Recent Publications on the History of Mining

Compiled by Lysa Wegman-French

The following bibliography contains books, dissertations and theses, articles and chapters of books, and other media—organized within those four categories—that relate to the history of all types of mining in North America (that is, Canada, the United States, and Central America). It does not include book review articles.

Digital capabilities are changing our options for seeing works of interest. Some films and printed works are also available for viewing on the internet. We haven’t included URLs for these, but check the internet for their availability. Moreover, some articles are available only on the internet; for these we have included the URL. In addition, many older books are now being reissued as e-books, and older films are being distributed as DVDs. We did not include them in this compilation since the content is not new. However, if you are interested in an older work, check to see if it is now available as an e-book or DVD (WorldCat.org is a good source for this information).

We thank all the members who have sent in contributions, and welcome suggestions for our next compilation.

Books:


Álvarez Rodríguez, Gloria Angélica, and Alfonso Pacheco Hernández. Palacio Alvarado: La Casa de un Minero [Alvarado Palace: The House of a Miner]. Chihuahua: Instituto Chihuahuense de la Cultura, 2014. [Mining magnate Pedro Alvarado Torres operated one of Mexico’s richest silver mines, the Palmilla mine near Parral in the state of Chihuahua.]


Basso, Matthew, and John Perry Christensen. The Way Utah Worked. Salt Lake City: Utah Humanities, 2017. [Includes chapters on miners’ labor unions and on miner and folk hero Rafael Lopez.]


Birch, Jesse, and Will Holder (eds.). Black Diamond Dust. Nanaimo, BC: Nanaimo Art Gallery, 2016. [Expands a Nanaimo, BC, exhibition that examined the history of coal mining through artworks, poetry, essays, literature, folk songs, and archival images.]

Booker, Matthew Morse. *Down by the Bay: San Francisco’s History between the Tides.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. [Also an e-book. Includes his argument that hydraulic mining for gold in the Sierras sent millions of tons of soil and rock into the bay, where habitat never recovered.]  


Carte, Rebecca A. *Capturing the Landscape of New Spain: Baltasar Obregón and the 1564 Ibarra Expedition.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2015. [The expedition traveled to the mining frontier in Northern Mexico.]


Chase, Rachelle. Lost Buxton [Iowa]. (Images of America.) Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2017. [In the early nineteenth century, this town and the Consolidated Coal Company were racially integrated when other places were segregated.]


Dobson, Robert D. The Second History of Ishpeming, Michigan, 1920 through the 1954 Centennial. Negaunee, MI: Dobson Publications, 2015. [The author compiled the iron mining town’s history as reported in its newspaper.]

Dodds, Betty Bettencourt. The McClelland Civil War Letters: A Pittsburgh Family from 1861 to 1865. Indianapolis: Dog Ear Publishing, 2014. [Includes letters from Tom McClelland, who traveled west to the future territory of Arizona with the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company in early 1861.]


Fenoglio Limón, Fiorella. La Minería en la Cultura Chalchihuites: Un Modelo para Armar [Mining in the Chalchihuites Culture: A Model to Build]. México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2011. [Focuses on pre-Columbian mining methods, the pan-regional trade network, and the Chalchihuites’ sociopolitical and cultural organization in Zacatecas, Mexico.]

Ferguson, Cody. This is Our Land: Grassroots Environmentalism in the Late Twentieth Century. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press,
2015. [Also an e-book. Presents three case studies regarding mining in Montana, Arizona, and Tennessee.]


Foster, John F. *Victims of the Herrin Massacre: The Dead and Survivors of the Herrin Mine War of June 21st and 22nd, 1922.* [Herrin: John F Foster], 2015. [Twenty-three non-union laborers were murdered in the Illinois coal-mining area.]


Frazer, Lillian (ed. by Christy Steele Frazer). *A Walk through Minden in the Lives of the Crone and Vegh Families.* Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2016. [The author follows the struggles and love of her family in the West Virginia coal mining town.]

French, William E. *The Heart in the Glass Jar: Love Letters, Bodies, and the Law in Mexico.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015. [Also an e-book. He connects intimate lives to the broader cultural setting (1870s to 1930s) and examines reading and writing practices in the communities that the letters came from: mining camps and villages.]

García Barragán Martínez, Elisa, and Gabriela Sánchez Reyes. *200 Años del Palacio de Minería: Su Historia a Partir de Fuentes Documentales [200 Years of the Mining Palace: A History Based on Documentary Sources].* México D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2013. [Dating to around 1800 and one of the masterpieces of Neoclassical architecture in the Americas, the building housed the Royal School of Mines and Mining of the Royal Court; the book details the history of its construction and the changes the building has undergone.]


Hanusa, George L. *Out of the Mud: How a Rural Coal Mining Settlement Became the City of Windsor Heights.* [Windsor Heights, IA:] WH Publishing Group, 2016.


Henshaw, Blain. *Rescue at Moose River.* East Lawrencetown, NS: Pottersfield Press, 2017. [Three men were trapped in an abandoned coal mine for ten days; two survived the ordeal.]

Hussey, Richard K. *Kanaka.* [Sacramento, CA:] I Street Press, 2016. [Details the life of a young man who left his home in Hawaii to search for gold in California.]

Ibarra Quijada, Jesús Ernesto. *Nacozari de García: Tres Siglos de Historia y Minería [Nacozari de García: Three Centuries of History and Mining].* Mesa, AZ: Hispanic Institute of Social Issues, 2016. [Includes copper mining in the Sonora, Mexico town of Nacozari de García.]


Keevil, Norman B. *Never Rest on Your Ores: Building a Mining Company, One Stone at a Time.* Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2017. [Details a century of the multinational Teck Corporation, which originated in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, including the discovery and creation of mines, the mechanics of industry financing, and the role that mergers and acquisitions play.]


McKinney, Gage. *MacBoyle’s Gold.* Grass Valley, CA: Comstock Bonanza Press, 2016. [In the 1920s, mining engineer Errol MacBoyle located a rich lost vein in the “worked out” Idaho Maryland gold mine, allowing him and his wife to live in luxury.]


Merritt, Chris W. The Coming Man from Canton: Chinese Experience in Montana, 1862-1943. (Historical Archaeology of the American West.) Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and the Society for Historical Archaeology, 2017. [Also an e-book.]

Meyers, David, Elise Meyers Walker, and Nyla Vollmer. Carrying Coal to Columbus: Mining in the Hocking Valley [Ohio]. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2017. [Also an e-book. At the start of the twentieth century, at least fifty thousand coal miners worked here, the place where the United Mine Workers of America was founded.]


Northwest Territories. A Guide to Mineral Deposits of the Northwest Territories, 2016. [Yellowknife]: Government of Northwest Territories, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, 2016. [Divided into sections for gold, silver and base metals, strategic minerals, and diamonds; each deposit description includes location, current ownership, a brief history, geology, and exploration or production details.]


Peyton, Jonathan. *Unbuilt Environments: Tracing Postwar Development in Northwest British Columbia.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017. [Also an e-book. Draws on a range of case studies to analyze the social and environmental impacts of unfinished projects, such as the closed asbestos mine and town site at Cassiar.]

Pittman, Walter E. *Rebels in the Rockies: Confederate Irregulars in the Western Territories.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014. [Also an e-book. Southerner sympathizers included leading mine owners; groups that scattered throughout mining camps attempted to organize, equip, and train miners as soldiers.]

Primus, Constance Merrill. *Victorian Visitors at the Hotel de Paris in Georgetown, Colorado.* Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company Publishers, 2014. [Includes profiles of Heneage M. Griffin, a wealthy mining investor from England, and mine owner and operator Lena Stoiber, known as “Captain Jack.”]


Regalado Pinedo, Aristarco. *Guadalajara: Siete Acontecimientos que La Encumbraron [Guadalajara: Seven Events that Made It].* Guadalajara, Mexico: Arlequín, 2011. [Includes the discovery of the mines of Zacatecas.]


Rosenow, Michael K. *Death and Dying in the Working Class, 1865–1920.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015. [Also an e-book. Coal mining explosions that produced mass casualties are the subject of chapter three. Since bodies were not available for burial, new death rituals—particularly memorial services—were required to mourn the dead.]


Sandine, Al. *Deadly Baggage: What Cortés Brought to Mexico and How It Destroyed the Aztec Civilization.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2015. [Includes a chapter on how silver and gold promoted slavery and boosted European commerce.]
Santa Rosalia: Documentos para Su Historia [Documents for Its History], 1885-1946. La Paz, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur, 2009. [This collection of fourteen documents traces the history of El Boleo, a French-owned copper mine, which drove the development of Santa Rosalia.]


Yukon Archives. *People of the Yukon: Dawson Charlie, George and Kate Carmack, Robert Henderson, Shookum Jim*. Whitehorse: Yukon Tourism and Culture, Cultural Services Branch, Yukon Archives, 2016. [Consists of a bibliography of archival and library material in the Yukon Archives.]


Dissertations and Theses:


Brown, Sumner Stevenson. “Troubles at Coal Creek: Rhetorics of Writing, Research, and Working in the Archive.” M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2016. [Using the Coal Creek Tennessee Insurrection (1891-3) and the Coal Creek Company’s archive, shows how research methodologies interact with writing regional histories and performing archival research, and demonstrates three distinct writing voices: academic, narrative, and technical.]


Macias, Anthony William. “Mining Memory: Contention and Social Memory in an Oaxacan Territorial Defense Struggle.” Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, Austin, 2014. [In a historic Mexican mining area, locals formed an anti-mining movement against a Canadian-owned gold and silver mine.]

Mandelia, Ankita Juhi. “Polychlorinated Biphenyl Compound and Metal Contamination and Remediation in Torch Lake, Houghton County, MI.” M.S. thesis, Michigan Technological University, 2016. [Provides a brief overview of the history and problems of a hundred years of dumping mining waste into the lake, and a history of remediation efforts.]


Richards, Matthew Steven. “Mountaintop Removal, Activism, and the Commitment to Progress in Industrial Sacrifice Zones: The Socialization of Class in West Virginia.” Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 2016. [Discusses the coal industry’s conscious goal of creating a dependent culture in West Virginia.]

Richey, Christopher. “The Historical Archaeology of Ore Milling: Ideas, Environment, and Technology.” M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Reno, 2016. [Changes in gold and silver milling technology at the Cortez Mining District, Nevada, are examined through the study of five mills (1864 to 1944)].


Articles and Chapters:


Anderson, Tony. “Aluminum Q & A.” *Welding Journal* 93, no. 2 (Feb. 2014): 24-5. [Briefly mentions the discovery of the process to extract the metal from ore, as well as developing alloys.]


Austin, Noah. “Copper Queen Mine.” *Arizona Highways* 93, no. 6 (June 2017): 8.

Ávila, Alfonso, et al. “Cinnabar in Mesoamerica: Poisoning or Mortuary Ritual?” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 49 (Sep. 2014): 48-56. [Prehistoric inhabitants of Ranas, in Querétaro, Mexico, were exposed to high levels of mercury due to mining cinnabar, a mercury compound.]


Blanco, María del Pilar. “‘Palabras De La Ciencia’ [‘Words of Science’]: Pedro Castera and Scientific Writing in Mexico’s Fin de Siècle.” *Science and Education* 23, no. 3 (Mar. 2014): 541-56. [Castera developed inventions for the mining industry and was also a noted science fiction writer and liberal intellectual; the article explores the intersections of aesthetics and science.]

Blevins, Jason. “How Idaho Springs Plans to Turn the Argo Mine Superfund Site into a Tourist Attraction.” *Denver Post*, 16 May 2017.


Colvert, Dominic. “Peter Burnett Led the First Wagon Train From Oregon to Gold Rush California.” Wild West 27, no. 6 (Apr. 2015): 20-1. [He became the first governor of the state of California.]


“A Deserted Village: Barclay’s Abandoned Mines.” *Settler* 54, no. 1 (Feb. 2016): 11-4. [Presents a story from an 1892 newspaper regarding the historic, but nearly depopulated, village of Barclay, Pennsylvania, and its abandoned coal mines.]


Donnelly, Michael. “Gold Mining at Edmonton.” *Alberta History* 65 (Spr. 2017): 2-10. [Placer gold mining from 1859 into the mid twentieth century.]


Feather, Carl E. “A Tale of Two Centuries.” *Goldenseal* 42, no. 2 (Sum. 2016): 68-71. [Discusses the coal mining towns of Century No. 2 and Century No. 1, West Virginia, including the deaths of twenty-three miners in a 1906 explosion.]


Fine, John Christopher. “The Lure of Jade.” *History Magazine* 17, no. 5 (June/July 2016): 31-5. [Includes the role of the Olmecs in Mexico in the proliferation of the jade culture in the New World, and efforts to save the jade reserve in Guatemala.]


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Gilkes, Paul. “Dahlonega Mint Exhibit to Open.” *Coin World* 58, no. 2981 (29 May 2017): 1, 32-4. [The U.S. Branch Mint in Georgia (1838-1861) produced only gold coins; the exhibit covers gold and gold mining in Georgia.]


Goodman, Martin. “The High-Altitude Research of Mabel Purefoy Fitzgerald, 1911-13.” *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 69, no. 1 (20 Mar. 2015): 85-99. [Pursuing science when it was largely closed to women, Fitzgerald measured hemoglobin and alveolar air of min-
ing staff and families at altitudes from 6,000 to 12,500 feet in Colorado, providing pioneering evidence of the role of oxygen in breathing.]


Groves, Melody. “Sadie Was Shady but Aspired to Be a Lady: Sadie Orchard Ran a Bordello but Also a Stagecoach Line and Hotels.” Wild West 28, no. 2 (Aug. 2015): 22-3. [She lived in the Kingston area, New Mexico, from the late 1800s to 1930.]


James, L. Allan. “Designing Forward with an Eye to the Past: Morphogenesis of the Lower Yuba River.” Geomorphology 251 (Dec. 2015): 31-49. [The geomorphic evolution of this California river up to 1910 is reconstructed using cartographic, documentary, and stratigraphic evidence, identifying the importance of river mining.]


Kruger, Les. “Kelly, New Mexico.” Wild West, 27, no. 2 (Aug. 2014): 68-9. [Area was a source of zinc, lead, and silver from the 1860s to the 1930s; zinc carbonate (smithsonite) was used in paints so Sherwin-Williams owned a mine.]


Langford, Tom. “Class and Environmental Justice Politics in the Demolition of Natal and Michel, 1964-78.” BC Studies, no. 189 (Spr. 2016): 31-58. [Residents of the two Canadian mining towns were relocated.]


Manders, Gina C., and James S. Aber. “Tri-State Mining District Legacy in Northeastern Oklahoma.” *Emporia State Research Studies* 49, no. 2 (2014): 29-51. [The authors detail the history of this leading producer of lead and zinc (1885-1970), the controversy about Quapaw tribal lands, boomtowns, and life post-mining including injury to the environment and human health.]


McCandless, Robert G. “Ending Pollution at the Britannia Copper Mine.” *BC Studies*, no. 188 (Win. 2015): 9-33. [Britannia copper mine (1904-74) near Vancouver, BC, was Canada’s largest point source of metal pollution until 2005.]


Past owners ARCO/Anaconda, Alcoa, and Copper Beach Estates negotiated cleanup costs.

McCauley, Jacob, and Jennifer Bouldin. “Cadmium Accumulation in Periphyton from an Abandoned [Zinc and Lead] Mining District in the Buffalo National River, Arkansas.” Bulletin of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology 96, no. 6 (June 2016): 757-61. [The study found increased cadmium in algal organisms that are the base of the aquatic food chain.]


Menard, Andrew. “Robert Smithson’s Environmental History.” Oxford Art Journal 37, no. 3 (Dec. 2014): 285-304. [Smithson rejected the nostalgic view of pastoral nineteenth century landscape and instead viewed engineered spaces such as mining sites as relevant to the environment.]


Miller, Lana L., et al. “Using Molecular Biomarkers and Traditional Morphometric Measurements to Assess the Health of Slimy Sculpin (Cottus cognatus) from Streams with Elevated Selenium in North-Eastern British Columbia.” Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry 34, no. 10 (Oct. 2015): 2335-46. [Coal is a major source of selenium; the study examined impacts of current and historic coal mining on fish.]


Oakley, Peter A. “Permanent State of Decay: Contrived Dereliction at Heritage Mining Sites.” In: Hilary Orange (ed.). *Reanimating Industrial Spaces: Conducting Memory Work in Post-Industrial Societies*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2015, 49-71. [Utilizes Alaskan case studies of the mining town of Kennecott and the No. 8 gold dredge to demonstrate that the visual aesthetic of decay is being intentionally exploited.]


Petrakos, Christopher. “William Ogilvie, the Klondike Borderlands and the Making of the Canadian West.” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 46, no. 3 (Sep. 2016): 362-79. [This Canadian Dominions Surveyor and Commissioner of the Yukon was tasked with clarifying the contested boundary line to maintain Canadian authority on the frontier.]


Potter, Heather, and Laura Kerr Wiley. “The Shifting Landscape of Appalachia: The Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston Mountain Photograph Collection, 1882–1905.” *Ohio Valley History* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 71-8. [For decades, many residents supported environmental legislation, but switched to a staunch defense of mining fossil fuels following the passage of the amendments to the Clean Air Act in 1972.]

Ralph, Michael. “From Slavery to Corporate Life Insurance.” *Dissent* 64, no. 2 (Spr. 2017): 63-7. [Looks at the relationship between slavery and the provision of medical insurance to coal miners, first in Virginia.]

Reiny, Samson. “Living in the Town Asbestos Built.” *Distillations* 1, no. 2 (Sum. 2015): 26-35. [Asbestos shipped to the factory in Ambler, Pennsylvania, was manufactured into products (1880s to 1960s); the waste has caused health problems.]


Scott, Conohar. “Photographing Mining Pollution in Gold Rush California.” *Photographies* 10, no. 2 (2017): 189-209. [This paper draws comparison between three photographers who documented the North Bloomfield Mining Company’s (1866-99) hydraulic gold mine and their role in landmark lawsuits; photography promoted corporate capitalism but also served as evidence for farmers whose lands were flooded by polluted tailings.]


Siber, Kate. “Ghost of a Chance.” *Preservation* 67, no. 2 (Spr. 2015): 26-33. [Mining ghost town of Animas Forks, Colorado; deals with the extreme weather conditions.]


Smith, Eva Edna Byrne Rizzi. “Independence Valley Pioneer.” *Northeastern Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* no. 1/2 (2015): 2-19. [Smith moved to Tuscaraora in 1867 when silver was discovered at the valley.]

Soto, Gerardo J. “Metal Mining in Central America (Early 1500s-Late 1800s).” In: José Eugenio Ortiz, et al. (eds.). *History of Research in Mineral Resources*. (Cuadernos del Museo Geominero No. 13.) Madrid: Instituto Geológico y Minero de España, 2011, 89-97.
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Stahlman, Josh. “Anthracite Mining and the Slavic Immigration.” *Pennsylvania Heritage* 42, no. 3 (Sum. 2016): 49. [Focuses on eastern and southern European immigrants between the 1860s and 1920s.]


Swanson, Drew. “From Georgia to California and Back: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of Southern Gold Mining.” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 100, no. 2 (Sum. 2016): 160-86.


Uzeta, Jorge. “Expectations of Order and Campesino Conservatism: Memory, History, and Rural Morality.” *Dialectical Anthropology* 38, no. 2 (June 2014): 133-51. [Discusses the link between memory and history in Atarjea, Guanajuato, Mexico.]


Verzuh, Ron. “Canada’s A-Bomb Secret.” *Canada’s History* 95, no. 4 (Aug. 2015): 32-7. [During World War II, Canada supplied high-grade uranium from the Northwest Territories and produced heavy water to assist in making the atomic bomb.]

Vierra, P. J. “Relocating the School of Mines.” *Password* 60, no. 3 (Fall 2016): 88-100. [Texas State School of Mines and Metallurgy (now the University of Texas, El Paso) moved in 1917-18.]


Vredenburgh, Larry M. “Mining History.” [(http://vredenburgh.org/mining_history/). Includes his recent articles about San Bernardino County, California (Whipple Mountains, the Oro Grande Mining Company, Ship Mountain, Old Woman Mountain).]


Warwick, Keith. “Mining Towns in Mariposa County.” *Journal of the West* 55, no. 4 (Fall 2016): 64-7. [Explores Altamont, California.]

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Other Media:


Evans, Mari-Lynn, and Jordan Freeman (directors). Blood on the [West Virginia] Mountain. DVD (93 minutes). New York: Virgil Films, 2017. [“Details the struggles of a hard-working, misunderstood people, who have historically faced limited choices and have never benefited fairly from the rich, natural resources of their land.”]


Horton, Kami (writer and producer), Bruce Barrow (ed.). Massacre at Hells Canyon. (Oregon Experience.) DVD (27 minutes). Portland: Oregon Public Broadcasting, 2017. [In 1887, whites murdered up to thirty-four Chinese gold miners, one of the worst mass murders of Chinese in the history of the United States.]

Larrigan, James, et al. “Rope Riders Mining Footage.” Roslyn, Cle Elum, and Ronald Oral History Interviews, no. 90. Audio/Video. Ellensburg: Central Washington University, 2014. [http://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/roslyn_history/90]. Rope riders did the most dangerous work in the coal mines, balancing on the hitches between coal cars as they wound through darkened tunnels. This video shows footage of the No. 9 Mine at Roslyn, Washington, and rope riders at work; the site includes articles and biographies.

