

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Hugh Anderson (Ed. & Compiler)**, *Strength in Battle: The Memoirs of Joseph Anderson Panton, Goldfields' Commissioner and Magistrate*. Edited and annotated by Hugh Anderson. Australian Scholarly Publishing Pty Ltd; N. Melbourne. ISBN 978-1-925588-88-0 PB, ISBN 978-1-925588-94-1 HB.

This is an unusual book, in that there is at least as much of social and historical significance in the voluminous footnotes as in the main text. In 1968, Hugh Anderson (1927-2017), historian and folklorist, was asked to edit and annotate the memoirs of Joseph Anderson Panton, held in the LaTrobe Library. The typescript was accompanied by a letter expressing the hope of Panton's daughter Alice, the typist, that the Trustees would find 'this intended autobiography worthy of preservation'. Anderson's job became far more difficult than expected, as there were big gaps in the writing, the story comes to a very abrupt end, and many names were introduced without explanation. This is all probably because Alice was neither a good typist nor an accurate speller; Panton was blind at the time he was dictating, so was not able to check the typescript, and Alice later became blind herself. The result was an enormous amount of extra research for Anderson, most of which is included in the footnotes. The memoirs are written in a very chatty style, full of sidetracks and what appears to be gossip; it's difficult to find definite dates; but the social and cultural picture he gives of the Bendigo goldfields is fascinating.

The 12 chapters begin with details of his early life in Scotland, including his time in the Military Academy in Edinburgh. It was here that he became interested in geology, and became skilled at field surveying, which he found very useful later. Although originally intended for the East India Company, the family had connections in Australia, and Panton eventually sailed for Sydney in 1851, expecting to become a pastoralist. His venture was sheep farming in the Goulburn Valley, but he soon appointed a manager and took a small party to the new gold field at Forest Creek. Gold was so plentiful that they thought it would still be there if they returned later – in spite of the large number of diggers they saw all over the goldfields. They sold their outfit at a profit and returned home, but Panton soon missed the excitement of the goldfields, and applied for the position of mounted Escort Officer for gold going to Melbourne. His application was granted, so he rode to Melbourne to be interviewed by Governor LaTrobe. LaTrobe considered him 'a bit too heavy for as Escort, it would be too severe on our horses', and offered him the alternative position of goldfields Commissioner at Bendigo. Panton accepted, though he had no experience at all, and became in turn Senior Commissioner, Resident Commissioner, and finally Resident Warden, of the Bendigo area.

He seems to have been regarded as a fair man by the diggers; he was certainly not in favour of standover tactics used in licence collection. He also intervened successfully in the 1852 Loddon River 'Red Ribbon Rebellion'. The diggers were angry

over the imposition of a 30 shilling licence fee, which Panton persuaded LaTrobe to remove.

Chinese diggers began to appear on the Bendigo field during 1854, mostly working ‘sunrise to sundown’ on the outskirts, and beginning to inspire jealousy among the Caucasian diggers. Panton suggested to the new Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, that Protectorates might help, and eventually four were established. Panton worked closely with the Chinese leaders, and they were happy with the Protectorates, even though Panton imposed a poll tax on all Chinese to help pay for the resultant administration.

Panton returned to London in 1858, married in 1860, and the couple returned to Melbourne in the *Great Britain* in 1861, taking up a property on the Wakool River. From 1862 to 1874, Panton was a Police Magistrate and Warden in Woods Point, Heidelberg and the Yarra District. He was Chief Magistrate of Melbourne till his retirement in 1907, with duties in Geelong and Stawell as well. His memoir gives little detail of his years as a magistrate, but contemporary accounts depict him as becoming far less tolerant, even biased, in his judgements, than he’d been in his time on the diggings. However, he was always active socially in every community where he was stationed, taking on various official roles, especially during his time in Bendigo.

Panton was a keen amateur geologist, had a large collection of his own, and organised a committee to prepare a display for the Bendigo Exhibition of September 1854. The display was of geological specimens, different mineralogical forms of gold, ‘very rich specimens of gold found *in situ*’, and models of the various methods used in both alluvial and quartz mining. Most of this display was later shown at the 1855 Paris Exhibition.

Panton was ‘ever on the look out’ to explore ‘some of the blank spaces left on the continent’. He was also keen to take up some of this country, and by 1880 he owned about five million acres, in the East Kimberly and Northern territory.

The book is illustrated by delightful lithographs, including some of Panton’s own paintings, which add to the strong feeling of ‘being there’. It is for anyone interested in the social and political as well as a personal background to Victoria’s early mining history, and not so concerned with technical mining details.

**Nicola Williams**

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**Nic Haygarth**, *On the Ossie: Tasmanian osmiridium and the fountain pen industry*, Forty South Publishing, 2017, pp.i-iv, 1-277, illustrations (some colour), facsimiles, maps, SB with French flaps, ISBN 978-0-6481063-7-1. \$49.95

To raise Haygarth's latest book and thumb slowly through its glossy pages provides a sense of satisfaction for a finely crafted work, much akin to the pleasure a calligrapher might discern in lifting a fine Swan or Waterman fountain pen and feeling the nib smoothly guide across a fresh page. As the subtitle testifies, *On the Ossie* is the story of the rise and fall of Tasmania's osmiridium mining industry and its close relationship to the worldwide popularity of the fountain pen during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Osmiridium is the common name for naturally occurring mineral alloys of osmium and iridium. Lying side-by-side at 76-77 on the periodic table, nestled to the left of their better known cousins platinum and gold, these two elements are not strictly speaking 'rare earths' as Haygarth suggests, but rather part of the transition metals. They are, however, two of the three rarest elements in the earth's crust and the two densest stable elements in pure form.

Osmiridium is made of star dust – believed to be scattered from the impact sites of ancient meteors, and occurs in very few places on earth in significant concentrations. Osmium and iridium are mostly found as trace elements in deposits of platinum and gold and it was from such sources that the only commercial production was undertaken prior to 1900, in the Ural Mountains of Russia. Gold and base metal prospectors in Tasmania's remote north-west wilderness had found traces of osmiridium in stream sediments as early as 1861, but believed there was no commercial value in the shiny silvery-grey mineral. All this was to change towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when fountain pen manufacturers discovered that osmiridium – one of the hardest naturally occurring substances - was perfectly suited as a 'point metal' for forming the tips of long-lasting pen nibs. Thus the stage was set for the emergence of a uniquely Tasmanian industry and a story that was a marketing dream for the copywriters of fountain pen advertising.

As Haygarth emphasises in his introduction, 'like an alluvial gold bonanza, stream-borne osmiridium seemed to have the power to change lives by shaking the bonds of lineage and poverty.' It was almost the perfect prospectors' and independent miners' mineral – rarer and more valuable than either diamonds or gold, found only in small isolated pockets of ore or alluvium that took experience and perseverance to locate, but was easily mined with manual labour alone, and then extracted by gravity, using the familiar techniques of puddling, sluices-boxes, cradle and tin pan. Its only disadvantage was the volatile price and limited number of buyers.

Haygarth takes a broadly chronological approach, shaping each chapter around a different theme. In this way he examines aspects of the industry such as the stimulus created by the rise of leading fountain pen manufacturers in Britain and America, the role of agents and buyers, prospectors, government incentives and the booming post-WWI demand and peak prices, followed by buyer collusion and ill-fated government attempts to introduce price regulation. This approach also has the benefit of describing a

broadly geographical arc, following the trail of ‘ossie’ miners from the earliest production on Pieman River in the state’s north-west during the early 1900s, through successive finds at Wilson and Huskisson Rivers, 19-Mile Creek, Savage River, Jones Creek, Castray River and Mount Stewart, before sweeping southwards to Rocky Boat Harbour and the last great rush to Adamsfield. In later chapters Haygarth turns to the introduction of capital and the inevitable decline of the industry following László József Bíró’s revolutionary invention of the ball point pen in 1938.

In the middle, chapter 4 provides a magical interlude as Haygarth takes an aside to recount the story of filming *Jewelled Nights*, a blockbuster silent-movie made in 1925 on Tasmania’s osmiridium fields, based on the romantic novel about a cross-dressing transgender heroine, written by the lesbian Australian author Marie Bjelke Petersen. This we learn was one of Haygarth’s entry points into the ‘ossie’ story, for amongst his forebears were several osmiridium diggers and the cross-gender relative, Frank-Hazel Humphries, whom rumour suggested was the inspiration for Bjelke Peterson’s novel.

*J.H. Robinson photo of osmiridium miners at Limestone Creek, Wilson River, c.1910s*



Source: Courtesy of Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Throughout the book, Haygarth’s words are complimented by a superb collection of some 265 historical and contemporary images, maps, plans and illustrated advertisements. Most notable among these are 65 historical photographs taken through the lens of the Waratah-based amateur photographer John Henry ‘Jackie’ Robinson. His crystal-clear glass plate negatives capture striking portraits of many of the characters mentioned by name in Haygarth’s text, showing their rough living conditions and the rugged beauty of the landscape in which they worked, together with intricate details of the mining techniques they employed. Complementing the historical images are beautiful contemporary colour images, many taken by the author himself, which vividly

depict the decaying relics of abandoned mining sites and settlements as they are gradually re-absorbed back into the rainforest.

It is a shame given the generally excellent quality of the publication, that some of the fountain pen advertisements are noticeably pixelated, and some historical photographs are either very dark or lacking in tonality – issues that could perhaps have been rectified by more expert digital manipulation at the production stage.

For those geographically challenged by the many obscure Tasmanian place names, eleven coloured maps are included, although these might have been more useful had each included a scale. One finds oneself annoyingly flipping backwards and forwards to work out how each of the smaller maps relates to the bigger picture, which might have been avoided had an additional key map been provided.

This is a mining history unapologetically about people and places and the lure of a rare and valuable mineral with a very specific commercial application. While the author includes some commentary about the impact of key international events and the general state of the Tasmanian economy, readers who seek tabulated production figures and graphs may be disappointed. No attempt is made to examine the value or importance of osmiridium production relative to other Tasmanian mineral exports and only passing reference is made to production figures or overall numbers of miners – we do learn though, that the 364 osmiridium miners at work in 1919 produced 2,009oz of the metal, worth £77,114, and that production peaked at 3,365½oz in 1925. All these, however, are only minor criticisms.

In short, I would recommend *'On the Ossie'* as a rewarding read and well worth the purchase price, if only because it will almost certainly become the only history dedicated to osmiridium mining that is likely to grace your bookshelf.

**Matthew S. Churchward**

*Museums Victoria*

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**Lyndon Megarrity**, *Northern Dreams: The Politics of Northern Development in Australia*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2018, ISBN: 9781925801187 PB.

**A**s a former resident of Darwin and someone who spends much of their professional life in regional centres and remote communities in North Australia, I jumped at the chance to review a book that claims to ‘bring to life the passionate arguments about Northern Australia’s national significance and analyses the political debates that have periodically drawn the public’s attention northwards’. *Northern Dreams* deals with the period from Federation to 2015, and focuses in particular on ‘the Commonwealth’s engagement with the North’ (p. 8). Megarrity’s ultimate goal however is less about examining policies or institutions for their own sake, but rather as ‘a window onto the values and lives of people and what they cherish most at particular times in history’ (p. 10).

*Northern Myths* certainly traces the forces that shaped Commonwealth responses to the North, and includes a focus on people by weaving through this policy history profiles both of northern residents who sought to influence Federal policies, and of Federal politicians who were responsible for shaping and for delivering, or perhaps more often for *not* delivering, those policies. Some central themes emerge. One is the absence, for most if not all of the period, of any coherent, consistent policy in relation to ‘the North’. Rather there is a waxing and waning of interest depending on political context and the dominant concerns of ‘mainstream’ (i.e. southern) Australian politics. Waning was more common than waxing, and the North was often seen in stereotypical if not misleading terms as a security risk (‘the empty north’), a financial sinkhole for unwary politicians (consistently a Treasury view), or Australia’s economic salvation (‘the foodbowl of Asia’). Megarrity suggests at times that a coherent Northern policy might in fact have been impossible to achieve, given the fundamental differences that exist, and which are well illustrated throughout the book, in demographic, economic and political histories and conditions in northern Queensland, the Northern Territory and the North of Western Australia. However in concluding the book he highlights the need for such a policy, based on ‘serious acknowledgement of the broader needs and aspirations of the growing northern society beyond jobs and growth’. Frustratingly, he does not go on to draw out what history tells us about how such an acknowledgement might be achieved (p. 184).

A second theme is the essentially derivative nature of policy on North Australia, derivative either of wider concerns driving the Commonwealth, such as maintenance of the White Australia Policy, or of the ambitions of Federal politicians. Examples of the latter were Gough Whitlam’s championing of the North, first as part of his own leadership ambitions within the Australian Labor Party (ALP), and then in building a winning electoral coalition in 1972. Another example involved Tony Abbot’s similar strategy three decades later. In neither case was the policy focus on the North maintained after individual political ambitions were achieved.

A third is the frustration ultimately experienced by ‘the Dreamers’, those optimistic souls who lived in North Australia and their southern allies who genuinely believed that Australia’s future lay in development of the North’s resources. While enjoying some victories during those times when the southern political wind blew in their favour, the electoral geography of Australia almost inevitably meant that their dreams were dashed. The book traces the ultimate withdrawal from the policy battlefield of a number of ‘Northern champions’ who invested much time and energy in the cause but ultimately accepted defeat, including Dr Rex Patterson, an expert on northern agriculture, former Director of Northern Development in the Commonwealth Department of National Development, and Minister for Northern Development in the Whitlam Government.

Finally, what emerges clearly is that in terms of changes to North Australia’s settlement and landscape, it is the private sector, especially the mining industry, supported to different degrees by state governments in Western Australia and Queensland that has provided the driving force. With the possible exception of Defence spending in Darwin and Townsville, the Commonwealth’s impact in this regard has been peripheral.

One notable absence from the book is any sustained focus on the ‘values and lives’ of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander northerners or on what they ‘cherish most’ at particular times in history. Major policy initiatives affecting them are briefly mentioned, including the recognition of Aboriginal land rights in the Northern Territory and the passage of the *Native Title Act*, as are the political controversies these generated, for example arising from the mining industry’s opposition to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*. However little attention is paid to the way in which Commonwealth policies have shaped the ability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to pursue their ‘Northern Dreams’, to what those dreams might be, or to the ideas and efforts to influence Commonwealth policy of Aboriginal ‘northerners’ such as Galarrwuy Yunupingu and Noel Pearson.

One specific omission is the lack of any reference to the Northern Territory Intervention, initiated by the Howard Coalition Government and maintained by its Labor successors. This is difficult to understand in a book that aims to analyse ‘the political debates that have periodically drawn the public’s attention northwards’. It is difficult to think of any Commonwealth policy intervention in recent decades that better fits this description. It would have added considerably to the book’s impact and completeness had Dr Megarrity chosen to consider how the Northern Territory Intervention can be understood against the backdrop of a hundred years during which the Commonwealth’s Northern development policy has been driven by the broader political concerns and ambitions of Federal politicians.

**Ciaran O’Faircheallaigh,**

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**Robert Porter**, *Below the Sands: the Companies that Formed Iluka Resources – Consolidated Goldfields, RGC, Westralian Oil, Westralian Sands, Associated Minerals Consolidate, Western Titanium*, UWA Publishing, Crawley, Western Australia, 2018, ISBN 978-1-74258-980-0. PB, RRP\$45.

**B***elow the Sands* is a history of the mining companies that came together in 1998 to form Iluka Resources. Iluka Resources, the Western Australian-based mineral sands company, had two antecedents. One was Westralian Sands, a company formed in Western Australia to explore for oil. First established in 1954 as Esperance Oil, it was renamed Westralian Oil before making a further switch in 1968 to Westralian Sands. The new name reflected the focus of the erstwhile oil exploration company on two mineral sand deposits that it had discovered in the south-west of Western Australia. The other company involved in the creation of Iluka Resources was Renison Goldfields Limited (RGC). Porter traces the latter company's lineage to Cecil Rhodes and the London-listed The Gold Fields of South Africa Limited.

Gold Fields, with its origins in gold mining in South Africa, was renamed Consolidated Gold Fields Limited in 1964. Gold Fields became one of the leading British mining and financing companies one of whose investments was in New Consolidated Gold Fields (Australasia), a company formed in 1956 mainly as an exploration company and whose subsidiary formed in 1960 was Consolidated Gold Fields (Australia) Pty Ltd. The Australian offshoot had an early success in establishing a stake in the consortium that mined the Goldsworthy iron ore deposits in Western Australia, the first iron ore company in the Pilbara iron ore province. Before and after its public listing in 1966, Consolidated Gold Fields Australia pursued a diversified business model based in the key Australian mining sectors of copper, tin, coal and gold but also in mineral or beach sands. In 1981 Consolidated Gold Fields established itself as a 'naturalised' Australian company that was majority owned by Australian shareholders. Under the name Renison Goldfields Consolidated (RGC), the company maintained its relationship with its London parent until 1989. Towards the end of the 1980s, however, another company established by Cecil Rhodes, De Beers, launched a hostile takeover bid for Consolidated Goldfields through the entity, Minorco. While Minorco's attempt was unsuccessful, it did lead to the takeover of Gold Fields in 1989 by the corporate raider Hanson PLC, a company with the reputation of acquirer and eventual seller of multiple businesses. The raid left Hanson as a major new shareholder in an Australian entity, RGC, that had gained ownership of the important sand mining province of Eneabba in the 1970s. Despite its larger size, the more expansive RGC would be taken over by the much smaller and parochial Westralian Sands when Iluka Resources was established in 1998. Porter's history is much broader and richer than that of Iluka and mineral sands. While they both play a central role in the narrative, the book encompasses the institutional histories of Consolidated Gold Fields in Britain and its offshoots in Australia, Consolidated Gold Fields Australia and Renison Goldfields Consolidated.

The author of the book is well equipped for the task. Robert Porter is not only an Iluka employee but also the author of a biography of the Western Australian historian, politician and Governor-General, Sir Paul Hasluck. The book is well written, meticulously researched from the archives of several companies and enriched by interviews with leading participants. It is essential reading for anyone interested in the post-World War II history of mining in Australia. It is also a credit to the far-sighted Iluka managers who encouraged its author and to UWA Press which has published it to high production standards with copious illustrations and useful maps, charts and appendices.

**David Lee**

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

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**Robert W. Vernon**, *John Taylor and Sons and their three 'Drops of Comfort' – their lead mines at Linares, Jaén, Southern Spain*, British Mining, No. 103, Northern Mine Research Society, Nelson, pp. 250, maps, photographs, ISBN-13: 978-0-901450-73-9. £12. Available at <http://www.nmrs.org.uk/publication/british-mining-no-103/>

**M**ining activity in the Linares district in Andalucia, Spain, can be traced back four thousand years, when the Bronze Age Argaric people mined outcropping veins of copper. Later mining of copper and lead lodes was carried out by the Iberians, Carthaginians and Romans. Records indicate continued mining activity from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with an increase following involvement of the Spanish Crown in the Arrayanes Mine in 1749. Difficulties in dewatering the mines limited the depth of mining until the introduction of steam technology by British companies in the 1840s revitalized the Spanish mining industry. Linares became one of the world's major lead producers in the following decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the last of the Linares mines closed in 1991.

*John Taylor and Sons and their three 'Drops of Comfort'* is the latest contribution by well-known mining historian Robert Vernon on the activities of British mining companies in Spain. John Taylor and Sons were involved in mining ventures as consultants, promoters and managers for almost 130 years in many parts of the world. In this book Vernon has documented in detail their activities in Spain, with emphasis on the Linares district. The heritage significance of the mining landscape of Linares and adjacent La Carolina fields, with their concentration of Cornish type engine houses, is also emphasized.

A concise summary of the Taylor family history and their involvement in mining over five generations is followed by a brief account of early British mining in Spain. The three 'Drops of Comfort' were the main mines managed by John Taylor and Sons at Linares: the Linares Lead Mining Company, Fortuna Company and Alamillos Company. Vernon has presented the histories of these companies, operating in the same district and with common management and directorships, as an opportunity to compare and contrast their mixed fortunes. The book is the outcome of more than three decades of research by Vernon, much of it in collaboration with the Colectivo Proyecto Arrayanes, a group of enthusiastic Linares residents dedicated to the interpretation and conservation of the mining heritage of the Linares and La Carolina fields. Participants in the 11<sup>th</sup> International Mining History Congress held in Linares in September 2016 will undoubtedly remember the generous hospitality offered by the 'Colectivo', organizers of the Congress.

Vernon suggests that British mining companies were probably attracted to Spain by changes in that country's mining laws and a relaxation of import tariffs on foreign machinery. The first of the Linares mines to be managed by John Taylor and Sons was Pozo Ancho. This mine, previously owned by the Marquis of Remisa, had been a very profitable operation but closed in 1843 as it became increasingly expensive to work at deeper levels; it had reached a depth of 50 fathoms (91 m). Duncan Shaw, a Scottish mining entrepreneur, bought the lease in 1848 and the Linares Lead Mining Association

(later registered as the Linares Lead Mining Company) was formed to work the mine. The first Cornish pumping engine at Linares started on the Santo Tomás shaft in October 1849. The viability of the mine was soon established, but by 1852 some shareholders were voicing discontent with the management - Vernon notes that 'none of the directors, or the immediate subscribers to the company had any experience in mining, let alone a mine relatively so remote from a point of export'. Practical experience was needed and this came in the form of John Taylor and Sons; they were appointed managers of the mine in early 1853 and went on to manage not only Pozo Ancho but other Linares lead mines for more than 60 years. Their appointment had an immediate impact on both mine development and share price.

The success of Pozo Ancho drew other British companies to Linares and also led to John Taylor and Sons floating the Fortuna Company in 1853, to work mines to the west of Pozo Ancho. In 1862, with the impending arrival of a railway connecting Linares to a port, and the prospect of lower transport costs, John Taylor and Sons purchased some 'pertenencias' (concessions) between the other two mines, and to work them the Alamillos Company was formed.

Two inter-related issues consistently mentioned in reports for all three companies were transport costs and smelting. In the early years, ore was carried by mule carts to Seville or Malaga (both about 250 km from Linares) for shipping to London, hence the decision by the Linares Lead Mining Co. to build a smelter in Linares to treat ore from Pozo Ancho. The Fortuna Co. built a separate smelter at Linares. In 1859, the railway from Seville reached Cordoba and the Linares Lead Mining Co. opened a smelter there, enabling it to not only reduce transport costs but also to use coal from the nearby Belmez coalfield. This smelter also handled ore from the Alamillos Co. Extension of the Seville-Cordoba railway to Linares was completed in 1865. Surprisingly, there is little mention of the cost or difficulty of transporting heavy machinery to Linares prior to construction of the railway.

Fluctuations in the price of lead were an ongoing subject of comment in company reports, with profits for each company reacting accordingly. Broken Hill was singled out for criticism at one meeting of the Fortuna Co. for 'having inundated the market with lead at any price it would fetch'. Nevertheless, until their final years of operations early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all three companies were able to pay dividends in almost every year. Linares Lead Mining Co. having the richest ore was in the best position to withstand periods of low lead prices; in 1898 it paid its 100<sup>th</sup> dividend, leading the Chairman to observe 'a centenary of dividends in a mining company is not a frequent experience'. Of the three companies, Alamillos was the least profitable, dividends being described as not spectacular but at least consistent and reliable.

Other issues of concern to the companies were currency fluctuations and variations in Spanish Government taxes. An unusual effect on productivity was experienced in summer months as labourers left to take part in the harvest. Civil unrest broke out in Spain leading up to, and during, the Third Carlist War but, interestingly, there appears to have been little impact on mining companies other than some disruptions to transport and occasions when some of the labourers were called up for army service. A shareholder at one meeting of the Alamillos Co. asked if they had been

‘selling lead to the Spaniards to shoot each other with’; the reply was that ‘they sold to those who paid them business, but not with the idea that their produce should be so used’.

Around the turn of the century, the companies were beset by a combination of unfavourable factors: depleting ore reserves, low lead prices, a drop in value of the English pound against the Spanish peseta and increased Spanish Government taxes. In spite of undergoing restructuring to raise more capital, each of the companies became unprofitable and were wound up early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Vernon notes that even if the mines had been able to continue, they would probably not have lasted beyond 1921, when a Spanish Royal Decree brought mining back under Spanish control and effectively ended significant British mining investment in Spain.

*Santo Tomás Shaft, Pozo Ancho Mine, Linares.*



Photo by Ross Both

The book is a valuable contribution to the literature on the history of mining in Spain, with a fine balance between background information and detailed history of the three ‘Drops of Comfort’. It is to be hoped that it will further the case for recognition of the Linares-La Carolina mining landscape as worthy of World Heritage status.

A good selection of appropriate photographs and informative maps accompany the text, although the size and contrast of the text in some of the maps presented a challenge to this reviewer’s ageing eyesight. Typographical slips are few: curious exceptions are the occasional partial

anglicising of ‘Santo Tomás’ to ‘Santo Thomas’ and Canada (the country) consistently appearing as ‘Cañada’ (predictive text may have been the culprit in confusing it with the name of one of the Fortuna Co’s mines, Cañada Incosa). A little more attention could also have been given to consistency in the use of accents on Spanish words (e.g. filón).

Readers wishing to know more about the social environment in Linares in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century may like to also read *Untrodden Spain and her Black Country* by H. J. Rose, chaplain to the English community in Linares in 1873-1875.<sup>i</sup> His observations on the life and customs of the miners and their relations with the Cornish complement Vernon’s history of the mining companies.

## Ross Both

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<sup>i</sup> Hugh James Rose, *Untrodden Spain, and her black country, being sketches of the life and character of the Spaniard of the interior*, Samuel Tinsley, London, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, vol 1 and 2, 1975. Available for download from University of Toronto Libraries at <https://search.library.utoronto.ca/>