

Metcalf himself was often absent for weeks together, on general business trips.

In February, 1842, the melting-house was destroyed by fire, and for some months lead was melted and the shot dropped in the open air. The house was rebuilt the following spring, by Edward Rogers, and the shaft was again boarded up.<sup>1</sup> The men boarded chiefly with Joseph Smith, who kept hotel in the company's house.<sup>2</sup> He also sold goods sent out to Helena by Henry Hamilton, of Buffalo, and occupied the old store formerly used by the Shot-Tower Company. Alonzo Harrington was the regular teamster for the company in 1842-43. John Wilson had by 1840 moved his family to Wilson Creek, but he continued to work at Helena at his old trade. The shot at this period was packed in kegs and shipped mostly to Buffalo, being hauled by team to Milwaukee. Very little was sent elsewhere, for the Missouri shot controlled the Mississippi markets.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The windows of the shaft were in three sets of three each. One of these was at the top of the shaft, one in the middle, and one about five feet from the bottom. The roof came well up the gable of the melting-house, and was itself gabled and shingled. It was sided up by Clark Hickox, who did the work from a platform on the inside, moved up and down by means of a windlass rope.

<sup>2</sup>John Metcalf supplied much of the farm produce used in the company's house, from his place in Ridgeway.

<sup>3</sup>The following are quotations from Milwaukee papers of the time: *Courier*, Sept. 1, 1841: "Last week there arrived about 20,000 lbs. of shot from the Helena Tower, and we understood 30,000 lbs. more will be forthcoming in a few days."

*Sentinel*, Sept. 7, 1841: "*Lead Trade*.—Last week six teams loaded with upwards of twelve tons of shot, arrived in town from Helena on the Wisconsin river. We are glad to perceive that the route by the way of Milwaukee, through the Lakes, to an eastern market is enjoying the attention of the mineral region. It is shorter and more expeditious than any other, and we believe less expensive. Our roads have been so much improved within the last twelve months that they are now very passable through the Territory. Still greater improvements can be made in them, and our citizens should use every exertion to secure this valuable trade to this place, as it will add much to the increase and prosperity of Milwaukee."