"Hedging" the Gold Rush: Fraternity on the Mining Frontier: California, Nevada, and Victoria, Australia, 1860–1880

By
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Gold rushes are confusing phenomena which defy rational explanation. The mass movement of people usually takes place when migrants make reasonably informed judgments about the potential lifetime benefits of movement—economic, social, cultural, spiritual—from their current abode to a new place of residence. They are also sensitive to changes in the relative ease, cost, and security of transport. If there are significant changes in any of these issues they can be expected to affect the pace of movement. The problem is that the "boomers" who raced to the new gold fields in the second half of the nineteenth century could not, and did not, make such rational calculations.[1]

It was particularly difficult for the '49ers. As participants in the first of the great "rushes" they had absolutely no means of knowing how things might turn out. Although there had been earlier gold discoveries in the east of the country, none had produced a sudden bonanza on this scale[2] and very few persons indeed could have had any real perception of how life would be in remote mountainous areas several thousand miles beyond the settled western frontier. Similarly, the journeys entailed unknown hazards and expense.

Things did not improve much over time. If anything, accumulated experience showed that it was impossible to predict outcomes from "rushing" and that the conditions of travel frequently became more difficult, costly, and dangerous. Certainly no "boomers" were ever in a position to make rational calculations about future earnings at their final destination or, indeed, in the rapidly developing areas that they left. By definition, those who suddenly left home, hearth, and loved ones to race to an unknown distant destination on the chance of finding gold were gamblers, not rational decision makers.[3]

All of this is well known, and it applies as well to those who rushed to Pikes Peak and the Klondike as to the early Argonauts. They were driven on for months at a time through all manner of privations by nothing more than hope. That hope was bred not just of the desire for a life-transforming instant cash dividend, but also a deeper seductive desire to have and to possess 'gold'—a metal that has mesmerised civilisations everywhere across millennia and appears to connect almost directly with human DNA.[4]

Many wrote then, and since, of "the gold fever" that gripped large parts of the nation, of "gullible dreamers," "the fools of 49."[5] It was a fever to which the young males who made up the bulk of the Argonauts were particularly susceptible.[6] Commonly drawn from the foot-loose populations of the agrarian West, accustomed to living on the margins of civilisation, and familiar with the unconstrained exploitation of natural resources,[7] they were particularly easily seduced. Even those few who might have wanted to take a more measured view of their prospects in California would have found it impossible to do so because of the very widespread false information disseminated by all of those who looked to make a profit from the incomers.

For many in this group, simply "seeing the elephant"[8] or taking part in the excitement was the driving force—success was a bonus. Economic historians would certainly describe such groups as "non-standard industrial workers" or as Goodman concluded in his comparative study of the gold rush society in California and Victoria, Australia, they "appear the exact antithesis of capitalist-industrial society, in that it took men out of the discipline of the cities into raw and unformed settlements, to work for a time outside of the wage nexus."[9] With such recruits and an environment often devoid of any external constraint, it is not surprising that the instant urban communities of the remote mining frontiers became the anarchic and lawless places of western legend.

Fraternity on the Frontier

To stop the story here, however, is to miss a great deal. The "boomers" may have been impulsive dreamers in their initial migration decisions but many clearly took very careful and considered steps to minimise the short-term risks of their actions to themselves and their families. Even during the fever of the early stages of gold rushes, when the temptation to overlook potential problems was at its strongest, most participants "hedged" some level of risk by leaving their families in the relative security of the place of last settlement, making financial provision for them where possible, and frequently travelling in mutually supportive groups.[10]

In the later stages of corporate mining, emigrating miners sometimes built up useful savings balances before risking a move, arranged for partial payment of their earnings directly to their families, and looked to extended filial and community allegiances for support at home and away.[11] Without doubt, however, one of the most effective ways of allaying risks to self and family, and of improving the chances of success at intermediate or final destinations, was to join one or more of the numerous nationally, and often internationally, affiliated fraternal, benevolent or friendly societies already well-established in the eastern and mid-western states by the early 1840s.

The Ancient Order of Free and Accepted Masons, the Independent Order of Oddfellows, the Ancient Order of Druids, the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Independent Order of Rechabites had all been successfully transplanted from Britain to the United States by the 1840s and their lodges/encampments/tents were flourishing everywhere.[12] As the frontier raced west, one or more of these groups would establish themselves in every town, almost from the date of first settlement. Thus, as Rodman Paul observed: "Three moveable institutions were universal on the mining frontier—saloons, churches, and fraternal lodges."[13] From the 1860s "home bred" organi-

sations, such as the Improved Order of Redmen (established in 1834) were joined by other similar societies, such as the Knights of Pythias and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

By the end of the nineteenth century over six hundred different organisations were operating in various parts of the nation with something around five million members—almost one in five of the male population. The rapid expansion of members was driven not only by the self-interest of individuals but also by the support of employers and politicians. They saw these institutions—unlike organised labour—as bastions of the status quo, promoting ideals of thrift and "self-help" and stabilising families and communities. Estimating the numbers involved is difficult before the collection of regular data at the beginning of the twentieth century, but at that time the largest organisations were the Freemasons and the Oddfellows, with a roughly equal membership of around 1 million, followed by the Knights of Pythias with around 600,000 and the Red Men with about 350,000.[14]

Periodic earlier estimates of the numbers of Freemasons were made by contemporaries from lodge membership returns made to the various State Grand Lodges from the beginning of the nineteenth century. These undoubtedly include a level of double counting, as masons moved around and joined different or multiple lodges, but they provide a general view of the scale and particularly the growth profile of the Order. (See Table 1.)

After slow growth during the early decades of the century the order began to expand at an accelerating rate from the 1840s, doubling in that decade and trebling in the next. It then slowed slightly but generally continued strongly through the rest of the century. The largest numbers were in the main population centres of the East Coast and Midwest but the rate of expansion was particularly strong in the West. It is probable that the other orders followed a similar growth profile, making this genuinely a "Golden Age of Fraternity,"[15] at the high point of which as much as 40 per cent of the U.S. male population may have been a member of one or more orders.[16]

Benefits of Fraternity

The fraternities provided varying degrees of insurance for their members, either "as of right" by making regular monthly charges for guaranteed returns at death or during sickness, or by charitable donations to cover unexpected emergencies or to help members recover after a life crisis. The Oddfellows provide a good example of the former and the Freemasons of the latter.

For those offering guaranteed returns, the

Date	Number of Lodges	Number of Freemasons
1800	347	16,000
1840	700	32,000
1850	1,835	66,142
1860	4,406	193,763
1870	7,194	443.898
1880	9,308	536,867
1889	10,088	609,463
1905	?	989,176

Table 1
Approximate Number of Masonic Lodges and Freemasons in the U.S., 1800–1905[17]

sums paid in and the sums paid out varied between orders and provided different levels of cover within orders. Some had regular contributions; some varied their contributions according to the calls made upon them at any particular time. In the 1870s, the Independent Order of Foresters was said to have made assessments that were so high that a member might have been paying the rent for a good house, though nine to ten dollars a year was more probable.[18]

Common levels of "insurance" for members included free medical assistance; weekly sickness benefits, commonly around five dollars but diminishing after an initial period; death benefits, usually around fifty dollars; and some provision for an endowment that would provide an annuity in old age.[19]

The Freemasons, who offered no certainty of relief but the possibility of financial assistance to help members get back on their feet, were expensive to join but inexpensive to belong to. Initiation fees usually amounted to around thirty-five dollars, while annual dues were about three dollars.[20] Lodge finance was thus largely based on bringing men into the order, and benevolence was dependent on voluntary charitable contributions.

On the urban frontier, the orders also often used their resources to provided facilities for their members that were not yet available in emergent towns. With the ever-present prospect of death, for example, and the pressing need for a proper Christian burial, the provision of cemeteries was given a high priority. Thus the first major expenditure by the Escurial Lodge in Virginia City was to purchase land for a Masonic cemetery,[21] while a generation later, in May 1898, the first meeting of 120 Freemasons at Lake Bennett in the Klondike focused on a similar pressing requirement.[22]

However, while all of these provisions for an uncertain future were desirable, it is probable that it was the urgent needs of the present that took pole position on the gold seekers' list of priorities. Most fraternities—certainly those affiliated with extended national and international organisations—offered informal help and support to travelling brothers. The Freemasons were among the best known for this. When asking the rhetorical question "Why do men join the Masons?" a correspondent of the London-based *The Freemason* explained that it was, "for the same reasons that they join other organizations, for profit, for social intercourse, from curiosity," but most particularly, "many men join because they think that it is a good thing to belong to an Order as universal as Masonry is and which gives him [*sic*] the privileges of visiting kindred lodges all over the world, with his Masonry as a practical letter of introduction to those who would otherwise be strangers."[23]

For the more adventurous traveller, opportunity also became reassurance. A correspondent of another weekly observed that

> wherever a ship sails, or a railroad runs—there is a Masonic lodge, there is a Brother's home. No accident will befall him that will deprive him of his friends. All of his traveling companions may die or desert him, or he may be robbed of all his money, but still the Freemason is among his relations, and may always find relief from his distress. This is, to a traveller, the *summum bonum* of Masonry.[24]

More specifically *The Freemason* told its readers that in America a sick and needy foreign Mason would be "visited by a brother, assisted financially and, if death should ensue, he will be buried with respect and reverence in the Masonic cemetery." It added that the Masons of California were particularly generous to charity and in the support of members.[25]

All of this was well established long before the '49s' rush. Historian Dorothy Lipson, writing of New England around the turn of the nineteenth century, observed that "among the explicit appeals of Masonry were its advantages for a physically and socially mobile population"[26] and that lodge visitors' books everywhere give testament to regu-

lar comings and goings. At just one meeting in 1842, for example, Galena Lodge, in Galena, Illinois, recorded visitors from lodges in Iowa Territory, England, Ireland, Indiana, Boston, Massachusetts, and New York.[27]

For travellers who had fallen on really hard times, or who had exhausted all of their traveling funds, the lodges also proved an invaluable source of financial relief. A brother could call on the local lodge and, on proof of his membership, receive small sums of money to cover the costs of a meal, short-stay accommodation, and perhaps a ticket to the next town. It was an invaluable network for a "tramping brother." There are no central records of the sums paid out for "tramping" relief, and they undoubtedly varied between lodges and over time, but it is likely that they were substantial and placed a real burden on some lodges. The Oddfellows, for example, suspended them for all but domestic American members.

A measure of the scale of the subsidy to migration provided by these emergency relief funds is provided by the large numbers of imposters who tried to take unfair advantage of them. The Freemasons—whose far-flung network of lodges and difficulties of validating claimants rendered them particularly subject to fraudulent abuse—were finally moved to introduce a complex system of national reporting to tease out the numerous imposters. Towards the end of the century the Canadian Grand Lodges came together with those in America to establish the Masonic Relief or Protective Association.

The association created a central register of the names, appearances, and stories of imposters, issued to subscribing lodges in monthly "Warning Circulars."[28] Lodges paid a per capita fee of a few cents per member to belong to the association and appear to have seen it as a sound money-saving investment. The issue was not simply an American one. It was a global problem for a global organisation, complained of from Britain to New Zealand, and it was tackled through regular exchanges between national Grand Lodges and even legal prosecutions for fraud.[29]

Fraternal Society

It is easy to see financial advantage—short- or long-term—as the main motivation for joining a fraternity, but they also offered many other less quantifiable rewards. Extended support networks and webs of trust helped to ease integration into new host communities and to assure successful social as well as economic outcomes. In their many and various forms, the lodges and their rituals provided effective spaces for physical and spiritual sanctuary from the turmoil of emerging urban communities, opportunities for exclusive socialising, entertainment, and arguably helped to mould more moral, disciplined, and productive characters.[30]

However, the benefits were not confined to individuals and their families alone. The wider community was also strengthened and helped to mature as the fraternities promoted the customs, traditions, and concepts of morality and ethics that enabled the anarchic mining towns to be pacified.[31] Through their organisation, administration, and operation they helped to build the social and civic capital that became the bedrock of every community.[32] Just as the urban frontier was creating a new kind of environment and a new kind of "American," the fraternities helped shape that process within the structural framework of the old eastern and European world.

The growth and evolution of fraternities in mining communities is well illustrated in California. The lodges came early and their number and membership increased rapidly.[33] The Freemasons, the Independent Order of Oddfellows,[34] and the Ancient Order of Druids, for example, were all active in the gold districts from the early 1850s, and they were joined by the Knights of Pythius, the Improved Order of Redmen, the American Order of Foresters, the Grange, the Benevolent Order of Elks, and numerous others from the 1860s onwards. Many of them accommodated women as

well as men.[35]

To one degree or another, they generally looked back to an imagined utopian past, which they celebrated with rituals of varying degrees of complexity. Some have seen the Freemasons as providing the original model for all of these orders, with others adopting, adapting, and evolving their own stories and interpretations. One indication of the prevalence of these orders is provided by the formation of an "antidote" organisation, in the form of *E Clampus Vitus*. Established by non-members, it poked fun at their solemn and frequently bizarre rituals, and it became a feature of almost every mining community across California.[36]

Notwithstanding their significance in the economic, social, and cultural life of mining communities, fraternal orders have received remarkably little attention from regional historians. There is no large secondary literature on their membership and activities, and they rarely feature in even the best of the general histories of the gold rushes either in California or elsewhere in the United States. Instead authors prefer to focus on the colourful and riotous life of the gold camps, to which fraternity and ritual were an antidote or at least a relief and an alternative.

Thus neither Malcolm Rohrbough nor Susan Johnson make mention of fraternities or other mutual institutions in their surveys of the California rush and, most surprisingly, Ralph Mann ignores them in his otherwise detailed study of the communities of Grass Valley and Nevada City. Outside of California, Ronald James makes a few oblique references to fraternities and social clubs in his study of Virginia City on the Comstock Lode, but the only western urban study to give them significant notice is that by Elizabeth Jameson on Cripple Creek.[37]

This neglect of the subject is difficult to explain and may have many causes, ranging from the current lack of academic awareness and involvement in such organisations, the impact of the long-standing ridicule of their rituals, and the opposite general direction of most gender studies. It is certainly not, however, because of a lack of available archival sources. From these, through careful investigation of membership structures, activities, and inter-personal relationships, it is possible to extend significantly our understanding of the gold rush experience —not perhaps the original motivations for going, but certainly the ease and security of travels, and the outcomes for those who arrived.

Masonic Lodges Compared

To investigate the potential of such research, the author has conducted an enquiry into the role of Freemasonry in the early mining communities in California and Nevada. This is possibly the easiest of the fraternities to research, with the membership of all lodges being regularly recorded in the lists published in the annual reports of the Grand Lodges of most states. Attention here has been focused on four Masonic lodges—one in Nevada City, California, and three in Virginia City, Nevada. Particular attention has been focused on Nevada City because Ralph Mann's careful work on the social structure of the district provides an unusually detailed context by which the membership can be measured and contrasted. To obtain a measure of how typical this experience in the western United States was of other "booming" communities in other parts of the world, a similar analysis was conducted for five lodges in the Ballarat–Bendigo area of Victoria, Australia, around the same period. The range of available data varies for each area but is generally sufficient to sketch broadly comparable pictures.

Nevada City, California

The first Argonauts arrived in the Nevada City district in late 1849 and the town and its lodge were established the following year. The lodge—initially Lafayette No. 29—was probably founded by incomers from the northern Midwest, since

it received its first warrant from the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin. By the following year, however, Masonry was already sufficiently well represented across California for the new state to establish its own Grand Lodge.[38] It issued a new warrant to Lafayette, renaming it thereafter as Nevada Lodge No. 13.[39] As the number suggests, it was one of many being enrolled across the state at the time, including several in neighbouring towns, such as Grass Valley, North San Juan, Rough and Ready, Orleans Flat, Truckee, Washington, and Red Dog.

With men pouring into the area, Nevada Lodge was for three years the largest lodge in the state—larger even than San Francisco No. 1—not only welcoming those who were already Masons but initiating well over a hundred who sought its supportive and networking benefits. So great was the demand for admission that a second lodge was established in the city in 1853, though it lasted only three years as Nevada Lodge "controlled the field."[40]

For its members, Nevada Lodge, like all other Masonic lodges, offered a combination of entertainment, a degree of charitable assurance for self and family in times of adversity, and above all, trust-based networking opportunities. Masons were sworn, whenever possible, to aid and support each other and to treat each other with honesty and respect. It may not always have turned out that way, but any advantage was a good one in a notoriously deceitful society where the description of a mine as "a hole in the ground with a liar at the top" was too often proved by example.[41]

Although the names of the lodge members were published, they were rarely accompanied by more details on origin, age, marital status, occupation, and such. This information must be derived from census material and that is not generally available before 1860 for either California or Nevada. By that point, the first heated enthusiasm of the 'rush' was past its peak, and many of the less successful and more foot-loose had undoubtedly moved on to other frontiers. However, more than half of the members of the lodge in the mid-1850s were still there in 1860[42] and an analysis of the lodge structure in that year provides a useful reflection of those who looked to this particular fraternity for support and succour during the early influx into the district.

At the beginning of the census year the lodge had ninety paid-up members, of whom sixty still lived in the vicinity and can be found in the census returns. The great majority of the identifiable group were mature men in their thirties (69 percent), though there was a sizable cohort of members in their twenties (22 percent). Fewer than one in ten was over forty.

This suggests that in the very early days of the lodge most of its members were in their twenties or early thirties (initiations under twenty-one years of age were rarely-agreed-upon exceptions), and that they were therefore fairly representative of the Argonauts as a whole as a youthful group. This was probably also true of their marital status in the early 1850s, with a predominance of bachelors; though by 1860 just over half of the identifiable members (56 percent) were married. This likely reflects the 'maturing' of the members and perhaps their relatively successful economic status.

Natives and Immigrants

The geographical origins of the Masons show a different balance from those of the Californian population as a whole.[43] By 1860, the lodge members seem to have consisted mainly of men from the northern and eastern states of New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and from New England, rather than the midwestern and southern states. Of course, many of these men might already have moved from their places of birth to the Midwest and used that as their jumping-off base for the gold rush. As has been seen, Nevada Lodge was established by men from Wisconsin, though none gave this as his place of birth. It is equally possible, however, that the northern

and eastern states, with their long-established and widely dispersed networks of Masonic lodges, gave men from those areas a greater appreciation of the support and potential advantages of membership, and that this may have exponentially attracted them to lodge membership at their point of arrival.

However, it is not so much the regional origins of the lodge's membership that really distinguishes it from the rest of California's population, as the very large proportion of native-born Americans among its members. Comparing the nationality structure of the lodge with that calculated by Mann for Nevada City as a whole, 72 percent of the Masons were American compared with just 54 percent for the residents of the city. To put it another way, the foreign born accounted for almost half of the city's population but only just over a quarter of the lodge's membership. In this context, Freemasonry appears as a non-representative, heavily skewed, "nativist" organisation.

This picture is considerably moderated, however, if the Chinese residents of the district are removed from the equation. Freemasonry, like most other fraternities and social and political organisations of this period, excluded the Chinese,[44] and if the structure of the lodge is compared with the non-Chinese population of the city, there is a much closer balance. Under such circumstances the domestic-born population rises to a much closer 64 percent for the city compared with 72 percent for the lodge. The lodge remains a relatively conservative, domestic-dominated organisation, but not so greatly out of line with its host population.

The same cannot be said for the balance of origins of the foreign born within the lodge. While in the city as a whole, men from the British Isles accounted for 23 percent of the non-Chinese foreign born, in the lodge they only accounted for 14 percent of the identified membership. Those from greater Germany and Scandinavia, however, accounted for 11 percent of the lodge membership and 9 percent of the non-Chinese city population.

The reasons for this variation are probably to be found in the strongly Protestant orientation of Freemasonry. Irish Catholics, who made up a significant part of the contingent from the British Isles and were in large numbers in the city, would generally have excluded themselves from the lodge because of papal edicts against Masonic membership. The same would also have applied to many from southern Europe, though their numbers were small in the city at the time.

By contrast, Germans, and particularly Scandinavians, would have known Freemasonry as an economically and socially elitist organisation at home. Those who were already Masons would have been keen to sustain their membership and those who were offered initiation in America would have seen it as a fortuitous opportunity to integrate with the Anglo-Saxon establishment.

It also may be significant that the turnover of foreign-born members of the lodge was much higher than that of the domestic-born population—though the numbers of identifiable foreign-born members doubled from seventeen to thirty-four between 1860 and 1870, only one was a member in both years. It suggests that Masonry was a particularly useful facilitator of continuing long-distance migration.

Occupations and Wealth

As might be expected, the identified occupations of sixty-four members of Nevada Lodge showed a strong orientation towards mining and mining related activities, but also reflected the overall diversity of the local economy. Around half declared their occupations as miner, millman, or craftsmen, such as blacksmiths and carpenters, with direct connections to mining or alluvial working, while the other half included a miscellany of town agents, merchants, manufacturers, bankers, and legal and medical professionals. Hotel and store keepers were also represented, as were clerks, post and telegraph operators, sher-

iffs, and farmers. Even the lowest economic order of "labourer" produced three members, possibly men who had fallen on hard times or had only recently arrived in the district.

The largest and most glaring omission from membership, however, was female workers of all descriptions. They were then, and are now, excluded from membership in regular Freemasonry and either had to rely on representation through their husbands or join related orders—such as the Eastern Star[45]—many of which later acquired considerable influence in their own right. The effect on the general economic and social welfare of women—particularly single business women—resulting from their exclusion from fraternal and many benevolent societies[46] is an under-explored aspect of women's history and can only begin to be appreciated from a clearer understanding of the benefits of membership afforded to men.

Interpretation of employment data to obtain an impression of the social status of lodge members is fraught with difficulty. Many of the occupational categories—particularly "miner" —could encompass a very wide range of experience, from a poverty-stricken employee to a wealthy mine owner, possibly with his own large labour force. A simple blue-or-white-collar division of the occupations thus creates wide possibilities for error.

However, accepting such risks and simply classifying the mining affiliated and some other small groups as "blue collar," and most of the urban occupations as "white collar," produces a predominance of blue-collar workers in a ratio of roughly six to four. This is significantly different, however, from that calculated by Mann for Nevada City males as a whole, at nine to one. It suggested, therefore, that the lodge members were disproportionately drawn from the upper quartile of their host society, and that many were probably part of the city elite.

This conclusion is supported by the personal and estate values declared by some members in the censuses of 1860 and 1870. Although the latter date is considerably beyond the early gold rush years it has been included to give some impression of the dynamics of asset acquisition that might be backward projected for the years before 1860. Thus Table 2 shows that the average asset value of members of the lodge was growing quickly in the 1860s, and that even by the beginning of that decade many lodge members already had acquired significant personal wealth.

Indeed, if these returns are compared with those calculated by Mann for the city as a whole, they reveal that the lodge, which had only 3 percent of the local male population, included four of the city's twelve wealthiest citizens assessed in terms of a declared asset value of more than ten thousand dollars. A similar relationship was maintained in 1870, when seven lodge members counted among an elite city group of twenty-one citizens declaring similar asset values.[47]

Identifying the richest members of the lodge also underlines the hazards of social categorisation by occupation. In 1860 they included the obvious banker and attorney but also two "miners."

Year	No. of Members Declaring	$0 - $999	$1,000 - $4,999	$5,000 - $9,999	$10,000 - $14,999	$15,000 - $19,999	$20,000 - $29,999	$30,000 - above
1860	27	4	13	5	1	2	1	1
1870	51	13	18	7	5	0	1	7

Table 2
Declared Total Asset Value of Members of Nevada Lodge
(Total Real and Personal Estate)

Similarly, in 1870, three of the seven described themselves as a miner, with one of them, George Jacobs, declaring an asset value of eighty thousand dollars. By contrast, in both years there were several miners who declared their total net worth—real and personal estate—at one thousand dollars or less.

It is unclear how well Masonry served the foreign-born members of the lodge. On the one hand it might be noted that in 1860 only two of the seventeen foreign-born members reported total assets in excess of one thousand dollars, while by 1870 this number had increased to eleven out of thirty-four. However, only one of the original seventeen was still in the lodge at the latter date, the rest having moved on. If they had all done as well as the single survivor—Charles Klingenspor, a miner from Germany—they would clearly have prospered. His declared assets had increased from nothing to over two thousand dollars during the intervening ten years.

It is notable that many of these less successful Masons also joined the Oddfellows. That fraternity offered more secure insurance for members, with guaranteed financial benefits in case of ill-health or death. One estimate towards the end of the century was that around a third of California's Masons held such joint membership.[48] In many cases, those with dual membership appear to have become Oddfellows first and Masons later—perhaps looking for perceived career-enhancing opportunities from the Masons once basic protection had been assured. Whatever the motivation, at least fifty-seven members of Nevada Lodge during the years after 1858 appear to have taken up such dual membership. (See Table 3.)

It is not possible to identify all of their occupations but these dual members appear to be

Occupation	Number	
Blue Collar		*% of Total: 51*
Miner/Millman	22	
Craftsman	5	
Transport	0	
Agriculture	2	
White Collar		*% of Total: 30*
Mine Manager/Engineer	0	
Hotel/Saloon Keeper	1	
Clerk	1	
Post/Sherriff/Telegrapher	0	
Shopkeeper/Dealer	1	
Health Related	4	
Attorney/Judge/Banker	5	
Agent/Merchant/Manufacturer	5	
Other	11	*% of Total: 19*
Total	*57*	

Table 3
Occupations of Nevada Lodge Members Joining the Independent Order of Oddfellows, Oustomah Lodge No. 16, 1858-1880[49]

dominated by less well-off miners and millmen. It is important to emphasise, however, that Oddfellows membership was not simply additional "poor man's insurance." Many white-collar workers also became members, including attorneys, bankers, merchants, and legal and medical professionals. Like Masonry, this, and probably many other fraternal groups, acted as major networking hubs within the town, attracting many leading community figures and contributing importantly to the construction of civil society throughout the district.

On the Comstock

Turning now from Nevada City, California, to Virginia City, Nevada, and its neighbourhood around the Comstock Lode, the general picture is similar but the detail more complex. Organised Freemasonry was first brought into the district in the early 1860s, though it is likely that Mormon Masons were active there long before that. The first lodge to be formed was in Carson City in early 1862, with a warrant from the Grand Lodge of California. It is known that an informal meeting of Masons took place in Virginia City as early as 1860 but it was not until 1863 that the first lodge was formed there, again with a warrant from the California Grand Lodge. Nevada established its own Grand Lodge at the end of 1864 and all of the existing lodges received new warrants in January the following year. By 1870 there were fourteen lodges meeting under its jurisdiction.[50]

The core of this membership study for Virginia City is for 1870, ten years later than that for Nevada City, but for a period at approximately a similar distance from the first rush into the district. Unfortunately, there is no equivalent of Mann's detailed study of the demography of Nevada City to set it against, but James' work on the town's development provides good general background.[51] The lodges considered are Virginia City No. 3 and Escurial No. 7, both meeting in Virginia City itself, and Silver Star No. 5, meeting in nearby Gold Hill. They were all of a very similar size, with between 120 and 140 members each (Nevada Lodge had 125 in that year), and together the three lodges had just over 400 paid-up members in 1870. Nearly all of these members were drawn from Storey County and probably accounted for around 6 percent of its adult male population in that year, again similar to Nevada City, California.[52]

The population of the district was still highly mobile and only 62 percent of the members can be traced in local census returns—almost identical to the 63 percent traceable for Nevada Lodge in 1860. Over a third had left and could not be found anywhere else in the state, even using the additional census returns for 1860 and 1880.

The high turnover was reflected in the age structure of the lodges, with the great majority of "survivors" being in their thirties and many also in their forties and fifties. These may have included many men who had first rushed to California in the 1850s and had since moved from one district to another as they developed. Such an explanation of "footloose" mature men would also explain why the three lodges had a much lower percentage of married members (42 percent) compared with Nevada Lodge (56 percent).

Most members were native-born Americans, again drawn mainly from the northern and eastern states, but there was a much bigger group of foreign born, amounting to over 46 percent of the total—possibly a consequence of the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. This approximated to the ethnic distribution in Storey County, where the population was almost equally divided between native and foreign born. Unlike California, there was no large recorded cohort of Chinese labour in the 1870 census.

As in Nevada Lodge, many of the foreign born were from Germany and Scandinavia, but here most now came from the British Isles. This may, however, disguise a shifting balance between the two groups during the 1860s.[53] Certainly data for Storey County as a whole shows a marked in-

Total	Eastern States	85	(NY 29, PA 17)
	Western States	50	(OH 21)
	Foreign Born	109	
Foreign Born	England	33	British Isles: 69
	Ireland	22	
	Scotland	12	
	Wales	2	
	Germany	11	Greater Germany: 25
	Prussia	9	
	Austria	3	
	Bavaria	1	
	Wurttemberg	1	
	Canada	13	
	Denmark and Sweden	2	

Table 4
Place of Birth of Members of Virginia City Lodges in 1870

flow of British immigrants during that period that reversed an earlier dominance of Germans and Scandinavians.

Interestingly, unlike Nevada City, there were numerous Irish members of the lodge, possibly suggesting different regional and religious origins in the home country. As in California, there was negligible representation from Southern or Eastern Europe, Latin America or Asia, but a sizable group of Canadians now made an appearance. Many of these foreign born had made no attempt to adopt American citizenship and the lodges appear to have put religious and racial affiliation above nationality in terms of whom they invited to join. (See Table 4.)

The membership reflected every aspect of the local economy, with more than seventy different occupations given. However, the dominance of mining and related activities was even greater than in Nevada Lodge, with almost a third giving their occupation explicitly as "miner." Here, however, there were also numerous men defining themselves as mine managers and engineers, giving wider opportunities for inter-class networking and job finding, which was particularly useful for new arrivals. The wider community and economy also continued to be well represented, with attorneys and merchants, IRS assessors and collectors, bankers, financiers, as well as the owners of bars, hotels, livery stables, a theatre, and the town gas works.[54] (See Table 5.)

As might be expected, the range of personal and estate assets declared by some of the members varied widely. Like members of the Nevada City Lodge, of those declaring their asset value, a large majority estimated their wealth at over one thousand dollars—67 percent, compared with 75 percent for Nevada City in 1870. A few were extremely wealthy, with an estimated total value of $100,000 or more. (See Table 6.) However, this is probably a skewed sample because most of those not declaring probably fell in the poorest group.

Miners	79 (31% of total)	Superintendents	8
Carpenters	17	Clerks	7
Blacksmiths	16	Foremen	5
Engineers	13	Teamsters	5
Merchants	10		

Table 5
Occupational Groups with Five or More Members in Three Virginia City Lodges

Nevertheless, the clear suggestion is that Masonic lodges in Nevada, like those in California, provided a highly equalising space—bringing together those from across the economic and social spectrum, melding the new arrivals with the established residents, and presenting wide opportunities for networking that could assist the accumulation of considerable wealth.

Finally, like Nevada City, the Comstock included a number of other fraternities that less well-off members of the Masonic lodges might join to further assure the risks of life and labour.[55]

Although the aggregate structure of Masonry in and around Virginia City conforms closely to that in Nevada City, disaggregating the three lodges produces some noticeable differences and shows that each one developed its own particular characteristics. Virginia and Escurial lodges were located in the centre of Virginia City, while Silver Star was located on the outskirts, at Gold Hill.

A glance at Table 7 (next page) immediately shows that the city lodges, while of similar sizes, had a different balance in their membership. That of Escurial Lodge, for example, appears to have had a larger number of mobile single men, proportionately more of whom were foreign-born miners and blue-collar workers, who had accumulated limited assets. Silver Star was slightly smaller but also had a high turnover of members and a high proportion of miners and manual workers. But it had more American-born married men who had accumulated average asset values significantly higher than both of the other lodges.

If anything, Virginia was the most "middle class" lodge, with the lowest turnover of members and the highest percentage of white-collar, native-born Americans, with significant average property values. Also, the foreign born that did belong to Virginia Lodge were mainly from greater Germany—reflecting the earlier origins of immigration into the Comstock area—while those in Escurial and Silver Star were drawn mainly from the Britain and Ireland, indicative of the new wave of immigration. It is noticeable that none of the lodges excluded non-citizens and therefore could not be regarded as "nativist" or nationalistic organisations.

One further perspective on the functioning of these lodges is provided by a short history of Escurial lodge, produced shortly after its foundation.[56] Over four years from early 1864 to the end of 1867, 167 men became members of the

Year	No. of Members Declaring	$0 - $999	$1,000 - $4,999	$5,000 - $9,999	$10,000 - 14,999	$15,000 - $19,999	$20,000 - 29,999	$30,000 - Above
1870	100	33	41	12	5	2	4	3

Table 6
Declared Total Real and Personal Asset Value of Members of the Three Virginia City Lodges

Characteristics	Virginia	Escurial	Silver Star
Total membership	142	137	124
Traced membership	100 (70%)	79 (58%)	72 (58%)
Marital status	53 single (56%)	49 single (64%)	34 single (50%)
Number of miners	25 (25%)	32 (40%)	23 (32%)
Blue/white collar	51/44	51/23	50/22
Native born	59 (61%)	40 (49%)	42 (59%)
Foreign born	38 (39 %)	42 (51%)	29 (41%)
Ave. Property Value	$7,026	$4,307	$8,693
Non-US citizens	5	9	5

Table 7
Membership Characteristics of Virginia, Escurial, and Silver Star Lodges in 1870

lodge. Of these, 97 were already Master Masons when they arrived in Virginia City, while another 57 completed their initiation by taking the third degree within the lodge.[57] The great majority thus enjoyed Masonic membership during the migration process and did not simply become members on arrival.

At the end of 1867, 129 of those who had joined the lodge were still fully paid-up members and 123 of them still resided in the Virginia City vicinity. This suggests that the high turnover of members referred to above began to take place, as might be expected, in the increasingly difficult years for mining in the district after 1868, rather than in the relatively prosperous years just after the middle of the decade.[58] Of those members in good stead who had already moved on, two were in California, one in South America and two back in Wales.

In its first two years of working, the lodge charged an affiliation fee to joining members of three dollars, but this was soon abandoned in the interests of recruiting as many locally resident Masons as possible.[59] Thereafter, all of its income was derived from a charge for every degree given to advancing initiates. Over the four years, the lodge received $6,825 from bestowing degrees, compared with just $326 from the early affiliation charges and $3,333 from annual dues.

The lodge was thus making more money from admitting and advancing new Masons than it was receiving from current members—an indication of the popularity of the order and the demand for membership. Some indication of the reasons for that popularity is found in the lodge's expenditures. From a total income of $11,170 over the four years it spent $9,835. A substantial but undisclosed part of this went to the purchase of land on the edge of town for a Masonic cemetery and the rest mainly on benevolence to its own and passing Masons.[60]

American Comparative

Taking all of this comparative data together, there were clearly differences between the experience in one Californian lodge in the late1850s and three lodges in Nevada in the late 1860s. However, the overwhelming general impression is not one of difference but of similarity and common experience at a particular stage in the evolution of a mining camp. The origins of their members, their age and ethnic structure, what they did, and how successful they were appear remarkably similar everywhere. It also suggests that Masonic membership offered important dividends to those who took it up. It did not simply "pay off" in terms of entertainment, spiritual elevation, moral and so-

cial support, etc., but did indeed allay some of the economic risks of migration to self and family and improve the chances of success at intermediate or final destinations.

There is, however, a need to exercise an element of caution in these conclusions. Masonic lodges appear to have become relatively elitist establishments in many communities. They did not simply assist members to become successful, but also became an order which the successful wished to join. A simple analysis of the wealth of members does not necessarily reflect accurately their long-term economic and social mobility.

It has not been possible to exclude the successful late joiners for this analysis, but it is clear that even if Masonry did not help "make" them, they helped to "make" Masonry. The tendency for the rich and successful to "ball together" within an organisation that stressed the value of work, education, honesty, diligence, reliability, and mutual support was likely to greatly improve the life chances of all of those involved. This was true in the settled and civilised urban communities of the East and Europe—it was doubly true in the anarchic, unregulated mining towns of the western urban frontier.

Victoria, Australia

So far attention has been focused on the membership structure of lodges in the western United States. There clearly remains a question about how far these fraternal experiences were duplicated in gold mining districts in other parts of the world during their periods of early development. To provide one limited comparison, attention will be turned to the Ballarat-Castlemaine-Bendigo district of Victoria, Australia.[61] Taken together, these communities approximate to those in both Nevada City and Virginia City.

The world began to rush in here from late 1850, partly prompted by the hope of repeating the California gold strikes of a year or so earlier. Rapid immigration continued, in a series of pulses, for the next nine years, creating "up-country urbanisation."[62] In many respects the Victoria district had a similar experience to that in California, with a first stage of simple, small-scale partnership workings, followed by deeper, larger, capitalist enterprises. It saw a massive growth in the population of the mining districts, from just a few hundred at the beginning of the decade to 30,000 adult males in 1852 and around 140,000 at its peak in 1858.[63] New urban communities sprang up and there was a scramble to create order and regulation.

However, there were also some very important differences from the American experience. Whereas the development of the American districts largely took place without effective control by the federal government, which owned the land and its resources, the Australian districts emerged within the context of a colonial administration that claimed rights to the minerals on behalf of the Crown and invested great energy in trying to ensure their proper and controlled development.

Similarly, whereas "the world rushed in" to California,[64] it was initially largely an "inter-colonial rush" from New South Wales, New Zealand, Western and particularly South Australia, and van Diemen's Land that populated the gold districts of Victoria during the critical first two years of activity. From the end of 1852 these gold seekers were joined by a great surge of immigrant "cousins" from the industrial towns of Britain and north western Europe. It was not until 1854, by which time many of the new communities had been firmly established, that other ethnic groups, such as the Chinese, began to arrive in large numbers.

With a more regulated environment and a relatively "high quality," disciplined, and homogeneous population,[65] it is not surprising that historians have seen Victoria's early development as "more orderly than [that of] California."[66] In this context, the development of fraternity was less urgent than where it was needed as a bastion against anarchy and chaos, but it was more familiar and

easily introduced. Freemasonry had become an organic part of Britain's empire and it flowed easily along the conduits of colonial control, carried by the army, the navy, and a host of administrators.[67]

A basic network of Masonic lodges had been well established in Australia before the first gold discoveries and the grand lodges of England, Scotland, and Ireland were happy, indeed competitive, to issue new warrants on demand. This was good for welcoming incomers and introducing new men into the order, but creates difficulties for the examination of Masonry's role in the emergent mining communities. There was no compelling reason for nationals to stick to their own lodges—English, Scottish, and Irish—but mixing was limited and there may have been a tendency for the lodges to separate themselves on an occupational or class basis.

The availability of archival resources has focused this research exclusively on those lodges warranted by the United Grand Lodge of England. Of these, there were six operating during the 1850s, viz.: In the Ballarat area: Lodge of Victoria No. 658, warranted in September 1855; Yarrowee Lodge No. 713, warranted in August 1857; Ballarat Lodge No. 717, warranted in October 1857; and United Tradesmen's Lodge of Ballarat East No. 744, warranted in May 1858. In the Bendigo area: Lodge of Bendigo, warranted in October 1854; and Corinthian Lodge No. 770, warranted in December 1858. The numbers relate to their sequential listing on the role of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Every year the secretaries of all lodges sent details of those joining, and being initiated, to the Grand Lodge in London, and these returns, now held in the Library and Museum of the United Grand Lodge of England, have provided the foundation of this study. Unfortunately, they are not entirely complete for these remote mining districts during the early stages of their development. They were often patchy, failed to be received, or have been lost. Those for Yarrowee Lodge during the 1850s have completely disappeared.

This provides a problem for the historian but caused consternation to the clerks of the United Grand Lodge in London, who saw their complex administrative arrangements, designed mainly for domestic use, breaking down for remote lodges on the other side of the world. Their complaints produced an informative response from the secretary of Golden Lodge on 22 April 1857.

> From the peculiar circumstances of the population of the gold fields of Australia generally being of such a nomadic character, it has been hitherto extremely difficult to make complete returns. Within the last 15 months the community having assumed a more permanent character, since the formation of the townships —we are at length in consequence enabled to comply with the requirements of the Grand Lodge. . . . It is utterly impossible for . . . a letter adequately to describe the many great difficulties that we, as the first Gold Fields Lodge, had to contend with in establishing this most flourishing branch of the Order. . . . A glance at the returns, more especially that of Brethren for whom the lodge do not require certificates in consequence of removal to other parts, will be sufficient proof of the continual changes taking place among us.[68]

Notwithstanding the difficulties, it has been possible to piece together the returns for around 440 men who joined five of the lodges (Yarrowee excluded) during the period to the end of 1859. The data includes names, age at becoming a member, occupation, and current residence. Unfortunately, the full range of this data is not available for all of the listed members. Unlike the data for the American districts, it does not include information on asset value or place of birth, but occasional comments on the recent origins of joining members gives a broad impression of the general

direction of movement. The data also provides a longitudinal view of membership over the decade, rather than a snapshot of membership in any one year, and thus perhaps gives a better view of the dynamics of lodge membership.

What do the data show? As in Nevada Lodge during its early years of development, the great majority of members were young, 70 percent being between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five. Very few were over forty and only one was over fifty.

Name evidence suggests that, as in the Virginia City lodges, many were originally from western Europe—particularly greater Germany, but also including a few French, Dutch, and other nationalities. Many Scots and Irish also unexpectedly appear in the membership of these English lodges and there was a significant number of Jews, some of them probably of central-European origin.[69] Perhaps fifty or more of the members were not British or Australian born, suggesting a level of ethnic or national mixing even greater than in the American lodges.

Occasional notes appended to the returns of those existing Masons who were joining the lodge indicate their most recent residence. Thus there are numerous "local" men coming from lodges in Melbourne, Geelong, and other surrounding areas in Victoria, as well as neighboring states such as South Australia and New South Wales. Long distance migrants were drawn from Lancashire, London, Bristol, and Birmingham in England and several came from lodges in Scotland and Ireland. At least three came directly from Canada (New Brunswick, Halifax, and Ottawa), and seven declared origins in the U.S., including two miners, a carpenter, a hairdresser, and a "publican" (bar owner). They were in every respect a very disparate crowd, representative of the new mining communities but sharing little in common other than their Masonic identity.

The occupational structure of the five lodges over the decade shows some general similarities with the American lodges but also some major differences. At the general level, the membership includes representatives from the broad range of the local economy, while at a more detailed level there are marked dissimilarities in the numeric balance of the various groups. Thus, as in the American mining communities, the lodges included large numbers of miners, but here they were not the dominant group, being outnumbered by publicans-inn keepers, who rarely figured prominently in America. There were, of course, many from the mining-related trades of carpenter, smith, merchant, and clerk, as in Virginia City, but the Ballarat-Bendigo lodges had a far stronger representation of storekeepers, retail trades (from butchers and bakers to boot makers and tailors), professionals (from finance, law, and medicine), government employees, and "entertainment services," such as artists, musicians. The latter group would have found the networking opportunities offered by the lodges particularly useful in finding customers for their services, as would the numerous auctioneers. Similarly, the lodges as "information exchanges" would have been highly useful for the journalists and perhaps those engaged in government service. Most surprisingly, there appears to have been very few mining managers and engineers, though the predominantly small scale of mining during this period may have kept their overall numbers small. Similarly, there were hardly any members from agriculture and the providers of transport services. (See Table 8, next page.)

International Comparative

There are no clear explanations for these divergences from the American experience, but various possibilities present themselves. Firstly, it is possible that the places and environments from which the Argonauts in Victoria were drawn did not have the same Masonic traditions among the working class as in America. Perhaps also they did not feel so exposed, so remote and isolated from friends and family, so in need of support and sustenance.

Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
Hospitality[70]	52	Government[71]	17
Retail[72]	42	Artists and Musicians	16
Miner	40	Clerks	15
Merchant	27	Publishing[73]	13
Professional/Management[74]	27	Food Preparation[75]	11
Medical[76]	22	Craftsmen[77]	11
Tradesmen[78]	19	Auctioneers	9

Table 8
Principal Occupations of Members of Five Lodges in Ballarat and Bendigo to 1859

Secondly, it is possible that those who did look for "insurance" found more positive guarantees in other fraternal or benevolent societies. For example, the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows had established four lodges in the Ballarat district and six in and around Bendigo by 1860 and their membership increased rapidly.[79]

Thirdly, there may have been specialisation of trades and occupations between lodges of different constitutions. As already mentioned, there were independent or non-English constitution Masonic lodges operating in this district that may have provided a home for a greater percentage of self-employed miners and other manual trades. For example, the Grand Lodge of Scotland established a lodge in Melbourne as early as 1843 and was working in nearby Geelong as early as 1853.[80]

Fourthly, it is possible that the economic structure of the towns was very different—the Australian towns being larger, more diversified, more developed, and perhaps more "rounded" in their development than were Nevada City and Virginia City in their early stages of development.

The simplest explanation, however, may be that the data used here are skewed by the absence of membership returns for Yarrowee Lodge during these years, particularly if that was more of a "miners" lodge. If the period of analysis is extended to include the members of lodges in the Ballarat and Bendigo districts over the longer period from the 1850s to the mid-1880s, the picture looks very different—and far more akin to the American experience.[81]

During these years, miners and those involved in mining-related activities emerge as the dominant group, with urban occupations, such as the professions and retail and hospitality, pushed into second and third place. This is not withstanding the growth in the size and prosperity of the towns, improved transportation, and the introduction of a wider range of occupations.[82] Precisely who the "miners" were—working men or rich owners or investors—is not clear, but historian Geoffrey Blainey's conclusions echo those for California and Nevada: "Bendigo was a dusty democracy in which the wealthy capitalists sometimes worked underground and humble miners sometimes owned mining shares."[83]

From the evidence presented here it is clear that fraternities, in their many different forms, had the potential to play a significant role in facilitating the movement of migrants within and between continents and in helping them to settle

and integrate on arrival. Such societies and orders would have appeared particularly attractive to those whose quest was unusually hazardous and uncertain, such as the Argonauts and other gold seekers of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Taking the specific example of Freemasonry, which had a particularly extended national and international network of lodges, all with clear obligations to assist travelling brethren, it can be shown that: (a) lodges were established in new urban mining communities within months of the earliest arrivals; (b) they were established by existing members who had probably availed themselves of the network as they had travelled to the gold fields; (c) the turn-over of their membership was high, suggesting onward movement of members to new mining districts and other lodges; (d) they rapidly expanded their membership with new arrivals, and especially new initiates who wished to take advantage of the various benefits offered; (e) most members were young men, in their twenties and early thirties, and a large cohort were unmarried; (f) most were nationals of the country but also included large numbers of first generation immigrants from Great Britain, Germany, Scandinavia and other parts of Protestant northwestern Europe; (g) by occupation they were mainly miners and those connected with the mining industry, though they reflected the entire business spectrum of the communities they served; (h) they were of widely varied economic status and wealth, though a tendency of the wealthy to seek membership, and membership to promote economic success, meant that the lodges came to be generally representative of the economic elite of their host communities; (i) many members, particularly those less well off, also became members of other fraternal organisations, especially those that offered insurance against accidents, illness, and death; and (j) the lodges offered advantages not just to their membership but to the wider construction of social capital in the community—or as political scientist Robert Putnam has put it, they offered both a "private good" to their members and a "public good" to society at large through the promotion of civic virtue.[84]

Taken as a whole, the fraternities, along with organized religion, provided the principal institutional instrument in bringing civilized and regulated society to the urban frontier and in forging new common identities from a myriad of newcomers, domestic and foreign. However, while they created much of what is best in western society, they also laid the foundations for some of its more negative attributes.

Membership based on exclusivity was the godfather of sectionalism, inequality and injustice. Thus the common exclusion of Chinese and Latin American workers from the early lodges created yet another obstacle to their integration and attainment of equality. Women were frequently excluded and relegated from the public to the private space of the home, unable to take part in much of the social and economic life of the town. European migrants were often divided between fraternities on religious grounds—Catholics from southern Europe, for example, excluding themselves from Freemasonry in obedience to Papal directives and establishing their own Knights of Columbus. African Americans, excluded from white Masonic lodges, developing their own, separate tradition of Prince Hall Masonry. As is so frequently the case, that which unifies also can separate.

Similarly, in orders where members swore allegiances, made commitments to help and mutual assistance, established patterns of co-operation and networks of trust, they could easily be seduced into favoritism, injustice, unfair advantage, discrimination, and even corruption. It is impossible to quantify and weigh accurately the positive against the negative in the process of community development, but illustrative examples of both aspects abound, particularly in the literature of Masonry and anti-Masonry.

Significant advances in the understanding of these issues, and an appreciation of their role not

only in the migratory process but in the overall development of community in remote areas, awaits further research. The issues are clear, the archives are there, and the field is unconstrained by past publication and current research. What is needed are the long and time-consuming prosopographical studies of fraternal memberships that are necessary to elevate the subject beyond simple anecdotal account into serious social history.

In the particular case of mining communities and the Argonauts, such study promises to reveal much that is new in our understanding of how they reached the gold fields, moved between them, settled, created communities, and achieved acceptable economic and social outcomes. It will also provide a sound basis for comparative history with other similar communities around the world, revealing their similarities and providing some understanding of the reasons for their differences.

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Notes:

1. Douglas Fetherling, *The Gold Crusades: A Social History of Gold Rushes, 1849-1929* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1988), 5-6.
2. William P. Morrell, *The Gold Rushes* (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 74-6.
3. John Sutter himself declared that "gold digging is a lottery" from which only one or two in a hundred became rich. See: H. W. Brands, *The Age of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the New American Dream* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 482.
4. This fascination continues into the present, with the reworking of old gold rush sites. Mary Hill, *Gold: The California Story* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), Ch. 13. See also: Peter L. Bernstein, *The Power of Gold: The History of an Obsession* (New York: Wiley, 2001).
5. See: Paula M. Marks, *Precious Dust* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 22.
6. Ralph Mann, *After the Gold Rush: Society in Grass Valley and Nevada City, California, 1849-1870* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), 227.
7. Rodman Wilson Paul, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848-1880* (1963), revised and expanded by Elliott West (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 41.
8. Anthony Kirk, "Seeing the Elephant," in: James J. Rawls and Richard J. Orsi (eds.), *A Golden State: Mining and Economic Development in Gold Rush California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 174-84.
9. David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 24.
10. Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *Days of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the American Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 40-8, 62.
11. Lawrence L. Price, "West Barbary: Or Notes on the System of Work and Wages in the Cornish Mines," in: Roger Burt (ed.), *Cornish Mining* (Newton Abbot, Devon: David and Charles, 1969), 162, 182; Marshall C. Eakin, *British Enterprise in Brazil: The St.John d'el Rey Mining Company and the Morro Velho Gold Mine 1830-1960* (London: Duke University Press, 1989), 239.
12. See: Noel P. Gist, "Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the United States," *University of Missouri Studies: A Quarterly of Research* XV, no. 4 (Oct. 1940): 31-2; Larry D. Lankton, *Beyond the Boundaries: Life and Landscape at the Lake Superior Copper Mines, 1840-1875* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 192-3.
13. Paul and West, *Mining Frontiers*, 213.
14. See: *Statistics of Fraternal Societies* (Rochester, NY: Fraternal Monitor, 1904 and following).
15. W. S. Harwood, "Secret Societies in America," *North American Review* 164 (May 1897): 620-3.
16. Albert C. Stevens (ed.), *Cyclopedia of Fraternities* (New York: E. B. Treat and Co., 1907), xvi.
17. *The Freemason*, 23 Aug. 1890, 94; Gist, "Secret Societies," 42.
18. Warren Potter and Robert Oliver, *Fraternally Yours: A History of the Independent Order of Foresters* (London: Queen Anne Press, 1967), 49.
19. Potter and Oliver, *Fraternally Yours*, Appendix D.
20. See: John Corson Smith, *History of Freemasonry in the City of Galena, Illinois* (Galena: Gazette Book and

Job Printing House, 1874).

21. See below p. 28.
22. *The Freemason's Chronicle*, 23 July 1898, 40.
23. *Freemason*, 10 Aug. 1895, 456.
24. *Freemason's Chronicle*, 15 June 1895, 262.
25. *Freemason*, 12 Jan. 1892, 12.
26. Dorothy Ann Lipson, *Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut 1789-1835* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 244.
27. Smith, *Freemasonry in Galena*, 30.
28. *Freemason*, 8 June 1895, 326.
29. *Freemason*, 24 Aug. 1895, 478.
30. See: Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989). William Greever observes that the fraternal organisations frequently provided the centre for social life in the mining towns. (William S. Greever, *Bonanza West: The Story of the Western Mining Rushes 1848-1900* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho Press, 1963), 180.)
31. See: Frederick Allen, *A Decent, Orderly Lynching: The Montana Vigilantes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).
32. See: R. D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000); Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender and Fraternalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture 1880-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Today their influence continues to be attested by the opulent lodge buildings that they created, which still figure among the largest and most imposing architecture of many western towns. S. John N. DeHass, Jr., *Historic Uptown Butte* (Butte, MT: s.n., 1977).
33. Guillermo de Los Reyes and Antonio Lara, "Civil Society and Volunteerism: Lodges in Mining Commuities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 565, no. 1 (1Sep. 1999): 218-24.
34. See: Peter V. Sellars, *The History of the Independent Order of Oddfellows in the City of San Francisco* (Portland, ME: Sellers Publishing, 2007).
35. See: Stanley S. Bransgrove, *Towards a Fraternal History of Marin County: A Survey of Secret Societies: Being a General History of Various Fraternities and Their Specific Impact in Marin,* on-line at http://mill-valley.freemasonry.biz/marin-fraternities.htm
36. See: Greever, *Bonanza West*, 63; and G. Meier, *Gold Camp Foolery: E Clampus Vitus* (http://www.ecv5978.com/goldcamp.htm). See also: http://mill-valley.freemasonry.biz/marin-fraternities-03.htm
37. Rohrbough, *Days of Gold*; Susan L. Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000); Mann, *After the Gold Rush;* Ronald M. James, *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998); Elizabeth Jameson, *All that Glitters: Class, Conflict and Community in Cripple Creek* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), Ch. 4. See also: Richard E. Lingenfelter, *The Mining West: A Bibliography and Guide to the History and Literature of Mining in the American and Canadian West* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003, 2 vols.), which reveals no significant major study.
38. For a general history of Freemasonry in the United States and its organizational structure, see: Mark A. Tabbert, *American Freemasons: Three Centuries of Building Communities* (New York: NYU Press, 2005).
39. Annual returns of the membership of all Masonic lodges in California thereafter were published in the *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of California*, 1850 and following.
40. For the origins of Nevada Lodge, see: Orval Bronson, "Freemasonry and Some Luminaries of Nevada Lodge No.13 F&AM," *Nevada County Historical Society Bulletin* 57, no. 2 (Apr. 2003): 1-4.
41. See: Dan Plazak, *A Hole in the Ground with a Liar at the Top: Fraud and Deceit in the Golden Age of American Mining* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006). See also: George G. Rice, *My Adventures with Your Money* (1913; reprint: Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 1986).
42. Nearly all of those that left the lodge each year generally did so by 'withdrawing', i.e. after having paid their fees up to date. Very few lost their Masonic status by being excluded. This would imply that they generally wished to remain Masons and would probably seek another lodge at their next destination.
43. See: Karen Clay and Randal Jones, "Migrating to Riches? Evidence from the California Gold Rush" (*Journal of Economic History* 68, no. 4 (2008): 997-1027) for an analysis of the limited censuses of 1852 and 1854.
44. Liping Zhu, *A Chinaman's Chance: The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1997), 88.
45. The Order of the Eastern Star was established in Massachusetts in 1850 and introduced into the western states by the early 1870s.
46. Sally Zanjani makes brief reference to the difficulties caused for women entrepreneurs by their exclusion from the clubs and other spaces where potential investors could be found. (Sally Zanjani, *A Mine of Her Own: Women Prospectors in the American West 1850-1950* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 6.)
47. Mann, *After the Gold Rush*, Table 13, 236.
48. *Freemason*, 12 Jan. 1892, 12.
49. See a list of the members of Oustomah No. 16 Independent Order of Oddfellows Lodge, Doris Foley Library, Nevada City, CA.
50. See: C. W. Torrence, *A History of Masonry in Nevada* (1944; reprint, Sparks, NV: Western Printing and

Publishing Co., 1975).
51. James, *Roar and the Silence*.
52. James, *Roar and the Silence*, 245.
53. James, *Roar and the Silence*, 95.
54. James, *Roar and the Silence*, 92.
55. Gunther Peck, "Manly Gambles: The Politics of Risk on the Comstock Lode, 1860-1880," *Journal of Social History* 26, no. 4 (Sum. 1993), 707-9.
56. "Roll of the Members of Escurial Lodge No. 7 F & AM, Virginia, Storey County, Nevada also a Short History of the Lodge to December 1st 1867," Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
57. There are three degrees in the process of initiation to become a full member of a lodge as a Master Mason. The majority had achieved that status before they "affiliated" to the lodge but a number of others either completed their initiation by taking the third degree in Escurial Lodge or were introduced there and taken through all three degrees. Overall, the lodge itself had initiated and conferred the first degree on sixty-seven candidates, most of whom probably stayed, but some had clearly moved on. The unaccounted fourteen members of the lodge were its founders, and therefore already well-established Master Masons. *Roll of the Members of Escurial Lodge*, 8.
58. James, *Roar and the Silence*, 79.
59. There was concern in all of the western territories that many of the incomers were Masons who sustained their memberships of their home lodge, and chose simply to visit, rather than become permanent members, of the lodges in the new towns. Many took steps to make it obligatory to join local lodges after one year's residence.
60. *Roll of the Members of Escurial Lodge*, 6-9.
61. For a general review of the development of this district, see: Charles Fahey, "Peopling the Victorian Gold Fields: From Boom to Bust, 1851-1901," in: Keir Reeves, Lionel Frost, and Charles Fahey (eds.), "A World in Search of Gold," *Australian Economic History Review* (Special Edition) 50, no. 2 (July 2010): 148-61.
62. See: Weston Bate, *Victorian Gold Rushes* (Melbourne: McPhee Gribble Publishers, 1988).
63. Geoffrey Blainey, *The Rush that Never Ended: A History of Australian Mining* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1969), 42, 60.
64. J. S. Holliday, *The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981).
65. High quality in terms of literacy and skills. See: Bate, *Victorian Gold Rushes*, 30.
66. Blainey, *Rush that Never Ended*, 42.
67. Jessica L. Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 51-60.
68. "Membership returns for Golden Lodge of Bendigo [Victoria, Australia] No. 641," Library and Museum of Freemasonry, United Grand Lodge of England, London.
69. See: M. Butcher, "Anti-Semitism in the Early Bendigo Lodges," in: David Beagley (ed.), *Gold and Blue: Freemasonry and Community in Bendigo 1854-2004* (Bendigo, Victoria: Holland House for the Golden and Corinthian Lodge, Bendigo, 2004), 39-46.
70. Publicans, inn keepers, hotel keepers.
71. Police, postal, civil servants.
72. Store keepers, drapers, jewellers.
73. Journalists, printers, stationers.
74. Accountants, architects, engineers, legal, surveyors.
75. Butchers, bakers, brewers.
76. Doctors, dentists, surgeon, chemists, veterinary.
77. Tailors, watchmakers, saddlers, boot makers.
78. Carpenters, joiners, coopers, painters, plumbers, smiths.
79. Thomas Collins, *List of the Lodges Composing the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) Friendly Society, for 1892-3* (Manchester, U.K.: s.n., 1892), 222-3.
80. See: George S. Draffen, *Scottish Masonic Records 1736-1950: A List of all the Lodges at Home and Abroad*, (Edinburgh: William Culross and Son, 1951). The Grand Lodge of Ireland also warranted two lodges in Ballarat in the early 1860s. See: Philip Crossle, *Irish Masonic Records* (Dublin: Grand Lodge of Ireland, 1973), 95.
81. Returns for the Ballarat lodges—viz. Ballarat, United Tradesmen, Victoria, and Yarrowee lodges for the years 1855-87, list 628 members. Returns for the Bendigo lodges—viz. Corinthian, Eaglehawk, Golden, and Zenith for the years 1854-89 list 1504 members. Many did not list their occupation. Returns to the United Grand Lodge of England were phased out from the late 1880s with the formation of the independent Grand Lodge of Victoria.
82. For example, in the food preparation trades fishmongers, grocers, confectioners, cordial makers, and tobacconists appear after the 1850s.
83. Blainey, *Rush that Never Ended*, 73.
84. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 19-22.