves, quite literally, on the local landscape—impossible to miss from the town below. But, the ski area never integrated itself into the town's public identity as did the Beartooth Highway. Residents skied at the site and promoted it during the winter months, but did not take the Mountain into Red Lodge as they had done with the highway. Mountain promoters tied themselves to Red Lodge with the slogan "A friendly mountain and a fun little town," but the town showed few noticeable signs of this association. No "Grizzly Peak Harmonizers" or RLM dance troupe ever graced Red Lodge's public arena. The Chamber of Commerce ran advertisements for Red Lodge Mountain in glossy magazines, but pictures of the ski runs did not pop up on local menus or on the sides of buildings.[97] The town's relationship with the Mountain was complicated by the fact that the ski area was a private business on public land and also by the town's growing identification with an idea of wilderness that increasingly denied the place of machinery in "natural" places.

Even more than the Beartooth Highway, Red Lodge Mountain represented the use of technology and machinery to enhance people's enjoyment of the natural world. From the bulldozers that ripped trees off the side of the mountain to create smooth runs to the engines that churned ski-lift chairs up and down the slopes, machinery played an essential role in the creation, maintenance, and promotion of the ski area. Indeed, Mountain promoters routinely reassured visitors in the 1970s that machines—snow grooming

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impact statements, endangered species listings—have changed the shape of conservation battles since the late 1960s, Harvey, A Symbol of Wilderness.

[96] On the growth of skiing in the West in the postwar years, see Rothman, Devil's Bargains, 168-286.

[97] See "Ski Red Lodge Mountain" brochures, CCHS; also Vertical File, "Red Lodge, Montana—Amusements," MHS.

machines, snow making machines, bulldozers—were creating the best possible ski environment for its patrons. As one manager put it, the machines made Red Lodge "a more efficient mountain." Boosters, for example, assured skiers in 1986, "If Mother Nature doesn't cooperate that's just fine; the ski area is equipped with snowmakers and expert grooming crews keep the slopes smooth and slideable."[98] Without machines, skiers depended on the whims of nature to provide snow and smooth runs, but visitors did not have to worry about that at Red Lodge Mountain. Even into the early 1990s, a promoter gushed that RLM's snowmaker daily consumed as much as 250 gallons of fuel and 200,000 gallons of water forced through guns that were actually "monstrous mechanical marvels of water lines, condenser, compressors, heaters, pumps and fans" to "magically" produce snowflakes or manmade snow—which actually lasted longer than natural snow.[99] The old idea of "finishing" nature still held true among RLM operators and the crowds of recreationists who descended upon the mountain every winter. The "machine" still made nature more accessible, more amenable, and more convenient. But, by the 1970s and 1980s, many were questioning how best to situate and control that machine in the garden. "Finishing," while retaining some adherents, was falling into disrepute among local residents.

Residents, for various reasons, began to question the need for "finishing" the natural world. How much more help, after all, did nature need? Did snow machines and flood lights and expanded trails really make the wilderness more enjoyable for all, or just for some? By the late 20th century Americans, including many Red Lodge residents, were thinking differently about forests and wilderness than they were in the 1930s. Red Lodge had actually become *about* living near nature. Residents like Karen Kinser and Michael Madsen relocated to Red Lodge without any real plans for monetary gain; the economic wisdom of the move interested them less than moving to a beautiful, remote place.[100] They, like many other "neonatives" wanted to freeze Red Lodge in place to preserve the natural amenities that had lured them out in the first place. This was the kind of feeling voiced by Yvonne M. Unruh in 1992 when she urged all her neighbors to protest against any oil drilling in and around Custer National Forest. Such development,

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[98]"Red Lodge Visitors Guide 1986," 46-47, CCHS.

[99]"Red Lodge Visitors Guide 1990-91," 6-7W, CCHS.

she argued, would create noise and pollution, disrupting area wildlife and destroying the "quality of life" in Red Lodge. The business of drilling oil "would be the ruination of the creative atmosphere" Red Lodge's natural environment provided for local artists and writers.[101] And, increasingly, these residents spoke up against about plans for development of the Forest Service lands that bordered the town. As resident John Clayton put it, "When business activities take place on Federal lands...we (the owners of the land) have both the right and duty to speak our minds" about how those lands will be managed.[102]

Thus, when RLM proposed construction of an expanded "Alpine Village" on their mountain in 1971 and again in the 1993, they could not count on the kind of booster support that had backed local efforts to construct the Beartooth Highway or the initial Grizzly Peak ski area. More often, developers found themselves fighting local residents on almost every point as they sought to expand and improve Red Lodge Mountain to make that part of nature "better" for visiting tourists.[103] Even though the Forest Service, through the local District Ranger, vocally supported expansion of the RML into a resort facility, townspeople remained unconvinced about the viability of such expansion.[104] Locals who depended on the natural world for their livelihood or who had moved to Red Lodge for its scenic beauty were, quite simply, more wary of developers, environmental destruction, and the social consequences of development in the national forest. And federal regulations—especially the requirement for a lengthy environmental impact process before developing on federal lands—gave those opposing such development much more of a voice in what was happening on the lands around their town. By 1996, when Red Lodge residents

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[100] Montana Free Press, June 1992, 16-17.

[101] Montana Free Press, September 1991, 3.

[102] Montana Free Press, September 1991, 6.

[103] The 1971 proposal fell through because of lack of funding. Red Lodge Grizzly Peak, "Ski Red Lodge: A Master Plan," 21 April 1971, CCHS; USFS, "Record of Decision for the Expansion of Red Lodge Mountain." Although the 1996 RLM report did not list the place of residency of respondents to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I cross checked these names with the Red Lodge phone book to determine local residency. On business owners' objections to RLM, see "Minutes," 14 January 1986, Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce.

[104] Linda Ward-Williams, Beartooth District Ranger of the Custer National Forest, wrote a letter to the editor of the Montana Free Press in 1993 urging public participation in the National Environmental Protection Act process for the expansion of RLM. She argued that the proposed action would turn RLM into a "regional, ski area resort" that would improve the Mountain's declining market shares, Montana Free Press, August 1993, 3.

responded in hearings on the expansion of RLM, they expressed fears about almost every aspect of what expansion might mean to 1,288 acres of Custer National Forest land. One respondent argued that he did not want Red Lodge to "become just another tamed mountain area like Vail, Aspen, Jackson, Breckinridge."[105] Many locals questioned expansion of trails (which Forest Service officials argued would "open up" backcountry vistas to visitors) as compromising "the existing wilderness area" and threatening wild plants and animals.[106] Although some residents welcomed the Mountain's expansion, many others questioned its planned development from the specifics of septic system construction to the presence of lighted buildings on the mountain side that would "pollute" the night sky.[107] Red Lodge's residents no longer trusted, necessarily, the machine to enhance the garden; rather, they felt that the machine (and those operating it) had to be watched every minute. The environment—the mountains and forests around Red Lodge—had become an integral part of how residents defined their town and themselves. Economic expansion—particularly that which affected public lands—was no longer simply accepted as a public good. Red Lodge had a new identity, one that had everything to do with protecting the natural environment and which had very little in common with the large-scale resource development of the town's founding years.

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By the early 1990s, the slackpiles and tipples and dirty grime that had once marked Red Lodge's identity as a coal metropolis were long gone—removed by the NPRR, the state bureau of reclamation, and the efforts of the Woman's Club and other civic groups. Old miners were dying off fast, and moving to homes in Billings even faster. Little remained as evidence of Red Lodge's history of industrial mining;

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[105]U.S. Forest Service, "Record of Decision for the Expansion of Red Lodge Mountain," Jan Roat, V-11.
[106]Ibid, Ron Gerondale V-12.

instead, residents had remade the town into a Wild West, environmental community. While a few businesses like the Red Lodge Coal Company (a restaurant) clung to the old identity of mining, many more businesses deliberately adopted the persona of the great outdoors. Stores like Mountain People and Sylvan Pass provided upscale Columbia clothing, Gore-Tex raingear, and high-tech camp stoves for backpackers heading up into the wilderness (hikers, after all, needed some mechanical assistance to rough it in the Beartooths). An Outward Bound dormitory stood along Broadway Avenue. On the side of a downtown building, a huge map showed the most popular hiking trails within a 20-mile radius of town. Red Lodge, it seemed, had completed its transformation from coal metropolis to nature's gateway.

This local transformation was repeated in hundreds of other small, extractive-resources communities all over the West—those towns fortunate enough to survive the demise of mining, farming, and lumbering because of the beauty and appeal of their natural surroundings. As Anne F. Hyde argues, these communities moved from "traditional extractive industries that bored mountains out and tore them down...[to] the tourism that worshiped the mountains."[108] Guided by enthusiastic visitors who sought beauty, spirituality, and freedom in the national parks and forests, local Westerners found themselves extracting new kinds of resources from the land around them and creating new identities out of those resources. "Nature" remained a resource even as residents found new ways of selling it to themselves and others. But the methods of extracting those resources had changed as the town adapted to its new identity as nature's town. At first very comfortable with using machines to "improve" nature—steam and diesel-driven equipment had, after all, been ripping coal out of Red Lodge seams since the late 1910s—local people grew increasingly wary of large-scale intrusions into the lands whose health and beauty had become their livelihood. This switch, then—from mining to nature tourism—*did* change the public identity of Red Lodge. As the older, mining population aged and moved on, and as newcomers became accustomed to dependence on a different type of resource use, residents created not only a new, cleaned-up townscape but also new ways of describing and valuing their community and its surroundings

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[107] Ibid, V-71.

[108] Hyde, "Round Pegs in Square Holes," 96.

Interestingly, however, even as Red Lodge cleaned off the last of its coal dust, coal mining as a public identity for the town started to regain some popularity. Finally, when no visible reminders of the coal past remained beyond the brick buildings of downtown and the defunct chrome mine entrance on the east slope, some residents began to yearn for a greater connection to that now-misty past. After successfully re-inventing itself as a cowboy town, ethnic community, and gateway to nature, Red Lodge finally was ready to have a go at celebrating a cleaned-up, nostalgic version of its mining heritage.

CONCLUSION:

PRESERVING A PAST

Montana has traditionally been a place of honesty and integrity, where people are friendly and sincere. This same code should apply to our image as projected by our buildings.[1]

In May of 1999, after almost a decade of fundraising and cleaning and renovating, the Carbon County Historical Society closed down its old museum at the south end of town and opened up a new one at the north entrance to Red Lodge. The move was almost poetic in its symbolism. The society packed up its possessions from a couple of wooden huts and a log cabin and moved them into the town's stately brick Labor Temple; the society moved from a museum that faced toward Liver Eatin' Johnson's rustic old log cabin into the former home of Red Lodge's once-powerful unions. The original museum had exhibited mostly artifacts from farming, rodeoing, and ranching (the "Old West"); the new museum featured an underground mining exhibit, a Finnish kitchen, and a display on the Beartooth Highway (the industrial, tourist West). In the move from rustic Red Lodge to industrial Red Lodge, the society seemed finally to rediscover for the town a coal-mining past worthy of public celebration. The industrial West had regained a place in the town's public presentation of its identity and heritage.

A century after its founding Red Lodge's public identity had, in a way, come full circle. By the 1990s Red Lodge was not only a Wild West rodeo town, ethnic Festival of Nations community, and "nature's town," it was also a "historic" mining district. Residents, under the leadership of the county historical society, had imprinted this public identity not only through the new museum, but also through a

refurbished downtown area, where new plaques proclaimed the area's listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Cleaned up, painted in "historic" colors, and stripped (mostly) of Wild West facades, the downtown, like the museum, reflected the glory days when the coal mines pumped thousands of dollars a month through the little town, funding construction of solid brick buildings and wide sidewalks. And, a new "Coal Miners' Park" on the north end of town boasted a marker in memory of the miners whose work and lives had made the town possible. Red Lodge's public identity once again showcased the industrial mining—the "coal slack" as well as the foreigners—that had created the little town at the turn of the century.

Had Red Lodge, then, by the end of the 20th century returned to a celebration of a more historically "honest" public heritage, as the above examples seem to suggest? Did the new museum and downtown area reflect a more "accurate" public presentation of local heritage than the community had generated through the rodeo and Festival of Nations? Not exactly. In its latest creation of public heritage and identity, townspeople created a new imagery that, like its other personas, was very much the product of what residents wanted Red Lodge to be. Although rooted more firmly in the town's "real" history of industry and miners, this new coal mining identity emerged from the same complex mixture of national movements, local desires, and historical invention that had marked Red Lodge's other prominent public identities—the Wild West, ethnic community, and nature's town. Red Lodge's public identity was changing by the late 1990s, but not so much as one might think.

First of all, like so much of Red Lodge's local public identity, the resuscitation of the coal miner, while reflecting very local concerns, had much to do with larger national trends. The move to the Labor Temple museum—and the accompanying public celebration of the town's industrial heritage—really began in the 1970s, when the Carbon County Historical Society formed out of a nation-wide surge of interest in local and state histories. In the excitement surrounding the nation's bicentennial, state and federal money became available for groups focused on researching, presenting, and preserving all aspects of American history. The recently passed National Historic Preservation Act (1966) also spurred local

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[1] Michels Raffety Architects and Carbon County Historic Preservation Office, "Red Lodge Commercial Historic District Revitalization Master Plan," 1986, 15-16, Carbon County Historical Society Collections (CCHS), Red Lodge, Montana.

efforts to dig into and preserve the past. The 1966 act created the National Register of Historic Places under the supervision of the National Trust, which allowed not only houses and individual buildings but also entire districts to be listed as "historic." Residents could now apply to put an area of a city—its downtown, residential neighborhoods, or industrial core—on the National Register and thus gain the privilege of listing these sites as nationally recognized "Historic Districts." Along with the prestige came tax incentives. The Tax Reform Act of 1976 encouraged building owners to preserve and rehabilitate their designated structures by giving them credits for participating in "appropriate" improvements.[2] From using "historic" paint colors to removing non-historic facades from buildings, officials with the National Register and the newly created State Historic Preservation offices encouraged owners to maintain the historical integrity of their towns.

Red Lodge was one of thousands of communities that took advantage of these national programs to not only research the local past, but also to present publicly a rehabilitated version of that history. In the mid-1970s, the local historical society obtained a bicentennial grant, set up a county preservation office, and set to work researching and documenting all of the buildings that seemed eligible for listing on the National Register. In conjunction with these efforts, society leaders Shirley Zupan and Harry Owens gathered together enough local reminiscences and historical accounts to publish in 1979 a 400-page history of Red Lodge and the surrounding area. Then, in 1983 the National Register officially listed the Red Lodge Downtown area and the Hi Bug as "Historic Districts." With these first steps, Red Lodge's mining history began to reacquire an ever more prominent place in the local townscape.

As members of the Carbon County Historical Society set to work researching and writing local history, they increasingly and publicly emphasized the community's association with coal mining. The move was not always deliberate—it's not as if members of the Historical Society decided that the town

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[2] David Hamer, History in Urban Places: The Historic Districts of the United States (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 18-20. See also, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation: Toward an Ethic in the 1980s (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1980); William J. Murtagh, Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America, rev. ed., (New York: Preservation Press, 1997); Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr. and Walter C. Kidney, Historic Preservation in Small Towns: A Manual of Practice (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1980); The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Economic Benefits of Preserving Old Buildings (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1976); Robert E. Stipe and Antoinette J. Lee, ed., The American Mosaic: Preserving a Nation's

had focused too much on the Wild West and needed to concentrate more on mining. Rather, as interested parties turned their attention to writing a town history, putting districts on the National Register, and creating a new museum, they invariably pulled Red Lodge's mining past more clearly into public view. Digging into the town's history, they found, naturally enough, mining and industry rather than cows and cowboys. Under the guidelines of state and federal preservation programs, which focused on saving the "authentic" past, residents received encouragement to locate and publicly display just this kind of history—the industrial, working-class stuff that previously might have been considered too dirty, ordinary, or boring for public presentation.[3] Rather than seeing this kind of industrial past as pedestrian, preservationists insisted that this sort of "genuine" history could actually attract visitors even while providing residents with a more accurate sense of their own complicated pasts.

The Red Lodge downtown "revitalization" project—an effort to make the town's main street area look like it had at the turn of the century—provides a good example of how this process of retrieval and presentation worked. In the early 1980s, when Red Lodge was only slowly recovering from its decades-long economic decline, leaders of the Carbon County Historical Society took an interest in a federal program developed by the National Trust called the "Main Street" project. Using nationally televised conferences to encourage local business communities, the National Trust promoted the concept that preserving historic downtown areas could actually "revitalize" older commercial areas.[4] In 1983, the board of the Carbon County Historical Society convinced many of the town's business operators to watch one of these conferences, and shortly thereafter the city council accepted the organization's plan to boost the downtown area by encouraging residents to "rehabilitate" the area according to specific guidelines from the National Trust. Uncovering and preserving the town's "authentic" built history, these elected officials agreed, could make the town more interesting, more attractive, and more vital to residents and visitors alike.

Heritage (Washington: United States Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, 1987).

[3] T. Allan Comp, "The Best Arena: Industrial History at the Local Level," History News 37 (May 1982): 8-11; Marsha Mullin and Geoffrey Huys, "Industrial History: How to Research, Collect and Display Industrial Artifacts," History News 37 (May 1982): 12-16.

[4] J. Myrick Howard, "Where the Action is: Preservation and Local Governments," in The American Mosaic, 126-27.

"Authenticity" or "honesty" were key words in the 15-year effort to put the town's buildings on the national register and "revitalize" the downtown area. Identifying, rehabilitating, and celebrating appropriately historic buildings centered around the concept that preservationists were somehow preserving and publicly displaying a more accurate version of the local past. Red Lodge preservationists, for example, sharply criticized previous efforts to "falsify" Red Lodge's history through the addition of rugged, western materials to the original building facades. These attempts to make Red Lodge buildings more appealing by making them more "western" had produced, according to Historical Society members, a "bizarre, and comical" look in the downtown area.[5] "Imagine," asked the authors of the town's revitalization master plan, "how the Italinate style stone mason would cringe if he were to return from the past to discover his beautiful masonry hidden beneath a barnboard or wild west façade."[6] Rather, the preservationists argued, local building owners should strive for "recapturing the original character" of Red Lodge by appreciating and revealing the "honesty generated by the building itself."[7] With grant money obtained through the State Historic Preservation Office, these historical boosters created a master plan that detailed block by block how building owners should "revive" their properties from the roofs and exterior walls to the windows and gutters. With the appropriate attention to detail, Red Lodge could, building by building, "revive its rich turn-of-the-century character and demonstrate its community pride in tradition and quality."[8] Preservationists wanted to re-create a "real" history in Red Lodge, one that drew on the early mining boom that built the city instead of from the area's more tenuous connection to a ranching heritage.

And, the revitalization master plan was a success. Encouraged by tax incentives and provided with a clear guide for rehabilitation, downtown building owners took the advice of preservationists and began to strip away the layers of history to reveal the "honest" faces of their properties. One by one, owners erected the desired awnings, installed leaded windows, and fixed up old brickwork. The town *looked* good. Oh, sure, some owners didn't comply with the guidelines, and others completely disregarded them—like the old Montana Power Company building that took on a pink adobe façade in

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[5] Michels Raffety *et al.*, "Red Lodge Revitalization," 8-9, 47.
[6] Ibid. 15.
[7] Ibid., 9, 15.

the mid-1990s. But, overall, the downtown assumed a new, brighter, more pulled-together appearance. And the turn-of-the-century coal mining town, residents discovered, appealed to tourists who were themselves increasingly fascinated in public displays of history.[9] Shedding some of its Wild West imagery (at least from the downtown area) residents seemed to celebrate a more authentic version of their past, one that acknowledged the industrial labor and corporate capital that had made Red Lodge possible.

In peeling away layers, though, and repainting brickwork, residents did not so much "uncover" their past as create a new and very public version of that past. Red Lodge preservationists, in their efforts to revive a "historic" district, actually made their own history. As with the annual rodeo and Festival of Nations, residents shaped a very public interpretation of what Red Lodge *should* have been; they created a present-day historical Red Lodge that was really an idealized, cleaned-up version of the original coal town. This was actually a common phenomenon around the country in these decades as thousands of local groups undertook similar efforts at historic preservation and revival. Geographer David Hamer argues that in the United States "historical" districts have often become "historicized," that is, members of local historical groups have tended to make these areas over "in the image of a particular interpretation of their past that it suits contemporary needs to establish."[10] Such districts "freeze" time; they attempt to preserve an idealized moment from the community's past and disregard all that happened between the chosen moment and the time of preservation. In Red Lodge, for example, preservationists decided the downtown area should reflect the period between 1894 and 1920, when most of the downtown structures were built; much of that added after 1920 was denounced as a fraud. In the Carbon County Historical Society's plan for downtown revitalization, for example, designers derided the "barnboard or wild west façade" that hid the "honest" faces of the town's masonry buildings.[11] Never mind that those rustic facades represented an important historical development—the town's concerted effort in the 1930s to attract tourists through the local creation of a Wild West imagery—they were "dishonest" to the original construction and had to go. Preservationists turned back local history to find the moment that defined the

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[8] Ibid., 9.
[9] Richard V. Francaviglia, Hard Places: Reading the Landscape of America's Historic Mining Districts (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), 177-179.
[10] Hamer, History in Urban Areas, ix.
[11] Michels Raffety *et al.*,"Red Lodge Revitalization," 15.

"apex" of the community's development; they found a kind of "usable" history that would reflect what these town leaders wanted their community to be. Here was mining without pollution, immigrant workers with no class or ethnic tensions, and an "authentic" historic downtown with paved streets that stunk of horse manure only after the annual Fourth of July parade.

More significantly, this kind of pretty, turn-of-the-century downtown imagery played to American notions about small towns. And, by the late 20th century, being a "small town" had become one of Red Lodge's most appealing public identities. Americans, as geographer D.W. Meinig points out, have long revered the "symbolic landscape" of the small town. A symbolic landscape, according to Meinig, is a set of landscape images, "part of a shared set of ideas and memories and feelings which bind a people together."[12] Like the New England village and the California suburbs, Main Street (the small town) conveys "certain meanings" to Americans: free enterprise, social morality, small town virtues, the "real" America.[13] As the United States urbanized, the small town represented the ideal middle ground between the remoteness of rural life and the complexity of the city. Indeed in the post-WWII years, Americans actually reversed their century-long trend toward urbanization, and started moving in ever greater numbers into suburbs and small towns like Red Lodge.[14] The preservation and revitalization of the old downtown area reinforced Red Lodge's small-town imagery. Being a small town, after all, was not just about size; it was also about image and identity. Red Lodge's new old downtown looked like a Main Street should look. The town acquired a defined, historic look that made the community more attractive, more like how a small town should look—which means more like the popular Main Street created by Walt Disney's imagineers to grace the Anaheim Disneyland.[15] The refurbished buildings lent a

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[12] D.W. Meinig, "Symbolic Landscapes," in The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays, D.W. Meinig, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 164.
[13] Meinig, "Symbolic Landscapes, 167; also John A. Jakle, The American Small Town: Twentieth-Century Place Images (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1982), 5-7.
[14] Samuel P. Hays, Beauty, Health and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 137-138; Meinig, "Symbolic Landscapes, 177.
[15] Meinig, "Symbolic Landscapes," 179. Even some local residents noted the town's increasing tendency toward "Disneyfication." One of the respondents in the Beartooth Front Community Forum meetings, for example, asserted that the group should work to preserve the community's historic identity, but not so that the downtown looked like a "theme park," Beartooth Front Community Forum video, "Land Use Planning Meetings," 17 September 1994.

sense of permanence and community to the town, in part because the district epitomized what Americans had learned a small town should look like.

Here, in short, was idealized "small-town America," Red Lodge's defining public identity by the late 20th century, and the identity modern residents seemed most intent on preserving. Newcomers to Red Lodge readily admitted that part of the community's attraction was its small-town "feel"—the security, friendliness, and sense of community Americans expected from a small town. Karen Kinser, who moved from Washington, D.C., to Red Lodge in 1992 positively gushed about how Red Lodge lived up to the best stereotypes about small towns. Red Lodge, Kinser raved soon after her arrival, "is homey and comfortable, and most of all, friendly....People here seemed happy, unharried, trusting and honest.... People take time to stop and talk and just, well, just be HUMAN."[16] Residents who had spent a bit more time in the community agreed with Kinser's initial perceptions of the town. For example, at the 1994 kickoff meeting for a new community action group, the Beartooth Front Community Forum, participants listed things they did not want changed about Red Lodge. Their responses included many attributes associated with the idealized small town: "small-town flavor and attitudes," "sense of community," "friendliness," "security for kids," "don't have to lock houses at night."[17] And, residents readily fought to preserve that sense of small town community and security, forming action groups like the Beartooth Front Community Forum, which helped to create a Red Lodge "Master Plan" for community development. By the late 1990s, local residents regularly sat in on town council meetings voicing opposition to many planned developments that would increase the community's size or change Red Lodge's small town ambiance.[18] In 1996, Red Lodge residents even fought a winning battle to force the U.S. Postal Service to rebuild the community's post office in the downtown area. Postal officials, conscious of parking and space needs, wanted to build a new facility on the edge of town where open spaces invited expansion. Townspeople, however, insisted that such a move would hurt the downtown area and erode some of Red Lodge's small town cohesion. The post office represented a facet of the community's small town

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[16] Montana Free Press (Red Lodge), June 1992, 16-17.
[17] Beartooth Front Community Forum, "Land Use Planning Meetings," 17 September 1994.
[18] See, for example, the 1997 story in the Billings Gazette describing townspeople's oppositions to a proposed housing development on part of the land reclaimed from the East Side Mine after the developer had spent $700,000 to buy the land. Billings Gazette, 14 August 1997, 1-5C.

identity—the local hub that centered residents as they made their daily trips to pick up mail, chat, and catch up on town gossip. "It's like church on Sunday," explained local writer John Clayton, "except everyone belongs to the same denomination, and it takes place six days a week."[19] Red Lodge, the small town, had become not only a vibrant public identity but also a very personal commitment for many residents.

So, ironically, even as they reshaped their town into the image of the bustling prosperity of Red Lodge's boom days of coal mining, residents were already seeking to prevent the kind of mineral extraction, development, and expansion that characterized the very era they had tried to recapture. By the late 1990s most locals wanted no part of the grand booster dreams of the 1890s; the "coal metropolis" no longer appealed to people who had sought out Red Lodge because of its proximity to nature and its small town appeal. The celebration of the coal mining past so evident in the revitalized downtown and the new museum did not mean a return to the pro-development beliefs of the town's early promoters. If boosters in past decades had sought to "grow" Red Lodge, modern-day activists in their rehabilitated downtown determined to control and moderate growth to maintain the amenities associated with life in a small community. In circling back to once again promote a local coal mining identity, town leaders sought to capture only certain, desired aspects of the town's industrial past.

Significantly, though, the new celebration of coal and miners *was* a continuation of another process begun in the 1890s when town boosters boasted of Red Lodge's connection to the exotic and masculine (but safe) mountain man. Like the mountain men in the 1890s, the cowboy in the 1930s, the immigrant in the 1950s, and the natural world in the late 20th century, the industrial coal miner found a place in the town's pantheon of icons, but only after local leaders distanced him from controversy, dirt, and any threat to the town's well being. Indeed, by the 1990s, when the Labor Temple museum opened its doors, the city built on coal no longer featured any prominent physical reminders of its coal-driven past except for the cleaned-up buildings along Broadway Avenue and the fake coal tunnels in the museum's mining exhibit. Mine waste no longer clogged the creek or the skies, the mine structures were long since removed, and most of the miners themselves had either died or moved away. Even the huge

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[19] John Clayton, "Keeping the Heart in the Center of Town", High Country News 28 (23 December

slack piles that had towered over the town for almost a century were gone. By the early 1990s, the state's Abandoned Mines Reclamation Bureau had removed or buried the tons of slack leaving Red Lodge safer, cleaner, and even more removed from the work that had created the town.

In a way, then, the new coal mining museum and the revitalization of the downtown fit into another older movement, one that had gained momentum after construction of the Beartooth Highway—town beautification.[20] The Historical Society's efforts downtown completed the movement to clean off the coal mining past that the Woman's Club and Chamber of Commerce had started decades earlier. With the tools provided by the state and federal governments in the 1960s and 1970s, townspeople were simply able to take this movement much further. They removed from the downtown area not only coal dust and Wild West shingles, but all the evidence of the deterioration and decay that had marked the town in the years after the mines closed down. Red Lodge, nature's town, finally had a suitably shiny, pretty main street.

In seeming to acknowledge the area's industrial past, then, Red Lodge residents erased the real, lingering reminders of that past. These erasures become clear in stories told by certain local residents. To some of the old-timers and their descendents the physical changes that accompanied the downtown revitalization and coal slack clean up actually removed parts of their connection to the town's past. The refurbished buildings and reclamation of mining areas distanced them from the work and play that, to them, was a real and important part of what Red Lodge was and is. Where some had seen pollution and grime, others had seen history. Soon after the state government removed the Westside slack heap, for example, Loretta Jarussi noted that one of her former students came to visit and he immediately asked about the reclaimed slack pile. When returning to Red Lodge, he explained, "The first thing I looked for was that dump." Jarussi's sister added that "Some of the people think that dump should have been left there as a monument."[21] Another resident, Richard Mallin, had more to say on the subject. "[T]hose slack piles were our old history," he argued. "We have nothing to talk about now because our proof of it is gone and there's nothing we can do. We can't convince you of what something is when you can't see

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1996), on-line, www.hcn.org/1996/dec23/dir/Profile_Keeping_th.html.
[20] Hamer, History in Urban Places, 176-77.

it ....We can't talk about that slack pile because it isn't there."[22] For this miner's son, the town leaders had removed part of his identity when they cleaned up the town to uncover a "suitable" coal mining heritage for the community.

Industrial mining again held a place in the town's public identity and heritage, but its features had changed significantly since the actual boom days of mining. "Heritage," after all, as David Lowenthal points out, is something that people create out of their pasts to make their present selves look or feel good. Stripped of their historical contexts—transience, violence, class tensions, smells, dirt—figures like the miner and the cowboy could be valorized, romanticized, and made to serve modern needs. Pulled out of context, removed from the slack piles and run-down buildings, the miner made less sense historically but became a more attractive and usable symbol of Red Lodge's current identity. Like the cowboys who no longer lived in town, the immigrants who now seemed so American, and the natural world that had been conquered with a highway, industrial mining by the 1980s and 1990s could finally be idealized and celebrated and incorporated back into the town's public persona as something attractive, appealing, and useful in the construction and maintenance of the community's "small town" identity.

And, the newly recognized mining identity even fit well with the community's more established public imagery, perhaps because few people seemed to question the contradictions between the town's various presentations of its past. The cleaned-up *historic* mining town, for example, did not contradict the town's contemporary identity as nature's town; with the slack piles removed and the creek running clear, no public reminder remained of the hazards, pollution, and destruction of that industry. By the 1980s, mining was far enough removed from the present to seem romantic; miners became simply figures from a far-removed past that no longer infringed on modern sentiments about nature. Likewise the emerging coal identity fit comfortably with the town's established Wild West imagery. Except for where it covered up the "honest" faces of the downtown historic district even the local historical society embraced the ranching/ cowboy version of the town's past. At the annual Festival of Nations, for example, the society typically hosted the Montana Day barbecue—complete with cowboy hats, boots,

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[21] Loretta and Lillian Jarussi Oral History, 21, OH 1487, Montana Historical Society (MHS), Helena, Montana.
[22] Alice and Richard Mallin Oral History, 26, OH 1481, MHS.

drawls, and country music. And the sanitized mining heritage, of course, complemented the town's Festival of Nations' identity, fitting neatly into the local story of immigrant miners turned ethnic neighbors. Instead of pitting these versions of the past against each other, local residents seemed to accept them as simply differing facets of western history that they had the right to celebrate as they saw fit. Suitably distant, cleaned-up, and safe, the town's mining history could be an asset to the community's public identity without detracting from other, also beneficial, identities.

Mallin's poignant argument about *his* slack pile and *his* history reminds us, though, that what town leaders perceived as appropriate "heritage" was not always what residents themselves wanted to remember about their lives in and around Red Lodge. For some local residents, like Mallin and Jarussi, the sanitized celebration of coal mining seemed as awkward and uncomfortable as "spurs and boots" had to some townspeople in the 1930s rodeo festivities. Townspeople's memories did not always fall neatly into the narratives constructed for the annual rodeo or Festival of Nations. But to other residents, whose memories did not stretch back to the boom days of coal and who could view slack heaps as simply ugly instead of as part of a personal history, the newly developed public heritage of coal mining might slip easily into their perceptions of what Red Lodge was and would be. For them the coal miner fit as readily into the town's western heritage and public identity as did the cowboy, the Indian, and the dancing immigrant. Residents and visitors alike could convince themselves of the legitimacy of these local icons because they, unlike the slack piles, remained to be seen and admired as integral parts of Red Lodge's public identity.

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