

In June 1959, a few months after his seventieth birthday, Moyle was called to serve in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' presiding First Presidency as second counselor to David O. McKay where one of his chief assignments would be the church missionary program. Several factors had influenced President McKay's selection of Moyle as a counselor, including his proven business acumen and, surprisingly, his politics: Moyle was a Democrat. This was a "minor but not inconsequential factor" "for a church striving to present a bipartisan image to the world" (187).

His successes in this calling, however, appear to have led eventually to his fall from grace among some of his peers within the church hierarchy. Indeed, Poll compares this portion of his subject's life to a Greek tragedy (210).

The accelerating missionary program of the church demanded vigorous, enthusiastic leadership—qualities Moyle possessed in abundance. His self-confidence and his fervent belief that he was right did not always help him, however, in working among older, more conservative brethren. Many in church leadership came to see problems with the missionary program as Moyle's new quotas for missionary work led to so-called "baseball baptisms." These baptisms added

scores of unconverted youngsters to ward membership rolls, much to the chagrin of local and general authorities. Moyle himself saw this problem as "exceptional" and often preached against the practice (211). As he saw it, the real issue was member retention through active fellowshiping, not simply the increase in baptisms.

At first, President McKay approved most of the initiatives put forth by his second counselor, giving Moyle "considerable latitude" (215). Within a few years, however, and in response to concerns among the hierarchy, McKay decided to assume greater oversight for church missionary efforts since these were its most "visible" and "vulnerable" public activities (215).

Following a life marked by personal, financial, and religious successes, Moyle died quietly in his sleep on 18 September 1963. Considering that life, Poll writes, "Henry D. Moyle had more impact upon the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the current century than any other man who did not hold the office of president" (224). Some may disagree with this claim, but after reading *Working the Divine Miracle*, it would be difficult to refute it. Author Poll and editor Larson have provided a solid biography of an important figure in the twentieth-century church hierarchy.

Protocols of the (Other) Elders of Zion

The History of the Saints, 3d edition, by John C. Bennett, ed. Andrew F. Smith (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 341pp., \$34.95

Reviewed by Terryl Givens, Associate Professor of English, University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia.

ONE MAY IMPUTE two possible rationales to the decision by the University of Illinois Press to reprint an 1842 exposé of Joseph Smith and Mormonism. Its re-publication may represent an appreciation for its value as a window on anti-Mormon hysteria and hate-mongering in an era when the

paranoid imagination and the literature of reprisal wrought much tragedy in Missouri and Illinois. One could also value it as an historically plausible account of early Mormon duplicity and infamy. Discounting its excesses, one might consider the book revealing and credible enough to contribute meaningfully to a fuller understanding of how Mormonism invited its own tragic chapters in American history. (The jacket offers a third rationale, one we are reluctant to take seriously. Even if Bennett is unreliable, we are told, "wherever the truth lies, *The History of the Saints* is a titillating concoction of indignation, revelation, and vituperation." That it may be, but one hopes that a press of this stature does not seriously consider that a sound basis for publication.)

Andrew F. Smith, the editor, makes a case for the book's documentary value in his lengthy introduction, but he is not very convincing. Smith reminds us that Bennett cannibalized almost four-fifths of the material from other hostile accounts. Bennett provides affidavits of Danite activity, evidence of Joseph's "amours and attempted seductions" and his theocratic aspirations, and a "mass of evidence" alleging various criminal activities (the catalogue ranges from arson and bestiality to rape and treason [257]). There is nothing new—obviously—in these charges. What is new is their presentation by a scholarly press in the context of an historical introduction that attempts to rehabilitate Bennett's book as good institutional, rather than cultural, history. Smith writes that Bennett has been wrongly "dismissed" by Mormon historians as either "a true believer who sadly went astray, or as an opportunist masquerading as a devout religious convert" (viii). This is curious criticism since the editor explicitly em-

braces the second option himself. Bennett was a "Barnumesque" character, he writes, who always "pursued secular, not religious goals" (viii, xvii). His biography of Bennett doesn't hedge either, as its title makes evident: *The Saintly Scoundrel: The Life and Times of Dr. John Cook Bennett* (University of Illinois Press, 1997). Smith's real complaint is that Mormon scholars have not taken this opportunist seriously as a chronicler of the prophet and church that publicly exposed and humiliated him. Smith asserts the familiar mantra that leaders of institutions generally conceal from others (and from themselves) the "real rules that govern an institution" and "the true institutional norms and ways of operating" (viii). In light of this premise, Smith apparently considers Bennett's book valuable as primary source material for documenting—at worst—the conspiratorial machinations in early Mormon history, and—at best—the false consciousness or self-deluded motivations behind Joseph's elaboration of early Mormon practice and belief. But with an author as prejudiced and unreliable as Bennett, who "left no infamy unclaimed in his attack on Mormonism" (xxxi), how are we to find illumination into "true institutional norms" and the "real rules" of Mormonism?

It may be merely idiosyncratic that Andrew F. Smith insists—against a tide of scholarship now decades old—that the theory that Solomon Spaulding authored the Book of Mormon is entirely plausible. In the section on the Missouri persecutions, his bias becomes more disturbing. Smith refers to Joseph's creation of the Danites "to enforce his will" and "suppress dissent" though the extent of his control over this mysterious band remains open to debate (xv). He then refers to Sidney Ridgon's inflammatory 4th of

July speech that aroused “non-Mormon” (never “anti-Mormon”) ire, and—in what many readers may at first think a misprint—writes that the “Mormon militia plundered non-Mormon settlements” (xv). Factually correct, perhaps, but what does such a fact mean when the author neglects to mention the slaughter of Mormons at Haun’s Mill and never even hints that attacks, house burnings, mobbings, and murder took place against Mormons? Even the riot to prevent Mormons from voting at Gallatin is sanitized here as an “electoral altercation” (xv), thus preserving the editor’s narrative agenda: Mormons were the only real instigators and perpetrators of violence in Missouri. This is “history” in the same sense that Bennett’s book is a “History,” and the lack of objectivity is

as transparent as it is bewildering in a university press publication.

Even accepting the legitimacy of some of Bennett’s charges about the beginnings of secret polygamy in Nauvoo and Joseph’s theocratic designs, his sheer rhetorical and sensationalistic excess led the editor James Gordon Bennett to conclude in 1842 that the book’s publication “utterly disgraces its publisher” (xxxii). Perhaps the same can’t be said of its re-publication. But justifying the decision by appealing to “titillation” will not do. And promising, in a uni-dimensional introduction, that the book will reveal Mormonism’s “real ways of operating” does not remove us as far from 19th century sensationalism as we could wish.

Henry William Bigler: Mormon Chronicler of Great Events

Henry William Bigler: Soldier, Gold Miner, Missionary, Chronicler, 1815-1900, by M. Guy Bishop. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1998). 208 pp., \$36.95.

Reviewed by Violet T. Kimball, Writer and Photographer, Glen Carbon, Illinois

M. GUY BISHOP HAS MOVED AWAY from famous Mormon church leaders to delve into the life of a minor member who had a major appointment with American history. Henry William Bigler’s life is one that has both historical and religious significance. He left “thirteen day books and journals and an autobiography/journal telling much about mid-nineteenth century California” (xiii). One of his most im-

portant entries was made January 24, 1848 at Sutter’s Creek: “This day some kind of mettle was found. . .that. . . looks like goald.” (59). Bishop’s purpose is to present “Bigler’s written record [which] offers an unsophisticated mirror of his activities and thoughts, convincingly sincere in intent and formidable in sheer volume” (xii). By all standards, Bigler was a common man who did not know he had a date with destiny when he marched out of Iowa with the Mormon Battalion on July 21, 1846, to the strains of “The Girl I Left Behind Me.” Bigler, however, did not leave a girl behind.

Henry William Bigler was born in Pennsylvania in 1815 and joined the Mormon church with most of his immediate family in 1837. They migrated