

and chose the former. "God Willing" is the story of the death of the widowed Amy and, in retrospect, the death and funeral of Israel twenty years earlier.

Although she chooses a Mormon setting for her stories, Eileen Kump is too sophisticated a writer to rely on oversimple, pseudo-spiritual solutions to her characters' dilemmas. The readers may sometimes feel, however, that the implications of each tension are not really followed through: we are convinced of Amy's anxieties over the disclosure of her pregnancy, but rather suddenly she decides not to worry about it any more; and when her careful and exact vision of her new house is shattered, she reconciles herself to her fate in a way that seems almost facile. Since Eileen Kump's imagination, taste, and craftsmanship are so evident—in this reviewer's opinion, no finer short fiction has ever been written by a Mormon author—it is tempting to wish for a sustained treatment of a really complex set of problems, perhaps in novel form. Most of the stories in *Bread and Milk* take up a single, already-existing conflict and then allow it to melt into resolution under the warmth of good will, faith, and the passing of time. How wonderful it would be to see what Eileen Kump could do if she decided to present the growth of an interwoven set of difficult conflicts and then see them through to a working-out. All the prerequisites for accomplishing such a task seem to be there in abundance.

TERRY, KEITH and ANN. *Emma: The Dramatic Biography of Emma Smith*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Butterfly Publishing, 1979. 160 pp. \$7.95.

Reviewed by Donald Q. Cannon, professor of Church history and doctrine, Brigham Young University.

Emma Smith, wife of the Prophet Joseph, has long attracted the interest of Latter-day Saints. For more than a century after the death of Joseph Smith, Mormons looked upon Emma with disfavor. Then, in recent years, her reputation has been restored. Indeed, several LDS authors have suggested that Emma deserves our sympathy and understanding. Foremost among those who have administered historical artificial respiration to her character is Erwin Wirkus. In his book, *Judge Me Dear Reader* (Orem, Utah: Randall Publishers, 1978), Wirkus pleads with his readers to understand Emma, to realize

how truly difficult her life was, and to forgive her for her shortcomings. That this favorable view of Emma has gained widespread acceptance is attested to by the approval of this point of view by Church Correlation. Evidence of that sanction is the lesson on Emma Smith and section twenty-five of the Doctrine and Covenants in the Gospel Doctrine Sunday School manual for 1978-79.

Because Emma has come full circle from disfavor to favor, it would seem that the time is right for a balanced view, even for a definitive biography of the "real" Emma Smith. But alas, *Emma* by Keith and Ann Terry is not that book. The authors of *Emma* candidly confess that "this book is not and does not pretend to be a definitive biography of Emma Smith" (p. xx). It is neither definitive nor "historically accurate biography," as claimed on the dust jacket. Indeed, what research was invested in this work is totally inadequate. A careful reading of *Emma* reveals the authors' failure to use the best and most authoritative sources, faulty organization, poor writing style, exaggerations, and confusion of places, events, and people.

To become aware of some of the problems inherent in this biography, consider the following. In many instances the authors fail to make use of the best source material on Emma Smith, in particular, and Church history, in general. While discussing the Emma-Brigham controversy and Major Lewis C. Bidamon (Emma's second husband), they fail to incorporate, or even call attention to, the insightful and precise work done by Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery. This team of LDS authors has been working for several years preparing a major biography of Emma Smith, which is to be published by a national publisher during 1982. Along the way these two fine scholars have given numerous lectures and have published several articles which should be included in any biography of Emma.¹ In their discussion of the Kirtland Safety Society, the authors fail to mention or use the study by Marvin C. Hill, C. Keith Rooker, and Larry T. Wimmer, "The Kirtland Economy Revisited: A Market Critique of Sectarian Economics," which appeared in *BYU Studies* 17 (Summer 1977): 391-475, and as a separate publication. That fuller study rejects the notion that the bank failed because of general economic conditions and Joseph Smith's ineptness in financial matters, arguing that the Society failed because it was unable

¹Examples of their work include "Lewis C. Bidamon, Stepchild of Mormondom," *BYU Studies* 19 (Spring 1979): 375-88; "Sweet Counsel and Seas of Tribulation: The Religious Life of the Women in Kirtland," *BYU Studies* 20 (Winter 1980): 151-62; "The Lion and the Lady: Brigham Young and Emma Smith," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 48 (Winter 1980): 81-97; "New Light on the Sun: Emma Smith and the New York Sun Letter," *Journal of Mormon History* 6 (1979): 23-35.

to get a corporate charter from the state of Ohio. Likewise, the Terrys' discussion of the New Translation makes no mention of the pioneering work of Robert J. Matthews, who has written several fine articles and an excellent book on that subject. For example, Emma's critical role in preserving the manuscripts prior to their publication in 1867 is ignored in the Terrys' work. Richard L. Anderson has spoken widely on the Joseph–Emma letters, the subject of a forthcoming book. Unfortunately, the Terrys do not include in their study his insights regarding Emma. These omissions are major oversights which constitute serious errors.

Emma also contains many other historical inaccuracies. The number of casualties at Haun's Mill was seventeen, not forty (p. 39). The letter which Joseph wrote to Emma while in Liberty Jail is not at Chicago, but at Yale (p. 48). Dimick Huntington was not Demick (p. 98). Three of the four articles credited to James L. Kimball, Jr., were in fact written by Stanley B. Kimball, who is not even listed (p. 158).

Concerning the matter of faulty organization, the most obvious problem is the lack of chapter titles and the exclusion of a table of contents. Without these guides the reader is left to wander aimlessly through the book, not knowing for certain what is next. A related problem is footnoting. The notes are listed at the back of the book, but they refer not to specific quotations but are simply listed page by page. Consequently, the reader is never sure what specific source relates to what specific quotation or passage in the text. Also, the book reads more like an outline than a full story. It is filled with one-sentence paragraphs, and often the subject changes so abruptly that one can hardly catch one's breath while reading. In a word, the story is not complete.

In addition, the writers employ careless exaggerations and overstatements. While this practice seems common in popular Mormon writing, it distorts the truth and is inappropriate in historical work. For example, when the authors compare Governor Boggs with Hitler, the statements attract attention and reinforce current Mormon attitudes, but they considerably overstate the matter.

In their handling of some topics, Keith and Ann Terry tend to confuse people, places, and events. The role of Emma Smith vis-a-vis the role of W. W. Phelps in the creation of the first Church hymn book is unclear. The Masonic Hall on Main Street and the Masonic lodge room in the Red Brick Store on Water Street in Nauvoo are often referred to as if they were the same place. Porter Rockwell's conversations with Joseph Smith III are misplaced in point of time.

Other examples could be cited, but those mentioned should suffice to demonstrate that *Emma* has serious deficiencies. The book is, however, not without redeeming value. For example, the authors often present controversial material without being defensive or apologetic. In discussing Joseph Smith's use of a peepstone and his treasure-hunting activities, they forthrightly present the truth. Their material on plural marriage (chaps. 12 and 13) is relatively up-to-date and honestly presented. In some cases, they do tell us something very meaningful about Emma. Her relationship with Joseph, the family's lack of roots and a home of their own, and her life with her second husband are effectively and sympathetically presented.

But these strengths are outweighed by the major flaws. What concerns the serious student of Mormon history is that the Emma Smith portrayed in this work is not the real Emma Smith. Emma was not the romanticized, dramatized figure presented in the pages of this biography. To understand the real Emma, or to find the truth about Emma, much more is required. In short, we need a definitive, accurate, honest biography of Joseph Smith's wife.