

the movement of Athapaskan-speaking peoples. Finally, Loendorf stresses the importance of bringing a variety of lenses to bear in “seeing” rock art, such as those to be found in ethnographic interpretation, as well as in the spatial and temporal distribution of the materials studied. He ends with the observation that, “It is only by combining insights from these various intellectual domains that we will develop a comprehensive picture of past life on the High Plains, and the place in it of rock art.”

In conclusion, this is a thorough but easily read book on an aspect of the past that most Americans, including many archaeologists, are largely unfamiliar with. The rock art of the High Plains contributes much to the region’s cultural landscape and it helps to inform its sense of place. Loendorf successfully reveals an interesting aspect of the landscape by allowing us a glimpse of the rock art that punctuates this unique and formidable place. We see this place through the lens of the rock art itself and come away knowing it through the words of a gifted archaeologist.



## *A Yankee in Mexican California, 1834–1836*

Richard Henry Dana, Jr.

Foreword by John Seibert Farnsworth

Berkeley, California: Santa Clara University and Heyday Books. 96 pp., 7 illus. \$9.95 (paper).

**Reviewed by Glenn J. Farris**

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First-person accounts of life in Mexican California are prized by scholars of this period. Richard Henry Dana’s well-known book, *Two Years Before the Mast*, contains many intriguing observations, but in its unabridged form can tend to overwhelm the average reader. This is because Harvard student-turned-common-sailor Dana was evidently so taken with his mastery of the arcane lore of sailing ships that he seems to want to provide the reader with details on virtually every change of sail or activity aboard ship for the whole voyage, and this level of detail is probably the reason many people are put off by what is really a very good read. In this version, John Farnsworth has eliminated much of the nautical language and focused on Dana’s interactions and observations during his visits ashore. The reader is thus able to more clearly visualize Mexican California in the days immediately following the secularization of the California missions, a time when the ranchos were really starting to get into full swing. As a common sailor,

Dana was not able to venture much further into the country than the ports that he visited, which included San Francisco, Monterey, Santa Barbara, San Pedro, and San Diego. His relatively low station also resulted in his not being invited to the homes of the higher class Californians, even those of the foreigners. This may have flavored his relatively negative view of the people of the country, who he considered indolent.

It is interesting to contrast Dana’s book with another contemporary account written by Alfred Robinson, who arrived in California about five years before Dana and also published an account of California (*Life in California*) about six years after Dana’s book came out. Robinson was a merchant who was regularly invited into the homes of many California families, and though he may also have noted a certain lack of entrepreneurial energy on the part of the population, at least he could balance it with a more intimate contact with the people. On the other hand, Dana does provide us with the unusual view of California as seen by a fore-mast tar and there were certainly a large number of such men who visited California over the years, but very few who could provide us with a literate account. His interaction with people otherwise not well depicted by other writers, such as the Hawaiian sailors (Kanakas), the ebullient Italian crew of the *Rosa*, and the sailors aboard the Russian American Company ship *Polifemia*, his visits to the local groggeries, as well as the details about treating cow-hides purchased for the Boston market, are all very interesting and valuable. The fact that he was aboard

a ship of the Boston firm of Bryant and Sturgis, which dominated the hide-and-tallow trade at the time, adds to the pertinence of his observations.

While this book makes Dana's observations about California more readily accessible to the general reader, what is presented is simply what Dana had originally published, with no attempt at annotation. This could be frustrating for a scholar who might wish for more insight into the individuals and events mentioned. Such people would be better off to track down the wonderful, highly annotated version of *Two Years Before the Mast* edited by John Haskell Kemble and published in two volumes in 1964. However, footnotes may get in the way of a good yarn for the casual reader. On the other hand, Dana does

make a number of historically inaccurate observations that it would be well to set straight instead of leaving the reader with these presented as "facts." Dana should not be relied upon in the parts where he sought to inform the reader on the broader history of California. However, his firsthand, contemporary accounts are very useful. In short, this is a good book for light reading or for obtaining an introduction to this brief two years of California history, but for those wishing to use the information for scholarly purposes, I would recommend that they seek out either a fuller edition or, better yet, the Kemble version. Having said that, I did enjoy this book for rendering Dana's interesting account of life in California in 1834–36 into an easy read rather than a slog.



## ***The Archaeology of the Eastern Nevada Paleoarchaic, Part I: The Sunshine Locality***

Charlotte Beck and George T. Jones

Salt Lake City, The University of Utah Press, 2009  
University of Utah Anthropological Papers 126,  
262 pp., 151 figures, notes, appendix, references, index,  
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It is clear from even a quick glance at Charlotte Beck and George Jones' new monograph that the Sunshine Locality is a premier Paleoarchaic archaeological resource. Upon a thorough reading, the details assert this at every step via the large amount of data collected, the effort taken to collect it, and extensive geomorphological and technological analyses. The book is crucial to the desk of anyone interested in Paleoarchaic (or "Paleoindian," if you choose) occupations in the Desert West.

This is the first of a two-part effort by the authors to examine Paleoarchaic archaeology in the eastern Great Basin, and thus it is not a comprehensive treatment

of regional issues. It is a technical site report. But it is adequate to address most of what is on the minds of interested researchers, especially chronology and technological patterning, and to set up a larger discussion of land use and mobility, which are the authors' stated goals for their yet-to-be-published second part.

As described in Chapter 1, the Sunshine Locality is an expansive multi-site complex of almost 6 km.<sup>2</sup> associated with the currently ephemeral Sunshine Wash. At the Pleistocene-Holocene transition, this was a perennially wet distributary wetland in south-central Long Valley, Nevada. It is also the foremost site area in the authors' long-term research efforts in eastern Nevada, including summer fieldwork since the mid-1980s in nearby valleys to the south and east.

Chapter 2 presents a detailed discussion of the history of research at the site. This goes back to 1962, with Beck and Jones' involvement beginning in the early 1990s. They do a good job of corralling the spotty reporting and publication history of previous work, a blessing to those of us who know about the Sunshine Locality but have found it difficult to find a suitable description or pin down proper citations.

Of particular note in this chapter is their description of extensive artifact collecting done by avocationalsists