

is of particular relevance to *The Annals of Iowa*—receive comparatively less attention. Readers who seek a more comprehensive biography with archival citations should consult John G. Turner’s *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet* (2012).

Despite its admitted limitations, Alexander’s is a synthesis of periodically stunning depth and insight. The author’s deep familiarity with his subject matter is plainly evident. The book’s secondary title—*the Expansion of the Mormon Faith*—may suggest the author focuses narrowly on religious matters, but such is not the case. Young made little distinction between “religious” and “secular” matters, and Alexander follows his lead, ranging widely from “secular” topics like environmental land use to straightforward “religious” matters such as missions and temples. Packed with surprisingly immersive dives on scattered topics, Alexander’s synthesis thereby differs from an older reliable synthesis, Newell G. Bringham’s *Brigham Young and the Expanding American Frontier* (1986), a slimmer work of greater balance but less depth.

A seasoned scholar’s reflections on a critical figure in western history, *Brigham Young and the Expansion of the Mormon Faith* is a synthesis worth reading.

*The Mormon Handcart Migration: “Tounge nor pen can never tell the sorrow,”* by Candy Moulton. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. xv, 272 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, appendix, index. \$29.95 hardcover.

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A unique and compelling story of overland migration took place between 1856–60, when nearly 3,000 members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) “gathered to Zion” (Utah) by handcart. While numerous articles and books have looked at various aspects of this experience, Candy Moulton’s *Mormon Handcart Migration* is the first one-volume history in nearly 60 years.

The “gathering” largely took place under the direction of church leaders, and these handcart pioneers were a small percentage of the nearly 70,000 Latter-day Saints who traveled emigrant trails between 1846 and 1868. Many who “gathered” were only able to make the journey because of loans from the church-established Perpetual Emigrating Fund (PEF). In 1855, the PEF was nearly broke and Brigham Young,

looking for a way that would still allow individuals dependent upon the fund to emigrate, turned to handcarts, because they cost a fraction of what it took to travel by wagon. While others had used similar means to travel across the country, the experience of Latter-day Saints stands out because of its organization and scope.

This book looks at each of the ten handcart companies. The first seven began their journey in Iowa City and traveled about 1,300 miles. The last three started in eastern Nebraska, which meant these companies not only had 300 fewer miles to push and pull their handcarts, but they also avoided the infamously deep sands of Iowa that presented a challenge for both wagon and handcart emigrants alike.

Moulton presents the challenges leaders faced in implementing this new method of travel, including recounting the concerns, confusion and conflicting opinions of those responsible for its implementation. She also examines how enthusiasm on the part of some of those charged with implementing the program and ignorance on the part of those traveling by handcart allowed zealotry to overcome reason during the first year. Since most handcart pioneers came from Europe, Moulton's look at migrants' experiences during their ocean voyages as well as their overland journeys by rail and steamboat prior to beginning the handcart leg of their travels is a particularly interesting aspect of the volume.

She discusses the first three companies of 1856 together in one chapter, interweaving the writings of company members. Much of the focus upon the handcarts has long been on the fourth and fifth companies, the Willie and Martin companies, which were trapped by early winter storms in present-day Wyoming and experienced a great loss of life. A major portion of Moulton's work is likewise devoted to these companies—and the Hunt and Hodgetts wagon companies that followed them and were also caught in the storms—and the subsequent rescue that involved hundreds and lasted more than two months. Moulton devotes chapters to the two 1857 companies, who were aided in their journey by U.S. troops bound for Utah during the so-called "Utah War," a chapter to the company that traveled in 1859, and a chapter to the two 1860 companies, the last handcart companies.

Handcart companies occasionally faced similar challenges, one being that there were times when they had inadequate food, yet by looking at the handcart experience in its entirety, Moulton shows that the experiences of the companies varied. For instance, the makeup of the companies traveling after 1856 differed from the first companies as emigrants learned lessons and addressed problems. As a result, death rates for later companies were comparable to wagon companies.

Moulton approaches the subject in a fast-paced and engaging style that she honed through years of newspaper reporting. Her interest in the handcarts grew in part out of her husband having handcart pioneer ancestors and from her own long-standing interest in overland emigration. The book is at its best when she draws upon her strengths, including her own expertise regarding the trail and trail narratives, and allows individuals to speak for themselves and tell their own stories. In allowing these voices to be heard, Moulton presents themes long associated with the handcart story—faith, devotion, sacrifice, heartache, tragedy and triumph. These themes are at the heart of why thousands of Latter-day Saints each year push and pull handcarts in multi-day reenactments known as the “trek.”

*German Americans on the Middle Border: From Antislavery to Reconciliation, 1830–1877*, by Zachary Stuart Garrison. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2020. xiii, 232 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$30.00 paperback.

Reviewer Petra DeWitt is an assistant professor of history at the Missouri University of Science and Technology. She is the author of *Degrees of Allegiance: Harassment and Loyalty in Missouri's German-American Community during World War I* (2012).

*German Americans on the Middle Border* takes a geographic approach to evaluate the place of German immigrants during the American Civil War and Reconstruction. Zachary Stuart Garrison focuses primarily on German immigrants who settled on what he calls the Middle Border, the area along the Ohio River, from its confluence with the Mississippi River northward to the Mississippi's confluence with the Missouri River. This natural line in the midwestern landscape divided freedom from slavery and represented the intersection of northern, southern, and western political ideologies.

Taking this spatial view allows Garrison to update the traditional historiography of German immigrants' inherent opposition to slavery due to their beliefs in civil liberties and their European experiences. The author sees a more complex picture and convincingly argues that not all German Americans held abolitionist views. Instead, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and its threat to the survival of the United States inspired German immigrants to overcome their own ideological differences and briefly unite in opposition to slavery as an institution that not only limited individual freedoms but also restricted the advancement of society as a whole. When the Civil War broke out,