

Duane A. Smith and John L. Ninnemann. *San Juan Legacy: Life in the Mining Camps*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009; 181 pp., 81 b&w illus., map, ind., paper, \$25. ISBN: 9780826346506.

This volume is a sequel to author Duane Smith and photographer John Ninnemann's *San Juan Bonanza: Western Colorado's Mining Legacy*, published in 2006, also by New Mexico Press. The two volumes contain the same jacket typefaces and color schemes, although *San Juan Bonanza* is hardbound and *San Juan Legacy* a paperback.

The former volume concentrated on the settlement and development of the urban San Juans, and its photography concentrated on structures and mining scenes. *San Juan Legacy*, as its subtitle suggests, focuses more on the social aspects and everyday life of these communities, while its photography centers on historical artifacts.

San Juan Bonanza consisted of only two chapters: the settling and the urbanizing. *San Juan Legacy* is divided topically into twelve chapters. The topics are: the business community, law and order, newspapers, transportation, home-making, childhood and education, medical, religious, fraternal, the red light, culture and the arts, and sports. Smith gathers primary testimony chiefly from San Juan newspapers published in Durango, Silverton, Ouray, Telluride, Rico, Lake City, and Creede, along with a few contemporary guide books and reminiscences.

Smith has written extensively about these subjects over the past forty-plus years, and devotees of his previous works will find familiar themes articulated in this offering in his usual easy-going style. Its business leadership was the source of a community's persistence and vitality; good transportation often made the difference between prosperity and failure; religion, fraternity, and culture provided continuity and community on the remote and transient mining frontier; the red light district was a necessary evil; nineteenth-century medicine was a thing usually better avoided.

Ninnemann's accompanying photographs are mostly of the artifacts of everyday life extant in the region's museums, along with a few exterior photographs. A couple of the exteriors are repeated from *San Juan Bonanza*. Ninnemann retains the period mood in his exteriors by resorting to shots of antique baseball re-enactments and buildings framed so as to hide the automobiles. Some photos are not reproduced as crisply as in the previous volume, though that might have as much to do with the hazards of indoor photography as with the processes of duplicating images for publication.

Alas, the work of New Mexico Press was not up to its previous standard in some other areas as well. It sometimes appears as if the press used a spell checker instead of a person to do the editing. The word that appears is almost always correct, but sometimes it is not the correct word.

The book also features typos, redundancies, and some missing words—the worst example of the last being the omission of the fourth and fifth lines from the first stanza of Cy Warman's famous poem about Creede.

So consider *San Juan Legacy* a pleasant volume especially useful for readers fresh to the subject, though unfortunately lacking the production quality of its predecessor.

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Dennis M. Larsen. *Slick as a Mitten, Ezra Meeker's Klondike Enterprise*. Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2009; 136 pp., photos, maps, notes, bib., ind., paper, \$25. ISBN: 9780874223026

Ezra Meeker is best known today as the old timer who, early in the twentieth century, set out to mark and preserve the Oregon Trail. But in 1898, like thousands of other Americans, he was swept up in the Klondike gold rush and spent the next three years trying his luck among the mines