

that deserves to be taken seriously (and this book wants to and should be), deserves the expense of a clean copy.

*Prayers in Bath* is a pivotal book that merits the right to ask what it does through the very real characters that breathe them into life. There are no lines of the prayers Julia uttered in Bath, but the answers unearthed from the ruins were profound. Luisa Perkins earns the right to posit her questions and see her book bound as art and with art, because it is art.



## The Life of a Spiritualist Saint

Scott H. Partridge, ed. *Thirteenth Apostle: The Diaries of Amasa M. Lyman, 1832–1877*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2016. 1050 pp. Appendix, biographical register, biography, index. Hardcover: \$60.00. ISBN 978–1–56085–236–3.

*Reviewed by Cristina Rosetti*

In historic accounts of Mormonism's founding leaders, Amasa M. Lyman is often absent. However, despite this absence, Lyman is noteworthy for the many roles he played in the formative years of the Church. He was converted through the missionizing efforts of Lyman E. Johnson and Orson Pratt, served as a missionary who became known for his charismatic preaching, acted as apostle under both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, led the San Bernardino territory, and was eventually excommunicated for apostasy. For all the roles he played, Lyman's life presents important insight into the complexity and challenges within early Mormonism. In the introductory notes to the volume, Scott Par-

tridge offers insight into this complexity. Speaking of the collection, he writes, “His diaries reveal a serious-minded deeply committed, kind-hearted, empathetic man with a wry sense of humor, whose beliefs and experiences—extensions of what he had been taught as a Mormon convert—came into conflict with the church when he took some of the concepts of Mormon theology to their ultimate conclusions” (9). Through careful transcription and formatting, the diaries beautifully reflect the highs and lows of Church participation, as well as the multiplicity of ways Mormons navigated faith in the early Church.

*Thirteenth Apostle: The Diaries of Amasa M. Lyman, 1832–1877* is a compilation of transcribed documents that offer insight into one of Mormonism’s most fascinating leaders. As an edited volume, the text is separated into thirteen sections that arrange the life of the Apostle into key segments. These segments include Lyman’s journey to join the Saints in Kirtland, his colonizing efforts in San Bernardino, the rise of his interest in Spiritualism, and his movement away from orthodox Mormonism toward the Church of Zion led by William S. Godbe. To add context for the reader, each section begins with a historical introduction that summarizes the particular period represented in the documents. As the editor notes in his broader introduction, the documents are part of the larger Amasa Mason Lyman Collection found in the Church History Library. Methodologically, the text seeks to remain true to these original manuscripts; this goal is accomplished through attention to detail and limited editing of the diaries themselves. Aside from date standardization and minor grammatical additions, the volume reflects a careful transcription of Lyman’s life, including the underlining and strikethroughs found in the original manuscripts.

Throughout the volume, Lyman’s lifelong interest in religion and truth stands out as a dominant theme in the Saint’s life. This is true of his faithful days as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through his later involvement in the Church of Zion. In each organization, Lyman portrays himself as a man devoted to the search

for knowledge, wherever it may lead. This is not only true for Lyman, but his many associates. Throughout his personal life, as well as the lives of many men and women he encountered on his journey, Lyman espoused themes present in broader Mormon culture. For example, outside of religious involvement, the diaries demonstrate the ways Saints were actively engaged in civic matters. For Lyman, this manifested in his time spent in the San Bernardino territory as an early colonizer and governor and his involvement in the National Free Religion Association and the National Liberal League.

Lyman was a Mormon who dabbled in a variety of metaphysical traditions that developed in the nineteenth century, and his diaries both delve into the life of an early Saint and illuminate the experience of Spiritualists in Utah. As a Spiritualist practitioner, Lyman frequently wrote about his séance attendance and the spirits that visited him to offer insight into the spiritual world. This included the spirit of Joseph Smith, who Lyman wrote highly of in both his mortal and eternal states. In addition to spirits, Lyman also frequently interacted with Spiritual thinkers and mediums who toured the country offering insight into the nature of humanity and interactions between the temporal and spiritual world. As the diaries progress and Lyman becomes increasingly interested in the practice of Spiritualism, the writing reflects changes in language that demonstrate his increasing investment in the movement. Demonstrative of both Lyman's shift to understand the world in terms of Spiritualism, as well as the fine editorial work of the volume, is Lyman's entry of May 1, 1873, of the death of his grandson: "To day my son Amasa [Jr.]'s ^wife^ [Cynthia] was prematurely delivered of a p[a]ir or twin Daughters. They survived their birth but an hour and passed away to Nature under the kindly and humane institutions of the bright land of Sumer in the hap[p]y beyond" (748).

One of the most interesting insights the diaries offer is the glimpse into the life of an excommunicated Saint who had previously devoted his life to the Church. Although Lyman's excommunication came following

his movement toward Spiritualism, the disciplinary action was not a direct result of his Spiritualist practices. Rather, his designation as an apostate stemmed from his preaching doctrines deemed contrary to the church, specifically in reference to the Atonement. Unlike other works on Lyman, this volume offers readers a full transcript of the sermon in question: the Dundee Sermon delivered in March 1862. Within this forceful sermon, Lyman speaks about Jesus' mission and the nature of Atonement, looking to the individual as having a key role to play in their own salvation:

What I find fault with is that when we are told the blood of Jesus will cleanse us from all sin, without any effort on our part to do right, it is virtually a proclamation to us that we can do nothing for ourselves; and then we will sit down supinely waiting for the blood of Jesus to free us from the consequences of the wrongs we are committing—for the word of God that has done and will do to take effect, when we are the authors of the wrongs that exist (952–953).

Even after his excommunication, Lyman continued to be interested in Mormonism. As a member of the Church of Zion under the direction of William S. Godbe, Lyman lived in a world of a Mormonism that existed alongside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Salt Lake Valley. What remains most compelling from this period, as the editor indicates, is that Lyman's life did not change drastically after his excommunication. Rather, he simply moved into a leadership role under a different Church structure. For students and scholars of Mormonism in the contemporary moment, this aspect of Lyman's life may offer key insight into the ways individuals navigate their involvement in Mormonism.

Scott H. Partridge's edited volume illuminates the life of one of Mormonism's most compelling Saints. Through the publication of his diaries, Signature Books offers readers a glimpse into the life of an early convert and the metaphysical world of early Mormonism. As both a Mormon and a Spiritualist, Lyman lived within the fluid boundar-

ies of orthodoxy and faith. Although Partridge was not alive to see the culmination of his work, this volume will surely serve as a foundational resource for anyone interested in Lyman, the Godbeite movement, and Spiritualism in Utah.



## On Apple Seeds, Rats, and the State of Mormon Literature

Steven L. Peck. *Gilda Trillim: Shepherdess of Rats*. Alresford, Hants: Roundfire Books, 2017. 272 pp. Paperback: \$16.00. ISBN: 978-1782798644.

*Reviewed by Shane R. Peterson*

Steven L. Peck has long been seen as a pioneer in the field of Mormon letters, because of his ability to move beyond the usual clichés and expectations that often come with fiction about the faith. In two of his previous novels, *The Scholar of Moab* and *A Short Stay in Hell*, he successfully moved the genre into the twenty-first century because of his willingness to push boundaries, embrace the unorthodox, and explore difficult themes. His latest contribution, *Gilda Trillim: Shepherdess of Rats*, follows this same vein by branching out into even newer territory, but unfortunately, it often gets lost along the way.

The book itself is not a simple, straight-forward narrative; Gilda is presented not as a point-of-view character, but rather the subject of MA student Kattrim Mender's thesis, which she describes as "an academic work disguised as a novel disguised as an academic work." With limited commentary in the preface, at the beginning of each chapter, and at