



5-1-2006

Book Notices

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Recommended Citation

Rogers, Jedediah S.; Needle, Jeffrey; and Maxwell, Robert L. (2006) "Book Notices," *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 45 : Iss. 2 , Article 22.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol45/iss2/22>

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The Oatman Massacre: A Tale of Desert Captivity and Survival, by Brian McGinty (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004)

Renderings of the massacre that took the lives of six members of the Roys Oatman family on February 18, 1851, near the confluence of the Gila and Colorado Rivers (in present-day Arizona) derive, at least in part, from Royal B. Stratton's *Captivity of the Oatman Girls*. Stratton's 1857 narrative accompanied Olive and Lorenzo Oatman—the two survivors—on their speaking tours, but as independent scholar and writer Brian McGinty aptly reveals, the book and even the Oatmans' circuit tours inaccurately and falsely represented the massacre and the events that followed. McGinty combines Stratton's account with new and underused source material, and circumstantial evidence, to construct a carefully wrought portrait of this fascinating western saga.

One could compile a laundry list of McGinty's innovative contributions to the historical record, from the route the immigrant parties followed to the number of attackers to the amount of time the Oatman girls spent in captivity (Lorenzo survived the massacre after being left for dead, but 13-year-old Olive and 8-year-old Mary Ann became captives, the latter dying probably in 1855). McGinty is more hesitant to blame the massacre on the Apaches than the Tolkapayas, since clubs were employed in the attack and because the Tolkapayas lived much closer to the vicinity than the Apaches. He locates the probable location of Olive and Mary Ann's captivity in Wiltaika (present-day McMullen Valley), and he suggests that while among the natives, Olive likely married or at least engaged in some level of sexual intimacy. McGinty also pays special attention to the postcaptivity years of Olive and Lorenzo.

Students of Mormon history will find special interest in McGinty's close attention to the religious context of the Oatmans' ill-fated odyssey—their ties to Mormonism and their loyalty to Colin Brewster, the "Boy Prophet" who attracted a small following of Mormon dissenters after the death of Joseph Smith, and his prophesies of a fertile "Land of Bashan." After all, as McGinty rightly points out, without this connection to Mormonism the massacre probably would never have happened.

—Jedediah S. Rogers

Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts, edited by Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, Robert J. Matthews (Religious Studies Center, BYU, 2004)

This volume is a massive, thorough, and thoroughly engrossing look into the mind of Joseph Smith and the evolution of his translation of the Bible.

Joseph Smith's "corrections" to the canonical text were not a matter of retranslating ancient manuscripts. Instead, they arose from Joseph's claims to a place in the prophetic line of authority. However readers appreciate the origin, nature, and value of the Joseph Smith Translation, this current study adds a new dimension to the understanding of both the revision and the reviser.

The bulk of this work constitutes a page-by-page reproduction of the work done by Joseph Smith and his scribes. We are also given glimpses into Joseph's own copy of the Bible, showing the notation system he used in preparation for the revision. It shows the work of an ordered and determined individual, one who took his task very seriously.

Several introductory chapters enhance the study and provide necessary, helpful information: "Joseph Smith's

New Translation of the Bible” provides a bird’s-eye view of the work. A brief history of the translation, along with a discussion of the types of changes made by the Prophet, helps in understanding the larger work. Also included is a brief note on how the translation has been used in the LDS Church. “The New Translation and Latter-day Saint Doctrine” discusses the impact of the work on the development of doctrine in the LDS Church. “The New Translation Materials Since 1844,” written by a scholar from the RLDS (Community of Christ) tradition, is a fascinating look at the ownership, publication, and use of the materials outside the LDS tradition, and the eventual permission given to the Utah church to utilize the work. The “Scribes” chapter identifies the men and women responsible for the transcription of the Joseph Smith translation. “Transcription Methods” discusses the awesome responsibility that confronted the editors of the present volume in transcribing the manuscripts. “The Sequence of the New Translation” presents, in table form, a chronological view of the translation. It reconstructs, as carefully as the record permits, the date, scripture reference, name of the scribe and where the translation was done. Scholars of the LDS scriptural tradition will find a gold mine of information and insight in this book.

—Jeffrey Needle

The Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Edition, ed. Grant Hardy (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003)

Grant Hardy, chair of the history department at the University of North Carolina at Asheville and specialist in Chinese history, has produced for the University of Illinois Press a useful edition of the Book of Mormon. Over the years various editions of the

Book of Mormon have been produced outside The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, most recently the 2004 Doubleday edition, which was advertised as the first trade edition. Depending upon how one defines “trade edition,” it would appear that the University of Illinois anticipated Doubleday by a year, to say nothing of a number of other editions produced in the last decade (see an appendix in the Illinois edition). The original text of the Book of Mormon has been in the public domain for over a century and, given its importance, it is not surprising that various types of editions should be published. What is perhaps surprising, given the University of Illinois Press’s long tradition of publishing scholarship on various aspects of Mormonism, an Illinois edition has not come out before now.

Hardy used the text of the 1920 edition of the Book of Mormon that is found in the public domain (the Doubleday edition uses, with permission, the 1981 text of the official Church edition). Hardy has typeset the text beautifully, dividing the chapters into paragraphs and setting poetic passages as poetry. He added quotation marks and two levels of headings in larger type, which guide the reader and ease the finding of particular sections, but otherwise the text has not been changed. Typography does make a difference to the reading experience, and this edition is well set, as befits a “reader’s edition.” Hardy’s typesetting also appropriately places this edition squarely in the tradition of modern Bible typography.

In addition to the text of the Book of Mormon, Hardy includes an introduction and appendices containing the testimonies of various witnesses to the Book of Mormon, a chronology of its translation, a discussion of the poetic

forms found in the text (including chiasmus and other forms of parallelism), a listing of the significant variations of the different manuscripts and editions, genealogical tables, chronologies, maps, a glossary of names, and an up-to-date bibliography.

Hardy says, “This edition is intended to help non-Mormons understand what it is that Mormons see in this sometimes obscure text” (vii–viii). The book will also be useful to Church members seeking greater understanding of one of the foundational documents of their religion, or simply seeking to enjoy the scripture in a more readable setting.

—Robert L. Maxwell