

Review

Title: *Playing With Shadows: Voices of Dissent in the Mormon West*
(Vol. 13 in Arthur H. Clark's *Kingdom in the West – The Mormons and the American Frontier Series*)
Editors: Polly Aird, Jeff Nichols and Will Bagley
Publisher: University of Oklahoma Press, Norman OK
Genre: LDS History, Utah History, Religious Dissent
Year Published: 2011
Number of Pages: 518
Binding: Hardback
ISBN: 978-0-87062-380-6
Price: \$45.00

Reviewed by Kris Wray for the Association for Mormon Letters 2012

The latest installment of the popular 'Kingdom in the West' series from Arthur H. Clark Company, entitled 'Playing with Shadows: Voices of Dissent in the Mormon West,' has been released. This makes thirteen volumes announced thus far, with twelve actually published (At Sword's Point v2, by MacKinnon, is scheduled for release in 2013). *Playing with Shadows* was coedited by Polly Aird, Jeff Nichols and Will Bagley. It tackles the complexity of dissent, apostasy, and the 'shades of resistance' in-between as exhibited in histories by four nineteenth-century members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS): George Armstrong Hicks, Charles Derry, Ann Gordge and Brigham Young Hampton. At different points during their sojourn in the Zion of the American West, they all became disillusioned with some aspect of the Mormon religion, members within the faith (often leaders), or both.

Although each editor chose a particular figure, everyone reviewed and improved upon the work of the other two in an attempt to faithfully represent the original records in a readable format. (p22) Bagley describes the expansion of the project's purpose during the course of the collaboration, resulting in a "reevaluation of the light that these peoples' stories shed on Mormon history." (p12) An editor's Introduction, which paints a background of the author, precedes each narrative, while footnotes and commentary throughout the book provide helpful biographical and contextual information.

Playing with Shadows opens with a forty-page article entitled 'Tracing a Shadow—Dissent and Resistance in the Mormon West.' It touches upon various occurrences of Mormon dissension throughout the nineteenth-century, particularly the administrative years of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Incidents during Missouri, Illinois, and Utah are highlighted, reminding us that a number of Saints became convinced rebellion against the Church or its leaders was necessary at some level. Ironically, as is the case with several of the people featured in *Playing with Shadows*, it was not unusual for so-called 'apostates' to feel their accusers were actually the ones apostatizing from the Gospel of Christ, but attempts to point out the evidence of such often fell on deaf or unsympathetic ears. While much has been said about Mormonism's culture of violence since Kirtland's 1834 Zion's Camp, the culture of anti-violence embraced by a number of members of the Church who were disgusted by force and fear of punishment (such as a few in this book), has garnered less attention. I'd bet several of the characters in this volume might have answered 'no' to the question, 'Are you a Mormon apostate?'

Being crowned with the label 'Apostate' during those early days was often more difficult than one might realize. Latter-day Saints believed that gathering together in an effort to live spiritually and economically

unified was a commandment of the Lord, essential to achieve “the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom.” So it was no small matter to be accused of being one of the rotten apples responsible for holding up the establishment of Zion on earth.¹ LDS Church leader’s behavior toward ‘apostates’ ranged from one extreme of the spectrum to the other over the decades, depending on the circumstances. On occasion, a fired-up President Young could be heard bellowing that rather than “apostates should flourish here, I will unsheath my bowie knife, and conquer or die,” while years later to his brethren in the School of the Prophets he would privately recommend “the let alone policy towards apostates in our midst, not to speak, or write about them, or wish them evil.”² The 1856 LDS Reformation laid bare ideas that quickly became the flashpoints for a decade of unprecedented wild fires within Zion’s borders. For the next fifty years, real or perceived threats of punishment by Church officials (via their ever-present minions, the ‘Danites’) contributed to the ebb-and-flow disillusionment of a portion of the Utah populace. Thankfully a number of these dissenters kept records that allow us to reexamine their place within the annals of Mormon history. Narratives of all flavors may provide surprisingly accurate information, particularly in the case of first-hand experiences, contributing to a more rounded interpretation of available contemporary sources.

Polly Aird edits the one hundred and sixty page autobiography of George Armstrong Hicks, penned around 1878-1880. George’s family left for Deseret Territory in 1852, and soon after arriving, he married sixteen-year-old Elizabeth Jolley, known as ‘Betsy.’ Having passed through a few scrapes with local Church leaders, and dealing with the deaths of Saints who had shortly before perished in the handcart disasters, George says he still remained a committed member. Twenty years later he testified of an experience that enveloped him upon rising to speak during a testimony meeting in 1856:

I felt an irresistible power which I could scarce control impeling me to arise and say something. I yelled and a power which was new to me took possession of my speaking organs and spoke as it were through me and I listened like the rest of the people present. My heart and feelings under went a change. I was filled with love for the whole human race. I felt like a new being, my mind was filled with a kind of confused light. I saw as it were ‘through a glass darkley.’ I could see beauties in the ‘Gospel’ that I had never seen before. I felt as though[h] it was not only a duty but a privilege to serve God. I felt as though my sins were all blot[t]ed out of the Book of Remembrnce. (p140)

Called to be part of a relocation of hundreds of families to the Cotton Mission in southern Utah, he and Betsy left in 1862 and spent the next sixteen years down south. These areas gave George access to whispers concerning the massacre of emigrants on 11 September 1857, as well as interaction with some of its perpetrators. The more he uncovered concerning the matter, the more difficult it became for him to reconcile John D. Lee’s position in the community thereafter. To Lee’s chagrin, it became almost habit for George Hicks to denounce the Mountain Meadows slaughter and those who participated in it, even carrying around a Deseret News sermon by Brigham Young as proof that the leader of the Church was not in allegiance with any murderers. Lee countered that President Young did not mean what he said and was simply trying to placate Gentiles and weak Saints, which in turn prompted a letter from George to President Young in 1869 asking that action be taken against John D. Lee.

Brigham answered back that because Brother Hicks worried so much about the Mountain Meadow deaths, anyone reasonable might be led to think “you yourself must have been a participator in the horrible deed... In such a case, if you want a remedy – rope round the neck taken with a jerk would be very salutary.” George Hicks was not amused, “That little bit of prophetic advice I did not obey. From that time forth I have believed that Lee is better acquainted with the Prophet than I am.” He later

¹ *Doctrine and Covenants* (1981 LDS) 105:2-10.

² *Journal of Discourses* 1:83, 27 March 1853; *SLC School of the Prophets*, 23 April 1870.

admitted, "It always has been a mystery to me why such characters a[s] O.P. Rockwell, Bill Hickman, and men of that ilk have always been tolerated in the Mormon Church." (p74-75, 81 & 101) On 26 April 1874, George Armstrong Hicks was "cut off" from the LDS Church "for apostasy."³ Bitter for a season, George wrote a letter to the editors of the Salt Lake Tribune on August 12th of that same year defending himself, wherein he claimed he was disciplined by his Bishop for reporting to the Tribune that he had witnessed John D. Lee riding next to Brigham Young. He shrugged off the punishment, concluding, "I have no faith in any of the religions of the day, but... I have loved God, my country, and liberty."⁴ After cooling off for three years, Brother Hicks had a public confession printed in the *Deseret News*:

Inasmuch as I was cut off the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the 28th of April, 1873, at Cedar City, for apostasy, and published in the *Deseret News* as such, and I have said and written many hard things about the people, and authorities of the Church, I hereby confess my errors and acknowledge my follies, and ask forgiveness of all Saints who have been offended by my writings and sayings, for I desire to be restored to the fellowship of the Saints, and to be forgiven of my heavenly Father.⁵

By the mid-1880s, George Hicks again found himself being outcast, this time for suggesting to the Bishop "that the people give up polygamy." Decades later he successfully requested his membership be restored, the same occurring under the hands of Apostle Reed Smoot on 25 June 1923 (There was some doubt he had ever been officially excommunicated). (p200 & 205) His autobiography is peppered with recollections of life in Palmyra, Spanish Fork, Salem, Washington, and New Harmony (all towns in Utah), along with commentary on some of the more controversial elements of the state's history, such as the Reformation, the Cotton Mission, John D. Lee, and the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

Edited by Will Bagley, the second narrative was written by Charles Derry, an English blacksmith who began as a Utah 'Brighamite,' but later joined the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (RLDS). Covering approximately forty pages, Bagley concludes that Derry's recollections "provide a compelling and moving look at life under Utah's frontier theocracy from the bottom up." (p211) Having served in various ecclesiastical positions during the six years since his conversion, Charles, his wife (Ann Stokes), and their two children boarded a vessel in Liverpool headed for New Orleans in March 1854. Ann passed away from cholera soon after their arrival in the United States.

Desiring companionship and a mother for his children, Charles set his sights on finding a trustworthy wife from among a train of newly arriving Mormon emigrants, who were no doubt flattered by the competitive suitors seeking their eternal companionship. Blessed with success in his choice of twenty-three year old Eliza Herbert, the newlywed Derrys struggled to establish themselves in the Valley. Unsatisfied with the method wherein public workers were paid in goods available at the tithing storehouse instead of money, Charles also grew convinced that economic manipulation and favoritism among elite families was practiced. Brother Derry's confidence in Church leadership and their ability to govern effectively was "shattered." (p226)

The Derrys packed up and moved to Ogden in October 1855. The infant city offered a seven mile irrigation canal dug from the Weber River, substantially expanding land opportunities beyond the previous ten or so acres three years earlier. But people coming to the area looking for work and a place to settle instead found drought and scant employment. To make matters worse, a shortage of food, clothing, and other necessities was growing. Most nearby cottonwoods had been cut down, so many

³ Excommunications, *Deseret News*, 27 May 1874, 1.

⁴ Some Startling Facts, *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 Aug 1874.

⁵ Public Confession, *DN*, 26 Sep 1877, 12.

newcomers burrowed into dugouts while attempting to secure funds for purchasing a plot. Other than an occasional score, for months the Derry family diet consistently boasted of edible weeds and roots.

Stake High Councilman Moses Clawson had grown accustomed to a similar menu. He, Charles Derry, and other neighbors took various jobs wherever they could find them. That winter the Derrys rented a drafty, wood shack with another family. Squeezed into a borrowed, covered wagon nearby, Moses was supporting five children and his twenty-two year old second wife while he built a small adobe house. Like most residents with little choice, the fifty-five year old Clawson and thirty year old Derry traded backbreaking manual labor for low pay or food items. "The snow having fallen so deep that cattle are dying by scores every day," Moses lamented, "and the people are very scant for food of all kinds."⁶

For Charles Derry, the worst was yet to come. Once the LDS Reformation kicked into full-gear a few months later, Weber County prosecuting attorney Luman Shurtliff and fellow ward missionaries "went from house to house, teaching the people and calling on all to repent, old and young, high and low." They brought with them a questionnaire, called a 'catechism,' which aided in identifying sins that needed to be confessed and resolved, but were not to be abused by prying "into the sins that are between a person and his or her God." Some Saints in Ogden underwent rebaptism to symbolize the forsaking of their sins and a renewal of their covenants.⁷

Soon after, Stake President Lorin Farr called a meeting for all Priesthood holders to attend, which included Charles Derry, now living on the bench in a dugout.⁸ Around this time Charles recollected being seized with "the spirit of rebellion," although he kept his icy feelings towards leaders of the Church private, "not anxious to have the Danites lurking in my path." (p229) Clawson and Shurtliff had both been Danites during the 1838 Missouri era, but Charles probably would have had more to fear from a fanatic among the younger generation, or a Bishop determined on exercising a 'laying on of hands' approach for chastising sheep wandering from his flock.

I was in a meeting called by Lorenzo [Lorin] Farr and others of this inquisition, when every man was called upon to covenant that he would not hear any speak disrespectfully of President Young. And they were told it was their duty to knock such a man down. They were further told that no man would be permitted to leave the Territory, and if they attempted to leave, they must leave their property and their wives and their children behind them. (p 235)

By mid-January 1857, Moses Clawson had consecrated his property, horses, cow, tools, furniture and a wagon "unto Brigham Young Trustee in trust for said Church [and] his successors in office." He covenanted to "forever defend the same" from possible competing claims by his heirs or anyone else against LDS leaders in the future.⁹ Avoiding such steps, while at the same time procrastinating initiation into the endowment ceremony, the Derrys quietly found a way to live among the Saints in Ogden without raising too many eyebrows. Charles was sure that doing otherwise would have made him lose his employment, "and these were the least evils he might expect." Bitter as the pill was to him, Charles was called to serve in the Nauvoo Legion during what is often called the Utah War.

I concur with a historian of the RLDS Church who noted the autobiography of Charles Derry "takes much reading to find time spent in one place."¹⁰ His representation of Ogden during 1855-1858 is an

⁶ *Moses Clawson Diary*, 12 Oct 1855 and 24 January 1856.

⁷ *Luman Shurtliff Journal*, 19-28 Dec 1856.

⁸ *Moses Clawson Diary*, 25 Nov 1856.

⁹ *Moses Clawson Transfer Deed*, 17 Jan 1857.

¹⁰ *S.A. Burgess to O.C. Henson*, 24 May 1933.

honest description of the trials faced by its residents during those years, seasoned with a tablespoon of hindsight sarcasm. When US soldiers entered Salt Lake City in 1858, Ogden and other settlements nearby were virtually abandoned. The Derrys never returned to Ogden, instead shuffling around the Bountiful and Salt Lake City areas until they were able to collect sufficient means to leave the Territory for good in the summer of 1859. (p240-247)

While Bagley focuses solely on Derry's time in Utah, those years become even more intriguing, considering his subsequent history within the Restoration movement. When Charles and his wife left Deseret Territory, they soon after joined the RLDS Church under Joseph Smith III, and Brother Derry was called to help preside by serving as one of the Twelve Apostles. Later chosen to be a founding member of the RLDS Church's first ministry for patriarchs—The Order of Evangelists—in 1903, Brother Derry was welcomed in by presiding patriarch, Alexander H. Smith.

Although John Hawley would eventually convert to the RLDS Church himself, at a meeting in 1868 with Alexander, he told the son of the late Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. that he and other Utah Mormons looked upon Charles Derry "as an apostate." Interested in succession claims, and believing he had an insider's perspective when it came to dissecting Utah Mormonism, Charles made sure 'Brighamite' missionaries were rebutted when opportunity arose.

These Josephites were all clever. They gave me Saturday night of their conference to tell them what they should do to be saved. I wished to get in a warning voice when I could. After I had dismissed my meeting Charles Derry, one of their Twelve, called the attention of the congregation and said he would show us the difference between the church he represented and the one I represented the next day. He did so, and I expect the Josephites thought his church was better than mine.¹¹

Jeff Nichols attempts to make sense of Ann Gordge's work in the third section of *Playing with Shadows*. Residing in Idaho and Utah until her death, Ann Gordge probably penned her memoir around 1890. While neither holograph variant (BYU or Bishop) of her autobiography appears to be the original (so textual primacy is unresolved), both manuscripts are amalgamated into the text presented in *Playing with Shadows*. (p20-21) The eccentric John D. Lee lost his young wife Ann in 1871 when he went into exile. A fifteen page evaluation of the nineteenth (and last) wife of Lee sets the tone for understanding her violent and bloody rendition of Utah history, where sins of all sorts soak the pages in order to produce a shocking tale. Disjointed at times, it occasionally reads like an unfinished rough draft of a dime novel.

Ann's narrative comprises over sixty pages of *Playing with Shadows*, with most material covering the Mountain Meadows Massacre and John D. Lee, and it should be read with skepticism. For instance, she claims to have walked through the meadows and saw "people there after the occurrence scattered over the ground butchered in the most horridable maner," but then makes several accusations about how pregnant women, children, and even fetuses were killed (which were then crossed-out). (p268) A little further on, she even describes a ritual of blood atonement. (p277) Of course, Mormon maniacs and Danites distributing punishment are on the loose. Ann's Danites burn families alive after robbing them, kill their own sons for minor infractions of disobedience, and live on top of subterranean caves where they hide their victims!

While it is fair to generalize that Danites, Destroying Angels, Be'hoys (Brigham's Boys), and other such mutations were usually men with reputations for being over-zealous or quick to react against 'enemies' of

¹¹ *Experiences*, Hawley.

the Faith, a few of them were often worthy of the title 'Saint.' In many of their scriptural mindsets, their actions had Biblical and Book of Mormon precedents, were prophetically justifiable, and had God's stamp of approval.¹² An early edict given to Danites was "to put to right physically that which is not right, and to cleanse the Church of every great evil which has hitherto existed among us inasmuch as they cannot be put to right by teachings and persuasions."¹³ Danite initiation ceremonies and ranks—principally developed in Missouri—eventually gave way to the Kingdom of God, temple rites/penalties, vengeance oaths, and assumed loyalties, with an occasional swearing of secrecy thrown in for good measure when consequences were harsh. Unfortunately, there were also Danite boogymen that made even the Devil blush, committing crimes of opportunity every time someone yelled, 'Gentile!' or 'Apostate!'

After 1838, Mormon 'regulators' were often organized following ecclesiastical hierarchy, employment structure (such as police officers), geographical location (Eph Hanks at Big Mountain, William 'Bill' Hickman in Salt Lake City and West Valley, Port Rockwell at the southern end of the Valley, John D. Lee in southern Utah, etc.) and membership in what were essentially some of the earliest Anglo outlaw gangs of the Wild West (such as Bill Hickman's 'Hounds'). Not to mention Nauvoo Militia ranking, and the occasional lone wolf. And talk about dissent and shades of resistance! At any given time one 'Danite' might be feuding with another 'Danite,' or up to his neck in rogue work for personal gain. Some, like Orrin Porter Rockwell, professed allegiance to the Church hierarchy, law and order; while others such as Lot Huntington were unconcerned with prophets... as long as there were profits.

It was not uncommon for 'Danites' to express dissent and disapproval about how other 'Danites' were conducting themselves. When publicly marked as traitors, Danites such as John D. Lee and Bill Hickman were considered at-risk themselves by those they once mentored into the craft. (p451) Things were more complex than just being dubbed a terrible 'Danite,' and being given the green light to wreak havoc. Ultimately, enough suspicious deaths and assaults occurred throughout the 1850s and 1860s, in addition to the Mountain Meadows Massacre, to give a lasting impression that punishment for dissent or resistance was a possibility.

Many speculated that Danites were "entirely and blindly at his [Brigham Young's] disposal, to carry out all his plans, meet all his wishes, and execute all his measures, which often involve robbery and murder." (p442) While at the same time, a portion of loyal members of the Church began immortalizing Danites like Deputy Sheriff Porter Rockwell as super-human Samsons, divinely appointed to police the Kingdom by any means necessary. Either way, by the 1900s the Danites (as feared during the first six decades of Mormonism) had become an endangered breed, replaced by cut-throat attorneys and carnivorous lawsuits.

Definitely imaginative, one wonders if Ann embellished some parts of her story more than others. Unless she pirated a version from an expose I didn't check, her detailed recollection of being endowed and sealed to John D. Lee in the Salt Lake Endowment House smacks of more truth than other episodes she describes. The last few pages has Ann tangled up into so many adventures with Apaches, Billy the Kid, etc., the reader is again left questioning how much spin is added into the rest of her stories. If you're a John D. Lee, Mountain Meadows Massacre, or Mormon violence buff, it's worth reading.

Playing with Shadows dedicates one hundred and ten pages to Brigham Young Hampton's journal/autobiography. Previous research by Jeff Nichols on early prostitution within the City of the

¹² D&C 98:23-46.

¹³ *Joseph Smith Journal*, 27 July 1838.

Saints well equips him to edit this material. Frequent entries in Hampton's journal really get consistent in 1870; before that it's sporadic, with autobiographical information and history going back to the 1830s. It stops in 1901, with some years missing in-between, or sometimes only a few entries per year. Though they had been converts for nearly twenty years, the Hampton family didn't arrive in Salt Lake City until 1855. While his widowed mother lived in a home rented by Brigham Young until she moved into the Lion House (she was sealed for 'time only' to President Young), her son Brig Hampton was invited to stay with the Prophet. He was old enough to get married, doing so about a year later (and eventually two more times, though he had marital struggles from the moment they said 'yes').

For several decades after his arrival in the Valley, Brigham Hampton made a name for himself as a trustworthy Be'hoy. One fracas between Salt Lake police and U.S. soldiers left him unharmed, though he counted seventeen bullet holes in his clothes. (p350) Another out-of-the-ordinary event from Brigham Hampton's life is when he was arrested in mid-December 1871 for the tragic murder of Dr. J. King; a former army physician who it was rumored gave up the ghost while being beaten by Salt Lake police in 1866. Unfortunately, Officer Hampton kept no known record during the time of Dr. King's demise. Eventually the charges were dropped. Brig and others imprisoned under murder and other crimes received so much community support that it spoiled him for years later, when again in legal trouble, he became embittered because no one cared enough to help.

Brother Hampton attended meetings, paid tithing, acted as a bodyguard for President Young, and even signed his name to a list of Saints desiring to join a United Order in 1874. (p375-376, 380) A few months later President Young counseled the city's law enforcement: "he sent his blessing to them and tell them to be good boys. And treat our enemies as the enemies of the Kingdom of God. And treat them kindly and let them see we did not stoop to as low and mean things as they." He cautioned them "to take care of our selves and not get hurt or killed. But always have the drop on our enemies and strike the first blow." (p381) Once Bill Hickman was out of graces with the Church, the ex-Destroying Angel believed Brigham Young sent Brig Hampton and a few others after him.¹⁴

No question one of the most intimate moments recorded between Brig Hampton and Brigham Young was at the latter's deathbed on 29 August 1877. After several days of attending prayer circles being held in the Endowment House every hour for the ill Church President, Hampton went to see his step-father of sorts, and found him "Moaning and apparently in great pain." The priesthood holders present laid their hands on the dying patriarch's head and asked the Lord to spare his life if it was His will; or if not, to let his pain decrease so he could die in peace. "As soon as we rose to our feet the hard breathing ceased and he seemed perfectly easy," Hampton recorded, adding he heard about Young's death an hour later as he was dressing to participate in another prayer circle. (p385-386)

Hampton proceeds into the turbulent attempts by federal officials to enforce laws enacted by the Government during the 1880s. In 1885, with Mormon leaders attempting to thwart arrests for unlawful cohabitation by lying low, some Saints felt they were being persecuted by hypocritical carpet baggers for living the same order of marriage as practiced by several prophets in the Bible. Prominent gentlemen (coincidentally considered unfriendly to the Saint's cause) were arrested for lewd conduct with women set up in rooms on West Temple that allowed spying eyes to witness the crimes from a concealed room. Brigham Young Hampton was partially behind the sting, under the counsel of a 'Citizens Committee' chaired by Frank Armstrong. This committee bank-rolled an operation compromising government officials and others that gives today's unscrupulous intelligence agencies a run for their money. To

¹⁴ *Hickman to 'Katharine,' 7 Jan 1872.*

Hampton's surprise and dismay, rooms under police supervision rented in brothels were deemed entrapment, so he was accordingly charged, while the original arrestees of the ill houses of fame were set free. Judge Charles Zane sentenced him to one year in jail after the jury found him guilty of conspiracy to incite and trap federal officials through prostitution. Then President of the Church, John Taylor, assured Brother Hampton that "we have no doubt that your motives were good and the consciousness of this will sustain you." (p393-398)

Brigham Hampton never left the LDS Church, or denounced its authorities, but he did feel scapegoated and then abandoned by the Citizens Committee, the Brigham Young Trust Company, and other LDS folks who had varying degrees of culpability in actions he was prosecuted for, but who never offered monetary or legal assistance after he voluntarily took the blame. Journal entries from the mid to late 1880s contribute to our comprehension of the Mormon underground, a system of friendly locations in and around Utah where Church leaders hid while playing cat and mouse with law enforcement. The Manifesto of 1890 is not covered, nor the post-manifesto plural marriages that occurred thereafter. Brigham Young Hampton died a Latter-day Saint in 1902. [Side note for Mormon Fundamentalist historians: George Q. Cannon, Samuel Bateman, Charles Wilcken, and others who figure prominently in the 1886 recollections of Lorin Woolley make appearances, usually in connection with something having to do with plural marriage or meeting with members of the First Presidency.]

A thirty page Afterword concludes the volume, reviewing circumstances in which Saints in Utah became disillusioned. The 1856 Reformation, 1857 Mountain Meadows Massacre, 1858 Utah War, and the crime ridden years that followed, stirred up sufficient uneasiness for many to lose the spark that brought them out West. The polygamy battles of the 1880s were of a similar nature. Other contributors referred to by the editors were the waves of miners that settled around Zion, missionaries sent to Utah from the RLDS Church, the transcontinental railroad, and the Godbeites.

I heartily agree with the editors when they confess "estimating the extent and nature of dissent in Utah Territory is a perilous task." (p467) As they've demonstrated, narratives like the four included in *Playing with Shadows* deserve to be fleshed out in an effort to uncover new material and perspectives on these, and many other, engaging subjects. A twenty-page Bibliography and a thorough twenty-five page Index are added in the back. Like other topics in the *Kingdom of the West* series, *Playing with Shadows* won't disappoint historians with a taste for rawhide Mormonism. The editors have done a fine job providing another important voice of the Mormon people in the American frontier. If you're doing research on similar matters, or simply want some intriguing, before-bed reading, buy the book.

Those who purchase the collector's edition of *Playing with Shadows* will be pleased to find the 2011 Keepsake pamphlet for this volume is, 'The Coming Storm: The Murder of Jesse Thompson Hartley' by H. Michael Marquardt. Over four-hundred archive boxes in his collection on Mormonism at the University of Utah testify of Marquardt's dedication to serious research. Examining the eight month relationship Jesse T. Hartley had with Utah Mormonism prior to his demise in 1854 under the hands of Bill Hickman; the author provides an up-to-date snapshot of Jesse Hartley's life, a reconstruction of his death, followed by family information.

Several years of detective work by Marquardt has uncovered new statements by George Boyd, James A. Ivie, and Polly Bullock Roberts, in addition to a ghostly daguerreotype of Jesse Hartley taken not long before he was killed. After five years on the West Coast, Jesse had come to Salt Lake City in September 1853 on his way back East. Just a few weeks following his arrival, he shot a letter off to U.S. Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, arguing that some of Utah's legal procedures were unconstitutional, and that

Governor Brigham Young ought to be removed from office. Jesse recorded he had heard and read about robberies, plundering, false imprisonment, and more by the Mormons, but it wasn't until he actually moved there that he found "it is all true and the half have not been told." A lawyer by trade, Brother Hartley's letter was to-the-point, even graciously offering to accept a federal appointment to an office in the Territory if needs be (Transcript of letter is included, p6-8).

Unbeknownst to him, Jesse's letter was intercepted by an observant sleuth at the post office and forwarded to Brigham Young. Curiously, Jesse Hartley was baptized into the LDS Church three months later, on 7 January 1854. How far he truly converted is open to debate, as rumor had it he wanted to marry a young Mormon widow named Mary Ann Bullock Williams, which he accomplished soon after becoming a Saint. Needless to say, Brother Hartley was suspected of being a wolf in sheep's clothing by those who knew about his secret letter to Davis.

Requesting a U.S. Secretary of War to forcefully submit the Saints by sending officers "from the states to execute the laws...without fear or the expectation of reward," was no small matter to men who pioneered the wilderness in order to escape Babylon's grasp. Denying accusations he was a thief and a fraud, Jesse must have realized he was a marked man when during the April 1854 General Conference, he and President Young finally crossed paths. Brigham advised the congregation that Brother Hartley's recent mission call was revoked, and followed with a tongue lashing and recommend that "he ought to be baptised in Salt Lake with stones tied to him & hold him under 24 hou[rs] to wash away one hundredth part of his sins," and then be "Sent to hell across lots on a missio[n] to preach to the damned." Against his pleas, Jesse was publicly cut off from the LDS Church on that memorable occasion. (p12-13)

Bill Hickman was just the sort of trigger-happy guy to take President Young's sentiments to heart. He remembered Apostle Orson Hyde informing him that Brigham had ordered Jesse Hartley be 'used up' if he came through Green River, and that he, Hyde, wanted Hickman and George Boyd to do the honors. Bill had listened to the President of the Church say as much at Conference, so even if Hyde exaggerated Brigham's comments, would he have disputed whether Brigham said it privately to the President of the Quorum of the Twelve or not? Like other similar situations, the 'orders' were not a smoking gun document with a signature that laid out the job in detail, so we are left with a reconstruction that makes determining the degree of Brigham's involvement more complex. Hickman later admitted in his biography to assassinating Jesse Hartley as they crossed a creek on horseback, and stashing the body in the willow thicket while Hyde watched "the whole performance" from the side of the mountain.¹⁵ Obviously President Young rolled the dice at Conference by cursing Hartley in front of the entire congregation, but did he specifically direct Orson Hyde to have Jesse taken out by Destroying Angels if he tried to skip town? Read it and make up your own mind! 'The Coming Storm' is available on Mike Marquardt's website:

<http://user.xmission.com/~research/mormonpdf/index.htm>

¹⁵ *Brigham's Destroying Angel*, Hickman (1872), 96-98.