

As excellent as this publication is, I was disappointed by a few things: not a single contribution was written especially for the occasion (unless you count the bibliographical essay), and the authors appear to have made little effort to update their original works. The title and perhaps inspiration for the compilation derives from Robert B. Flanders's groundbreaking *Nauvoo: Kingdom of the Mississippi* (1965). Flanders did contribute a 1970 essay to this volume, but his reflections on Nauvoo historiography since 1965 or on the staying power of his book (which is still in print) would have been much more welcome. (Yes, I know Flanders went into Ozark studies years ago, but still. . . .)

In conclusion, buy, read, enjoy!

*The Iowa Mormon Trail: Legacy of Faith and Courage*, edited by Susan Easton Black and William G. Hartley. Orem, UT: Helix Publishing, 1997. xxxii, 268 pp. Drawings, maps, notes, index. \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY DANNY L. JORGENSEN, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA, TAMPA

The Mormon trek across Iowa and all that it entailed is an important chapter in the history of westward American expansion. The migrating Latter-day Saints influenced the social, political, and economic development of the Midwest and Iowa before the Civil War. The Mormons faced ongoing intolerance, hostility, and violence in Illinois following the 1844 murder of the founding prophet, Joseph Smith. Beginning in February 1846, approximately fifteen thousand Saints eventually departed Nauvoo, the unfinished metropolitan center of the theocratic Kingdom of God that they had built over the previous six years. Three principal waves of Mormons eventually crossed the Mississippi River. In Iowa the Saints connected primitive trails and roads, constructed bridges, and established way stations (shelters and farms forming villages) en route to the Missouri River at the Council Bluffs and across it into Indian territory at present-day Omaha, Nebraska. By 1852 most of them had departed Iowa on the trail they blazed to pioneer settlements in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints, many of them British converts, followed this Mormon Trail. Many, many other Americans followed this road for part or all of more than a thousand miles across Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Utah, before the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. Uniquely religious, this extraordinary Mormon journey also was distinctively the largest and longest migration of any single collection of people in American history.

Unexpectedly, the Saints encountered exceptionally difficult conditions in Iowa on the first part of the trek, resulting in prolonged travel times as well as greater suffering and loss of life than the American Mormons experienced anywhere else on their migration to Utah. Trekking across Iowa taught the Saints invaluable lessons and helped prepare them well for the remainder of the journey, although it did not prevent even greater hardships and death among the ill-prepared 1850s handcart companies of European converts farther west. While Joseph Smith's martyrdom punctuated the early elaboration of Mormonism, the Iowa trail experience marked the initial institutionalization of its subsequently dominant form. This event consequently was a defining moment for what became the largest and most successful new religion in American history. The Mormon migration, beginning in Iowa, contributed immensely to the formation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' sacred story.

The worthy aim of this edited collection—including an introduction, twelve chapters, and eleven brief county histories—is to “contribute new information and clarify previous understandings” (xi) pertinent to the Iowa Mormon Trail. Divided into three sections, these essays describe the Latter-day Saints' situation at Nauvoo, Illinois, in the early 1840s that eventuated in their exodus across Iowa and subsequent settlement of the Salt Lake Valley; many and various aspects of the Iowa Mormon Trail experience; and the legacy of the trek and related events for southern Iowa. Much of the material included comes from a symposium of scholars, local historians, and trail enthusiasts held May 3–4, 1996, in Des Moines as part of the 150th anniversary celebration of the Iowa Mormon Trail.

This volume generally is a readable and more or less useful summary of what is known about the Mormon Trail in Iowa. Bits and pieces of new information also are scattered throughout the collection. Few of these discussions, however, reflect any penetrating inquiry into historical records or fresh interpretations of Mormonism, the Iowa trail experience, or the importance of these events for scholarly understandings of westward migration, the Middle West, or especially Iowa. The county history section unfortunately is extremely uneven and weak. The lack of any sustained mention of dissident Saints and rival factions remaining in Iowa is a most regrettable omission. There are a few sound scholarly chapters, including Stanley B. Kimball's description of social life along the Iowa trail; Carol Cornwall Madsen's sensitive, profusely detailed, literary narrative on women's lives; and Larry C. Porter's discussion of the Mormon Battalion.

This book presumes considerable familiarity with Mormonism's sacred story. Some non-Mormon audiences will have difficulty distinguishing it from historical facts and interpretations. Most chapters will not be helpful to scholarly researchers or specialists. Mormons, however, should enjoy the book, especially the first section, which would be useful for LDS institutes and Sunday schools.

*Winter Quarters: The 1846-1848 Life Writings of Mary Haskin Parker Richards*, edited by Maurine Carr Ward. Life Writings of Frontier Women, volume 1. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1996. xiv, 336 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY BETTIE MCKENZIE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In February 1946 the exodus of a religious community, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), from Nauvoo, Illinois, began with the crossing of the Mississippi River. The weather was fierce; the cold, rain, and mud were unrelenting. The advance company persevered, reaching the Missouri River in June. All across Iowa there were wagons on the trail, families in temporary quarters in the hastily constructed settlements of Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah, and still others left in Nauvoo. It was impossible for the Mormons to go farther west that year. Their temporary camp on the west side of the Missouri was called Winter Quarters. The next year the pioneer company pushed on to Utah; the thousands who were not able or ready to join them moved to the Iowa side of the river. For the next five years, until 1852, Iowa was the home of thousands of Latter-day Saints stranded in time and place between their former chosen city and the new Zion in Utah. There were for those years more Mormons in Iowa than in Utah, and their story is the founding of the western slope of Iowa.

Until recently the diaries and documents of the men, generally the leaders of the church, have been the basis for the history of the westward movement. It is a history that leaves untold the story of women, of families, and of the social life of the communities. *The 1846-1848 Life Writings of Mary Haskin Parker Richards* is the beginning of a series that will bring new insight into this history through the lives of Mormon women. This volume provides a rare look at the Iowa portion of the Mormon trek, life at Winter Quarters and the nearby Iowa settlements.

Mary Richards was 22 years old and newly wed as she began her journey. She had been born and converted to Mormonism in England.

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