

Armstead, Robert, and S. L. Gardner. Black Days, Black Dust The Memories of an African American Coal Miner. New York: University of Tennessee P, 2002.

Robert Armstead remembers his childhood, growing up in a segregated coal camp during the Great Depression, and he recalls his family's efforts to confront economic challenges while also dealing with the reality of racism. His father worked as a horse driver in the mines until machinery put him out of work. Even though, as a young man, Armstead saw how his father had suffered, he himself went to work in the mines in 1947. Among those drawn to jobs in the West Virginia coal mines during the first part of the twentieth century were thousands of African Americans. They proved successful in this industry—despite low wages and discrimination at the hands of mine operators. From his first day on the job, coal mining fascinated him. He initially labored in a timber crew, shoring up mine roofs. Then, in a life peppered with mine closings and layoffs that sent him from one place to another in search of work, he eventually became a mining machine operator, a foreman over predominantly white crews, and finally a safety inspector. Armstead's recollections of his father provide descriptions of primitive mining methods in the 1930s and grueling twelve-hour work days. Armstead's memories of his own career document his enthusiasm for mining and the work ethic that earned him responsible positions in the mines. Robert Armstead retired from the coal mines in 1987. He died in 1998. The descriptions of his father's work was really interesting to me, especially contrasted with his own with the technological advances made within mines and he also talks about the work his mom did, which was mostly housekeeping and taking in laundry.

Bush, C.D. "C.D. Bush telegram." Letter to John Kongley. 13 Oct. 1894. Roslyn Black History. June 2001. Ellensburg Public Library. Feb. 2009

<<http://digital.lib.cwu.edu/cgi-bin/library?a=p&p=home&l=en&w=utf-8>>.

This is a digital image online of communications to John Kongley, general manager of the Northern Pacific Coal Company concerning African-American miners in Roslyn. The text of the letter is as follows: Dear Sir: Today I recd. the enclosed letter from "Jim" Shepperson. Evidently there is some dissatisfaction among the "Colonial Troops." I will call at Roslyn in a week or so and investigate and get the facts if I can. I am afraid some partiality has been shown and you will know all my colonial friends were guaranteed an equal show. Soon as I get at the facts - will advise you fully. When may we look for you? Yours Truly, C.D. Bush. The euphemisms were interesting to me, in addition was some confirmation that Jim Shepperson, in addition, to finding work for black miners was also looking out for their welfare. It's not clear who C.D. Bush is, I tried looking on the internet but the only reference I could find was on the Roslyn website in reference to this telegram. It was helpful to my research because it documented the tensions that existed between the black miners and the community.

Campbell, Robert A. "Blacks and the Coal Mines of Western Washington, 1888 - 1896."

Pacific Northwest Quarterly 73 (1982): 146-55.

Robert Campbell writes an article about the 1889 miners' strike against the Oregon Improvement Company that brought violence to the Washington towns of Newcastle and Franklin. The violence again erupted two years later when the company brought in 500 experienced black miners to break the union. The Knights of Labor and the rival Western Central Labor Union directed campaigns of intimidation and even terror to drive the new arrivals out, but the black miners refused to surrender their jobs since employment prospects elsewhere were bleak and a lot of them had uprooted their families to move North. The Panic of 1893 sent the Oregon Improvement Company into bankruptcy and ended the controversy. This book contains 3 illustrations which are maps and 4 photos of mines and miners. This was a very helpful article, although short, and I wish the author elaborated more on the tactics of companies to play the strike breakers against the labor unions. Definitely, a must read for anyone researching African American mining in Washington State.

Davis, Richard L. "Racism in Mining." Letter to National Labor Tribune. 14 Feb. 1891.

Digging for Answers. George Mason University. Feb. 2009

<<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>>.

Richard L. Davis was called upon frequently in the 1880s and 1890s to serve as a spokesman for the many black miners in his home state, as well as the thousands more who labored in Alabama, Tennessee, and West Virginia. He was also called upon to serve as an intermediary between black rank-and-file miners and the white majority and white national leadership of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), dealing with issues as black participation in the union, strike breaking by African Americans, and the racist attitudes of many rank-and-file white miners toward African Americans. Davis was twice elected to the UMWA's executive board. In a series of six letters submitted in 1891 to the National Labor Tribune, Davis reflected on the larger meaning and purpose of interracial unionism in an era of rising racial tensions and institutionalized discrimination.

In the first letter, dated February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1891 letter to the National Labor Tribune, R. L. Davis reported the decision by some of his fellow Hocking Valley Black Ministers to form a separate organization following the alleged denial of equal access to the diminishing number of jobs in the field. Davis, both as a black miner and a UMWA official, had agreed to investigate the charges of discrimination against black miners. In a letter dated February 3, 1891, Davis notes that he had found no evidence to support the charges. Nevertheless, Davis used the opportunity to attack racial discrimination as being destructive of the basic union impulse. By the end of March 1891, Davis reported further complaints by black miners of discrimination. Davis notes that his efforts to find a workable compromise on this volatile issue were often unappreciated, particularly by his

fellow black miners. But Davis expresses his steadfast support, nonetheless, for the importance of unionism. In a May letter to the NLT, Davis describes in some detail the various types of black oppositionists to the UMWA (he calls them “kickers”) in the Hocking Valley. While critical of these black miners who opposed the union, Davis took the opportunity to underscore the essential truth of the “kicker’s” demands for fair treatment. At the end of July 1891, Davis responded to a letter in the NLT from a black miner who had gone to the coal fields near Seattle, Washington, to work in the midst of an ongoing strike. Black strikebreaking had engendered a violent and racist response, not only on the part of the striking white miners, but also from the Seattle labor movement as a whole. Davis asked for space to reply at length to the strikebreaker’s attempted justification of his actions, which Davis saw as the most fundamental threat to successful interracial organization. Writing in late August 1891, Davis again addressed the important question of black strikebreaking, this time concerning the attempt by a white labor agent to secure Ohio black miners to break a mine strike at Raymond, West Virginia.

The Raymond strike and Davis’s response to it are of particular interest because the Raymond strikers were all white and had consistently refused in the past to work with black miners. While sharply critical of such exclusionary attitudes, Davis nonetheless supported the Raymond strikers’ cause and even worked in Ohio to secure funds in support of the strike. These series of letters were particularly interesting to me because it shows how some black miners were trying to navigate that middle of the road position. How do you reconcile the racism of people you want to work with, and would like to, at least, civilly integrate with, with that of another’s need to work and be able to live and support your family? That question was one that all black miners had to address at some point in their careers no matter where in the country they worked.

Lewis, Ronald L. Black coal miners in America race, class, and community conflict, 1780-1980. Lexington, Ky: University P of Kentucky, 1987.

Ronald Lewis writes a very comprehensive history of African Americans in the United States, working as coal miners as slaves, convicts, and as wage laborers until they were displaced by mechanization. He explores how they were treated within the communities that they work, their relationships with the unions and the history of labor exploitation framed from a Marxist construct. While this book was fascinating as a part of African American history, there was only a couple of short paragraphs regarding the coal mining industry in the Pacific Northwest. He briefly relays some statistics of how many black coal miners were in the West and the time period from which they were most active. This book wasn’t particularly helpful to me as the information presented was concentrated in the Appalachia’s, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama and Kentucky.

Lovell, Charles. "Through Open Eyes." Ninety-Five Years of Black History in Roslyn, Washington. 2 Mar. 2009. Ellensburg Public Library. Jan. 2009

<<http://epl.eburg.com/Roslyn>>.

This website was a great jumping off point for my research into African American miners in Washington State. Roslyn, Washington was a coal mining town located at the eastern base of the Cascade Mountains. The first commercial operations in Roslyn were initiated in 1886 by Logan M. Bullet, Vice President of the Northern Pacific Coal Company, (a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific Railroad). Within two years the town's population grew to over 1,000 as miners from the eastern United States and Europe were attracted by the work the coal company offered.

Dissatisfied with wages and working conditions, the white miners went on strike in 1888. Company officials recruited strikebreakers including African Americans. The first black miners came to Roslyn under these circumstances. James E. Shepperson was hired by the company to bring these black miners from Virginia, North Carolina and Kentucky to replace the striking miners. Most of the African Americans did not know at the time they were being recruited to break an ongoing strike. Approximately 300 black miners came to Roslyn Washington between 1888 and 1889. Many brought their families, creating the single largest increase in the black population in the history of the Territory.

As expected, resentment grew among the white out-of-work miners. Eventually the tensions eased and the black and white residents of Roslyn came to an understanding. When the entire community needed a school house, the black citizens of Roslyn offered up their church. After the strike was broken, white miners slowly returned to work and reconciled themselves to working along side black miners. The shared dangers of late 19th Century coal mining helped forge a bond between these groups. The demand for coal also meant expansion of mining in the region which in turn generated considerable work and reduced the sense of competition for jobs between the miners. Finally, when the United Mine Workers organized the workers, black and white miners entered the union as equals. The website provides the location of various resources that are available in different libraries. There are numerous photos of communications about the strike, mining families, workers, the mine itself and photos of the landscape. This website was extremely helpful.

Moore, Ernest, and Gloria Phelps. The coal miner who came west. Seattle: E. Moore, 1982.

This is the autobiographical account of the experiences of Black coal miner family that lived in Franklin, Washington. The book is 77 pages and from abstracts that I read filled with pictures, unfortunately I haven't been able to get my hands on it yet. I've requested it via Evergreen's library but am waiting through the interlibrary loan system. But I would assume that this book would be very helpful since it's filled with personal pictures and first hand accounts of a miner in Franklin, Washington.

Mumford, Esther. Black Heritage Survey of Washington State. 6 Oct. 2004. Department of Archeology and History Preservation. Feb. 2009 <<http://www.dahp.wa.gov/>>.

This is a 93 page report that's available online through the Washington State Department of Archeology and History Preservation website written by Esther Mumford. The purpose of the report is Ms. Mumford's attempt to have a consolidated repository of information regarding African American's in Washington State. Her information covers the years of 1845 - 1935, she begins with George Bush moving this family north of the Colombia River. She covers migration (voluntary and involuntary), different types of work, health, education, religion, etc. At the end of her report, she includes her bibliography which was helpful to me in finding other resources in addition to discovering some resources like Cayton's Weekly and The Seattle Republication that I had previously thought that there were no copies available. She provides very exact information about the numbers of African Americans who migrated here and why and where they settled.

Mumford, Esther. Seven Stars and Orion Reflections of the Past. Ananse Pr, 1986.

This is the transcribed historical account of several black families in Washington State. This initially started as an interview project and was later transcribed to publish in book form. The interviews were a part of a radio series that would play weekly. Ms. Mumford has a nice cross section of black life in early nineteenth century Seattle to today. From poor to affluent, maids to business owners it was interesting to read what their initial motivations were, how they interacted with their communities. While only one of the families specifically spoke of mining, the entire book was a really good example of what life was like in the nineteenth century.

Palmer Coking Coal Company. Palmer Coking Coal Company Records (1895 - 2005).

Raw data. Washington, Black Diamond. 16 Mar. 2005.

The Morris Brothers Coal Mining Company was incorporated on December 15, 1921 and was located at Durham, a mining camp in southeast King County. In 1928, Morris Bros. took over the operation of the Occidental Coal Company in Bayne; however, the stock market crash in 1929 placed a strain on the business.

This is a large file full of biographical features, a statistical database, directory, proclamation, drawing. Includes an electronic copy of the "Washington State Coal Mine Fatalities: 1885-1960" database. The CD-ROM is the product of Palmer Coking Coal Company staff researching the Annual Reports of the Inspectors of Coal Mines of the State of Washington. Also includes a brief history of the company, introduction to the database, directory of institutions that received the database, a State of Washington Governor's Proclamation introducing Coal Mining History Week, and a drawing of the principle coal areas of Washington State. Abstracts of Title and related papers for land in Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon. Includes seven volumes of records for land held by the Pacific Coast Company.

Rathbum, C.H. "C. H. Rathbum Telegram, 1891." Letter to John Kongley. Jan. 1891.

Roslyn Black History. June 2001. Ellensburg Public Library. Feb. 2009

<<http://digital.lib.cwu.edu/cgi-bin/library?a=p&p=home&l=en&w=utf-8>>.

This is a digital image online of a letter written by C.H. Rathbum to John Kongley, I think the letter was written in January but that's uncertain because the text of the letter is incredibly hard to read and enlarging doesn't help at all. C. H. Rathbum, secretary of the Star Coal Company in Illinois was corresponding to John Kongley, general manager of the North Pacific Coal Company in Roslyn about sending African-American miners to the Roslyn mine. The original group of black miners were put to work at mine No. 3 near Ronald. They were regularly armed, and the site was fortified with logs and barbed wire to prevent a confrontation with the striking miners. Most of the black miners armed themselves routinely for protection when leaving the encampment. I can only pick out a few words but the tone of the letter is not a happy one.

"Robert Saunders papers." Interview with Larry Gossett. 20 Mar. 1968.

Robert Saunders' parents and maternal grandparents came to Roslyn, Washington from South Carolina in 1900. They were brought on the Northern Pacific Railroad as strike breakers for mining work. The family moved to Seattle around 1903 after Saunders' grandfather was killed in a mining accident. Saunders' father got a job as a fireman at Seattle Gas Company through Jim Hill, who owned stock in Railroad, Mines, and Seattle Gas. Robert was born in Roslyn in 1901. This is a tape recorded interview conducted by Larry Gossett on 20 Mar 1968. Saunders talks about his childhood and schooling at Broadway and Franklin High Schools, and later job discrimination against Negroes who were trained in special vocational programs in high school. He talks about experiences playing pro baseball in black leagues before Blacks were allowed into major league baseball. He talks about experiences on ships as a cook. He gives several anecdotes about experiences in Bombay, Africa, and the Orient, relevant to racial feelings toward Blacks. This a 60 minute sound cassette found at the University of Washington Special Collection archive, it cannot be accessed on weekends or holidays and is in digital format.

Ronald, Alexander. Roslyn mining strike, 1888. Digital image. WSU Library. Mar. 2001.

Washington State University. Feb. 2009 <<http://kaga.wsulibs.wsu.edu>>.

This is an online digital image that is available online through the library at Washington State University. The image is of a telegram sent from Tacoma, Washington Territory on December 30, 1888 to John Kangley of Streator, Illinois, the text is as follows: "In taking the new drivers to Roslyn this afternoon Ronald and Williamson were surrounded and knocked senseless by strikers and disarmed. Afterwards run out of town. Several of new men badly used up. Mob rule reigns in Roslyn tonight and..." Alexander Ronald was Superintendent of the Northwestern Improvement Company (N.W.I.) in the 1880's and for whom the town of Ronald was named. Sent via western union telegraph company. The telegram stops abruptly and I wasn't able to find an accompanying image that would have supplied the rest of the message. I thought this telegram was an indication of the level of violence that had gripped Roslyn during the strike.

"Roslyn, Washington." Wikipedia. Ed. WikiProject Washington. 28 Feb. 2009. Jan. 2009

<[www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)>.

Wikipedia has a short paragraph about the strike of 1888, and was a great starting point for finding initial sources about African American coal mining in Washington state. It gives you a brief history about the strike of 1888, and the mine accident of 1892. At the bottom of the entry, you have several external links that connect you to other sites with more information about Roslyn and about coal mining.

Saunders, Cornelia. "Cornelia Saunders papers." Interview with Larry Gossett.

Miss Saunders' grandfather came west to work construction in the 1800s. Then he worked in coal mines in Franklin, Washington. Cornelia Saunders studied at the UW to be a nurse and worked at Franklin hospital from 1934-38. Tape recorded interview conducted by Larry Gossett on 3 May 1968. Miss Saunders discusses the life of black miners around 1889, and farming life in Yakima Valley, where there were black homesteaders. Her grandfather went with Jim Shepperson to work as a strike breaker. There were gun battles, especially in Renton because white settlers didn't want the blacks to be there. Saunders' mother and father came to Seattle in the very early 1900s after a mining explosion. Her father was a laborer for the city and then at the Gas Company for 37 years. The family lived on 26th and E. Madison since 1914. She stressed that blacks were free to get an education or learn a trade but couldn't get jobs at their trades. She mentions the black influx during World War II. Before the war there were 3,200 blacks in Seattle, and now there are 50,000. This audio interview is available through the University of Washington and is approximately 90 minutes in length and in digital format.

Schwantes, Carlos Arnaldo. The Pacific Northwest An Interpretive History (Revised and Enlarged Edition). New York: University of Nebraska P, 2000.

Carlos Arnaldo Schwantes has written what is still considered the most comprehensive and balanced history of the region. This edition contains significant additional material on early mining in the Pacific Northwest, sea routes to Oregon in the early discovery and contact period, the environment of the region, the impact of the Klondike gold rush, and politics since 1945. Recent environmental controversies, such as endangered salmon runs and the spotted owl dispute, have been addressed, as has the effect of the Cold War on the region's economy. Schwantes has also expanded the discussion of the roles of women and people of color and updated statistical information. This was a very good book to read about the history of the Pacific Northwest, he focuses on three major themes: economic development based on natural resources, the urbanization of society, and an increasing concern for the environment. The book is 570 pages, 92 illustrations and 14 maps. At the end of the book, he provides an appendix that has some statistical information about the racial makeup of the PNW, population changes, and information on river and coastline changes. I really liked this book because it provides a very inclusive look at the history of Washington Territory that includes all of the different groups of people that were living there during those times and what they were doing. I think this is a book that anyone studying the history of the area would be able to use.



Shideler, John C. Coal towns in the Cascades a centennial history of Roslyn and Cle Elum, Washington. Spokane, Wash: Melior Publications, 1986.

John Schideler came to the coal mining areas around Roslyn and Cle Elum in 1983 and 1984 to investigate the hazard potential of abandoned underground coal mine lands for the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Surface Mining. In conducting research for the final report, John became interested by the history of Roslyn and Cle Elum and decided to write this book. In writing Coal Towns, John drew upon his background as a former professor of history and author of several other history books. John is a native of the Pacific Northwest. This book is a history of Cle Elum and Roslyn, two coal mining towns in Washington state. The book begins with a brief introduction to the area's geological origins. Chapters address Native American residents, the pioneer era, the discovery of coal and the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway, mining and logging, the decline of coal mining, and the end of the coal mining era. There are a number of photographs in this book and it was very helpful to me but a pretty short book at about 158 pages.

Stern, Mark. "Black Strikebreakers in the coal fields: King County, Washington: 1891."  
Journal of Ethnic Studies 5 (1977): 60-70.

Mark Stern relates the activities of the Oregon Improvement Company's recruitment and use of African Americans from Iowa and Illinois at its Newcastle and Franklin mines during the Knights of Labor-inspired strike of 1891. Contrary to the white miners' stereotypes, the blacks involved were not 'collected from the slums' or 'unconscious tools of the company,' but were for the most part experienced coal miners who had gone through industrial conflicts before, were conscious of their role, and had some ideological justification for their actions. Local black leaders preached a philosophy of self-help and racial pride, and saw the managers of the corporation as allies against the Knights and the white workers. Events in King County contradict the dominant interpretation of the phenomenon of the black strikebreaker, and show that Booker T. Washington's creed was less a rationalization of racism than a stress on cultural pride and separateness. He based his research on primary and secondary sources; 29 notes.

Strom, Sam. Strom Sam papers. Raw data. Washington, Monte Cristo. 17 Jan. 1973.

Sam Strom reminiscences of his experiences as a homesteader, miner, Western Federation of Miners Union official, and justice of the peace in the Upper Sauk Mining area in Snohomish County, Washington; 1934. Strom discusses the establishment of the mining camp at Monte Cristo, Wash. and the development of trail, road, and rail access into it. He lists some early pioneers on the Upper Sauk River. The reminiscence covers the years 1893-1934. This is a transcribed interview available through the University of Washington. It was interesting to read his experiences first as a strikebreaker and then later as a member of the union. There is a lot of good

information here about community sentiment, motivations for strikebreaking and the justifications behind it and the eventual acceptance into the union.

Taylor, Quintard, Charles Ramsay, and John Dawkins. "Black Oral History (1972 - 1974)." Black Oral History Collection. 2007. Washington State University. Feb. 2009 <<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/finders/cass2.htm>>.

The Black Oral History Collection consists of interviews conducted by Quintard Taylor and his associates, Charles Ramsay and John Dawkins. They interviewed African American pioneers and their descendents throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, from 1972-1974. Since it seemed that few African Americans left a written record of themselves, important information was passed on from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Topics discussed in the interviews include early black settlers, job opportunities, social life and community, living patterns, black churches, and black political involvement from the late 1800s through 1974. Most of the interviews follow a standard set of questions. The tapes are arranged alphabetically by interviewee. An exception occurs where two interviewees were recorded on the same cassette (No.s 3 & 4), making 51 interviews on 50 tapes. Topics include early black settlers, job opportunities, living patterns, black churches, and black political involvement from the late 1800s through 1974. All of the audio is available to listen to online however you must download RealPlayer to be able to hear it. There is a wealth of information from a variety of sources about family histories and what it was like to settle this area. I have listened to 3 of the interviewees and plan on listening to the rest.

Whatley, Warren. "African American Strikebreaking from the Civil War to the New Deal." Social Science History 17 (1993): 525-58.

Warren Whatley explores the practice that United States companies employed by using black strikebreakers when unions would go on strike. When large groups of black men and women would enter a white area with the protection of the police or a private protection company during a time when they were denied most basic civil rights and were excluded from joining unions. The perception, during the early nineteenth century, was that African Americans had become a "race of strikebreakers." He includes a very lengthy list of dates and places that have recorded instances of strikebreaking with the use of a black labor force, sorted by industry. I was hoping to find some more information about the strikebreakers in Roslyn, WA but he keeps most of his historical information centralized to the Midwest and Northeast. Ultimately, this article wasn't particularly helpful to me.