



THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CRAFT AND INDUSTRY

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Archaeologists investigating sites of craft and industrial enterprise often puzzle over a domain of bewildering ruins. Locations of remarkable energy, tumult, and creativity stand silent. This book provides an overview of the archaeology of American craft and industrial enterprises, outlines developments in theories, research questions, and interpretative frameworks, and presents case studies from a wide range of subjects.

Research focused on industrial enterprises traverses a spectrum of perspectives. Some limit their efforts to recording, mapping, and studying the mechanics of a site. Others examine comparative questions of changes of technologies over time and space. Many analysts look away from the buildings and equipment of the workplace and focus instead on the workers, their families, residences, lifeways, and health experiences. With many sites presenting standing ruins, historians and archaeologists often encounter local stakeholder groups who wish to promote heritage themes and tourism potentials.

All of these perspectives can be pursued with significant advances in research and curation methods. Investigations often range from microscopic analysis of product constituents to large-scale, three dimensional recording of locations and features with high-resolution, laser technologies. Past debates questioned whether primary emphasis should be on heritage recording or on archaeological research questions. More recent trends focus on collaborations across interest groups.



*The shapes arise!
Shapes of factories, arsenals, foundries, markets;
Shapes of the two-threaded tracks of railroads;
Shapes of the sleepers of bridges, vast frameworks,
girders, arches;
Shapes of the fleets of barges, tows, lake and canal craft,
river craft.*

— Walt Whitman, 1871, in *Song of the Broad-Axe*




Table of Contents

1. Introduction: Craft, Industry, and Heritage
 - Manufacturing and Anthropogenic Impacts
 - Definitions, Methods, and Theories
 - Excavating Histories of Craft and Industrial Enterprises
2. Making and Harvesting Commodities: Episodes of Craft Growing to Industry
 - Rivers and Textiles
 - Winning and Losing in Cornell's Pottery
 - Spinning Whimsies at Dyott's Glassworks
 - Hand Tools, Trip Hammers, and Castaways at John Russell's Cutlery
 - Making Do in Schroeders' Saddle Tree Factory
 - Of Oysters, Abalone, and Salmon
 - Many Storied Domains of Bread, Biscuits, and Cheese
 - Artisan Support for an Armaments Factory
 - Bottles and Beer at Work and Home in Harpers Ferry
 - Binderies, Tanneries, and Social Perceptions
 - Races, Lime, and Fire at Shepherdstown Cement Mill
 - Some Observations and Affordances
3. Arteries and Flow
 - Rivers, Canals, and Shipping
 - Building the Rail Lines

Iron Trajectories and Wasteful Impacts
Pullman's Rail Cars and Factory Town
Trends and Intersections

4. Extraction

Rails and Wood Cutting in West Virginia
Assemblies and Tools of Mining
From Cornwall to the Great Lakes
Colossal Montana
Hydraulic Assaults
Working the Cortez and Comstock Terrains in Nevada
Comparative Cases of Ethnicities, Cohesion, and Prejudices
Carving Coal in Berwind and Ludlow, Colorado
Mining and Murder at Lattimer, Pennsylvania
Ridge Barriers, Man Camps, and Magnetometers among the Oil Fields
Fueling Other Industries

5. Forges, Furnaces, and Metallurgy

Methods for the Melt
Early Smelting in New Mexico
Saugus Iron of Massachusetts
Trenton Steel Works of New Jersey
Strategies and Bloomeries in the Chesapeake
Landscape Challenges in Blacklog Narrows
Iron Plantations in South Carolina and Maryland
Women of Iron
Bluff Furnace of Tennessee
Tahawus Blast Innovations in New York
West Point Foundry on the Hudson
Jackson Iron Company of Michigan
Tredegar Iron and Cannons in Virginia
Hawks Nest Tunnel in West Virginia
Innovations, Pragmatic Choices, and Personal Costs

6. Craft at a Prodigious Scale: Potteries of Edgefield, South Carolina

Manufacturing Stoneware in Regional and Atlantic Contexts
Archaeological Revelations
Diverse Research Initiatives

7. Heritage Dynamics and Concluding Observations

Evolving Questions and Methods
Heritage Preserved and Repurposed
Future Prospects

References



Other books:

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