*For Immediate Release*

New from Wayne State University Press:

**Justus S. Stearns:**

*Michigan Pine King and Kentucky Coal Baron, 1845—1933*

DETROIT—August 1, 2015—At the turn of the century, "Pine King" Justus S. Stearns was Michigan’s largest producer of manufactured lumber and the owner of a prosperous coal mining operation headquartered in Stearns, Kentucky, a town he founded. Over the course of his career, Stearns would own at least thirty manufacturing businesses—making everything from finished lumber to kitchen utensils, game boards, and motors—as well as hotels, a railroad, and a power company. He was also an active member of the Republican Party who served one term as Michigan’s secretary of state and a philanthropist who gave a great deal of his wealth to causes in both Michigan and Kentucky.

In *Justus S. Stearns: Michigan Pine King and Kentucky Coal Baron, 1845—1933*, Michael Nagle addresses key events in the first few decades of Stearns’s life and his initial foray into the lumber industry. Subsequent chapters explore Stearns’s political career, his timber operations in Wisconsin, and his coal, lumber, and railroad operations in Kentucky and Tennessee. Nagle also details the ancillary businesses that Stearns founded or purchased in the early twentieth century, even as his Stearns Salt & Lumber Company served as the anchor of his Michigan holdings, while Stearns Coal & Lumber did the same for his operations in Kentucky. The final chapter offers an overview and analysis of Stearns’s lifetime of accomplishments, including his impact on the town of Ludington, Michigan, where he maintained a residence for over fifty years.

Nagle makes extensive use of primary source material from several historical archives as well as contemporary newspaper accounts, court documents, company records, and other primary sources. American history scholars, as well as general readers interested in Michigan’s lumbering era and Kentucky’s mining history, will enjoy this biography of an exceptionally influential businessman.


**Book launch celebration:** Thursday, September 10, 2015, 7:00 pm @ Stearns Motor Inn 212 E. Ludington Ave., Ludington MI. More information at [http://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/news-events/events/detail/michael-nagle-stearns-motor-inn](http://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/news-events/events/detail/michael-nagle-stearns-motor-inn)

For more information on the book or to speak to the author, please contact Emily Nowak, Marketing and Sales Manager, Wayne State University Press, (313) 577-6128 tel; (313) 577-6131 fax; enowak@wayne.edu. To learn more about the Press, please visit wsupress.wayne.edu.