

neurs, and corporate histories. In the U. K. there are few histories of mining men or mining companies and no histories of major mining centres, such as Camborne and Redruth, to match the research and scholarship given to Virginia City or Butte. Instead British mining historians and enthusiasts tend to focus their interest on the development of particular mines, their physical evolution and the technology that they used. They are particularly interested in mine engineering, surviving remains, and “landscape history.”

In that context, this volume joins an already crowded field as a guide to the surviving archaeology of Cornish tin and copper mining. Some of those other volumes were also co-authored by Ken Brown, who has established a reputation over many years as an expert on steam engineering, not just in Cornwall, but many other parts of the world. There is, therefore, not much here that cannot be found elsewhere. However, this volume makes an important contribution in how it packages that material.

Driving through Cornwall, particularly the western half of the county, the visitor encounters a landscape littered with engine houses. These provide the core of what was granted UNESCO World Heritage status in 2006. Identifying which house or mine is which has always been a major problem, but this book goes a long way to resolving that problem. With the use of numerous maps, photographs, driving directions, and Ordnance Survey grid references (a nationwide system of location indicators in the U. K.), the engine houses are clearly identified and interpreted. Not much is said about the other remains surrounding the houses, but particular attention is given to the steam engines that they contained, from large pumping engines to much smaller winders.

The material is arranged in ten sub-regional chapters and short but succinct sections provide a background on the development of the “Cornish Engines” that these buildings housed and the mining history of the district. American readers should note that these engines were very different

from the “Cornish engines” commonly used in America. All-in-all, this is a very useful volume for both the first-time visitor to Cornwall and the already well-versed mining historian and industrial archaeologist.

It is slightly more problematic for those with more rigorous interests. Firstly, although the title suggests that it is a “complete” view of its subject, the authors take care to point out that it is not an exhaustive treatment. It would have been useful to know what might have been left out, especially if it relates to specific sites. Secondly, a lack of footnote references frustrates further research or the checking of data. Thirdly, a bibliography of references to the now-extensive body of literature on the history of individual mines and mining districts would have been a valuable addition. Fourthly, a mine name index would be useful for those who already know what mine they are looking for.

Some of these issues might be addressed in a second volume, which is now in preparation, but they in no way diminish the real value of this book as a highly useful touring companion. Anyone planning to visit the Cornish mining districts should buy it.

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Dorothy M. Frost. *Gold Rush Wife: The Adventures of Nellie Frost on Turnagain Arm, 1895-1901, as Told to Her Daughter Dorothy Frost.* (Rolfe G. Buzzell, ed.) Eagle River, AK: Ember Press, 2016; xx + 284 pp., numerous b&w illus., 3 maps, ind., paper, \$27. ISBN: 9781495180026

Gold Rush Wife is a superb contribution to the personal narratives of gold mining families in the North. Importantly, it also relays these experiences from a woman’s perspective. Nellie Frost was one of the few women living in Sunrise, a settlement across the Turnagain Arm of Cook Inlet from Anchorage. Less well known than the

Nome and Yukon gold rushes that followed, Sunrise flourished and declined from the last years of the nineteenth century to the early years of the twentieth, coinciding with the story of Nellie Gillespie Frost and her husband, William Lynn “Jack” Frost, during those gold rush years.

The book exists because of the dedication of the Frosts’ eldest daughter, Dorothy, born in Washington state after her parents had departed Sunrise in 1901 due to their mining claims’ diminishing returns. Entranced by her mother’s stories of Alaska, Dorothy engaged in years of research to document her parents’ life at Sunrise. Although she was unable to find a publisher during her lifetime, her book came to life after two of her grandsons brought the manuscript, family photographs, and other documents to Alaska. Fortuitously, the grandsons connected with historian Dr. Rolfe Buzzell, an expert on the Turnagain Arm gold rush, who helped to shape the manuscript into a publication.

The Frosts’ time in Alaska is inextricably tied to broader economic trends in the lower forty-eight—Jack Frost lost his California business during the economic depression of the mid-1890s. As for many others, the emerging Alaskan gold rush seemed to offer good economic prospects; Nellie and Jack’s families both had roots in mining. Nellie grew up at the Trinity Mine in California and Jack’s father participated in the California gold rush. After deep deliberation, Jack Frost departed California for Alaska in 1896; Nellie joined him in 1897, one of the few women and smaller number of wives in Sunrise, and one of the only wives to winter in Alaska throughout the whole period of the Frosts’ work on their Turnagain Arm mining claims.

This narrative vividly brings to life the Frosts’ personal experiences, spanning their journey from San Francisco to Sunrise, the social and community life of Sunrise residents, and the grueling challenges of mining work. It also documents Sunrise’s transformation from a rough gold rush encampment to a more settled town.

The book’s photographs of the Frosts, mining claim work, Sunrise’s buildings, and transport by dog sled and ship, among other topics, add rich visual detail to Nellie’s story, alongside reproductions of programs and other memorabilia documenting Sunrise’s rich social and cultural life. The maps also add immeasurably to the narrative.

In the foreword, Buzzell provides background about how this account came to be, as well as historical context for both the Turnagain Arm gold rush and the Frost family’s story. Among other points, he discusses the use of dialogue in this account, ultimately deciding to retain it in the work. While this decision honors Dorothy Frost and her manuscript, the vernacular dialogue can be a bit jarring—the book’s only distraction, a minor one. The book has a detailed index and list of photographs and maps, both of which add to its research value.

Gold Rush Wife is a worthy addition to Alaska gold rush literature. Moreover, it is an invaluable contribution to the body of comparatively limited works written by and about women’s experiences in the Alaskan gold rush. Nellie captures the allure of Alaska in a story of remarkable fortitude and persistence. Alongside a keen interest in Alaska’s scenic natural beauty and the rare inclusion of Alaska Native members of the larger community, *Gold Rush Wife* details the rigors of the daily life of gold mining and of a gold mining family at Turnagain Arm, providing depth to a lesser-known chapter of Alaska’s gold rush history.

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