

trek was based upon faith and a hope for temporal as well as spiritual salvation. The venture could lead to success and glory or to failure and destruction of the LDS Church. The great Mormon exodus was a work in progress with both forward and backward steps. Ultimately, it achieved perhaps even greater success than Young and the original pioneer party foresaw. Between 1849 and the arrival of the railroad in 1869, approximately 60,000 people crossed the plains to establish a new home in the tops of the mountains—unarguably a triumph in migration unequalled in American history.

Mixing strong faith and good schol-

arship, Richard Bennett has created a work that leaves the reader with a greater understanding of and appreciation for the trek across the plains and settlement in the Great Basin. Among avid Civil War buffs, the question is often asked, "Do you hear the guns?" This is a way of expressing their love of this history and their enthusiasm for its powerful evocation. Perhaps one could ask those who study the Mormon Trail, "Do you hear the wagon wheels?" Until recently, I had not. But after traveling part of the trail in 1997 and then reading Bennett's excellent book, I have almost begun to hear them creak.

A Welcome Arrival, A Promising Standard

The Pioneer Camp of the Saints: The 1846 and 1847 Mormon Trail Journals of Thomas Bullock. Edited by Will Bagley (Spokane, Washington: Arthur H. Clark, 1997), 393 pp. Volume 1 in the series: "Kingdom in the West: The Mormons and the American Frontier."

Reviewed by Richard E. Bennett, Professor of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University.

THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS of the exodus from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Rocky Mountains saw the publication of several significant new works in Mormon history. Surely one of the most significant contributions of these is Will Bagley's edition of the Thomas Bullock journals of 1846 and 1847. Bagley and his publishing team are to be commended for bringing this vital and illuminating original document into public view. Whatever criticisms follow pale in importance to the

fact that Bagley has produced this valuable book. The English-born Bullock himself mars his record with small-minded complaints and petty criticism of the men around him, and his officially appointed record does not quite compare to the writings of contemporary diarists William Clayton, Orson Pratt, or Wilford Woodruff. Still, Bullock's account is a unique and wonderful addition to the literature of the Mormon trek.

The administration of the Church Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is also to be commended for the support and encouragement given this project. The publication of this original document may evidence a changing attitude, a refreshing recommitment to bringing to light important sources long neglected or forgotten in church archives. One can only hope that we will not have to wait for other anniversary celebrations to see more such publications.

The Pioneer Camp of the Saints has much to recommend it. Handsome and easily readable, the book features many photographs, detailed tables, and lists of rosters and mileage charts. Bagley's helpful introduction and life sketch of Bullock cover almost 25 pages, and each chapter or sub-section of the diaries is preceded by its own historical overview and explanation. An excellent index and a detailed appendix identifying many names appearing in the journal complete the volume.

Bagley's editing of the Bullock journal is professional. Scores of names, places, and events encountered along the way are described and detailed helpfully in footnotes, but footnotes are reasonable in number and size and do not overwhelm the text. Not since Juanita Brooks's study on Hosea Stout (*On the Mormon Frontier: The Diaries of Hosea Stout* [University of Utah Press, 1964]) has there appeared a better-edited Mormon journal.

More importantly, Bagley has been faithful to the original record, complete with intended—but stroked out—words and phrases and original grammar and spelling. There are no nagging ellipses, emendations, or revisions. In short, it is printed here and now as it was written there and then. And Bagley has gone one step further by incorporating helpful excerpts from Bullock's later letters and writings, especially those that appeared in the *Millennial Star* of 1848 in which he discussed the recent journey. He also integrates into the text key minutes of council meetings held along the trail, documents that Bullock wrote in his own hand as recorder to the Council of the Twelve. To the extent these records are included—and one is chagrined that more have not survived—Bullock's diary is as much the official record of the exodus as it is a personal account.

The work is not, however, without errors or weaknesses. These appear particularly in certain of the editor's historical and doctrinal explanations. If, for instance, the treatment of Samuel Brannan's life and intentions is sound and thorough, the same cannot be said with regard to James Emmett and George Miller. These men were not acting under Brigham Young's wishes when they settled in the Pawnee Village on the Niobrara in 1846/47. Instead, they were following their own course of borderline rebellion, one that soon took them out of the church. Bagley's inclusion of Bullock's Poor Camp journals of 1846 is commendable, but fails to incorporate recent scholarship (See esp. *The Iowa Mormon Trail: Legacy of Faith and Courage* [Orem, Utah: Helix Publishers, 1997]). Bagley's thoroughness in describing people and places is sadly lacking when it comes to clarifying the theology of the exodus. Missing are explanations for Brigham Young's May 26 sermon in Scottsbluff, the purpose of prayer circles, the Law of Adoption, the meaning of rebaptisms upon reaching Salt Lake Valley, and of other doctrines and practices peculiar to the trek. Bullock understood these things implicitly, but the editor needs to help the reader. Bagley minimizes or perhaps misunderstands the differences between Young and Pratt in their trail confrontation of August 1847. It wasn't "a possible rival for leadership of the church," but differing views on the role of the Twelve that was at issue (268). For such a complete journal with so many footnotes on rivers, ridges, and terrain, why only a single map on the last 100 miles of the trek? And why are some of the finest contemporary journals—by Horace K. Whitney, Erastus Snow, A. P. Rockwood, and Appleton Harmon—so little referenced or noted. Bullock was not alone, and a discussion, however short, of the other

journalists of the exodus would have strengthened this work.

These are, however, quibbles and should not distract or dissuade the scholar, student, or history buff from

reading and relishing this work. One can only hope that the remaining offerings in this series of original documents will measure up to the standard set here by Bagley.

Plural Marriage, Singular Lives

In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith. By Todd Compton (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1997), 824 pp.

Reviewed by Lawrence Foster, Professor of American History, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia.

JOSEPH SMITH'S POLYGAMOUS RELATIONSHIPS have been a topic of great interest and controversy among Mormons and non-Mormons alike. The reactions of the women whom Joseph Smith took as plural wives and the way in which their relationships with the Mormon prophet were part of their own larger life experiences, however, have seldom been studied systematically. Most writers have contented themselves with making head counts of Smith's alleged plural wives. The Mormon church historian Andrew Jenson listed twenty-seven probable plural wives, Fawn Brodie identified forty-eight, and more recent Mormon historians such as Danel Bachman, D. Michael Quinn, and George D. Smith have identified thirty-one, forty-six, and forty-three plural wives, respectively. These lists often do not adequately distinguish between different types of plural wives, particularly between those who probably sustained full connubial relations with Joseph Smith and those who were only posthumously sealed to him "for eternity."

Todd Compton's massive and path-

breaking, 788-page study *In Sacred Loneliness* provides the most comprehensive assessment yet available of the lives of thirty-three women whom he considers "well-documented wives of Joseph Smith" (1). Compton begins with a twenty-three page introduction that discusses some of the complex issues that must be addressed if Joseph Smith's plural marriages are to be understood, and then he briefly summarizes the evidence on each of the wives in chart form. The 596-page core of the book consists of thirty well-written and thoroughly documented chapters that sympathetically reconstruct, using detailed quotations from a wide range of primary sources, the lives of the thirty-three women he has identified as plural wives. These include two sets of sisters and one mother-daughter pair whose stories are combined in three of the chapters. Instead of in-text source citations, 148 pages of bibliographic and chapter references are provided. A fifteen page index concludes the study.

Although scholars may take issue with some of Compton's assumptions and arguments, his study is a major step forward in understanding early Mormon plural marriage. First and most impressively, Compton is concerned about treating each of the women whom he studies as a real person in her own right and reconstructing the entire life stories from birth to death of these often quite remarkable women, many of whom be-