book, "The Miners," includes many stories of miners' experiences working in the district. The book was inspired by Richard's friend, John R. Jackson, who is the source of many of these stories. Jackson is described as a Creede native, prospector, miner, mine manager and developer, self-made geologist and mineralogist, writer, and poet. However, one of the better stories in the book is in the forward and comes from Huston himself.

> I will never forget my first day in the Commodore Mine at Creede. I reported to work on night shift (4:00p.m. until midnight) with a hard hat, carbide lamp, lunch in a paper sack, and no water. My work station was on a level a hundred or more feet above the main level. On the way up the ladder, I burned a hole in my lunch sack with my unfamiliar carbide lamp and the lunch went down the ladder way. I got awful thirsty, and after realizing I had no water, decided to drink out of a trickle of water coming into the drift. The water was loaded with sulfates and the result was diarrhea. What a day! No water, no lunch, and diarrhea in a place totally void of light except for the feeble beam supplied by my carbide light. I worked along and completed the shift even though I was exhausted, hungry, thirsty, and ill. I'm surprised that I went back to work the next day!

We are glad that he didn't give up on Creede and eventually compiled this history. Huston packs a lot of interesting information into his book. I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in the mining history of Creede, where, according to Cy Warman, the "poet of the Cochetopas,"

> It's day all day, in the day-time,
> and there is no night in Creede.

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Elinor McGinn. ***A Wide-Awake Woman: Josephine Roche in the Era of Reform***. Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 2002; 203 pp., ill., paper, $21.95.

Elinor McGinn's biography about Coloradan Josephine Roche is the seventh volume in the Colorado History series published by the Colorado Historical Society through the University Press of Colorado. This well-researched and written work is the first biography of Roche. It describes the professional career of a "fighter for social rights" for American coal miners, not only in Colorado but at the national level.

Born on 1 December 1886 in Neligh, Nebraska, to John and Ella Aspinwall Roche, the young Josephine led a privileged life. Her father was a successful businessman who made his wealth in the financial industry. Both of her parents were well educated and provided their daughter with an "upper-class education" at Vassar and Columbia University that "led to the formation of her progressive ideals." Not afraid of hard work, Roche worked with delinquent girls in New York's settlement houses and later with Denver's juvenile and probation courts. In her early adulthood, Roche associated with like-minded individuals concerned with political, social, and economic problems in America. Within this close network of friends and mentors were a number who held government jobs and who would later open political doors for Roche.

Roche's first social reform efforts began in Denver. When Roche's friend, George Creel, newly-elected Denver police commissioner, offered her a job as Denver's first policewoman—

inspector of amusements—she accepted. That same year she represented Colorado at the 1912 Progressive National Convention in Chicago. Roche's efforts at social reform in Denver's law enforcement met with resistance and eventually led to her dismissal. It was this experience that made Roche realize that economic and political reforms were necessary to improve society.

Over the next fifteen years, Roche became involved in a number of political and social causes. Then, upon the death of her father in 1927, she became the major stockholder of Rocky Mountain Fuel Company (RMFC), with holdings in the northern Colorado coal fields. In a time of economic upheaval, with coal prices dropping, natural gas and oil usage spreading, the cyclical nature of the industry, and then the Great Depression, Roche struggled to keep her company viable. She worked not only in Colorado but at the national level to establish equitable labor and management rules and broad economic policies unique to the industry. She eventually led her own company into becoming a union operation, signing the first permanent union agreement by a Colorado coal mining company.

When Roche supported the New Deal's Bituminous Coal Code, she caught the eye of President Franklin Roosevelt. He appointed her assistant secretary of the Treasury in 1934. She promoted RMFC auditor J. P. Peabody to head the company and moved to Washington. When Peabody died in 1937, she returned to Colorado and to the RMFC. Despite her efforts to reorganize it, the company was failing. In 1951, after twenty-four years as its head, Roche resigned from Rocky Mountain Fuel to work full time for the United Mine Workers' Welfare and Retirement Fund.

During her years at the Treasury Department, Roche became a spokesperson for public health, promoting interest in national health care. Long after Roche had returned to Colorado, she continued committee work in FDR's administration to improve health and welfare programs. At the same time, Roche became an expert on the coal industry. She traveled the world speaking about problems within the industry and toured European companies on fact-gathering missions for Presidents Roosevelt and Truman. In 1946, Roche became technical aide to John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America.

She worked part time for the newly formed United Mine Workers Welfare and Retirement Fund. McGinn writes that Roche and Lewis shared a "mutual concern for miners' welfare and their underlying belief in unions and collective bargaining." Early in his career, Lewis aspired to create a health and pension fund for miners. Lewis called a strike in April 1946. President Truman reacted by placing the mines under control of the secretary of the interior. The dispute ended in the National Bituminous Coal Agreement, which created the UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund, the first non-contributory pension plan for miners. Lewis, well aware of Roche's activities, called upon her to assist him in working out the details. Six years later, Roche returned to Washington to become full-time chief of the pension fund.

By the 1960s, economic trends had begun to weaken the fund. As the coal-mining industry lost jobs due to decreased consumption of coal and mechanization, the number of working miners fell from 416,000 in 1950 to 180,000 in 1959. The union fought to keep the fund liquid by cutting benefits, raising retirement ages, and funding their own medical facilities. An aging Lewis' retirement resulted in political infighting within the UMW. In the end the fund was to suffer. Roche was dismissed in 1971. Her last cause was to remove Lewis' successor, Tony Boyle, whom Roche felt blackened the name of the UMW. Boyle was not re-elected as union president, but whether this was due to Roche's anti-Boyle campaign is not clear. Although UMW President Arnold Miller resurrected the fund, the medical

plan was dismantled after Roche's death. Still, her many achievements in promoting progressive idealism and change in the coal industry reached well beyond the boundaries of Colorado.

In her meticulous review of Josephine Roche's life, Elinor McGinn provides her readers with a biography of interest to mining and non-mining readers alike. Anyone interested in labor or union history would find McGinn's insights especially thought-provoking.

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Andrew Gulliford. ***Boomtown Blues: Colorado Oil Shale***. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003; 336 pp., 37 photos, 18 drawings, 9 maps, bib., ind., paper, $26.95.

Kenneth N. Owens (ed.). ***John Sutter and a Wider West***. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002; 148 pp., illus., map, ind., paper, $15.

Duane A. Smith. ***Silver Saga: The Story of Caribou, Colorado***. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003; 240 pp., photos, maps, bib., ind., paper, $21.95.

Raye C. Ringholz. ***Uranium Frenzy: Saga of the Nuclear West***. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2002; 370 pp., photos, maps, ind., paper, $19.95.

Over the past few years several of the university presses have reissued important books on mining or related resource development issues, often with additional material appended. The University Press of Colorado has reissued Andrew Gulliford's *Boomtown Blues: Colorado Oil Shale*, which it first published in 1989.

This history of oil shale's development, in fits and starts, on Colorado's western slope between 1885 and 1985, emphasizes the most recent boom centered at Parachute, on the Colorado River east of Grand Junction, during the energy crisis of the 1970s. Gulliford sees that latest boom, and the bust that followed in the 1980s, as largely a question of "capital versus community."

Gulliford subscribes explicitly to Bernard DeVoto's "plundered province" view of western development. This time the plundered province was the western slope and the plunderer was the Exxon Corporation, which created a boom by preparing to carry out an unmitigated ecological disaster on this water-poor region, then caused the bust by not undertaking its ecological debauch in the face of low oil prices.

Gulliford concludes that Colorado's oil shale rush of the 1970s and early 80s "was blatantly manipulated from the start without adequate consideration for the people whose lives would be most affected," including Gulliford's. The small-town West, he believes, still suffers from corporate colonialism and economic dependency.

The new edition of Gulliford's book includes a new afterword: "Oil Shale Towns Revisited: Old West, New West, Next West." Although the intervening years haven't completely doused his fire, Gulliford admits he has since learned to become more detached from his subjects. The other thing that time has done is show that the oil bust was not fatal. These communities did survive the hammer blow of Exxon's departure, and are doing reasonably well.

Gulliford also notes, with some irony, that Colorado's modern western slope has become a tourist-based service economy almost devoid of well-paying industrial jobs. So the old problems of making a western livelihood remain. While Exxon's ambitions for oil shale may not have been the best course for the western slope's economic development, neither, perhaps, is a pristine, de-industrial landscape consisting largely of absentee millionaires and minimum-wage service workers. Maybe the real lesson of the boomtown blues is that the demands of resource extraction, environmental preservation, and economic vitality must, as ever, be balanced.

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