

churches rather than the Reorganized Church despite vigorous RLDS missionary efforts in this region.

Finally, although the author makes an admirable effort to relate his story of the Cache Valley apostasies to the larger history of Western America through his discussion of the Big Range as the archetype of Frederick Jackson Turner's "safety valve," Simmonds never really pulls his story into mainstream American history. Although Simmonds briefly describes the Protestant Home Missionary Society and its tendency to draw parallels between Utah Mormons and non-Christian heathens, he could have made more interesting apostate-gentile comparisons. Simmonds is less than convincing in his efforts to relate Cache Valley apostates to the national campaign to "Americanize" or "Reconstruct Utah." He goes into

elaborate detail describing the activities of C.C. and William Goodwin, important Cache Valley apostates who were appointed by the federal government as U.S. commissioner and probate judge respectively. These appointments, according to Simmonds, enabled these apostates to enforce federal anti-polygamy laws enacted by Congress during the 1880's. Simmonds fails however, to demonstrate that the activities of the Goodwins or other apostate Federal officeholders "broke the resolve" of Cache Valley Latter-day Saints toward plural marriage.

Despite its shortcomings, Simmonds' study represents a significant beginning point in the study of Mormon apostates—a foundation upon which future studies can be based.

Snowy Tea Towels and Spotless Kitchens

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Homespun: Domestic Arts & Crafts of Mormon Pioneers. By Shirley B. Paxman. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1976, \$3.95.

Homespun suggests ways for women of today to practice pioneer crafts. Individual chapters on log-cabin cooking, preserving and drying foods, homemade remedies, needle arts, quilts, patchwork, dyeing, producing cloth and clothing, rug making, soapmaking, candlemaking, dried and waxed flowers and fruits, and toys and dolls comprise this abundantly illustrated volume. Combining some historical lore with instructions from the past as well as current applications, the book would be useful for leaders of girls in planning historical projects. Primary workers will welcome *Homespun* this centennial year.

Perhaps it is ungenerous to find fault with a book so attractive and well inten-

tioned, but a few additional comments should be made. The handsome pictures have been neither described nor attributed. The pictures of Mormon photographer George Edward Anderson are familiar, but not a word identifies them. The needlewoman who did the very attractive cover embroidery should be credited for her work. The old utensils photographed are not located or described, and the old engravings and woodcuts have a distinctly European appearance. I had hoped to find pictures of genuine Mormon artifacts from the attics of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers. If, as Paxman states, "When needed clothing and bed coverings had been provided, the loom and spinning wheel were then turned to the production of articles of beauty for the home and its occupants," let's see them.

The eclectic nature of the illustrations points up the central problem of the

book. The promise to delineate the arts and crafts of the Mormon pioneers is not met. "Pioneer" is not defined by time or space, and only the most fragmentary evidence binds these practices to Mormons. For some crafts, such as making samplers or potpourri, no Mormon evidence is presented at all. Instead this book considers activities supposedly practiced by pioneer women everywhere, and encourages women to consider adapting them to modern life as an answer to ecological problems. As such it is a charming and useful book.

Today's rebirth of interest in early crafts represents a tribute to our forebears. Their simple, hard-working lives are bathed in a rosy glow of nostalgia. There is much to charm in playing at the old crafts. Did I not just get an old spinning wheel of my own, something I have wanted for years and years? And the patch of flax in my backyard, which I plan to process, spin and weave, is over a foot tall. I feel virtuous and creative when I discuss it at parties. But the lumpy yarn and loose yardage I turn out in an effort to understand how things were done do not equal the beautiful products of our machine age nor do they recreate the past.

We have a mythic image of our pioneer mothers, they of the snowy tea towels and the spotless kitchens, which hides from us their eagerness to give up the homespun in favor of the store bought whenever they could. When the truth is known, it will be grubbier and more dismal altogether. Pioneer families were probably as eager to have bakery bread as our own are to have homemade.

Mormons were pioneers by location, but not by time. They were progressive by nature. The industrial revolution in America was well underway before the Church was organized, and fashion followed the mechanized rather than the hand-made. Brigham Young wore imported broadcloth rather than homespun, and his beautiful houses featured imported machine-made carpets and fashionable furniture rather than rag rugs and his own honest carpentry. After the railroad came through, only the institution of the Retrenchment movement could stay the clamor for imported luxuries.

When the cotton mission was founded in Dixie in the early 1860's, machinery was bought to gin and spin it.

Brigham Young encouraged the growers to ship the cotton east for cash when it could not be efficiently processed locally. Although the cotton experiment was eventually abandoned as impractical, the vision of an industrial society precluded ladies spinning at the hearth. Such spinning and weaving as the sisters did was limited to the home silk industry, an unsuccessful attempt to turn out luxury items without a dollar drain. Mormons were untypical pioneers, and the delineation of their particular household activities, begun in this book, will produce an interesting picture.

The most valuable source cited for this picture is Annie Clark Tanner's splendid memoir, *A Mormon Mother*. Tanner's comments do illuminate actual Mormon household practices, and perhaps other journals and memoirs could be successfully mined for further information of the same kind. The bibliography lists only eight Mormon sources (including Kate Carter's multi-volumed compilations) among a number of craft books. More literary sources are certainly available.

As for artifacts, perhaps there is little to find. Paxman states that when a woman set out to do some needlework "she was bound only by her imagination and the order imposed by the materials available." (p. viii) I would hope that this is so, but see no evidence that Mormon women did not feel themselves bound by traditional patterns. Little artistic development seems to have taken place in the valley. Annie Tanner's mother embroidered yards of muslin to trim her baby clothes. Her daughter embroidered mottoes on perforated cardboard. Was there nothing unique? Surely some imaginative Mormon woman pieced a quilt she called "Brigham's Britches," "The Iron Rod," or "Celestial Marriage" as well as the traditional styles depicted here. Even if the items fail by current standards of beauty, let's claim them as our heritage.

American needlework was in decline after 1825, and Mormon sisters were unfortunately ill placed historically to sew the finest seams. But there is a story to tell about Mormon women's work and how they made do for their families. Most likely it tells more of ingenuity and practicality than of beauty. Shirley Paxman has begun the story.