

Book Notices

The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836, edited by Jan Shipp and John W. Welch. Provo, UT: *BYU Studies*, Brigham Young University; and Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994. xxi, 520 pp. Illustrations, maps, graphs, notes, appendixes, bibliography, indexes. \$29.95 cloth.

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The 1831–1836 journals of William E. McLellin cover the period from McLellin's conversion to become a Latter-day Saint apostle to his break from the church. The journals and footnotes take but two hundred pages. The remainder of the book consists of extensive essays, charts, indexes, and registers, including a biography of McLellin, notes on persons he mentions, a list of his converts, scriptural references he used, and a gazetteer of his travels. The reader might want to begin with Porter's biography and Jan Shipp's introductory essay.

McLellin preached mostly in Ohio, Illinois, and Missouri, living only briefly in eastern Iowa. Although the journals are informative about everyday affairs, they immerse us in the roughly competitive religious climate of the 1830s Midwest, where Methodists, Universalists, Campbellites, Deists, and Mormons vied for souls. McLellin appears as a man of integrity. He left the church believing that Joseph Smith was going astray, then associated with several splinter groups, but rejected the two major groups that emerged after Smith's death.

This book is significant in Mormon historiography. In the 1980s a forger of Mormon documents, Mark Hoffman, falsely claimed that he had McLellin's diaries, which would expose Smith as a practitioner of "white" magic. Instead, the journals, discovered in church vaults, show that McLellin preached a New Testament Christian message, strong on millennialism, modern revelation, and the Book of Mormon.

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