## Background Note

The Coxe family's connection with Pennsylvania's anthracite coal region is rooted in the prescience of the statesman, author and land speculator Tench Coxe. Recognizing the significance anthracite would play in the development of the newly founded Republic, Tench purchased nearly 80,000 acres of land surrounding outcroppings of anthracite coal in Carbon, Luzerne and Schuylkill counties. He hoped that future generations of the family would profit from the land when the anthracite industry came of age. Indeed, his purchase would secure wealth for the Coxe family and all their mining enterprises well into the twentieth century.

Tench Coxe was born in Philadelphia on May 22, 1755, to William and Mary Francis Coxe, members of a family with a long tradition of land ownership. Tench's great-grandfather, Dr. Daniel Coxe, personal physician to King Charles II and Queen Anne of England, held large colonial land grants in New Jersey and the Carolinas. Though he never visited his property in the new world, Dr. Coxe would eventually acquire the title of Governor of West Jersey. Upon his death, he passed the whole of his North American land holdings to his son, Colonel Daniel Coxe. The Colonel was the first Coxe to leave England for life in America, settling in Burlington, New Jersey in 1702. Inheriting a passion for land, Colonel Coxe distinguished himself by publishing "A Description of the Provinces of Carolana," which in 1722 proposed one of the earliest plans for political union of the British colonies of North America.

Tench Coxe explored various career options in his struggle to establish his name in the United States. After considering a profession in law, Tench chose instead to join his father's import-export firm, Coxe & Furman, in 1776. The renamed firm of Coxe, Furman & Coxe operated for fourteen years but was dissolved by mutual agreement after experiencing financial difficulties. Soon after, Tench and a business partner from Boston established a new commercial enterprise under the name of Coxe & Frazier. After several prosperous years, this firm also disbanded, freeing Tench to pursue a career in public service.

Tench's Loyalist sympathies during the American Revolution complicated his political ambitions. Following British General Howe's evacuation of Philadelphia in 1778, the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania accused Tench of treason for collaborating with the enemy. Although he swore an oath of allegiance to the United States of America, his Tory leanings would be used repeatedly to undermine his political influence.

Despite his Loyalist past, Tench retained the respect of his patriot neighbors. He was selected as the sole Pennsylvania delegate to the Annapolis Convention in 1786, and then elected to the Second Continental Congress in 1788. After the war, Tench became an advocate for the Whig Party, although his politics were often in direct support of the Federalist cause. This was apparent from a pamphlet he wrote in 1788 titled, "An Examination of the Constitution of the United States," which revealed his strong support for the ratification of the United States Constitution.

With the new government in place, Tench received a variety of appointments to public office under George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. He was named Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in 1790, Commissioner of the Revenue of the United States in 1792 and Secretary of the Pennsylvania Land Office in 1800. After switching his affiliation to the Republican Party in 1803, Tench accepted an appointment from Thomas Jefferson as Purveyor of the Public Supplies, an office that he held until 1812.

The duties of his various posts ultimately made Tench an authority on the industrial development of the nation. In 1794 he published a collection of essays under the title, "A View of the United States of America," in which he contemplated the development of commerce and manufacturing in America. These essays reveal his early awareness of coal in Pennsylvania, as he remarked,

> "All our coal has hitherto been accidentally found on the surface of the earth or discovered in the digging of common cellars or wells; so that when our wood-fuel shall become scarce, and the European methods of boring shall be skillfully pursued, there can be no doubt of our finding it in many other places."

Anthracite coal was discovered around the year 1769 in Pennsylvania. It is the hardest of the known types of coal, with an average 85%-95% carbon content, as compared to the 45%-85% range of the bituminous coal found in the western part of the state. The high carbon content in anthracite allows it to burn at much higher temperatures than bituminous coal and with less smoke, making it an ideal fuel for home heating. The only anthracite deposits of commercial value in the United States are located within four major fields in Eastern Pennsylvania and are confined to an area of 3,300 square miles. These four coalfields are commonly referred to as the Northern, Eastern-Middle, Western-Middle and Southern fields.

Tench Coxe's awareness of the promise of anthracite coal, coupled with his tenure in the Pennsylvania land office and a family tradition of land speculation spurred him in 1790 to begin purchasing promising acreage. Though he acquired land throughout the country, he particularly focused on land in Carbon, Luzerne and Schuylkill counties in Northeastern Pennsylvania, which he believed held vast underground seams of coal.

Despite large land holdings, Tench Coxe lived most of his life in debt thanks to litigation, tax problems and complications with business partners. Realizing that he would not be able to develop the property in his lifetime, Tench worked diligently to retain the property he believed was enriched with valuable mineral deposits, in hopes that his dreams would be realized by future generations of Coxes. Tench's son, Charles Sidney Coxe, would inherit from his father a passion for land ownership and for the untapped potential of the anthracite coal region. When Tench Coxe died on July 16, 1824, he left Charles sole executor of his estate, which was composed of approximately 1.5 million acres in eight states.

Born July 31, 1791, Charles Sidney Coxe was the sixth of ten children of Tench and Rebecca Coxe. Educated at the University of Pennsylvania and Brown University, Charles was admitted to the Philadelphia Bar in 1812. Charles eventually served as District Attorney of

Philadelphia and associate judge of the District Court of Philadelphia, but he remained infatuated by his father's vision. Charles devoted his life to keeping together the large coal properties handed down by Tench to his surviving children. This monumental task involved paying annual taxes on completely unproductive land, fighting a never-ending battle against squatters and timber thieves, and litigating an endless array of boundary disputes.
Charles and his family routinely spent their summer months in Drifton, Luzerne County a location that would eventually become synonymous with the Coxe name. His son Eckley Brinton Coxe gained his first experience in the coalfields at Drifton, accompanying his father as he traced the geology of the area in search of coal veins. Besides introducing Eckley to the "family business", the surveys gave Charles invaluable detailed knowledge that he used to preserve the coal deposits on his family's property. Deposits that he discovered comprised nearly half of the entire Eastern-Middle field.

Even as his knowledge grew, however, Charles was unable to develop the land he retained. He saw the pioneers of anthracite mining lose fortunes as the mining technology of the day struggled to catch up with the new demands. Regular shipments of anthracite began in the 1820s as canals opened the coal regions of Pennsylvania to markets in Philadelphia. The demand for anthracite remained relatively low during the early years of the industry, but as markets developed and demand increased, railroads began to compete in the trade and would eventually come to dominate as carriers to all of the major markets. As the problems of mining and transporting coal and developing a market for it were worked out, the demand for "hard coal" grew substantially. Coal sales increased from 364,384 tons in 1840 to 3,358,890 tons in 1850 and would steadily increase throughout the century to levels exceeding 40 million tons annually. Charles Coxe's witness to the inception of this industry unquestionably spurred his desire to realize his father's dream, but like Tench, he too would have to defer to his sons.

Charles S. Coxe had married Ann Maria Brinton in 1832 and together they were the parents of seven children, Brinton, Rebecca, Anna Brinton, Eckley Brinton, Henry Brinton, Charles Brinton and Alexander Brinton. The eldest son, Brinton Coxe, followed the career of his father, establishing himself in the legal profession. Brinton was a renowned lawyer and writer of constitutional law and served with prestige as president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania from 1884 until his death. The remaining four sons would distinguish themselves in the coal business under the guidance of their brother, Eckley B. Coxe.

Born in Philadelphia on June 4, 1839, Eckley B. Coxe entered into a family in which his calling was clear. His aptitude for the calling however, would astonish the entire industry. Eckley's earl surveying excursions with his father introduced him to the mines, machines and collieries of the anthracite industry. His exposure to local miners must also have made a lasting impression, as his knowledge of their customs and sympathy toward their circumstances proved to be one of his greatest assets as an employer.

Eckley Coxe's formal education began in 1854 at the University of Pennsylvania. Although focusing his studies in chemistry and physics, he took additional courses in French and bookkeeping after receiving his degree in 1858. After graduation, Eckley briefly returned to the coalfields where he was engaged in topographic geological work on his family's land, learning a skill that would later earn him a commission to the Second Geological Survey of Pennsylvania. In 1860 Eckley went abroad to polish his technical education, spending two years in Paris at the *Ecole Nationale des Mines*, one year at the *Bergakademie* in Freiberg, Germany and nearly two years on a tour studying the practical operations of European mines.

Armed with both practical and theoretical knowledge of his craft, Eckley B. Coxe returned to America and embarked on the mission for which his entire life had prepared him. On January 30, 1865, Eckley, his brothers Alexander, Charles and Henry and a cousin, Franklin Coxe, formed the co-partnership Coxe Brothers and Company. The company began with a combined capital of $120,000, with Eckley investing $40,000 and the others partners investing $20,000 each. The firm was formed for the exclusive purpose of mining and selling coal from the Drifton property, which they leased from the Estate of Tench Coxe. The Estate had begun leasing property as early as 1852 to various companies, which paid royalties to the estate in return for the coal they mined. Coxe Brothers would operate under a similar lease, but they would, in a sense, be paying royalties to themselves as both partners and heirs.

Coxe Brothers and Company began operations in Drifton in February 1865, sending their first shipment of coal to market the following June. Once the operations at Drifton were fully tested and proved successful, Eckley moved to consolidate control over all of his family's land, in order to keep all the mining profits in the family. By 1879 Coxe Brothers and Company had opened collieries at Deringer, Gowen and Tomhicken, adding Beaver Meadow Colliery two years later. The firm's success exceeded all of the partners' expectations, reaching well beyond the goals set forth in the original Articles of Co-partnership. Charles B. Coxe died in 1873 and Franklin Coxe retired from the firm in 1878. In 1885, the remaining partners agreed to extend the life of the firm indefinitely and operate for the purpose of developing the land belonging to the Estate of Tench Coxe

Even more important to the success of the Coxe family mining interests was the organization of the Cross Creek Coal Company in October 1882. The officers of this company included the three remaining partners of Coxe Brothers and Company, along with a Philadelphia partner, J. Brinton White and the Coxe's first cousin Arthur McClellan, brother of the Civil War General, George B. McClellan. Cross Creek Coal Company took over all of the mining operations on the Estate lands, led by Eckley B. Coxe, president of both companies. Coxe Brothers transferred the mining rights to the Coxe property to the Cross Creek Coal Company, but retained control of the Coxe collieries where the freshly mined coal was prepared.

Eckley's shrewd and aggressive management of his family's land proved successful. When his father, Charles S. Coxe died in 1879, Eckley assumed an even more direct role in the management of the property. In addition to receiving the inheritance of his grandfather's land, he, along with his three surviving brothers, became executors of the Estate of Tench Coxe. By 1886, Eckley had brought nearly 3/4ths of his family's property under his direct control. Coal shipments from these properties reached an astounding 1.5 million tons in

1890, a vast improvement from the 27,000 tons sold in its inaugural year. Coxe Brothers and Company did not limit itself to mining operations on the lands of the Estate of Tench Coxe. By 1889, the firm was also leasing lands from the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company, West Buck Mountain Coal Company, Anspach & Stanton, the Black Creek Coal Company, and the Central Coal Company. In total Coxe Brothers was operating roughly 30,000 acres of coal property.

Jut over twenty years after its inception, Coxe Brothers and Company established itself as the largest individual anthracite producer that was not associated with a major railroad. This distinction, however, made them an obvious target for the expanding railroad industry. Realizing the value of anthracite as freight, railroads entered into a land scramble throughout the region, securing their coal freight by purchasing it before it was mined. This point is perhaps best illustrated by the actions of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which in 1872 purchased 28,000 acres in the anthracite fields. Of the roughly 38 million tons of coal produced in 1888, 29 million had been mined by coal companies linked with the railroads. The remaining independent producers were forced to negotiate with the railroads to have their coal shipped to market. It was the practice of the railroads to charge exorbitant fees to the independent producers, which in effect reduced the railroads’ competition in the coal sale yards. In order to survive, many independent producers were either forced to sell their coal directly to the railroads at the mines or to sell their operation completely to the railroad. Eckley B. Coxe, however, pursued an altogether different means of survival.

In 1888, the partners of Coxe Brothers and Company petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission for relief from the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company (LVRR). They argued that the Lehigh Valley Coal Company (LVCC), entirely owned by the LVRR, sold coal at a price that did not net them sufficient funds to pay the fees that were being charged to Coxe Brothers and Company for the same shipping service. The railroads were willing to operate their coal companies at a loss, since they were more than able to absorb the losses with increased railroad freight. As a result of discriminating between the companies it owned and independent operators, the LVRR was found in violation of federal law and was forced to lower its rates in 1891.

The lengthy trial, however, inspired Eckley to build his own railroad, which began operations in 1891. Incorporated as the Delaware, Susquehanna & Schuylkill Railroad, its tracks linked all of the Coxe collieries with connections to most of the major rail lines in the region. With sixty miles of single gauge track, twenty-nine locomotives and 1,500 coal-cars, they forced the railroads to compete for the immense freight being produced by their coal companies. By compelling his adversaries to come to fair terms with victories in both the courts and in the coalfields, Eckley succeeded in securing Coxe Brothers’ position as the largest independent anthracite producers in Pennsylvania.

In June 1893, Ezra B. Ely and Eckley Brinton Coxe, Jr. were admitted to the firm of Coxe Brothers and Company. Ezra, a long time business associate and general sales agent of Coxe Brothers and Company and Eckley, Jr., son of the deceased Charles Brinton Coxe, joined the firm just weeks prior to the establishment of two more Coxe mining enterprises. On June 19, Coxe Brothers and Company, Incorporated was organized as the selling agency for Coxe coal and purchased from the firm their supply headquarters in New York, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Milwaukee and Philadelphia. This same day also saw the formation of the Coxe Iron Manufacturing Company, which took control of the firm's machine shops in Drifton. In addition to being responsible for the construction and repair of Coxe mines and railroads, this company also filled large outside orders for machinery. It was in these machine shops that Eckley proved himself as one of the most brilliant mining engineers of the day.

The United States Patent Office records 111 patents either issued directly to Eckley B. Coxe or as a supervisor of employees who worked under his instructions at the Drifton Shops. Seventy-three of these patents pertained to the details of the Coxe Mechanical Stoker, which introduced the first practical means of burning small sizes of anthracite coal. This innovation put an end to the financial loss associated with large culm banks of fine sized coal that plagued collieries as waste. The subject of waste seems to have driven the business and personal endeavors of Eckley B. Coxe. As a founder and future president of the American Institute of Mining Engineers, Eckley was appointed to chair a committee to investigate waste in coal mining, which he did thoroughly. His report outlined the waste associated with the extraction, preparation and transportation of anthracite coal.

To combat waste in the preparation of coal, Eckley designed and erected the world's first coal breaker made of iron and steel. This fireproof structure, used to separate coal into uniform sized pieces, was also equipped with numerous innovative labor saving devices, including an automated slate picking chute, improved coal jigs, corrugated rollers for breaking coal and electric lighting for nighttime operations. The breaker at Drifton stood as one of the most revolutionary coal structures in the region until Eckley erected an even more magnificent iron and steel coal breaker at Oneida. In creating more economical methods for preparing and consuming coal, Eckley helped boost the anthracite industry to remarkable levels. Although he secured many of his inventions by patent, Eckley licensed his improvements to many coal operators and created an agency to help install and maintain the complicated machinery at the various collieries. This service reflected Eckley's conviction that the mutual exchange of knowledge in engineering matters would benefit the whole anthracite industry, and in turn would benefit each individual company.

That attitude appears to have carried over in his interactions with consumers, as is evidenced by a paper Eckley read before a meeting of the New England Cotton Manufactures, acknowledging that,

> "It may seem curious that a person whose life has been spent in mining and marketing coal should appear before this association to discuss the economical production of steam, involving, as it does, either the use of less fuel or fuel of less value. But I am convinced that the more valuable a ton of coal becomes to our consumers, the more in the end will be our profit from it."

Eckley recognized, however, that the increased demand for anthracite would subvert his battle against waste. The abundance of coal beds in the region gave rise to numerous operators who often sacrificed long-term efficiency for low-overhead and quick profits. Using cheap machinery and incompetent labor, these operators mined only the most valuable and easily available veins, leaving large amounts to waste. Mining practices like these were prohibited in many European countries, where the right to mine had to be obtained from the government. In many countries, mining operations were required to work to full capacity, so long as they did not compromise the safety of the men or the mine. Having witnessed European laws in practice, Eckley was an advocate for comparable laws in this country, calling for a well-educated corps of experts to inspect the mines and manufactories to ensure the protection of life and property. In later years, mining foremen would be required by Pennsylvania law to pass an extensive exam, demonstrating not only practical experience but also specific knowledge of the principles of ventilation.

Eckley was also aware that mining legislation alone could not prevent careless miners. As an employer of skilled labor and a trustee of Lehigh University, Eckley gave a great deal of thought to the issue of technical education. In concluding a paper titled, "Mining Legislation," read at the general meeting of the American Social Science Association in 1870, Eckley insisted

> "upon the importance of establishing schools for master miners, in which any one who works in the mines could, while supporting himself by his labor, receive sufficient instruction in his business to qualify him to direct intelligently the underground workings of a mine."

His exposure to the finest technical institutions of Europe made Eckley keenly aware of the shortcomings in America of giving its students an equivalent education. In order to prevent future mining foremen and superintendents to grow up without a theoretical knowledge of their work, Eckley established the Industrial School for Miners and Mechanics in Drifton.

The school opened its doors on May 7, 1879, providing young men employed by Coxe Brothers and Company with an opportunity to educate themselves outside of working hours. This unique opportunity gave the young miners a chance to combine the scientific knowledge of various disciplines, including trigonometry, mechanical drawing, physics, mineralogy and drafting with the experience gained in their daily toil. Classes were held free of charge at night and during idle days in the mines in a two-story building erected by Eckley Coxe, known as Cross Creek Hall. In addition to comfortably seating 1,000 people and housing a library and reading room for the residents of Drifton, it also furnished classrooms for the eleven students who enrolled in the school during its first year. The school succeeded in delivering a first class technical education to its students for nearly ten years before a fire completely destroyed the Hall in 1888. Five years later the school reorganized under the name Miners and Mechanics' Institute of Freeland, Pennsylvania, which soon after changed its name to the Mining and Mechanical Institute of Freeland. The school continues to operate today as the MMI Preparatory School and stands as a testimonial to Eckley's achievements in promoting technical education.

Eckley and the Coxe family gave generously to the people of the anthracite fields. They donated estate lands for churches and cemeteries of various denominations, as well as schools, parks and baseball fields. Eckley also established a scholarship prize of $300 for the best student at his mining school, which would continue for the term of four years if the recipient chose to pursue higher education. Eckley made a point, however, not to confuse business with charity and confined his donations predominantly to gifts of opportunity and knowledge. But, as the people of Drifton affirmed during the opening ceremonies for Cross Creek Hall,

> "For relieving those who have been disabled by accidents, providing for the widows and orphans, visiting our homes in times of sickness, taking an interest in the education and welfare of our children and providing a free library, to promote our intellectual culture you are worthy of the highest praise we can bestow."

One of the most deplorable circumstances in the coalfields was the scarcity of adequate hospitals. Nineteenth century anthracite mining was extremely dangerous, with miners facing hazards from explosions, suffocation, cave-ins and floods. By 1881, Coxe Brothers and Company employed 1,171 people, who endured their share of accidents, despite the sound mining methods initiated by the company. The closest hospital was in Bethlehem, which was over two hours away. To remedy the situation, at least for his own workers, Eckley established the Drifton Hospital on September 1, 1882, for the benefit of Coxe Brothers and Company employees. The building could accommodate thirty-five patients and in its first sixteen months of operation treated eighty-five people. In later years, a state hospital at Hazleton was built for the miners of the Eastern-Middle field. Eckley was an obvious candidate for the Board of Commissioners of the state hospital, an appointment he received in 1891.

The company also maintained an accident fund for its employees. In the event a Coxe Brothers employee died, the fund contributed fifty dollars to the family to defray their funeral expenses. It also provided the widows of employees with three dollars a week for one year, allowing an additional dollar per week for each child less than twelve years of age. In cases where the employees were disabled, men were given five dollars a week until they were able to perform light work.

In all his endeavors, Eckley B. Coxe held himself to a high standard of honor. His standard of personal integrity created unusual circumstances when he was elected to the Pennsylvania State Senate in November 1880. Elected a Democrat from the 26th senatorial district, comprised of parts of Luzerne and Lackawanna counties, he declined to take the oath prescribed by the state constitution, thereby forfeiting the office. In an address to his constituents in January 1881, he explained that he was not able to swear to the fact that all his campaign funds had been contributed as "expressly authorized by law." He further stated, "I have done nothing in this campaign that I am ashamed of, or that was inconsistent with strict honesty." A detailed examination of his accounts show expenses that were not considered "expressly authorized," but were also not uncommon for most of the political candidates in Pennsylvania. In holding himself to the strict letter of the law, he earned the respect of both

Democrats and Republicans alike. The next year Eckley B. Coxe was again elected to the Senate, this time with a majority three times as large as the previous year.

Eckley's personal character made him a model senator and he took advantage of the opportunity to spread his opinions across the entire commonwealth. Belonging to the minority party in the Senate, Eckley was unable to initiate any legislation, but did remain vocal concerning many of the major issues of the day. He was particularly interested in the "Voluntary Trade Tribunal Statute," which dealt with the vexed topic of labor organizations. In addressing the Senate, Eckley argued,

> "Though not pretending to be a workingman, or in any way his representative, but, on the contrary, a large employer of labor of all kinds, I feel and admit that he has equal rights with me. What he properly demands, and what he will have, is justice. To be satisfied, he must feel that the bargain is fair, and that it has been reached in an honorable way, without any resort to coercion. He cares more for this than a slight addition to or a deduction from his daily pay. Where the workingman does not get his dues, trouble must ensue, and capital must pay its share of the bill, which is often a large one."

Eckley made every attempt to treat his men with the respect they demanded. Even so, he was not immune to strikes, which brought his collieries to a halt on several occasions. When demands for increased wages by a joint committee of the Knights of Labor and the Miners' and Laborers' Amalgamated Association brought operations in the anthracite fields to a standstill in 1887, Eckley remained open to hearing the grievances of his men, but like many coal operators, refused to meet with organizations, as he did not believe they represented the best interest of his men. As labor struggled to organize in the latter part of the century, workingmen were as determined to stand by their unions as operators were to ignore them. This state of affairs resulted in repeated struggles between labor and capital throughout the country, struggles that were especially bitter in the coalfields. When a congressional committee was appointed to investigate the labor troubles in Pennsylvania in 1888, Eckley testified,

> "It does not make any difference to us whether the men belong to any association or not. I do not care what association they belong to or what politics they have; it is none of my business; but when it came to the question, I was always willing and anxious to deal with my own men, and I expect to always; but I want to deal with the men who are interested to the particular question that I have got to settle."

Eckley continued to remain active in the mining profession through his associations with numerous professional organizations, including the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Engineer's Club of Philadelphia, the American Chemical Society, the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to name just a few. In 1870, Eckley published a translation of Julias Weisbach's treatise, "A Manual of the Mechanics of Engineering and of the Construction of Machines, with an Introduction to the Calculus." Weisbach was a former professor of Eckley's at the *Bergakademie* in Freiberg, and an influential voice in the field of mechanics. This capacious volume, used primarily as a textbook, was completed at a monetary loss, but would, however, associate Eckley's name with one of the leading mechanical engineers in the world.

As Eckley continued to advance his own career and the anthracite industry as a whole, he never lost sight of his principal commitment to developing the lands of the Estate of Tench Coxe. In an effort to fully exploit the resources of his family's land, Eckley organized four additional companies in June 1893. The Drifton, Oneida, Tomhicken and Beaver Meadow water companies were organized to supply water to the industries and citizens of Hazle, East Union, Black Creek and Banks Township, respectively.

On June 20, 1893 the capital stock of the four water companies, along with the stock of the Cross Creek Coal Company, Coxe Brothers and Company, Incorporated, the Delaware, Susquehanna and Schuylkill Railroad Company, and the Coxe Iron Manufacturing Company were placed into a trust under the control of Eckley B. Coxe, who served as president of them all. The trust was created to secure the continuation of the companies in the case of the death or sale of interest by any of the partners. The ownership of these companies was held in the same interest as that of the firm of Coxe Brothers and Company, being 4/15$^{ths}$ each with Eckley and Alexander Coxe, 3/15$^{ths}$ each vested in Henry B. and Eckley B. Coxe, Jr., and a 1/15$^{th}$ interest with Ezra B. Ely.

With the establishment of the various new Coxe enterprises, the business of the original firm (Coxe Brothers and Company) became limited to the operation of company stores at Fern Glen, Eckley and Drifton. This was no small point however. By remaining a partnership the Coxe family was not bound by the corporation laws of Pennsylvania, which prohibited the operation of company stores. But Coxe Brothers and Company stores respected the spirit of the anti-company store legislation. All Coxe employees were paid in cash that they could spend anywhere and not company script, which they would have to spend on overpriced goods at company stores. Eckley instructed his stores to sell goods as cheaply as possible and at no point were store debts deducted from an employee's wages.

The various Coxe-owned enterprises remained in Eckley's charge till May 13, 1895, when at the age of 55, Eckley Brinton Coxe died of pneumonia. His death was mourned across the region as the buildings of Drifton were draped in black and Coxe collieries went idle. On the occasion of his funeral, every mine in the region suspended operations as a tribute to their deceased colleague.

Although Eckley was gone, his benevolence lived on through his wife of twenty-six years, Sophia Georgiana (Fisher) Coxe. Sophia undoubtedly served as Eckley's guiding light in his many altruistic endeavors. She was collectively known throughout the region as the "Angel of the Anthracite Fields" and the "Coxe Santa Claus." Sophia earned the latter title by providing the children of the Coxe mining towns with gifts and candy at an annul Christmas Party held in Cross Creek Hall. With the income guaranteed to her in Eckley's will, Sophia embarked on numerous acts of charity, funding additions to the Hazleton State Hospital, White Haven Sanitarium and the Philadelphia Children's Hospital. Sophia also advanced

Eckley's work in education as a faithful benefactor of the Mining and Mechanical Institute of Freeland. She endowed the school with a new gymnasium and a trust fund to keep the school operating after her death, which occurred in 1926.

As Eckley's benevolence continued after his death, so too did his mining enterprises. His two surviving brothers, Alexander and Henry Coxe remained active in the business affairs of the Coxe mining companies, as Alfred E. Walter, a business associate, took control of the trust and presidency of the Coxe companies. The trust would subsequently pass to Irving A. Stearns from 1901 to 1905, when the trusteeship was canceled. The mining enterprises continued to expand through the turn of the century under the administration of Alexander B. Coxe. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Alexander had distinguished himself in the Civil War, serving on the staff of Major-General George Meade. After the war, he played a major role in the financial management of Coxe Brothers and Company as the only Coxe partner, other then Eckley, who resided in Drifton. He continued to live near the collieries for nearly forty years.

In March 1900, Alexander initiated a series of business maneuvers to streamline the management of the various Coxe companies. He purchased the entire capital stock of the Coxe Iron Manufacturing Company and the selling agency, Coxe Brothers and Company, Inc. for the Cross Creek Coal Company. Now representing the combined capital of three companies, the Cross Creek Coal Company officially changed its name to Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. The new company name distinguished only by the replacement of "and" by "&". Days later, the original firm of Coxe Brothers and Company was dissolved by agreement, with the remainder of its property and assets being assigned to the Cross Creek Coal Company for the sum of $300. The business of the firm would be continued by Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. and the Delaware, Susquehanna & Schuylkill Railroad, both of which were owned in the same interest as the original firm.

As both the executor of the Tench Coxe Estate and partner of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc., Alexander was in a unique situation to further consolidate the management of the Coxe properties. On June 24, 1904, the numerous individual leases from the Estate of Tench Coxe to Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. were consolidated into one blanket lease. The lease granted exclusive mining rights to the latter on the Drifton, Eckley, Stockton and Beaver Meadow properties, as well as on portions of the Tomhicken, Derringer and Oneida properties. The terms of the lease were agreed to continue until the coal was exhausted from the property or mining operations became unprofitable. In 1904 Coxe Brothers was operating roughly 30,000 acres of land, although not all of it came from family leases. In addition to owning small portions of land, they still held leases on additional property from the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company, West Buck Mountain Coal Company, Anspach & Stanton, Black Creek Improvement Company and the Central Coal Company.

The year 1904 also marked the death of Henry B. Coxe, leaving the sole responsibility of the company and the estate in Alexander's charge. With most of the family leaving the coalfields for homes in Philadelphia and nobody in the family willing to take the reins of the family business, the aging Alexander contemplated giving in to the railroads and selling off the mining operations.

The Pennsylvania Railroad approached Alexander with an offer to purchase the entire operation of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc., in an attempt to secure the valuable freight being produced at Coxe collieries. This freight totaled over one 1,500,000 tons of anthracite with 1,000,000 tons being mined directly from Coxe land. The LVRR, however, was not willing to lose its principal independent coal shipper and made Coxe Brothers a matching offer. Fortunately for the LVRR, Alexander Coxe served on its board of directors and in 1905 agreed to sell the whole of the Coxe mining enterprises to the LVRR.

The sale was completed on October 7, 1905 and included all of the property and assets of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. comprising, 1100 miners' houses, real estate in Chicago and Milwaukee, floating equipment in New York harbor, all the mined coal on hand as well as the leasehold rights covered in the 1904 lease. Also included in the sale were the Delaware Susquehanna & Schuylkill Railroad and the four Coxe subsidiary water companies. In return the LVRR paid a total of 18.4 million dollars, $6,400,000 being paid in cash and $12,000,000 in collateral trust four percent bonds, which could be redeemed in semi-annual payments of $500,000. The bonds were issued by the Girard Trust Company, which secured payment with Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. stock, pledged by the LVRR. These bonds would mature in February 1926 at which time the stock was to be transferred back to the LVRR.

The sale had the effect of taking the Coxe family out of the mining industry after forty years of successful operations. The sale also marked the last major land acquisition by the LVRR, which competed in an industry that by some estimates controlled as much as 78% of the entire anthracite output. Nearly all of the other large independent operators had sold-out years ago, leaving the Coxe family operations as a relic of a day gone by. The family, however, would not forget the employees who gave the better part of their lives in service to the company. The Coxe Relief Fund was created by a resolution of the former stockholders of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. on October 31, 1905 and was funded by contributions from the Coxe family. In addition to paying off the sundry debts of the company, the fund provided a pension to numerous Coxe employees.

The Coxe family benefited greatly from Alexander Coxe's management of the company. In addition to providing the estates of his former partners with an $18.4 million dollar sale, he secured the Heirs of Tench Coxe a steady income of coal royalties for years to come. The stress and anxiety of such an endeavor, however, had an adverse affect on his health. Just four months after completing the sale to the LVRR, Alexander B. Coxe died. With all of the original Coxe partners dead, a new generation of Coxe heirs stepped in to manage the affairs of the Estate of Tench Coxe. In January 1906, Henry Brinton Coxe, Jr. and Alexander Brown Coxe, both sons of Henry B. Coxe, became the Estate Agents. The management of the estates property remained in the hands of agents and attorneys-in-fact for its entire existence, one member of which was always a descendant of Tench Coxe.

Although selling all of its direct interests in mining, the Coxe family retained ownership of the land it leased to Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc., now a subsidiary of the LVRR. Indirectly having control of the leases to the Coxe property, the LVRR subleased the mining rights of the Coxe land to the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, placing Coxe Brothers in the business of preparing coal at the breakers.

For years Federal law had prohibited railroad companies from owning their own coal properties, a law that was easily avoided by placing control of their properties with a coal company whose stock they owned entirely. Laws seeking to put an end to monopolistic trusts were becoming increasingly more stringent, however, placing all of the major rail lines in the anthracite field at risk of prosecution. In June of 1906, the Hepburn Act passed into law. Containing a commodities clause, it explicitly forbade the interstate shipment by railroad companies of any mining product in which they held a direct or indirect interest. The LVRR became an easy target for the law. The railroad could not readily disguise its ownership of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. because it was paying for the purchase with railroad bonds.

A decision in 1911, by the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York, affirmed that the LVRR was in violation of the Commodities Clause of the Hepburn Act by its stock ownership of both the LVCC and Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. To evade the clause the Lehigh Valley Coal Sales Company was organized in an attempt to distance the railroad from its mining operations. The sales company purchased Coxe Brothers and Lehigh Valley coal at the breakers and distributed it to the various dealers. The Lehigh Valley Railroad Company’s entanglement with its coal properties remained obvious nonetheless and in March 1914, the Federal Government filed suit against the railroad for trust evasion, charging it with violations of both the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and the Hepburn Act.

After six years of litigation, a decision was handed down ordering the dissolution of the Lehigh Valley mining combination. The final decree of the court was handed down in November 1923, outlining the exact steps the court required. The decree called for the creation of a trusteeship that would hold the complete voting power of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. stock. The trustee was further ordered not to vote the stock in any way that would bring about a unity of interest or a suppression of competition between the two companies.

Under the direction of the Coxe trustee, Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. went through a series of changes in the operation of their property. In 1929 management of the Coxe properties was turned over to the Jeddo-Highland Coal Company, operated by Donald Markle, son of the highly successful retired anthracite operator, John Markle. The change in management took control of the Coxe Brothers property out of the hands of the LVCC, severing the remaining links with the LVRR.

The agreement with Jeddo-Highland had been in place for seven years when, in 1936, Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. was given direct control of its mining operations, placing them back in the business of mining coal for the first time since the company was sold in 1905. Management by Coxe Brothers did not prove to be very sound, as strikes repeatedly shut down operations. During a strike in 1938, an operative employed by the company to spy on the men reported,

> "They say the company is not providing and using props at any place – that no effort is being made to save the roof. They say no coal is being taken which entails the expenditure of anything but the minimum amount of money. This they interpret to mean the abandonment of the company's operations there in the near future is a certainty. This is now the basis for the strike."

The poor management of Coxe Brothers under the control of its board of directors, many of whom were directors of the LVRR, did not go unnoticed by the Coxe trustee and in 1940 management of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc., once again, was turned over to the Jeddo-Highland Coal Company. Management of portions of some properties were also granted to the Gowen Coal Company, Wolf Collieries Company, Pardee Brothers and Company, Inc., Sterrick Creek Coal Company and the Haddock Mining Company. The year 1940 marked the last year that Coxe Brothers had any direct or indirect control concerning mining, selling or transporting coal from its leased property.

The anthracite industry saw peak years of production during World War I, but then began a steady decline from which it would never recover. By the 1940s coal operators were becoming increasingly scarce giving the LVRR an opportunity to regain control of the capital stock of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. In 1942 they petitioned the United States Government to end the trusteeship, arguing that Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. acted strictly as a property agent without any control of the operators policies. They further argued that 82% of the coal on Coxe Brothers property had been removed since the trusteeship was created and with the decreased market for anthracite coal, finding a buyer of the Coxe Brothers stock would be nearly impossible. The courts handed down a decision in favor of the railroad and ordered the stock of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. returned to the LVRR.

The return of Coxe Brothers' stock was authorized by the courts with the explicit requirement that quarterly reports concerning the financial condition and conduct of business be submitted to the office of the Attorney General of the United States. The approval of the Attorney General's office was also required before Coxe Brothers could change the terms or execute any new lease. In its petition to the courts the LVRR alluded to the "short prospective life of Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc." This attitude appears to be confirmed upon the latter's return to LVRR control. A memo from C.E. Hildum, Vice President of the LVRR, in June 1943, stated,

> "Coxe Bros. presumably could use its cash to continue mining operations, either by its own organization or through management agreements, until its working funds were exhausted, or until its operating leases exceeded the Railroad Company profits from the movement of coal."

The LVRR was once again mining for freight, a practice that ultimately brought about a significant decrease in coal royalties for the Heirs of Tench Coxe.

In 1943, Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. leased over 19,000 acres of land, 79% of which was leased from the Estate of Tench Coxe. The remaining portions were either owned in fee or leased from the Deringer Estate, LVCC or the Estate of Charles S. Coxe. For the next seven years Coxe Brothers did not operate any of its collieries but was still required to obtain the heirs' consent before subleasing to tenants.

The Estate Agents, however, were unhappy with the way Coxe Brothers was managing their property. The agents believed that Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. was mainly interested in obtaining freight for the railroad rather than obtaining the maximum income from the properties. Coxe Brothers was further criticized for allowing the Haddock Mining Company to operate the Beaver Meadow, Deringer and Tomhicken properties without paying royalties or taxes for a period of nine months.

In 1938, an amendment was made to the 1904 lease in which royalties were to be paid to the estate on a profit sharing basis, with 2/3 of the net income being paid in royalties. The estate was then permitted to employ accountants to examine the records of Coxe Brothers. The accountants found numerous discrepancies in Coxe Brothers' accounts and in February 1949 the Heirs of Tench Coxe filed a lawsuit against Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. to recover $350,000 due them in royalties. The heirs charged that Coxe Brothers took unauthorized deductions in computing their net income, the basis for establishing royalty payments. The lawsuit, however, was just an example of the animosity that existed between the two interests. It eventually became the clear desire of the Estate Agents to eliminate Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. as a "middleman" by canceling the terms of the 1904 lease.

In 1950, the Estate Agent, Daniel M. Coxe, called a meeting of the Coxe heirs to discuss the canceling of their lease with Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. It was agreed by all parties involved that the result of such an action would create considerable savings on overhead and increased royalties to the Estate. As part of the settlement agreement from the lawsuit filed a year earlier the terms of the 1904 lease were canceled. In addition, Coxe Brothers assigned all of its subleases, titles to culm and refuse banks, its fee land, mining equipment, drainage tunnels and miners houses to the Estate of Tench Coxe. Of particular significance in this agreement was the stipulation that all of the maps, leases, surveys, correspondence and records of every nature relating to the property be transferred to the Estate. The ownership of these records were retained by the Estate until 1968 when they were transferred to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, as a portion of this collection.

The courts approved the settlement agreement in July 1950, having the effect of putting Coxe Brothers & Company, Inc. out of business and in line for liquidation. Coxe Brothers was officially dissolved in July of the following year with distribution to its stockholders, the LVRR. The settlement also placed the Coxe family in direct control of its landholdings for the first time in forty-five years.

By 1950, the anthracite industry was a shell of its former self. A deflated market for anthracite led to decreased income for the estate. Under the direction of the agents, new leases were granted to mining operations, including the Jeddo-Highland Coal Company, but finding additional tenants proved to be extremely difficult. Given the state of affairs in the anthracite fields it soon became the clear intention of the Tench Coxe Estate to divest itself of its landholdings.

In 1956, the first major land sale was completed for 2,000 acres, to the Beryllium Corporation of Reading to establish the firm's new Nuclear Division. The land sale trend continued in 1959 with the sale of the Drifton Village and again in 1960 with the sale of Tomhicken.

Coal production on estate lands was down to 62,744 tons in 1960 without any hope of future improvements. Facing the prospect that the majority of accessible coal deposits had been exhausted and profitable leases were no longer available, Daniel urged to the heirs to liquidate the real estate of the Estate of Tench Coxe. The large number of individuals, estates and trusts holding an interest in the Tench Coxe Estate, however, made property sales extremely difficult. With over fifty-seven distributees, representing 108 heirs on two continents, the fractional interests of the estate were getting smaller as the number of heirs multiplied with each generation.

To avoid the lengthy task of securing consent from all of the individual family members, the heirs and owners of the Tench Coxe properties executed a trust agreement, which conveyed their authority to sell the family property to a group of trustees, which included Daniel M. Coxe, Eckley B. Coxe, III and Tench C. Coxe, Jr. The trust was organized under the name *Tench Coxe Properties Liquidating Trust* in December 1961. Initially, the trust was able to sell only small portions of the property, but nonetheless actively pursued a buyer for the large acreage that remained. The trust liquidated the last remaining portions of the estate lands in 1966, with the sale of 16,400 acres to Butler Enterprises, Inc., owned by the prominent Philadelphia real estate developers, Philip and Nathan Seltzer.

Butler Enterprises was drawn to the area due in large part to the efforts of Can-Do, Inc., *(Community-Area New Development Organization)*. This citizen-sponsored organization was established in 1956 with the intention of drawing new industries to the Hazleton region, which Philip Seltzer described as being one of the "great progressive areas of Pennsylvania." Can-Do, Inc. functioned with assistance from the Coxe family, which had a great deal to gain from increasing the vitality of the region. The assistance was also very much characteristic of the Coxe family's tradition of providing support for the social and economic development of the region.

The transfer of title to Butler Enterprises marked the end of an era for the Coxe family, an era spanning over 150 years of direct involvement with the people and geology of the area. An example of this relationship between labor and capital can be seen today at Eckley Miners Village, a historic site representing a nineteenth century company mining town or "patch town." The site is maintained by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, on land once owned by the Estate of Tench Coxe. The family's impact will also continue to be felt at MMI Preparatory School, which continues to benefit from contributions from the Heirs of Tench Coxe and the Sophia Coxe Charitable Trust.

Although the Coxe family has long since left the coalfields of Northeastern Pennsylvania, the potential still exists for the Coxes to return to the region, through the auspices of Tench Coxe, Inc. Established in 1968, this company holds the gas and oil rights to roughly 13,000 acres of property included in the sale to Butler Enterprises. Although the prospect of discovering gas and oil may not be substantial, large domes discovered on the property in the 1950's may prove to be valuable storage sites for natural gas surpluses pumped into the Northeast during summer months. The domes are situated at depths of 18,000 feet, which do not make them economically useful to date. But time will tell.