

monoville

Volume I

by Kenneth Lifshitz

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Length: 195,000 words

Genre: Historical Fiction

Format: PDF or Wordperfect

Sample Chapters: Available on request

Abstract:

Like the obscure magnetic and volcanic forces that shaped the face of the continent there were inescapable deep rooted forces inhering in the personalities who came to populate the west, those who came also to ineluctably and indelibly alter it; chief among these were greed, idealism and the belief in science.

Contrary to the picture in the popular mind it was not the primarily conflict of the cowboy and the Native American which inalterably shaped the contours of the American West, this was accomplished mostly by men possessed by one of these three opposing, but inextricably interlinked cultural imperatives. They were the driving force of expansion and Manifest Destiny, what we call today in a convenient elision, civilization. Their tools were the compass and the theodolite, black powder and unbounded enthusiasm and with these they subdued the landscape much as the guns, germs and steel subdued its first inhabitants. To understand these men and women better is the task of anyone who wishes to come to grips with the history of the nation at a visceral level and the motives of the men who brought us from the gold fueled euphoria of the early eighteen fifties up to the brink of national dissolution. 'monoville' traces the history of those whose crimes and triumphs, both of omission and commission came to shape this vast landscape and how (we and) they become eventually complicit in the destruction of a way of life and indistinguishable each from the other through moral and intellectual lapses.

Time Frame: 1855-1861

Locations: Coast of California, San Francisco, the Olympic Peninsula of Washington and the Eastern Sierras. New Harmony Indiana.

Author Bio: See www.kenlifshitz.com/authorbio.html

Plot Outline:

The story begins with the apparent suicide of Archibald MaCrae captain of the USCS Survey Ship *Ewing* off the coast of Santa Barbara in 1855 while scouting Bishop Rock.

Book 1 – Chess

A suicide and the activities of the survey fleet off the coast of California. Surveyors James Lawson and George Davidson come west.

Book 2 – Breath of the Dragon

The Chinese communities east of the Sierras. A murder outside a vegetable store in Bodie and the miners seek revenge against the Chinese for stealing their jobs.

Book 3 – Ghost Dancer

Consequences of the murder of the astronomer Kirlew Hume on the sacred Indian grounds of Bishop Tuff. Drawing the line between Nevada and California. Mark Twain encounters a camel and a rock.

Book 4 – New Harmony

The socialist utopian experiment in Indiana and the rise of the scientific class in America. Robert Owen the Scotch industrial atheist and Georg Rapp the rapturist square off.

Book 5 – Two Wolves

The survey of the Olympic Peninsula and the Makah Twana Ceremony. A cougar hunt. The assault on Port Townsend. The Indians get a washing machine and lose their land.

Book 6 – Kit Carson

The creation of Carson City. Competition for the U.S. mint. Eadweard Muybridge begins an odyssey and ends up with a baby. Making the railroad.

Book 7 – A World Not Yet Realized.

San Francisco and the Vigilance Committees. The Daily Evening Bulletin. The first visit of the nation of Japan to America. The last cruise of *the Active*.

Another murder in prison. A great telescope is born. The San Francisco Mid-Winter exposition.

Book I

Chess

- ▶ **Able I Ere I Saw Elba** – a confession of sorts.
- ▶ **Bishop Rock**– the suicide of Archibald MacRae of the USCS
- ▶ **Fiji, If I May**– exculpatory interlude
- ▶ **The Far Hills Beckon Wanly** – MacRae’s past
- ▶ **Lawson** – expletives not deleted, a strange funeral
- ▶ **Of Whole Cloth** – Mark Twain and the petrified man
- ▶ **Planets and Stars** – Postlude

Book II

Breath of the Dragon

- ▶ **Subtle is the Lord** – The motives of a self confessed murderer
- ▶ **The Celestial Sniper** – Coronal Mass Ejections and other strange events
- ▶ **Aurora** – The Aurora of 1859
- ▶ **“Goodbye God, I’m goin’ to Bodie”** – betting on death
- ▶ **The Lee Yong Vegetable Company** - a Chinese entrepreneur
- ▶ **The Killing of Kin Lam in Black and White** - a murder with vegetables
- ▶ **Negitivity** – the landscape of Mono Lake
- ▶ **Non Compus Mencius** – Sam Leon’s Trial
- ▶ **The BowlaWhorEmporium** – a new kind of all inclusive resort
- ▶ **Sam Warrington’s Last Whiskey** – the poker game with a murderer
- ▶ **A Hole in One** – Sam Warrington stirs up the miners
- ▶ **Blowin’ Off Steam** – The miners set out to take revenge on the Chinese of Mono
- ▶ **Don’t bring Gunfight to a Bull Fight** -- Cherokee Liz confronts a wagonload of irate miners

Book III

The Ghost Dancer

- ▶ **Antelope Bones** – Machin and Cherokee Liz at Machin's diggings on Mono Lake
- ▶ **Amazing Grease** – More confessin'
- ▶ **Peas in a Pod** - Cherokee Liz at the St. Louis School for Indians
- ▶ **The Howe** – Machin meets Liz on the way west
- ▶ **Tavibo and Kish Taka** - the murder on ceremonial grounds is discussed
- ▶ **Necessity Rocks** – Machin and Ton-Wa are met by Indians on the Bodie Tpke
- ▶ **Literary Pursoots** – Twain & Higby join the party
- ▶ **Orion's Belt** – Sam Warrington's corpse
- ▶ **Franky Goes to Hollywood** – and a dog shows up
- ▶ **Justice Delayed** – the Indians demand justice for the murder at Bishop Tuff
- ▶ **A Connecticut Camel** – a dromedary joins the party
- ▶ **A Tongue Turned to Stone** – Liz ends up with the severed head somehow
- ▶ **Something He'd Rather Not Say** – Machin asks for his horse back
- ▶ **Tickle Me Elmo** – the medicine man scolds Tavibo
- ▶ **Legend of the Red Headed Giants** – the story of the Si-Te-Cah
- ▶ **Mummies** – Liz tries vainly to dispose of the head

Book IV

New Harmony

- ▶ **Sweet Grapes and Sauerbraten**– Robert Owen purchases Neu Harmonie from Georg Rapp
- ▶ **New Landing** –Robert Owen builds his dream on the shores of the Wabash
- ▶ **Black Ballad** – The purchase of the footprints of Gabriel
- ▶ **Le Academie Pestoloizianum**- contention amongst the Harmonists
- ▶ **The Fauntleroy** – The Fauntleroy clan arrives from Mars Hill amidst an attempt to oust Owen
- ▶ **The Declaration of Mental Independence** -Owen fights back
- ▶ **MacCluriana** – An alternate theory about the footprints is advanced
- ▶ **Valediction** – Owen decides to leave for good
- ▶ **The Boatload of Knowledge** – the arrival of the ‘scientifics’ en masse
- ▶ **Gabriel’s Footsteps** - Martin Anderson arrives in New Harmony with a patent for a washing machine

Book V

Two Wolves

- ▶ **Station Weasel** – Ferdinand Hassler and the creation of the Coast Survey
- ▶ **The 39th Parallel** – the laying of the transcontinental arc
- ▶ **The Telescope** – George Davidson spots something odd
- ▶ **Moral Clarity** - George Davidson and Robert Fauntleroy in the Gulf of Mexico
- ▶ **The Point of Beginning** – The beginnings of the survey of the west coast
- ▶ **Neeah Bay** – Davidson and Fauntleory are abandoned when they go on a cougar hunt
- ▶ **Two Wolves** – James Lawson and George Davidson
- ▶ **The Missing Spoon** - a spoon goes missing from the *Active*'s mess
- ▶ **A Pig and Whistle** – Anderson arrives on the west coast with his washing machine. The assault on Port Townsend with a pig's foot.
- ▶ **Juniper Berries** – the curious fate of the bootlegger Pettingill.
- ▶ **Fine Young Cannibals** – Mrs. Alden ends her feud with George Davidson
- ▶ **A Mirror in the Soul** – They return from the cougar hunt
- ▶ **And Called it Makah Roni** – Fauntleroy is kidnapped
- ▶ **The Tin Man** – The Twana ceremony and the shaman
- ▶ **I'll Take Manhattan** – Feuerstool shows up at the Makah lodge
- ▶ **Friday Returns** – Fauntleroy returns to the beach and they are picked up
- ▶ **The Races of Man** – an 'ethnologist' from the Smithsonian arrives.
- ▶ **The Cave of the Winds** – the Transcontinental Arc

Book VI

Kit Carson

- ▶ **The Report of 1855** – Smithsonian ethnography
- ▶ **Steak and Shake** – Isaac Stevens goes to Washington via San Francisco
- ▶ **Mac and Cheese** – the transcontinental rail survey
- ▶ **Ex Fact Posto** – more earthquakes
- ▶ **The Curry Mint** – the creation of Carson City
- ▶ **Viva Suckley** – the rail survey parties meet up
- ▶ **The Hand Writing Politely on the Wall** – after the earthquake
- ▶ **Helios Studio** – Stevens has his portrait taken
- ▶ **Kingdom Came** – Eadward Muybridge decides to go to England
- ▶ **Eagles Arms** – Muybridge needs to settle his advertising bill
- ▶ **Bang Bang Maxwell** – Muybridge returns with cash
- ▶ **Twice Shy** – Muybridge packs
- ▶ **Fort Sutter** – Muybridge takes the stage for Carson City
- ▶ **A Talent for Deception** – Feuerstool falls in with a Swedish wagon train
- ▶ **Shambalah** – Muybridge arrives in Carson City
- ▶ **Wu Zhi Mountain** – Machin arrives in Carson a near riot of Chinese blasting crews
- ▶ **Double Vision** – Muybridge's pocket monkey
- ▶ **The Magnolia Saloon** – Twain convinces Sam to go off after Feuerstool
- ▶ **Pawn Ography** – Muybridge departs Carson
- ▶ **The March of the Public Exploders** – the Chinese are sent to Reno
- ▶ **Man in Motion** – Muybridge has a stage accident on the Mono Bodie turnpike
- ▶ **Collapse** – Machin has a breakdown on the way to Marysville
- ▶ **Marysville Had a Little Lamb** – Sam Leon arrives at the paper run by Ben Avery
- ▶ **Giving Head** – The final fate of Kirlew Hume's head
- ▶ **Waiting for the Go dough** – Curry lobbies for a mint
- ▶ **Not Quite a Corpse** – Muybridge is taken in by Cherokee Liz to recuperate
- ▶ **The Shortening Tightrope of Life** – Legends of the Si-Teh-Cah
- ▶ **Sects Appeal** – Kirlew Hume's murder
- ▶ **!Sir is Osiris!** – The first child born in Monoville
- ▶ **Fort Smith** – Muybridge tries to find a home for Liz's child which she has abandoned
- ▶ **Long Division** – The country ruptures

Book VII

A World Not Yet Realized

- ▶ **I Hate J.D. Salinger** – the extended version of the confession
- ▶ **The King is Dead Long Live the King** – James Casey and the First Vigilance Committee
- ▶ **A Civil Hanging** – The Second Vigilance Committee
- ▶ **Farting Divas** – The hanging of Casey and Cora
- ▶ **The Passage** – Life goes on
- ▶ **The World Not Yet Realized** – Ben Avery takes over the paper
- ▶ **“All Around the Mulberry Bush”** – running a newspaper
- ▶ **Will ‘o The Wisp** – A new theory about newspapers
- ▶ **Feet of Clay** – Avery takes a visit to the Geberding mansion
- ▶ **Action Reaction** – San Francisco reinvents itself again
- ▶ **An “Improper Pronoun”** – Ben Avery falls in love
- ▶ **Art for Arthur’s Sake** – Arthur Geberding arrives on the West Coast
- ▶ **Herb Encrusted Goat Cheese Jolly Ranchers** – arrival of the *Kanrin Maru*
- ▶ **An Immovable Object and an Unstoppable Force** – Ben Avery has a vision
- ▶ **Giddyness** – Mary Geberding’s salon
- ▶ **Barry & Patten’s** – Arthur recounts his recent encounter with the Japanese
- ▶ **Gillopolis** – C.F. Gillen demonstrates a new invention to Eadweard Muybridge
- ▶ **The Twenty Dollar** – Feuerstool is arrested for counterfeiting
- ▶ **A Stranger Visits** – James Moffat visits San Quentin
- ▶ **The Active** – Geberding purchases *the Active* for an orphan outing
- ▶ **The Man With a Drum for a Head** – an escape attempt at San Quentin
- ▶ **Two Dummies** – the murder of James Lick
- ▶ **Ne Plus Ultra Shave** – The rest of a confession
- ▶ **Hekyl and Jekyl** – aftermath of the breakout attempt
- ▶ **The Nonchalance of Venice** – the afternoon outing aboard *the Active*
- ▶ **Chellis Unbound** – various loose threads are remarkably tied up
- ▶ **Last Licks** – Feuerstool assumes Lick’s identity
- ▶ **Harbison’s Apiary** – the importation of a colony of bees into California
- ▶ **Cheops Styx** – James Lick considers a fitting monument to himself
- ▶ **Four and Twenty** – the death of Edward Dickinson Baker
- ▶ **“The Pacific to the Atlantic Sends Greetings”** – the first telegraph message
- ▶ **Meat Falling from the Sky** – the California Academy of Science
- ▶ **McComb’s Back** – two dummies are rediscovered
- ▶ **Drakes Caiques** – Building the mid-winter exposition
- ▶ **The Midwinter Exposition** – George Davidson realizes a moral lapse

- ▶ **A Simple Act of Justice** – Davidson is fired from the Coast Survey
- ▶ **The Idiot** – Conclusion/self flagellation