The material used in this study was gathered over a period of several years. The bulk of it is from published federal census records, local histories, and scholarly monographs. These range all the way from Table XV, "Native Population of Fifty Principal Cities," Statistics of the Population of the United States (Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, vol. 1, Washington, 1883), to Samuel Radges, comp., Radges' Biennial Directory to the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments, Business Firms, Etc., of the City of Topeka, for 1876–1877 (Topeka, 1975). All the pertinent sources have been cited in full in the notes to the text. The following essay is selective and is designed to give an indication of the items found most helpful.

"Streets," "Topography," "Tributary country," "Water-courses, harbors, etc.," "Waterworks." The 222 cities included constituted the backbone of American urban society at the time. Waring solicited information from officials in twenty-three of the twenty-four cities west of the ninety-fifth meridian with populations in 1880 in excess of eight thousand. All responded, except for those in San Jose. Virginia City authorities were not contacted, despite the fact that the Nevada community had a population of 10,917. The Social Statistics of Cities proved indispensable in the writing of this book. Unfortunately, Waring retained custody of the manuscript schedules, and they apparently have been lost.


Manuscript census population schedules for enumeration districts of all twenty-four towns are available through National Archives and Records Service T publications. For persons enumerated the 1880 census shows address; name; relationship to head of family; sex; race;
age; marital status; born within the year; married within the year; profession; occupation or trade; number of months unemployed during census year; whether person was sick or temporarily disabled so as to be unable to attend to ordinary business or duties; if so, what was the sickness or disability; whether blind, deaf, dumb, idiotic, insane, maimed, crippled, or bedridden; attended school within the year; ability to read and write; place of birth or person, father, and mother. While some research was done in most of the western city schedules, the greatest use was made of those for Virginia City to determine the percentage of women, and of those for Los Angeles, San Jose, San Antonio, and Topeka to tabulate individuals with Spanish last names. The census-takers wrote in longhand, some less legibly than others, and the quality of the ink used varied. Thus, one Los Angeles enumeration district is almost unreadable, while others are easily read.

Numerous county and local histories exist for the towns of the urban frontier. These works vary in content and quality. Characteristically, they are poorly organized; but most contain information not found elsewhere on town promotions, dominant groups, population trends, industrial developments, and social life. The accompanying biographical volumes, sometimes called “Mug Books,” have sketches of community leaders. Some of the local histories are old enough to be considered primary sources in their own right. These include Alfred Sorenson, Early History of Omaha, or, Walks and Talks Among the Old Settlers: A Series of Sketches in the Shape of a Connected Narrative with a Brief Mention of the Important Events of Later Years (Omaha, 1876); Atchison, The Railroad Center of Kansas: Its Advantages for Commerce and Manufactures (Atchison, 1874); and Samuel Huhel, A History of the City of San Francisco and Incidentally of the State of California (San Francisco, 1878). Books found especially valuable are Theodore S. Case, History of Kansas City, Missouri (Syracuse, 1888); W. S. Burke and J. L. Rock, The History of Leavenworth, The Metropolis of Kansas and the Chief Commercial Center West of the Missouri River (Leavenworth, 1880); Topeka Illustrated, Its Progress and Importance: A Descriptive and Statistical Review of Her Resources, Advantages and Facilities in Trade, Commerce and Manufactures, Together with a Delineation of Her Representative Establishments (Topeka, 1887); Laurance Hill, La Reina: Los Angeles in Three Centuries (Los Angeles, 1929); William Corner, San Antonio de Bexar (San Antonio, 1916); W. B. Vickers, History of the City of Denver, Arapahoe County, and Colorado (Chicago, 1880); and Edward Tullidge, A History of Salt Lake City and Its Founders (Salt Lake City, 1885). In a special class are two short and worthwhile reminiscences, Will Irwin, The City That Was (New York, 1906), about San


The study required the use of a wide variety of general and specialized works. There is much urban material in Glenn Quiett,
ESSAY ON SOURCES
