



Southwest Missouri Mining (Images of America)

Jerry Pryor

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The southwest corner of Missouri made fortunes for many early settlers to the area, and created an economic boom rivaling the Gold Rush. In this new book, author Jerry Pryor creates a pictorial history of the efforts of those who staked everything on the chance of striking a fortune underground in the land west of the Mississippi. As early as the first Native American occupation of the region, mining for ore had always been an essential aspect of life in southwestern Missouri. In the mid-19th century, mining towns sprung up like weeds, with early wanderers hearing tales of fortunes made, sometimes accidentally, while plowing fields rich in ore. Joplin, Webb City, Cartersville, and Oronogo all have origins in the mining camps that eventually grew into booming towns and cities. Soon this rich belt of mining land fostered a variety of lifestyles, ranging from the poor man's attempt to support his family under difficult and frightening conditions, to entrepreneurs such as Alfred H. Rogers, who organized the Southwest Missouri Electric Railway Company, the largest inter-city system west of the Mississippi.

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