

deal with the hard facts it presents, to the heightening of their own awareness of the mixture of human and divine in all of us — even prophets. As my favorite common reader wrote of her response to the book's Joseph, "I went on to put myself in his place, between Emma and a drawn sword. . . . But he loved the Lord and was committed to restoring a principle that was almost unbearably hard." This reader's sensitive reading justifies Samuel Johnson's faith in common readers of all ages: "Our authors, after nearly destroying our faith [in Joseph] let Emma restore it. [The] strong, quiet, intelligent, compassionate

and loving woman [they show her to be] could not lay aside her moral training, yet she loved him so deeply that she couldn't surrender him to his own God, but loved him to the end" (Urnsbach 1984). Without sacrificing Joseph we have an Emma Smith we can own, understand, and love.

REFERENCES

- Urnsbach, Lucile to Maureen Urnsbach Beecher. 5 Nov. 1984. In my files.
 Woolf, Virginia. *The Common Reader*. 1925; New York; Harcourt, Brace & World, 1953. She quotes Johnson in his *Life of Gray*.

Genealogical Blockbuster

The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy, edited by Arlene H. Eakle and Johni Cerny (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing Co., 1984), 748 pp., \$39.95.

Reviewed by Gary Topping, Curator of Manuscripts, Utah State Historical Society.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE consumed with genealogical passion to profit from this new work of far-reaching and fundamental importance, though those who are will buy it as a matter of course and use it extensively. Furthermore, raw beginners and salty old pros alike will find it easy to use and inexhaustible in its benefits. Micheneresque in both title and scope, *The Source* is an indispensable adjunct to any genealogical project that values thoroughness and efficiency.

This is not a manual of research procedure; that function is to be filled by a companion volume, *Ancestry's Guide to Research*, scheduled for later publication (though referred to in *The Source* as already having appeared). An introductory section deals with basic research procedures and common pitfalls; but the book's main emphasis is on locating and using the various sources, published and unpublished, available to genealogists. A concluding section, "Special Resources," deals primarily

with records on immigration and ethnic minorities, and seven appendices give current addresses of repositories and publishers useful to genealogists.

In spite of its formidable size, *The Source* is remarkably easy to use. The researcher can quickly locate a needed chapter by using an "information guide" at the beginning of each chapter, which gives, in graph form, the type of information contained in the records being considered, a table called "Could You Use This Chapter?" giving the chronological period in which such records were kept, and "Clues That You Should Consult These Records." Because some of the chapters are very lengthy and all are very detailed, these pages will save the researcher a great deal of time.

Copious illustrations appear, it seems, on almost every page. Facsimile examples of every significant record type are given. The researcher who has never seen a manuscript census schedule, for example, can practice using one, illustrated in this book, before entering a library. The techniques for using some sources, such as the handy Sanborn fire insurance maps, are even less well-known, and the illustrations in such cases are especially welcome. (Note that the Sanborn map illustrated on p. 524 is

transposed with the Chicago Archdiocesan record on p. 520.)

It is a further delight that, wherever possible, the illustrations have been selected for their human interest as well. Consider, for example, the Civil War pension application of L. H. Hathcock reproduced in full on pp. 285–91. Hathcock was wounded in the thigh during the battle of Murfreesboro and lost the use of his leg, which rendered him barely able to support his wife and three children. “I am trying to farm,” he wrote. “With the help of my wife and children I can barely make a living. My neighbors are good to me and help me some.”

Some of the illustrations go beyond the bare requirements of the text. In William Thorndale’s chapter, “Land and Tax Records,” there is a fascinating set of instructions (p. 221) on “Drawing Plat Maps.” No doubt such instructions are not strictly necessary to Thorndale’s purpose of teaching the use of land records, but they are most welcome nevertheless, and enrich the researcher’s experience. Knowing how the sources are created helps us use them intelligently.

As nationally known and respected professional genealogists, the editors, Arlene Eakle and Johni Cerny, are understandably intolerant of typical genealogical frauds and failings such as bogus pedigrees and unauthenticated records. Likewise, they value the pursuit of genealogical truth wherever it may be found. Few of us would

prefer to find an ancestor in a divorce court record, an indigent list, or a penitentiary roster, but Eakle and Cerny give detailed instructions for searching all of those sources. Genealogy as an ego-flattering enterprise will find no encouragement here, but seekers after unvarnished genealogical truth will be well armed.

Eakle and Cerny are prominent contributors as well as editors: Eakle’s chapter on “American Court Records” is a real *tour de force* that could stand alone as a monograph, and Cerny’s chapters on institutional records and ethnic minorities are, as far as I know, the first published descriptions of these records. The other authors are all impressively credentialed experts in specific research areas.

Ancestry Publishing Co. is a newcomer to the publishing scene. *The Source* is the firm’s first book, and plans include publication of other books as well as expansion of its quarterly newsletter into a bi-monthly newsletter and a magazine.

The Federation of Genealogical Societies recently bestowed a special Award of Merit on *The Source*, the only volume ever so honored by that organization. If subsequent products continue the high standards established by *The Source*, we can look forward to their appearance with enthusiasm. Most new publishers begin with a modest product and try to work their way up; Ancestry has begun at the top and clearly intends to stay there.

Meet the Author of *The Prophet of Palmyra*

Thomas Gregg: Early Illinois Journalist and Author by John E. Hallwas (Macomb: Western Illinois University, 1983), 98 pp., \$3.95.

Reviewed by Stanley B. Kimball, professor of history, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville.

I WAS ANXIOUS to review this biography of the founder of eight nineteenth-century

newspapers in and near western Illinois (including the *Warsaw Message*), the author of *The History of Hancock County*, and, especially, the author of *The Prophet of Palmyra*. Just as I started, however, I found a caveat in the first paragraph of the preface: this monograph was written “from a perspective that does not center around the Mormons at Nauvoo.”

That, of course, is a perfectly legitimate perspective from which to write but one