

“...surely my babies weren’t sacrificed for nothing.”



# The Colorado Coal Field War: Massacre at Ludlow

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Once, in America ...  
... coal was king.

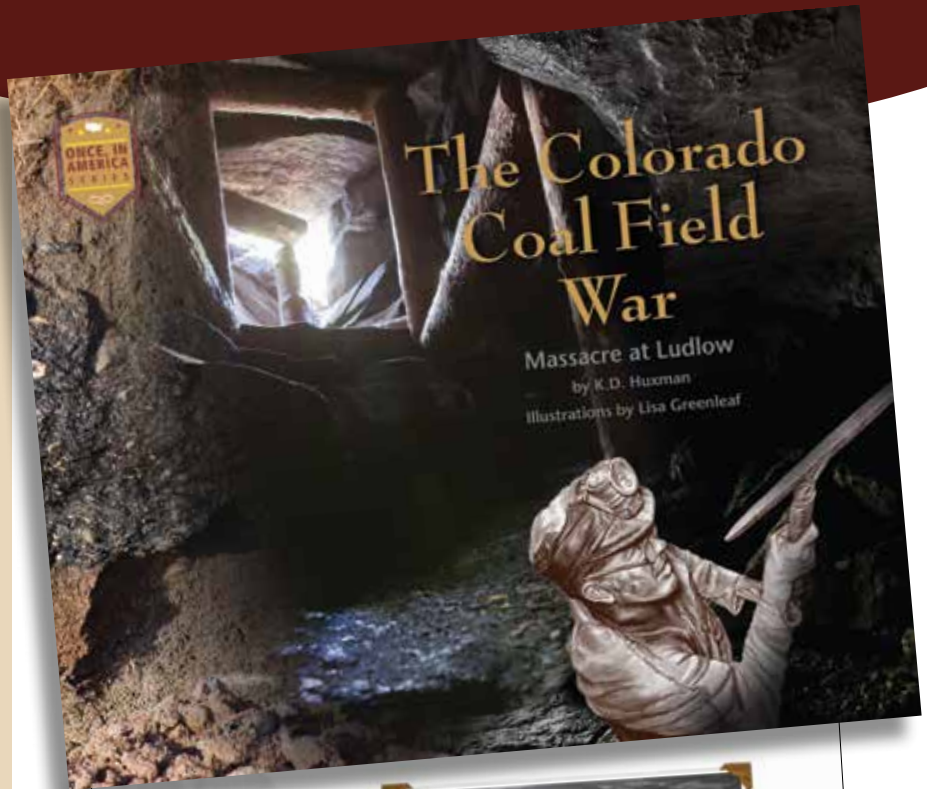
But if you were and immigrant miner who just wanted to be paid an honest day’s pay for an honest day’s work, you might end up dead.

Your family, too.

It happened in 1914 in a place near the tiny railroad town of Ludlow, Colorado.

“... one of the nearest approaches to civil war and revolution known in this country in connection with an industrial conflict...”

~George West, federal investigator



But Louis didn't say just a miner. His ability to translate English for other Greek immigrants made him a valuable commodity to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). He could tell his fellow miners about the miners' union and how it could help them be safer on the job and get paid fairly. Company owners and managers were not happy to have people like

Louis around. They preferred to have workers who came from many different nationalities and who spoke different languages. It meant they couldn't communicate in order to share complaints and organize. Men like Louis Tikas were a problem. Louis became a UMWA organizer. And a marked man.



A Colorado National Guardsman aims a machine gun towards the striking miners.

entered the Ludlow area on November first. At first the miners greeted them with hope. The soldiers represented order and safety. The militia was to keep the peace only, not take sides. And for a while, that was the case. However before long mine guards were being accepted into the militia and the balance of power changed again.

The militia commanders ordered the miners to give up their arms to show their peaceful intent.

The miners resisted but finally a few old rifles were surrendered. Eventually the militia organized peaceful and not so peaceful searches of striking miners' tents. No matter how many arms the militia seized, the striking miners always seemed to have more. In fact, the strike organizers made a point of buying rifles and ammunition in Trinidad and Pueblo to insure that the miners could defend themselves.



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