

Hunter's journal, skillfully edited by David P. Robrock, adds to our argonaut literature by recounting travels along a lesser used path to the gold fields.

This volume compares favorably with other recent gold rush journals, such as Charles Ross Parke's *Dreams to Dust: A Diary of the California Gold Rush* (1989). Hunter lucidly records such monotony-breaking events as the group's playful "hunting" of coyotes and gophers and discovering of the remains of a fellow argonaut who had been murdered by Mexican "bandittos." Regrettably, one can only speculate about what ever became of Hunter in California since the journal ends abruptly when its author enters southern California in December 1849. As the editor notes in the introduction, Hunter "fails to appear in California records" (xxi). Although we know little on the personal level about William W. Hunter, either before or after the gold rush, his journal makes a strong contribution to published argonaut writings nevertheless.

*Left for Dixie: The Civil War Diary of John Rath*, edited by Kenneth Lyftogt. Parkersburg, Iowa: Mid-Prairie Books, 1993. 100 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$6.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY GAROLD COLE, ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

John Rath, a German immigrant who settled in Cedar Falls, Iowa, served in Company B of the 31st Iowa Infantry from August 1862 until his unit was discharged on July 1, 1865. His unit was involved in some of the most fiercely fought and strategically important battles of the Civil War: the Vicksburg Campaign, Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, the Atlanta Campaign, and Sherman's March to the Sea.

Despite his "worms-eye" view of the events, Rath always indicates an awareness of exactly where he was, the other units with which he was serving, and the significance of the military engagements. However, he says little about his feelings about his circumstances. For example, he mentions (but does not, as soldiers usually did, grumble about) the heat, cold, and rain. And he only discreetly criticizes the "bad generalship" of General Hooker at Missionary Ridge (35). Even the death and burial of his brother George at Missionary Ridge is described without explanation or emotion (35). However, on other occasions he writes engaging prose. The most interesting portion of the diary describes the March through the Carolinas, a section the editor tells us Rath later rewrote.

The diary as presented here is heavily edited. Contemporary photographs have been added, and the work is divided into sections with explanatory introductions, endnotes, and an epilogue. The editor has also introduced other stylistic changes for "the John Rath story to be told in the clearest way possible" (6).

Rath's diary is valuable as a record of the regiment. In fact, it may be the only published account of the 31st Iowa Infantry. At least no other account is mentioned in either Dornbusch's *Military Bibliography of the Civil War*, or my *Civil War Eyewitness*. In addition to being a chronicle of events in which the regiment was involved, Rath often mentions the presence (and often fate) of other soldiers from north-eastern Iowa. Iowans will also be interested to know that John Rath later helped his son John W. found Rath Packing Company of Waterloo in 1891.

*Roots of the Reorganized Latter Day Saints in Southern Iowa*, by Pearl G. Wilcox. Independence, MO: Pearl G. Wilcox, 1989. 439 pp. Notes, index. \$20.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ALMA R. BLAIR, GRACELAND COLLEGE

Pearl Wilcox's *Roots of the Reorganized Latter Day Saints in Southern Iowa* is a study of the largest of the several groups of Latter Day Saints who made permanent settlements in Iowa beginning in the 1850s. Many Reorganized Latter Day Saints concentrated in Mills, Fremont, Shelby, Crawford, and Decatur counties after they had either left the westering "Mormon trek" or returned from Utah disillusioned with polygamy. Others rejected leaders such as Alpheus Cutler and Charles B. Thompson to follow Joseph Smith III, son of the denomination's founder. Wilcox has not written a consistent thematic or sequential history of the denomination and its beliefs, but has constructed a litany of thirty-six specific congregations with brief biographical information on almost two thousand early (1855-1910) members.

The Reorganized Latter Day Saint Church's roots in Iowa have been deep and persistent. The Saints provided the initial impetus for the founding of Lamoni, Iowa, and were important segments of other small communities. Although articles have appeared over the years in the *Palimpsest* and elsewhere, this is the only book on the subject. It has various flaws: it lacks a unifying theme needed to control its encyclopedic facts and eliminate peripheral anecdotal material; there are some factual errors; the narrative is often disjointed; and there are

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