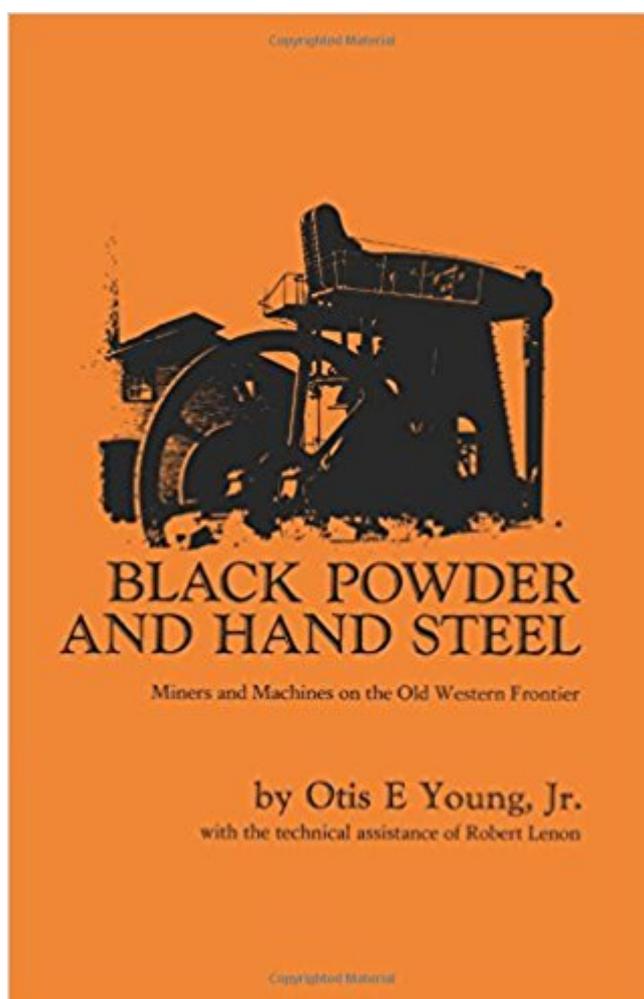


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Black Powder And Hand Steel: Miners And Machines On The Old Western Frontier



Synopsis

Mining in the western United States entered its great era after 1860 through use of the double-jack, black powder, hand steel, Bickford fuse, wire rope, and the steam engine. Those were the years of bonanza strikes: Henry Wickenburg's Vulture Mine in Arizona Territory; the main hard-rock gold strike in the desert Southwest; Ed Schieffelin's discovery of vast silver deposits in Tombstone, Arizona; and the Tonopah-Goldfield strike in Nevada, which netted over one hundred million dollars. *Black Powder and Hand Steel* describes the miners and the machinery they used. Otis E. Young, Jr., gives an account of the miners, particularly the Cornish and Irish, their origins, character, social life, pleasures, and, most important, their labors. The miner's lot depended on the tools he used, and the author traces the evolution of the miner's most important tools: from hoisting bucket to mine elevator, cold mining to dynamite, ore car to skip, hemp to wire rope, and slow match to Bickford fuse. Young reveals the difficulties of prospecting and mining two of the West's most valuable ores, gold and silver, and gives readers a firsthand look at the challenges of working even the most successful strikes. A companion volume to Young's *Western Mining*, *Black Powder and Hand Steel* is written in the same lively style—informative and entertaining for general readers and scholars. It is also well illustrated, with drawings by Buck O'Donnell.

Book Information

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