

Multi-Faceted and Extraordinarily Capable

In the World: The Diaries of Reed Smoot. Edited by Harvard S. Heath (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1997).

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TO MOST PEOPLE, UTAH'S APOSTLE-senator, Reed Smoot, seems one-dimensional. Most Latter-day Saints remember him as a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and as a senator from Utah. Some have heard of the battle to retain his senatorial seat, and some erroneously see this as a conflict over whether any Mormon could sit in Congress. Some have heard of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930, drafted in part by Smoot and approved over the objections of a large number of economists. Contrary to such images, however, Smoot was actually a multi-faceted and extraordinarily capable man. His diaries help to reveal this complexity.

The diaries which Harvard Heath has edited here first came to my attention shortly after the manuscripts department at the Brigham Young University library acquired them in the 1960s. At the time Smoot's son-in-law, Ariel Cardon, planned to publish a biography of the late apostle-senator. Dean Larson, who had played a central role in acquiring the diaries, asked me to spend some time searching through them to help Cardon in a revision of the manuscript. I read the diaries and Cardon's manuscript, and I made some editorial suggestions.

Then, fascinated by what I found

in the diaries, I began a detailed study of Smoot's role in the development of public land and resource policy. I wrote two papers which I offered to Cardon as part of the revision of his biography. He was not interested in using them, so I published them independently.

Later, when Harvard Heath was searching for a project for his Ph.D. dissertation, I suggested Reed Smoot, and he completed an edition of the diaries under my chairmanship.

The diaries edited here cover the period from February 1909 through August 1932. Family tradition has it that Smoot kept other diaries as well. This is probably true since the first of these diaries carries the number 3. The missing diaries may have covered at least part of his first term in office. If Smoot kept diaries after August 1932, they may have documented his defeat by Elbert D. Thomas in the 1932 election and his role as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve from 1933 through his death in 1941.

The absence of the early diaries seems particularly unfortunate. Most Latter-day Saints will recognize that the loss of the diaries for the period between his election in 1903 and the Senate vote in his favor in 1907 mean that his reflections on the struggle to keep his senatorial seat are missing. Significantly, these diaries would also have covered his early work on the Senate Public Lands and Surveys Committee, the development of his strong environmentalist views, and his support of Gifford Pinchot's and Theodore Roosevelt's forestry programs.

Be that as it may, the extant diaries are extraordinary for their frank-

ness. They offer a candid self-portrait of an indulgent and kind husband and father who agonized himself into ill health over the financial, marital, and psychological struggles of his children and the chronic illnesses of his first wife. They detail the chronic bickering within the Utah Republican organization and Smoot's Federal Bunch political machine between William Spry on the one side and Edward Callister, James Anderson, and Thomas Hull on the other. They reveal a powerful and well-respected political manipulator to whom all Republican presidents from Taft through Hoover turned for advice on legislation, appointments, and public policy. They reveal a committed environmentalist who fought for at least five years before securing the creation of the National Park Service and who loved the national forests. They reveal a patron of the arts, a devotee of beautiful architecture and city planning, and a friend of animals who helped facilitate the construction of the buildings in the Federal Triangle in Washington, D.C.; who served on the board of directors of the Smithsonian Institution; who talked Andrew Mellon into building and endowing an art gallery in Washington; who regularly visited the art galleries; and who frequently spent Sunday afternoons at the zoo. They reveal a partisan Old Guard Republican who held Democrats Woodrow Wilson and William H. King and Insurgent Republican Robert M. LaFollette in contempt, who organized a political machine of his own, and who supported other machine politicians in preference to Democrats. At the same time, they reveal an astute compromiser who worked with Progressives to rebuild the Republican party after the split of 1912. In doing

so, Smoot supported C. E. Loose, a close friend and one of the Progressives, for state party chairman. They reveal a wheeler-dealer who dipped successfully into the pork barrel for buildings and water projects for Utah. They reveal a savvy politico who refused to back statewide prohibition until he believed that its adoption would not harm the Republican party.

Readers should understand that Harvard Heath's edition is an abridgement and that it includes some of the paraphernalia scholars expect in the publication of a diary or papers. Heath has penned an introduction that interprets the scholarly writing on Smoot, discusses the provenance of the diaries, considers the procedure used in abridging the diaries, and offers a brief biography of the subject.

Since I have read all the diaries in the original, and since I have previously edited a diary and a collection of papers, I looked for certain things in the editorial procedure. First, I tried to measure how successfully Heath had identified the people mentioned in the text. Ordinarily this is done by giving the person's full name, the birth and death years, and a sentence or so of biographical information. Anyone who has done such work recognizes that there are always people an editor cannot identify. Moreover, I recognize as a reader that I may have missed the first entry on some of the individuals.

Assuming for the sake of argument that I did not miss the first mention, however, I was disappointed that several individuals were not identified or were inadequately identified. Alpha J. Higgs (43), for instance, is not identified. He was married polygamously after the 1890 Manifesto to

Bessie Badger, the sister of Carl A. Badger who served as Smoot's secretary for a number of years. Franklin K. Lane (205) is identified as Franklin Lane Knight. Madam Mountford (207) is Lydia Mary Olive Mamreoff von Finkelstein Mountford. A number of identifications that ought to have been given include Ida Maas Bamberger (127, whose full name is not given), Nicholas Murray Butler (258), Ambrose Noble McKay (288, 561), John W. Young (297), Simon Guggenheim (297), and George C. Parkinson (57). In identifying Lucien L. Nunn (46), the editor could have helped readers had he explained Nunn's connection with Telluride Power Company. Contrary to Heath's statement in identifying Jesse Knight (18), the mining-millionaire secured the Democratic nomination for governor in 1908, but Smoot, Callister, Hull, and Anderson remonstrated with the First Presidency and someone applied pressure which led Knight to withdraw. His son J. William Knight ran in his stead.

Second, I tried to rate the decisions to include or leave out certain entries. Understandably, Heath had to make difficult choices about what to leave out and what to retain in order to produce a single volume edition of an extensive diary. In general, I believe he has done an excellent job. I would fault him only on one point. He

left out the entries dealing with the drafting of the Smoot-Sinnott Minerals Leasing Act of 1920. The act was an extremely important aspect of Smoot's environmental legacy and remains significant in part because it has formed the basis for the leasing of hydrocarbons and other non-locatable minerals since that time. Moreover, it established the principle of payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) to counties and states for resources extracted from the public lands.

In spite of these reservations, I would compliment Heath, Signature Books, and Smith Research Associates for making this version of the diaries available. The bookwork is beautiful. Moreover, scholars of politics and economic development will find the volume a useful aid in researching the political history of Utah, the West, and the United States during the early twentieth century. Scholars of Mormonism will find it indispensable as a tool in understanding the LDS church during the period. Historians of the family will find it a fascinating study of Smoot's role in managing an exceedingly difficult family. Historians of the arts and architecture will find it enlightening in understanding the promotion of culture and city planning in Washington, D.C.