

Sally Zanjani. *Devils Will Reign: How Nevada Began*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006; 222 pp., b&w ill., notes, bib., ind., cloth, \$29.95. ISBN: 0874176638

Devils Will Reign: How Nevada Began, by Sally Zanjani, is an important addition to western historiography in general, and specifically to the body of literature dealing with the beginning of the region's mining. Zanjani, one of the West's more accomplished and prolific historians, has contributed yet another volume, filling a gap that needed to be addressed. Many previous histories have dealt with the volatile period of the 1850s and early 60s in the western Great Basin, but Zanjani has attacked the problem with a precision and thoroughness not previously attempted.

The 1850s was a dynamic time when the western Great Basin, the future Nevada, was at a crossroads. Those who were settling its small, scattered communities were pursuing agriculture and occupations associated with overland travel or they were placer miners in places like Gold Canyon, the future location of the Comstock Mining District. Zanjani captures a time when the direction that the region would take was not apparent, and people struggled to carve out a living in this remote setting.

From a mining history point of view, the flecks of gold in this volume are scattered throughout a treatment committed to be comprehensive. The specialist might feel it necessary to treat this book like a placer deposit to glean the good from it. A danger confronts those who focus on mining history, however, in that its proponents risk failing to see the larger picture. *Devils will Reign* is about the overall context first and foremost, and that is its strength. It also happens that mining is naturally woven into this story, making an appearance throughout, so industry historians would do well to procure this book.

From the beginning, there were placer operations in the western Great Basin, a reflection of the California gold country not far away. With

the 1859 strike that discovered the Comstock Lode and initiated the famed rush to Washoe, the territory transformed. Zanjani is able to keep her balance, unfolding the story as its contemporaries might have perceived it, without being prejudiced by the outcome later historians would know well. The magic of this volume is that it tells the story of the 1850s as though it is an end itself rather than a prelude.

Zanjani is to be commended for *Devils Will Reign*. As always, her writing is a joy to read, and her history is expertly researched. Well-considered illustrations salted throughout constitute an additional bonus. The period of the 1850s and early 60s still holds promise for additional research and insights, but whoever follows will need to begin with Zanjani's work.

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Geoffrey L. Buckley. *Extracting Appalachia: Images of the Consolidation Coal Company, 1910-1945*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004; 264 pp., ill., cloth, \$46.95. ISBN: 0821415557

Geoffrey L. Buckley begins this well-executed volume with a quote from John Berger: "A photograph, whilst recording what has been seen, always and by its nature refers to what is not seen." While conducting other research at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, Buckley came across a mother load of nearly four thousand photographs commissioned by the Consolidation Coal Company, mainly of its operations in Kentucky and West Virginia, but also in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Wisconsin. *Extracting Appalachia* represents the author's commendable effort to present dozens of these images and make sense of them in a larger narrative about the company, its history, and view of the world.

Key to the "making sense" aspect is Buckley's