

at BYU, shows how this national organization received its constitutional undergirdings from the work of its charter unit.

—John W. Welch

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*Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: California*, edited by David F. Boone, Robert C. Freeman, Andrew H. Hedges, and Richard Neitzel Holzapfel (Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1998)

Inspired by the 1996 sesquicentennial of the arrival of the *Brooklyn*, the ship that brought almost two hundred Latter-day Saints to the shores of the Golden State, *California* is an impressive addition to the Regional Studies series and has many interesting stories to tell. Since the arrival of those first Saints, California has witnessed important events in both national and Church history. The book's fifteen articles treat subjects as diverse as the march of the Mormon Battalion, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and the riots that erupted in Los Angeles following the Rodney King trial. Organized chronologically, the essays present a myriad of images, each one adding a distinctive flavor. Eliminating any single essay would leave the work incomplete.

The contributors bring to the volume numerous approaches and perspectives, giving the reader a taste of the richness and variety that has characterized the Saints' experiences in California. With some articles focusing on individuals, others on groups or events, and all demonstrating the Golden State's significant role in the past, present, and future of the Church, *California* is never boring. However, with the exception of the article by Richard Holzapfel, the volume might have benefited from illustrations that would give life to lengthy descriptions of people and places.

*California* makes a valuable addition to the growing body of works on Church

history, reminding the reader that the Church is not confined to the Wasatch Front. The volume offers satisfying and enlightening reading for anyone interested in learning more about the complex and compelling story of the Latter-day Saints.

—Amber Esplin

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*My Servant Brigham: Portrait of a Prophet*, by Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and R. Q. Shupe (Bookcraft, 1997)

“The heart of this book is the images” (3), assert the authors of this brief but attractive volume. Providing “some lesser-known word pictures and visual images, photographs and artifacts” (3) from the life and world of Brigham Young, this work skillfully weaves together a well-documented running text with visual images, often ingeniously utilizing images as text.

Many images are seen here in print for the first time, such as the handsome portrait of Brigham Young featured on the cover (also 107). Rare views were dug out of nineteenth-century national copy, the Library of Congress, or private hands. There are no earth-shattering discoveries—no long-hoped-for photograph of Brother Brigham out among his people—but even the expert will learn something new from this collection. In particular, images of Brigham Young's carriage, his death mask, and a document listing the measurement of his physical lineaments (120, 141, 142) will interest both scholar and layman alike. Scholars will benefit from corrections and clarifications on the dating of portraits and will puzzle over an image purported to be a fragment of Brigham Young's original membership certificate (59), dating his baptism to April 9, 1832, five days earlier than his own recollected date of April 14.

Telling a story through images, as this book attempts to do, inevitably leaves out elements of the story where images are lacking or do not get the point across.

Toward the end of his life, Brigham Young formally introduced the United Order of Enoch, which he considered to be the culmination of his prophetic leadership. No information on that order is included, nor is his endowment for three schools broached. A delightful, familiar image of Brigham Young's daughter in a "retrenchment" dress accompanies a discussion of the young women's society (111), but no image of the young men's movement Brigham Young initiated in 1875 apparently exists.

Over one hundred images are interspersed throughout the book. Its standard-size format allows this significant work to give only a snapshot of Brigham Young's world, but it will rightly bring that world into the hands of a larger audience.

—Jed L. Woodworth

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*Nephite Culture and Society: Collected Papers*, by John L. Sorenson (New Sage Books, 1997)

The Book of Mormon is a record left by real people, who lived in real families, who sailed across real oceans, and who behaved in anthropologically reasonable ways. John Sorenson, known to many for his insights into Book of Mormon geography, culture, and society, collects in this volume eight of his miscellaneous papers, two of which are previously unpublished.

Sorenson is at his best when he describes such things as the individuals in Lehi's party and what can be known about the elusive substratum of Mulekite culture in Zarahemla. Perhaps most memorable in this book are his arguments that when Lehi and Mulek arrived in the Western Hemisphere, they found other people already there. Sorenson's hallmark is finding patterns of civilization, and this book offers insightful generalizations about Book of Mormon settlements, conflicts, and political economics.

Learning to read the Book of Mormon with utmost attention to detail is an art.

When it comes to culture and society, no one has mastered that art of cultural realism or applied it more sensitively than Sorenson.

—John W. Welch

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*All Things Testify of Him: Inspirational Paintings by Latter-day Saint Artists* (Bookcraft, 1998)

Landscapes, the heavens, objects, portraits, and events—all testify of Christ in this handsome, large-format volume. Featuring the works of twenty-eight contemporary LDS artists and illustrators, the book is both a visual and a spiritual feast. By having the artists introduce themselves and write their own commentary, the unnamed compilers have carefully refrained from imposing their own judgments or interpretation. Even the arrangement speaks of a hands-off approach—rather than being ordered by subject matter or style, the works are organized alphabetically by the artists' names, going from Robert Barrett to Christopher W. Young and touching upon such people as Wulf Barsch, James C. Christensen, Greg Olsen, and Gary Smith in between. The sometimes jarring shift from style to style is offset by the opportunity to become acquainted with the artist through their own words. With three exceptions, all the artists live in Utah. Many have regional or national reputations. Several have had their works featured in the *Ensign*; others will be familiar to folks who have visited either the Museum of Church History and Art or BYU's Museum of Art or have read *BYU Studies*. Although people are certain to disagree on who should or should not have been included in *All Things Testify of Him*, this volume provides a valuable opportunity to view paintings already treasured and to be introduced to other uplifting works.

—Doris R. Dant