

His wide reading of primary sources, some of them little used, allows him to provide vivid anecdotes. Included are many references to letters from highly motivated Iowa troops.

Nevertheless, this book is flawed in several important ways. First, Frank lumps all soldiers together, whether from the Union or Confederacy, and without much regard to region within the separate armies. The depth of confusion possible with this approach is evident when Frank uses the terms "Northerner" and "Unionist" interchangeably (34). Not all northerners supported the Union, and hundreds of thousands of white southerners did.

Most importantly, Frank seems insensitive to the very stuff of history: change and continuity over time. Inexplicably, the book draws primarily on letters written after 1863 to conclude, for example, that "more than 70 percent of my sample Union soldiers supported arming the black population" (54). This static percentage likely glosses over the sea change in Union opinion toward black troops as the war progressed. Reflection on how soldiers' ideas changed in the crucible of war would have improved this book immensely.

Finally, readers should be wary of the book's statistics on soldiers' opinions and motivations. Frank notes in his preface that he excluded from his samples soldiers who did not explicitly reflect on politics. Since, as Frank concedes, the majority of Civil War soldiers did not write about politics, the argument for strong political motivation and statistics on political opinion must be taken with a grain of salt.

Like *With Ballot and Bayonet*, McPherson's *With Cause and Comrades* and Gerald Linderman's *Embattled Courage* also draw heavily on soldiers' correspondence. Yet those books are more sensitive to the nuances of soldiers' letters and the transformations in soldiers' ideas as the war progressed. They remain the most important recent works on Civil War soldiers.

*The Graybeards: The Family of Major Lyman Allen during the American Civil War*, edited by Harriet Stevens. Iowa City: Press of Camp Pope Bookshop, 1998. 127 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, index. \$12.00 paper.

REVIEWED BY KENNETH LYFTOGT, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

Iowa has its share of Civil War legends. One of them is the 37th Volunteer Infantry, known as the Iowa Graybeards, a regiment made up of men over 45 years old. The regiment was formed in 1862 as a means of relieving younger men from guard and garrison duty and making them available for combat. Beyond that brief description little is known

of the Graybeards, though the regiment is frequently mentioned in Civil War histories concerning Iowa. *The Graybeards* is an attempt "to step into the breach" and bring some substance to the legend.

The attempt is successful in two crucial ways. The first is as a history of the regiment. Anyone seeking information on the subject now has a place to turn. One learns of the duties performed by the Graybeards and of the controversies concerning the performance of those duties. They weren't all lovable old guys, and they didn't necessarily get light duty and easy discipline. Until an enterprising scholar writes a full-scale narrative of the 37th, this book will serve as the standard.

The other strength of the book is as a means of bringing alive the voices of the past. There are no substitutes for primary sources, and that is what is offered. The book is a compilation of letters by Major Lyman Allen and his wife and selections from the diary of Viola Baldwin, Lyman's stepdaughter. Their words give unique insights into the daily lives of men and women caught up in their corner of the war. Baldwin's diary entries give the book much of its depth. Although she says little about military matters or politics, her words present readers with an account of a young woman trying to maintain a life of nineteenth-century respectability under difficult circumstances.

*The Graybeards* is successful as a reference book, but is not necessarily an enjoyable read. Footnotes would have served better than endnotes; biographical material could have been better presented; and the publisher could have allowed for a larger type—"graybeard" readers will need their glasses for this one. The text is well documented, the "biographical sketches" of the regiment's commanders contain much useful information, and the photos enhance the work, but as a literary experience, *The Graybeards* is disappointing. There is nothing, beyond the reader's own curiosity, to draw one into the story of the regiment or the lives of the people who wrote the letters and diary. But the book's subject matter earns it a place in the Iowa Civil War bibliography.

*From Mission to Madness: Last Son of the Mormon Prophet*, by Valeen Tippetts Avery. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998. xii, 357 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY MARK Y. HANLEY, TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The life of David Hyrum Smith, youngest son of Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith Jr., did little to alter the course of Mormon history. In uncovering the individual hopes and collective aspirations that church

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