The hard labour that has gone into the assembly of the data is much to be admired, so too the expertise with which it has been handled. That said, commentary on the data is restrained and there is very little, if any, historiographical discussion. This is a provisional piece of work, after all; a staging post to a fuller history. There are, nonetheless, valuable pointers towards future research questions. The authors invite more prosopographical work on engineers and managers, for example.

When Burt, et al., allow themselves more personal reflection their tone is sombre. What, they ask, did the Duchy of Cornwall and other landowners contribute to the South West? Their answer: "not very much. By and large, the profits, royalties and taxes on mining went to London and the locals were left with a few temporary jobs and some large holes in the ground" (159). On these grounds they are hesitant about recommending mining as a vehicle for economic advancement in developing countries.

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John Woodland. ***Money Pits: British Mining Companies in the Californian and Australian Gold Rushes of the 1850s.*** Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2014; 295 pp., 35 b&w illus., 3 tabls., 4 maps, notes, 5 append., bib., ind., cloth, $125. ISBN: 9781472442796

This book, according to the author, details the "heady days of British stock market speculation during the California and Australian gold rushes of the late 1840s and early 1850s" (xi). John Woodland, a geologist who returned to school for a Ph.D. in history, has completed a vast amount of original research across the globe in his worthy condensation and interpretation of this overlooked phase of mining history.

The author sees the story as two fold, one part in English board rooms and promoters' offices and the other far overseas in the goldfields of California and Australia. First, in England, he provides several chapters on key topics: company formation—joint stock, cost book, or incorporated by Royal charter—and capitalization, promoters and mining experts, and mining methods and government policies. He uses the contemporary term "gold bubble" to define the rapid expansion in speculation, or mania, after news of the gold discoveries reached Europe. Nearly 120 companies capitalized at £15 million were organized, 1849-53, before the collapse.

This reviewer enjoyed provocative pages on such topics as promoters and frauds—one convicted and sentenced to "seven years transport beyond the seas" (11); incompetent and aristocratic board members; the hiring of miners, mostly Cornish, to be sent to distant goldfields, who then quickly abandoned the company to dig their own gold; and the mining experts, mostly incompetent, except a few like John Taylor and Sons. Renowned promoter John Diston Powles and a few other adventurers are highlighted. A chapter on shareholder activists, such as Haim Guedalla, exposes the sheer hopelessness of forming companies to operate in lands thousands of miles away. Another major cause for failure was the absence of an understanding of hard rock gold or vein mining, detailed here.

A major part of the book looks at the companies that were organized to operate in California and Australia. In California, of the some forty-eight companies organized, not surprisingly, only nine raised enough capital to send workers to the distant goldfields. Distance, communications problems, lack of proper equipment, and lackluster managers brought all these to failure. Many of these companies were associated with John C. Fremont and his questionable promotions of his Mariposa grant, a failure from the outset. The Agua Fria Gold Mining Company, for example, transferred its efforts to Grass Valley, but weather and poor machinery caused delays and problems that finally bankrupted the concern. Manager

Melville Attwood closed the operation in 1858.

Similarly, Woodland explores the seventy companies organized to operate in Australia, only ten of which sent miners to the goldfields. The author's previous book was a history of the one successful gold bubble company, the Port Phillip and Colonial Gold Mining Company. Two chapters here discuss the company's initial failures, colonial conflicts with miners ("diggers" in Australia)—including the famous Eureka stockade rebellion—and the final ability of the company to evolve into an ore-processing firm, eventually a very profitable one. Its success coincided with the beginning of large-scale vein mining in the goldfields.

The book ends with a succinct review of the reasons for failure: distance, lack of capital, absence of vision or competence by board members, less-than-exceptional field managers, faulty machinery, and a number of government policies too outdated to facilitate investment. Woodland concludes that the development of a climate more friendly to corporations was unquestionably hastened by the sudden gold bubble demand. He writes that the bubble "exposed the need for sweeping reforms in both corporate governance and government legislation and regulations" (241). These policies would evolve, as did technology, gold mining skill, and management, in the following years.

The book benefits by the inclusion of an appendix containing all of the companies and their activities. Period illustrations and a few photographs are sprinkled throughout the text, as are a number of helpful maps.

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Susan F. Hirsch and E. Franklin Dukes. ***Mountaintop Mining in Appalachia: Understanding Stakeholders and Change in Environmental Conflict.*** Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014; 157 pp., 8 b&w illus., map, notes, ref., ind., paper, $23. ISBN: 9780821421109

The authors of *Mountaintop Mining in Appalachia* are Susan Hirsch and E. Franklin Dukes. Hirsch is a cultural anthropologist in the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University and Dukes is a mediator, teacher, and researcher who directs the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia.

When I was asked to review this book I have to admit I began reading with the feeling that it was most likely biased against mining. After reading the acknowledgements, I had hope that the authors would present a balanced study of the issues and the stakeholders involved. At that point, I was encouraged that the book would be a fair portrayal of a very contentious issue, one that has become the focal point for anti-mining forces nationwide.

As I read the book though, I began to sense a disguised and subtle bias. Companies were generally portrayed as faceless entities, while environmental activists and big environmental groups were characterized as being for the people and portrayed as heroes. The authors do make the point that all of society is a stakeholder in mining, from the standpoint of both its impacts and benefits. Mining companies and owners are made up of people—many of whom are from the region—and provide not only a medium for profit to the owners and investors, but also benefit to the people of the region and nation.

I have read and reread the book in an attempt to be fair in my review. It repeatedly echoes the environmental activists' mantra and accepts many of their unproven claims about the damages to people and the Appalachian region caused by mining. I acknowledge that there are those with