

God-fearing virtue, bristling with guns and burdened with guilt; and those who were

trying to live by the light of the gospel, one day at a time" (p. 275).

Meaning Still Up for Grabs

Zion's Camp: Expedition to Missouri, 1834 by Roger D. Launius (Independence: Missouri: Herald Publishing House, 1984), 206 pp., \$11.

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FIRMLY ESTABLISHED in Mormon history is Joseph Smith's 1834 crusade from Kirtland, Ohio, to the borders of Jackson County, Missouri, to "redeem Zion." Its purpose was to assist Latter-day Saints lately driven from their homes, protect them from further bloodshed, and, if possible, restore them to their lands and properties. Proclaiming divine revelation in support of his plan, Joseph Smith and many of his most trusted advisors set out to recruit 500 men for the expedition. In what now reads like a "Who's Who" in early Church history, the camp roster eventually included the names of Brigham and Joseph Young, Orson and Parley P. Pratt, Hyrum Smith, Charles C. Rich, George A. Smith, Heber C. Kimball, and some 200 others including a handful of women and children. Armed and drilled for conflict, this "army of God," now forever remembered as Zion's Camp, left Kirtland 1 May 1834 and covered the 900 miles across Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois to Liberty, Missouri in under fifty days.

Concerned with the smaller-than-expected number of fighting men in the camp and later crestfallen at the refusal of Missouri Governor Daniel Dunklin to support the Mormon foray with state troops, Joseph finally concluded his chances of success, if ever seriously held, were minimal. A possibly decisive battle with the "Jackson Countians" was aborted 19 June by a devastating thunder-and-hail

storm which the Mormons ascribed to divine intervention. Three days later, near Liberty, Joseph Smith issued the "Fishing River Revelation," chastising the Saints for disobedience and disbanding the camp, thereby postponing indefinitely the eventual Mormon reclamation of Jackson County. Zion's Camp never officially fired a shot upon its enemies. The few deaths reported among the Missourians came mainly by drowning, and those among the Mormons from cholera.

Some money and supplies did eventually reach a few scattered destitute Mormon families in the area but little else was accomplished. And though some enlistees remained in the region to assist in resettling efforts, most returned in small groups to Ohio. Clearly the mission fell far short of its announced goals. In fact, it served only to intensify local distrust of the Mormons, which culminated four years later in their expulsion from the state. Yet Zion's Camp did succeed in bonding the Ohio and Missouri Mormon camps, in identifying Joseph's most loyal followers (many of whom later rose to high levels of ecclesiastical prominence) and, paradoxically, in elevating the prophetic image of Joseph Smith.

For students of the Restoration movement who are interested in the facts and figures, people and places of Zion's Camp, Roger D. Launius has performed a valuable service. It's almost all there. In ten chapters of 206 pages complete with maps and appendices is everything the beginner needs to know: membership lists, breakfast menus, toll road charges, routes and rendezvous points, pistols and firearms, contenders and arbitrators, dreams and revelations, sickness and death.

Andrew Jenson, B. H. Roberts, Wilburn Talbot, Wayne A. Jacobsen, Leonard

J. Arrington, and others have been over the same road before. What is important here is that finally someone has published in one readily available, easily readable volume the big picture, which until now was the domain of obscure theses, diverse articles, hard-to-find manuscripts, and otherwise fragmented partial accounts. Had Launius also seized the opportunity to tell what it all meant, rather than simply what it was, his book might have held real promise.

Even in his quest for completeness, Launius failed to incorporate all the available data. Written originally as a thesis in 1978, the book came out six years later with only minor revisions and lacks the polish and additional research a final study deserves. For instance, relying heavily on early newspaper accounts, often at the expense of original unpublished sources, his membership roster (pp. 174-76) omits Albert and Ada Clements, Lewis Zobriskie, Levi Gifford, and two children, Eunice and John P. Chidister.

More disappointing is his omission of Wayne A. Jacobsen's valuable though tentative 1976 prosopographical study of the 206 men involved, their place of origin, place of and age at recruitment, and future Church activity and faithfulness. Other puzzling misstatements of fact include references to Wilford Woodruff as "a young man from Canada" (p. 88) when in fact he was born in Connecticut, and to Luke Johnson's unsuccessful effort to cross the Missouri River only to be forced back to the Clay County side from which "he fired several shots at the other [Jackson Co.] shore" (pp. 152-53). Johnson and his brother Lyman in fact crossed the river where they "discharged" three rounds of ammunition before being forced back across the river (Luke Johnson, "History of Luke Johnson," May 1834, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah).

Such little errors and omissions, though more bothersome than damaging, underline the nagging suspicion of incomplete re-

search. An immediate overview of the author's sources is not possible since the book fails to include a bibliography, but despite the many footnotes one is unconvinced that the author consulted all available sources, particularly those in the Historical Department of the LDS Church.

By far the more damaging criticism is not what the book says but rather what it does not say, themes and analyses that are but faintly stated and poorly developed. While his purpose is, admittedly, to write narrative and not interpretive history, surely with the knowledge and understanding at his command, Launius could have been less timid, less restrained. The relatively few arguments advanced, it seems to me, lack sufficient development.

For example, at the book's end (pp. 171-72), Launius agrees with Klaus Hansen that Zion's Camp "bequeathed a heritage of militancy to the church" and points without amplification to "future Mormon military organizations" as evidence. In the absence of fuller development, is this single military movement sufficient to establish a heritage of church "militancy"? Likewise the author's reference to the camp's legacy of "humanitarianism" is undeveloped. Are we really to believe that the spirit of charitable service in the Church began with Zion's Camp? What of the earlier Law of Consecration? What of earlier sacrifices?

Finally, the author agrees that Zion's Camp developed camaraderie, brotherhood, unity, and a high level of loyalty and allegiance to Joseph Smith. Precisely how Joseph accomplished this is not specified, although the author leads us to think it had something to do with his powers of revelation. For instance, one participant reported that Joseph related "some of the visions of his early youth, interspersing his narrative with maxims of incalculable value to the hearers" (p. 60). By "revelation" the camp was organized and disbanded (D&C 102, 105); by "revelation" Joseph identified the bones of "Zelph," the ancient white Lamanite warrior; by "revelation" the scourge of cholera was predicted. Yes,