

ing promoters could offer endless amusement and outrage.

Richard Lingenfelter
University of California, San Diego

Bob Weldin. *The Dry Diggin's Club*. Spokane: Miner's Quest, 2012; 303 pp., paper, \$20. ISBN: 9780578106823

Mining engineer Bob Weldin, a long-time member and former president of the Mining History Association, explained his motivation for joining the novel writing fraternity:

The stories in this book are primarily based on events that happened to the author and other field geologists during the 1960s. The stories have been fictionalized to illustrate what might have happened as well as what actually did. The reader should not try to attach actual names to the characters because they are composite personalities developed to illustrate the more interesting and dynamic people who are attracted to the mining industry.

The story takes place in the Pacific Northwest and focuses on Sara Mullins, who “is able to break into this masculine domain, yet, preserve the attributes of her femininity.” The author brings her alive as her career unfolds in the evolving world of mining in the post-World War II era and beyond. Along the way, it also provides some interesting insights into the mining profession.

Rather than summarize this well-paced story, the reviewer encourages one and all to read and enjoy *The Dry Diggin's Club*. Where does the title come from? That too may be found in the book.

Duane A. Smith
Fort Lewis College

Catherine Holder Spude, Robin O. Mills, Kark Gurcke, and Roderick Sprague (eds.). *Eldorado! The Archaeology of Gold Mining in the Far North*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and the Society of Historical Archaeology, 2011; 357 pp., 39 b&w illus., 8 maps, 27 tabs., ref., paper, \$55. ISBN: 9780803210998

This volume is the first attempt to summarize the work of historic archaeologists on early gold mining in Alaska and the Yukon Territory. The book is written primarily for archaeologists, but will be useful to historians, ethnologists, and other cultural resource specialists. Historic archaeological studies on mining sites in the far north—field surveys, excavations, oral histories, and analyses of material culture—began in the 1970s. Most of the early work focused on Skagway and Dawson. Since the 1990s, considerable archaeological investigation has been carried out in other parts of the far northern mining frontier, but much of that work was produced in “gray literature” (unpublished professional reports) for government agencies and papers presented at conferences.

This volume, which focuses on placer mining, is divided into five parts. Part I includes essays by Robert Spude, giving a brief overview of the history of Alaska-Yukon gold rushes between 1880-1918; Donald Hardesty, on theoretical perspectives on frontier mining patterns; Robin Mills, on a proposed model for a placer-gold-mining settlement system; Catherine Holder Spude, on predicting social and economic function at residential and commercial sites in the far north; and Margaret Purser, on comparative opportunities and challenges, seeking to put the work done on Alaska into a national perspective and suggesting directions for future historic archaeological studies of mining in Alaska.

Part II consists of three essays focusing on coastal transfer and supply settlements provisioning the Upper Yukon through Skagway and Dyea. Part III includes two essays on links in the interior transportation system. Part IV contains four es-

says examining central and secondary distribution settlements that supplied mining districts. And Part V has three essays examining mining sites on creeks in the far north.

Most of the twenty contributors to this volume are long-time employees of federal agencies who have done archaeological work on federal lands. Their essays largely reflect a perspective on far northern rushes which focuses on the Klondike, Nome, and Fairbanks gold rushes, while largely ignoring the lesser but numerous small gold rushes that had far-reaching impacts on nearly every area in Alaska and in portions of the Yukon. However, this volume does contain essays on lesser-known mining camps, such as Coldfoot in the Koyukuk mining district, Tofty in the Hot Springs mining district, Valdez Creek in the upper Susitna region, and Fish Creek in the Fairbanks mining district.

The theoretical models and case studies presented in this volume will be useful to those who are interested in early mining in the far north. The contributors provide thoughtful theoretical frameworks and analyses that shed light on the common attributes of mining camps, and of the supply and transportation systems that were necessary to support mining in Alaska and the Yukon in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Rolfe G. Buzzell
Office of History and Archaeology
Alaska State Division of Parks and
Outdoor Recreation

Janet L. Finn. *Mining Childhood: Growing Up in Butte, Montana, 1900-1960*. Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2012; 323 pp., 91 b&w photos, notes, bib., ind., paper, \$25. ISBN: 9780980129250

Mining Childhood is a detailed and captivating history of children in the mining town of Butte, Montana, during the first six decades of the twentieth century. In Finn's hands, children are

an inseparable part of the work and social activity of the famed "Richest Hill on Earth," giving mining historians a fresh perspective on mining history.

Finn's book consists of eight chapters plus an introduction, endnotes, a bibliography, and a fine index. The first chapter provides a summary of Butte's social and economic history, with an emphasis on events relevant to children. This helpful context sets up the historical matter in the rest of the book. Chapter Two provides a single-chapter summary of how Butte's mining industry impacted the children who grew up there, and—vice versa—the effects children had on life and work in Butte. Chapter Eight, at the end of the book, revisits the issues raised by the sources in previous chapters and considers the relationship between childhood and mining landscapes. These chapters are likely to be those researchers turn to for a nuanced framework that might be applied elsewhere for understanding children in mining towns.

The other chapters form the heart of the book, where Finn explores in greater detail the themes she set up initially, and illustrates them with rich detail. These chapters rely heavily on a wide range of oral histories, some conducted by Finn and others dating as far back as the late 1970s. Finn augments these crucial sources with archival and photographic material to discuss reform and community efforts aimed at children, children's play in Butte, their school attendance, and the labor—paid and unpaid—they contributed. Chapter Seven uses one person's oral history to combine the various themes in a single life story.

Finn uses this wealth of material in a commendably judicious way. Not only is the narrative interesting and informative, but Finn is admirably cautious about over- and under-sentimentalization, to which work on the history of children can be prone. She also largely avoids reusing anecdotes or retelling stories, which can be a challenge when writing an analytical work based on narrative sources such as oral histories. Ample photographs, scattered throughout the book,