Book Reviews

Edited by Christopher J. Huggard

Stanley W. Paher. ***Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps Illustrated Atlas*** (4th ed.). Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 2001. 208pp., photographs, maps. Paper, $32.50, Cloth, $39.95.

Stanley W. Paher's *Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps Illustrated Atlas* is a visually rich compilation of 1950s-era, black-and-white pictures, combined with modern computer-generated maps. Also published separately in two volumes, this combined edition features southern and northern Nevada, plus parts of neighboring California and Arizona. Seemingly random organization, minor errors of fact, and small printing mistakes mar the work, and its usefulness to historians is limited by its design. Nonetheless, I will bring Paher's *Atlas* on my next Nevada road trip.

Paher gained renown as the author of *Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*, an encyclopedic history of 668 abandoned sites, and his *Atlas* is intended as a companion volume to the larger work. Most of the *Atlas's* shortcomings can be described as functions of its subordinate role. There is neither index nor table of contents, only an index map that situates the detailed maps in a statewide context. Likewise, there is no bibliography—aside from a two-page catalog of other publications by Paher's book company—and no footnotes or references. The maps are arranged somewhat haphazardly, and cannot easily be read in geographic progression. These shortcomings limit the *Atlas's* utility to historians; Paher's larger work is more suitable as a reference.

Several errors further decrease the usefulness of the *Atlas*. Some incomplete captions, presumably the result of printing errors, leave the reader hanging. Paher describes the Great Fire of Virginia City as having occurred in 1876, which is most likely a typographical error as he gets the 1875 date correct in his book. Other errors are harder to explain: the courthouse in Virginia City is identified as having survived the fire, although it was not constructed until after the conflagration; the Mormon fort in Genoa is labeled as having been "restored," despite its 1940s-era origins; and Horace Greeley is said to have "originated" the famous "Go West..." phrase, even though Greeley himself repeatedly denied having done so.

The strengths of Paher's *Atlas* lie in its visual content. Nell Murbarger's beautiful photographs, most taken in the 1950s, capture ghost towns in a state of preservation that can no longer be enjoyed. Her photographs depict common objects now long gone, such as school books and small machines, as well as the more standard fare of old buildings and ruined storefronts. They capture some of the essential humanity about these places that becomes harder to glimpse as abandoned landscapes erode in the face of weather and vandalism.

As the title of the *Atlas* implies, the one-inch-to-four-mile scale maps are the reason the book exists, and Paher does a good job with them. The full-color, computer-generated maps feature some shaded relief of mountainous terrain and helpfully point out sites with entries in *Ghost Towns and Mining Camps*. They have been com-

pletely revised since the 1993 edition, and will be most useful to automobile explorers.

Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps Illustrated Atlas cannot be faulted for not rising above its design. Despite a few errors, it serves well in its intended roles as a companion volume to Paher's ghost towns history, as an atlas to assist explorers trying to find these sites, and as a collection of nice photographs of decaying places. Many mining historians might desire more, and would find this volume a minor disappointment.

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Charles V. Mutschler. ***Wired for Success, The Butte, Anaconda & Pacific Railway, 1892-1985***. Pullman, Washington: Washington State University Press, 2000. 192 pp., illustrations, photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Paper $31.95.

Mining and railroading have been intimately linked since the mid-nineteenth century. Railroads enabled mining companies to move ores and concentrates efficiently, so much so that a number of mining companies actually built their own railroads—for example, the Phelps Dodge Corporation's El Paso & Southwestern—when existing railroads either charged excessive rates or offered otherwise unacceptable service. In the annals of mining-related railroads, Montana's Butte, Anaconda & Pacific is legendary.

Built by mining magnate Marcus Daly's Anaconda Copper Mining Company to connect the copper mines at Butte with the smelter town of Anaconda, the BA&P Railway existed from 1892 to 1985. The BA&P was remarkable for its innovative use of electricity, notably high voltage DC, to haul trains for more than half a century, from 1913 to 1967. Electrification reaffirmed the BA&P's belief in both copper and industrial innovation, for this railroad not only hauled copper, but used copper overhead wire to operate its trains. Although the BA&P ceased operations in the mid-1980s, portions of the line still function as the Rarus Railway.

I admit to a nearly lifelong interest in the BA&P. Several factors—its route through picturesque Silver Bow Canyon, the gritty mining landscapes at both ends of the line in Butte and Anaconda, and its fascinating box cab electric locomotives—drew me to visit the property in the mid-1960s, just before the wires came down. A few pieces of BA&P equipment have been saved for posterity. During the Butte meeting tour in 2001, Mining History Association members viewed one of the remaining box cab locomotives on display.

Those of us who admire the BA&P Railway have waited a long time for this book. Until now, we have relied on short articles and brief references in books about railway electrification. Author Charles V. Mutschler begins by noting that he will emphasize two subjects: technology and corporate development. Appropriately, the book's first chapter deals with the mines, entrepreneurs, and conditions in Butte and Anaconda. This chapter provides a fine summary of developments that positioned Butte as a major copper producer. The second chapter discusses the developing transportation network of the interior Northwest. It beautifully summarizes the routes and importance of the numerous railroads that traversed the region and linked Butte with the outside world. The third chapter discusses the creation and early steam-powered operation of the BA&P, which became known as the "Copper Shortline." The fourth chapter—"White Coal vs. King Coal"—discusses the merits of electrification and the BA&P's transition to box cab locomotives built by General Electric.

Located fairly close to sources of hydroelectricity on Montana's rivers, BA&P was an excellent proving ground to demonstrate the economies of electric power. In fact, it was the first railroad in the U.S. to electrify for purely economic reasons. In the fifth chapter, Mutschler