

Book Reviews and Notices

Spirits of Earth: The Effigy Mound Landscape of Madison and the Four Lakes, by Robert A. Birmingham. Wisconsin Land and Life Series. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010. xxiv, 274 pp. Illustrations, maps, graphs, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer James M. Collins is an archaeologist at the Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa.

Earthen mounds in the shapes of animals and other supernatural creatures were constructed roughly A.D. 700–1100 by prehistoric inhabitants of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. *Spirits of Earth* is an excellent synthesis of the latest research on the phenomenon. The author argues that the mounds, mound-building ceremonialism, and sacred landscape created by such activities reflect the cosmology of the builders. Representations of birds, bears, and water-related animals suggest a cosmology that included a three-part division of the universe into sky, earth, and water realms. Patterns within thousands of mounds thus rendered a ceremonial landscape in which world renewal was a major theme.

The effigy mound builders were most likely ancestors of late prehistoric Oneota and, by historical extension, the Chiwere Siouan tribes (Ioway, Oto, Missouri, and Winnebago or Ho Chunk) that occupied the four-state region at the time of European contact. It is probably more than coincidence that many of the animals commonly represented in the ancient earthworks mirror clan totems associated with those tribes. The first several chapters of this book deal with socioreligious concepts, their cultural context throughout the last millennium, and the study of the mounds from the late nineteenth-century “antiquarian” movement through the present. The author then uses the Four Lakes region near Madison, Wisconsin, to illustrate the particulars of the native belief system and the relationship of the mounds to the physical landscape. This serious and carefully researched yet jargon-free book should find a place in all regional libraries.

The Missouri Mormon Experience, edited by Thomas M. Spencer. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010. vi, 187 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Alma R. Blair is professor emeritus of history at Graceland University. He has held various offices in the John Whitmer Historical Association.

The Missouri Mormon Experience is a significant collection of nine essays delivered at a 2006 conference held in Jefferson, Missouri. The conference title, *The Mormon Missouri Experience: From Conflict to Understanding*, indicates the goal and the tenor of the essays. The essays' topics range widely but concentrate on applying objective historical analysis to replace the vitriolic rhetoric marking much previous literature. The essays, by respected scholars in the fields of Mormon and Missouri history, are well written and well documented.

The introduction by editor Thomas Spencer gives an excellent overview of historical events between 1830 and 1838, when the Latter-day Saints first tried to settle in Missouri. He suggests that historians have only begun to probe the reasons Missourians opposed the Mormons so vehemently and that not all Missourians were, at least initially, antagonistic. Jean Pry and Dale Whitman expand on that theme, arguing that had the Saints settled near Columbia, Missouri, they might have gotten a better reception from a more sophisticated and urbane citizenry than that in western Missouri. Fred Woods traces the varied but generally peaceful reactions to the Mormons as they moved through Missouri by rail and river after 1838.

Two articles deal with Mormon military activities. Ronald Romig and Michael Riggs detail Joseph Smith's little-known plans to "redeem Zion" (Jackson County) by sending up to 1,000 men there by 1836. That plan was devised after the failure of the earlier "Zion's Camp" of 1834 to get back land lost the year before. The later plan was never put into action. Instead, the Mormons established a legitimate militia in Caldwell County along with an extralegal, semimilitary group of "Danites" accused by Missourians of stealing crops and animals and burning their homes. During the winter of 1838–39 the Saints were driven from Missouri under Governor Lilburn Boggs's infamous "Extermination Order." Richard Bennett argues that the failure of these earlier attempts to get back their land and to protect the Mormons led Joseph Smith to develop the legal and open but very large and disciplined "Nauvoo Legion" city militia in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1840–1846.

Kenneth Winn gives an insightful analysis of the cultural and economic character of both contestants. He notes that most Missourians have forgotten the events of the 1830s but that a legacy of violence lasted for decades: "Missouri reaction to Mormonism [gave] western Missourians a psychological framework, a language, and a behavior to deal with those whom they opposed" (24). Examples include Governor Boggs sending Missouri militia to fight in the Iowa-Missouri

"Honey War"; the brutal Lawrence, Kansas, massacre; and Senator David Rice Atchison's letter of 1854 to Jefferson Davis stating that Missourians planned to "shoot, burn, and hang" and "'Mormonize' the Abolitionists" (24).

Thomas Spencer contributes a detailed account of the Haun's Mill Massacre of October 30, 1838, when about 200 Missourians killed 17 Mormon men and boys. Spencer condemns it but outlines some of the Missourians' complaints leading to the action. Two articles on temples planned in the 1830s but not built complete the essays. Richard Cowan writes somewhat polemically on the Independence temple, and Alexander Baugh contributes new information on the "Far West" temple.

Although the Mormon experience in Iowa is not the focus of this anthology, the book gives background for Mormon migrations to and across Iowa and for the large number of permanent settlements in the state after 1846. It would be interesting to compare how Iowans reacted to the Mormons and why their reactions differed from those outlined in this volume.

North Country: The Making of Minnesota, by Mary Lethert Wingerd. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. xvii, 449 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer William E. Lass is professor emeritus of history at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He is the author of *Minnesota: A History* (second ed., 1998).

Although its title suggests a considerably broader study, this book is actually a history of Minnesota's Indian-white relations from the first French explorations in the mid-seventeenth century through the Dakota War of 1862 and its aftermath. Wingerd explains that her focus is "the meeting and melding of Indian and European cultures" in "a place where disparate peoples met, interdependence fostered cooperation and cultural exchange, and social and racial distinctions blurred among Dakotas, Ojibwes, and their European neighbors" (xiv). She observes that societies in which the intermarrying Europeans and Indians worked harmoniously in the fur trade existed briefly throughout North America. But she contends that "what makes the Minnesota region unique is that, because of its geographical inaccessibility, this multicultural meeting ground endured for two centuries, far longer than in any other part of the country" (xv).

During the time considered by Wingerd, Minnesota, in terms of incoming whites, had French, British, and American periods. With their emphasis on developing the fur trade and seeking a northwest passage through the continent, the French naturally partnered with