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FRANK STEUNENBERG

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Originally from Keokuk, Iowa, Frank Steunenberg (August 8, 1861-December 30, 1905) studied at Iowa State in Ames and worked as a printer and newspaper publisher in Des Moines and Knoxville, Iowa, until the end of 1886. Then he joined his brother in taking over the Caldwell Tribune for six years. A Democrat, he was chosen delegate to the Idaho Constitutional Convention in 1889 and was elected to the state legislature in 1890. He served on the original faculty of the College of Idaho the next year, and as a trustee of the College as well as of Caldwell. In 1896 he was elected governor of Idaho by an overwhelming vote in a time of great political excitement. Strife between sheep and cattlemen, focused on the trial of Diamondfield Jack Davis, who was accused by mistake of shooting two shepherders in 1896, created a major problem which lasted through both of Steunenberg's terms of office. Renewal of trouble in the Coeur d'Alene mining region plagued the last two years of Steunenberg's administration; after the Bunker Hill and Sullivan concentrator at Wallace was blown up on April 29, 1888, the mines remained under martial law until after Steunenberg retired from office.

In his later years, he had important sheep, lumber, and banking interests, being one of Idaho's prominent businessmen. His assassination at his home in Caldwell by Harry Orchard (alias for Albert E. Horsley) created a national sensation, and led to the celebrated trial of William D. Haywood for conspiracy in the dynamiting.

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