



10-1-1966

Expectations Westward: The Mormons and the Emigration of Their British Converts in the Nineteenth Century P. A. M. Taylor

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Recommended Citation

Cannon, M. Hamlin (1966) "*Expectations Westward: The Mormons and the Emigration of Their British Converts in the Nineteenth Century* P. A. M. Taylor," *BYU Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 7 : Iss. 3 , Article 11.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol7/iss3/11>

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P. A. M. TAYLOR, *Expectations Westward: The Mormons and the Emigration of Their British Converts in the Nineteenth Century*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966. pp. xvi, 277. \$7.50.

The story of the populating of America by the poor and oppressed peoples of lands across the seas is one of the great sagas of the nineteenth century. During that period the United States grew from about five and one-half million people clinging to the eastern seaboard to a nation of over 75 million that spanned a continent from sea to shining sea. A significant part of this saga is the peopling of Illinois and the trans-Mississippi west by European converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

To tell the whole story of the Mormon experience requires that one be a poet, a hard-boiled business man, a scholar, a sceptic, a religious mystic, a philosopher, a psychologist, a sociologist, and an economist. The indisputable fact that no one writer is all of these has not, however, prevented many of us from trying to interpret various phases of Mormon history.

One of the more successful of these laborers in the vineyard is Dr. P. A. M. Taylor, a lecturer in history in the Department of American Studies at Hull University, England. The primary purpose of *Expectations Westward*, he says, "is not to tell an exciting story, but to explore the relationships between Mormon theology, the early history of the Mormon Church in America, its missionary activities in Britain, its colonizing work in Utah, and the planned emigration of its British converts." Dr. Taylor has organized his study into three broad subject areas: "Britain," "Utah," and "The Emigrants and Their Journey." Part I contains a brief summary of the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as these doctrines were concerned with the "Gathering," describes conditions in the British Mission and the methods employed by the missionaries to secure converts and further the migration, and concludes with a summary of the beginnings of emigration. Part II deals with the authority of Brigham Young and the priesthood in Utah and attempts to show that only the authoritarian policies of the Church made possible the peopling of the Great Basin. The author devotes one chapter to the policies and practices adopted by the Church authorities to build up Utah. Another chapter details the methods employed in bringing the British

Mormons to the Rocky Mountains. Part III of the volume comprises five chapters which analyze the economic background and occupations of the emigrants, discuss the Mormon emigration agents in Liverpool and British legislation designed to insure the health and welfare of emigrating citizens, life aboard the emigrant ships, the overland journey from the eastern United States to the Missouri River, and finally the journey from the Missouri to Utah. (Dr. Taylor feels that "the study of individual and family adjustments among British-born Mormons must be left to scholars who live in Utah." This reviewer is a bit chagrined that Dr. Taylor was apparently unaware of his studies on British Mormon migration and the British Mormon in Utah which appeared in the *American Historical Review* in 1947 and 1952.)

It is evident from the foregoing summary of the volume that it contains a wealth of information and is the result of much painstaking research. The author has explored extensively the Church archives both in Salt Lake City and in the British Mission and has utilized microfilm supplied by the National Archives. In addition, he has used most of the recent historical publications on Mormon history. The result is an excellent and informative study of the English Mormons, though not a definitive one.

In studying the works of some leading writers on Mormonism, Dr. Taylor became confirmed in his belief that his own study "was worth making, since it would fill an important gap in the others' results." It is true that a gap exists, but it is neither as deep nor as broad as the author implies. In reviewing *Expectations Westward* for the *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Professor Gustive O. Larson said, "However, the very abundance of source materials and recognition of more recent publications emphasize a curious oversight of at least four pioneering contributions; namely, 'Church Emigrations' (an analysis by years) by Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson appearing in three volumes of *The Contributor* during the years 1891-92; 'History of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,' a master's thesis by this writer completed at the University of Utah in 1926; *A Century of 'Mormonism' in Great Britain . . .*, by Richard L. Evans in 1937; and 'The Gathering of the British Mormons to Western America,' a Ph.D. dissertation, by M. Hamlin Cannon at American University in 1950."

Dr. Taylor has researched deeply in the occupations and number of the Mormon emigrants. He has not, however, utilized earlier research: Jules Remy, *A Journey to Great Salt Lake City* (1861); Sir Richard F. Burton, *The City of the Saints* (1861 and 1964); and Frederick Piercy, *Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley* (1855 and 1962). In other areas Dr. Taylor has high praise for these authors. If he felt that their statistics were inaccurate, it would have been well for him to say so for the guidance of present and future students.

Certain facets of the story of the British Mormon emigrants which this reviewer feels might well have been touched upon in *Expectations Westward* include the efforts of President Buchanan and the Secretary of State under President Hayes to block the migration; the interest of British Mormons in colonizing Canada; and the importance of Kaneshville, Iowa, both as the home of the *Frontier Guardian* and as a jumping-off place for the overland journey to Utah (according to Jenson, Kaneshville for several years had a larger population than the Utah settlements). Somewhat fuller treatment might also have been given to the reasons for the establishment of the British Mission and to the migration of the British Saints to Nauvoo.

None of these comments are intended to detract from the many merits of *Expectations Westward*. Unquestionably, Dr. Taylor has written the best account of the British Mormons that has yet appeared and has added much to our knowledge of the movement. His prize-winning volume belongs on the bookshelf of any serious student of Mormon history.

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