

While not as exhaustive or comprehensive as *Way's Directory*, Mueller's *Upper Mississippi River Rafting Steamboats* is a valuable reference work for Iowa and upper Mississippi River history that will serve both river and general historians well.

Cultures in Conflict: A Documentary History of the Mormon War in Illinois, by John E. Hallwas and Roger D. Launius. Logan: Utah State University Press, 1995. x, 369 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliographical note, index. \$37.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ALMA R. BLAIR, GRACELAND COLLEGE

The story of the Latter-day Saints at Nauvoo, Illinois, has long fascinated Americans and has had special interest for Iowans, especially in 1996 as the sesquicentennial of Iowa's statehood corresponds with that of the Mormon migration westward across Iowa. In *Cultures in Conflict*, Hallwas and Launius have given one of the too few serious interpretations of the events in Nauvoo from 1839 to 1846 that led to the "Mormon Trek." They have collected almost one hundred hard-edged documents and given a biting interpretation that may take away some of the fun of the celebration, but that serves historical understanding well.

The choice of documents will be controversial because anti-Mormon views, often ignored, are well represented. Many of the documents have never been printed, and others have been hard to locate. Each section of documents is preceded by essays that explain their setting and source and give the authors' interpretation of the significance and historical impact of the documents. The intent is to illustrate what Mormons and non-Mormons were thinking as they responded to each other and thereby gain an understanding of the underlying tensions leading to the murder of Joseph Smith and the expulsion of the Latter-day Saints from Nauvoo.

The book covers six broad areas—none of them new in themselves, but the documents give each an immediacy and power. The first area of focus is on Nauvoo's rapid growth, its unusual religious motivation, and the character of Joseph Smith. Part two emphasizes local charges against the Mormons, including thievery, which have often been glossed over, and the Saints' mixing of political power and religion, a practice that antagonized the republican-minded non-Mormons. The third section is devoted to polygamy in Nauvoo and the growth of a dissenting movement in the church. Smith's destruction of the dissenters' paper, *The Nauvoo Expositor*, gave opponents in and out of the church an opportunity to destroy him. Part four recounts the events surrounding the murder of Joseph Smith and his

brother, Hyrum. The final two sections tell of the trial of the accused murderers, growing tensions between Saints and non-Mormons for the next two years, the exodus from Nauvoo beginning in January 1846, and the open warfare of that September.

Although Hallwas and Launius mostly stick to traditional subjects and use recent interpretations by other historians, they give a unique interpretation as well which ties Mormon characteristics such as bloc voting, group identity, and intense loyalty to Smith to a larger theme. Their thesis is that the troubles between the Mormons and non-Mormons was one of conflicting "myths." Each side had a "mythic vision" that ordered how they perceived all things. Beyond the accumulation of grating individual events or specific theological beliefs was an "ideological struggle between two cultures. . . . Mormons believed that the good society arose 'through a covenant with God that created a people,' while non-Mormons felt it arose 'through a contract among individuals that created a government'" (4). The Saints, the authors contend, were certain that they were being persecuted by Satan. They "needed" this myth to justify their existence and it was impossible for Smith or his followers to see that they might be in the wrong. Their theocracy was perfect, and outsiders and dissenters who opposed it must be destroyed. A similar myth developed in the minds of the non-Mormons: they were the defenders of the cherished American myth of individualized democracy. While both sides were adamant, perhaps unable to see any other vision, the non-Mormons felt that they were losing out to the expanding Mormon solidarity and so were impelled to act in illegal but, to them, justifiable ways. Both "myths" ensured the tragedy of Nauvoo.

This is an important book in its field. The historical settings are generally clear and informative, and the "myth" interpretation is provocative. Although too many documents on polygamy and more anti-Mormon than pro-Mormon documents are included, the documents are fascinating. The collection will be valuable for research for years to come and should help readers understand the complexity of the Mormon experience.

Pioneer Children on the Journey West, by Emmy E. Werner. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995. xiv, 202 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography, index. \$21.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ELIZABETH HAMPSTEN, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Between 1841 and 1865, forty thousand children took part in the overland migration from the Middle West to the western United States. Emmy E. Werner, a developmental psychologist, has found written

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