Kalaupapa: The Mormon Experience in an Exiled Community by Fred E. Woods (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center,
Emily Cook

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq

Part of the Mormon Studies Commons, and the Religious Education Commons

Recommended Citation
Cook, Emily (2019) "Kalaupapa: The Mormon Experience in an Exiled Community by Fred E. Woods (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center," BYU Studies Quarterly: Vol. 58 : Iss. 1 , Article 20. Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol58/iss1/20

This Notice is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in BYU Studies Quarterly by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
of images is more subtle and contemplative, and all images are printed in black and white.

I was surprised to find two minor factual errors in the editor’s introduction to the volume. Let me mention one. Hardy explains that the original manuscript instead of the printer’s manuscript was used by the typesetter (for text from Helaman 13, verse 17, to the end of Mormon) because “Joseph and Oliver took the printer’s manuscript to Canada to procure the copyright there” (xv). But Joseph Smith did not go to Canada with Oliver Cowdery. In the revelation regarding this errand to Canada, Oliver’s traveling companions were to be Hiram Page, Josiah Stowell, and Joseph Knight. It is uncertain whether all three accompanied Oliver, but Joseph Smith definitely did not.¹

This quibble aside, the Maxwell Institute Study Edition of the Book of Mormon is a valuable addition to the growing number of resources available to students of this volume of Latter-day Saint scripture.

—Roger Terry


Kalaupapa: The Mormon Experience in an Exiled Community by Fred E. Woods (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2017)

As Hansen’s Disease (also known as leprosy) spread rapidly throughout Hawaii in the nineteenth century, the Kalaupapa peninsula was selected as an “isolation settlement for confirmed cases” of leprosy and the location of “a receiving hospital where suspected cases could be treated” (20–21). These individuals were essentially exiled, and one might think that such an isolated community would be a place of loneliness, but Kalaupapa: The Mormon Experience in an Exiled Community explores how, instead, the community was built on love and inclusion and began to thrive and became a sacred space. According to author Fred E. Woods, professor of religious education at Brigham Young University, Kalaupapa “is the story of community—community unlike anywhere else in the world—not a space divided by borders and barriers or fences and enclosures, but a place which beckons every race and religion, every color and creed” (xv).

This book stands out from others written about Kalaupapa because it “emphasizes the Mormon experience” (xv). It begins by giving a brief history of Hawaii and the first Christian ministers (including Protestant, Catholic, and Latter-day Saint missionaries) to arrive there. The book then dives into stories of the inhabitants of Kalaupapa and the experiences of Church members there from the nineteenth century through the twenty-first century.

Included in the book’s 318 pages are over one hundred images, most of Church members and natives of Kalaupapa, which help bring to life the history Woods tells. Several appendixes supplement the narrative and feature the complete text of several primary documents, including the official acts that isolated those with leprosy, letters sent between Church leaders and the king of Hawaii, and records of the local branch presidency.

According to Woods, “The charity and uncommon service rendered at Kalaupapa is relevant in any age” (xvii). Anyone interested in the power of community and in global Church history will find this a compelling and satisfying read.

—Emily Cook