observer’s experience of the differential between two other images,” which even lent itself to the “obscene.” In fact, it was the observer himself who produced the “translation of the dreary parallel images of flat stereo cards into a tantalizing apparition of depth,” as Jonathon Crary has masterfully shown (Techniques of the Observer, MIT Press, 1990, 122, 132). This interplay between two images and the physiological effect, experienced as a thrilling “realism,” might have provided additional punch to Campbell’s analysis. This could also help line up stereoscopic practices and markets with the industrial (modernizing) developments of the turn of the century. Admittedly, this would draw on the history of the senses, optical media, and the modernity thesis, rather than the squarely Mormon doctrinal inflection of polygamy Campbell reads into Johnson’s stereoscopy. However, in many ways, optical illusions, erotic delights, the lure of foreign femininity, and the underground market for mail-order softcore seem more closely tied to western culture than early Mormon seer stones and polygamy.

Perhaps Campbell’s greatest achievement is offering the reader her own stereoscopic image of Johnson’s work and its significance. Her integrated image might be at times in the eye of the beholder, but it is smart, enlightening, and thoroughly novel. And these contributions, coupled with extensive historical research, are more than welcome.

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Reviewed by Richard E. Bennett

Every now and then, what starts out as a narrow family history transcends its bounds and becomes something far bigger and better—a much broader history that appeals to a very diverse and interested audience. Such is the case with Quentin Thomas Wells’s new and exciting biography, Defender: The Life of Daniel H. Wells. A descendant of the former second counselor to Brigham Young, Quentin Wells has written a very candid, free-flowing, fine-tuned, and well written history of Daniel H. Wells (1814–91). Building
upon Bryant S. Hinckley’s 1942 biography entitled *Daniel Hammer Wells and Events of His Time* (Deseret Book), Quentin Wells has produced a social, economic, political, military, and religious history of nineteenth-century Mormonism that has something for almost every reader.

In a beautifully designed and nicely printed study of 508 pages, Wells tells the history of his beloved ancestor in twenty-three chapters. The book may best be divided into three parts. Part one tells of the early life story of Daniel H. Wells, his birth and childhood in New Jersey, and his removal to Hancock County, Illinois, in 1834 to take up farming. Before long, he was elected justice of the peace for the county. His neighbors “cotcht me up on a pin hook and elected me so I was obliged to serve,” he later reminisced (22). Three years later, at age twenty-two, he married sixteen-year-old Ohio-born Eliza Rebecca Robison just before the Mormons began to settle Commerce after their Missouri exile. Wells profited therefrom by subdividing his farm into city lots and selling them to the Latter-day Saints (including the Nauvoo Temple Lot) but not in an exorbitant or unfair manner. He saw the Saints “as a religious people who had been wrongly treated” and, unlike his wife, made friends with Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders. In a work that does not seek to paper over difficult events, the author grapples with such topics as Joseph Smith’s introduction of plural marriage (which Wells never spoke openly against), the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor* (which Wells firmly opposed), and the subsequent murder of the Prophet.

Daniel H. Wells’s reputation for honesty and fairness among the Saints in Nauvoo led to his being reelected justice of the peace by his newfound friends. In August 1846, at the objection of his wife, he converted to Mormonism and was baptized by Almon W. Babbitt in the Mississippi River. Torn between his family and his faith, he stayed back as long as he could in hopes that his wife might convert with him. His delay in leaving accounts for his eventual role as a defender in the September 1846 Battle of Nauvoo when enemy cannon balls tore through his barn. His soul-wrenching decision to leave his ardently anti-Mormon wife, Eliza, and his eleven-year-old son, Albert Emory, to join in the Mormon exodus West provides the reader with a glimpse of how religion conviction can sometimes be a two-edged sword, dividing family and friends in a not-so-family-friendly time and place. As Wells admitted, “There was no middle ground” (84).

The second part of the book delves into Daniel Wells’s new life in the Mormon Deseret of Utah Territory. He and his first Mormon wife, Louisa Free, a not-yet-divorced spouse of John D. Lee, who had a reputation of being “hard on women” (107), spent the winter of 1848–49 living together in a covered wagon. Eventually, as his business enterprises blossomed, he married five other women and fathered thirty-seven children. Later living in the “Big House” on Number 8 East South Temple Street in Salt Lake City, Wells is depicted as a model polygamist, treating his several wives with respect, dignity, and equality. “He presided as the patriarch in his homes,
but with an intermittent, almost casual presence” (253). Those interested in studying plural marriage close-up among Utah’s early Mormon populations will find here much that should interest them.

Once in “Zion,” Wells earned a reputation as an excellent businessman developing lumber, coal, and nail-manufacturing enterprises. Impressed with Wells’s administrative abilities and his keen organization skills, Brigham Young appointed him attorney general of the Territory as well as superintendent of public works. The author argues that Young and Wells “both had a practical, no-nonsense mindset” (76). As head of public works, Wells supervised the building of the Salt Lake Council House, the Salt Lake Temple, the Social Hall, the Endowment House, the Salt Lake Theater, and the Salt Lake Tabernacle (1867). With the outbreak of the Utah War in 1857, Young once again turned to his trusted friend and humble confidante to command the Nauvoo Legion’s successful efforts to delay General Albert Sidney Johnston’s invading U.S. Army long enough for a brokering of an enduring peace agreement. That same eventful year, Brigham Young asked Wells, whom he called “as good a man as ever lived” (170), to serve as his counselor in the First Presidency, replacing Jedediah M. Grant.

A major contribution of this book is its recounting of the not-always-harmonious Mormon/Indian relations. Called back from his first overseas mission presidency assignment to resume his position as major general, Wells also led the Nauvoo Legion during the Black Hawk Indian War (1865–68). His tolerant attitude toward Indian ways and customs and his “vigilant defense” strategy (287) eventually ended the conflict relatively peacefully.

The final section of the book starts with the coming of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 and, with it, the increasing antipolygamy campaign tirelessly waged against the Saints. As mayor of Salt Lake City, Church and business leader, railroad builder, and esteemed community citizen, Wells was highly regarded by both friend and foe alike. He ardently opposed the anti-Mormon Gentile League of Utah (“Gentile Ring”) but did so in a peaceful, responsible way. Once when as president of the Endowment House he was subpoenaed to testify about sacred temple rituals, he refused to do so. When charged with contempt of court, he was imprisoned in the Sugar House penitentiary for a short time. Many, both Mormon and otherwise, viewed this action as “an unjust imprisonment” (365), and public pressure led to his speedy release. Some fifteen thousand admirers lined city streets to welcome him home. Soon afterward, Wells served as European Mission president for a second time in the 1880s. Fully converted to the doctrine of redemption for the dead, he served as president of the Salt Lake Endowment House for several years and as president of the Manti Temple before his death in 1891.

Ironically, some within the leadership of the Church did not always warm to him. To the author’s credit, the book does not shy away from controversy. Heber C. Kimball, first counselor to Brigham Young, seemed increasingly
jealous of his fellow leader. Nor did Wells and “the puritanical” (403) George Q. Cannon see eye to eye. When John Taylor became president of the Church, he refused to call Wells as one of his counsellors. In fact, though an apostle since 1857, Wells was released from the Quorum of the Twelve to serve as an assistant to the Twelve. But “if Daniel felt slighted by his brethren, none of his extant writings express any bitterness” (357).

Near the end of the book, we read of the rupture that occurred between the Wells and Cannon families over the marriage of John Q. Cannon and Louie Wells, one of Daniel’s daughters, a sad tale of broken covenants, recriminations, and accusations that drove the families apart for several years. The book may be entitled Defender because of Wells’s untiring work in defending the Church, but it is not defensive in taking only one side in various arguments.

The book relies on a wealth of primary and secondary sources. Found here is a fourteen-page bibliography listing such varied sources as diaries, unpublished letters, the Journal History of the Church (a surprisingly rich though often overlooked source), census records, land records, statutes and ordinances, and the Joseph Smith Papers. His secondary sources include a wide range of published articles, family histories, biographies, and scholarly histories such as those authored by Leonard J. Arrington, B. H. Roberts, Donna Hill, James B. Allen, and many others.

Nevertheless, the book has significant weaknesses. Probably the most glaring is that the author’s homework ended a few years ago. One wonders how the author could have missed such works as Bill McKinnon’s new studies of the Utah War, Matthew Grow’s biography of Thomas L. Kane, Kathryn Daynes’s More Wives than One, Glenn Leonhard’s great work on Nauvoo, Stanley Kimball’s study of Heber C. Kimball, Ronald Walker’s Wayward Saints (the Godbeites), Tom Alexander’s biography of Wilford Woodruff, and Fred Woods’s multiple Mormon migration studies, let alone my own works on the Nauvoo Legion, the Mormon Exodus, and the rise of temple consciousness. I also think that the story of the impact of the Civil War on the Latter-day Saints is not as well told as one might expect. Still, the author, who has a background as a Central Intelligence Agency officer and is not a trained historian, has done a great deal of homework and his research is sound—just somewhat dated and therefore unfortunately incomplete.

Another weakness that often plagues family histories is the tendency to tell more than is necessary—to quote long letters, bulletins, and other documents often in their entirety. A whole chapter on Wells’s ancestry may not be necessary. And do we need to know so much detail about every sibling, child, and cousin? Sometimes less is best. The book could have been considerably reduced in size without doing damage to the integrity of the work. Finally, there are a few factual errors such as there not being anywhere near ten thousand citizens in Nauvoo in 1840, the supposed disparity in numbers between single males and females in the 1870s, and the year of
birth of Wells’s first-born son Albert—1838, not 1837 (26)—which would have been before his parents’ marriage.

These weaknesses notwithstanding, this new study of Daniel H. Wells, defender of the faith, is a fine contribution to Mormon Studies. It is a religious, social, economic, military, and political history all wrapped up in a family history that is engaging, responsible, fast reading, and informative.

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Reviewed by Hal R. Boyd

There are certain epics in religious history that prove elusive to professional historians. The Latter-day Saints’ sweeping overland journey is one of them. The Israelites had their Exodus, the Pilgrims had their Mayflower, and the Latter-day Saint pioneers had their pushcarts. Such odysseys, however, become more than historical episodes—for many they comprise the founding mythos of an entire religious system and culture. It’s little wonder then that some of the twentieth-century’s most compelling treatments of the Mormon pioneers came not from strict historians but from novelists masquerading as historians, namely Bernard DeVoto and Wallace Stegner.

In short, from page one of *Far Away in the West: Reflections on the Mormon Pioneer Trail*, the editors and authors are up against a perilous trek of their own—present the Mormon pioneers in the professional prose of historians even as the story is perhaps better suited for poetry, fiction, art, and homily. From start to finish, however, the editors deliver a useful volume for both professional historians and lay Latter-day Saints alike. Wisely, the editors do not pretend to capture the grand sweep of the Mormon pioneers. Rather, they seem appropriately content to provide audiences with a few fresh vistas of the Latter-day Saints’ trek.

The volume is strongest, of course, when it does the hard work of blazing new scholarly trails. For example, Susan Easton Black’s essay entitled *The Economic Sacrifice of the Nauvoo Exodus* gives readers a different perspective on the financial sacrifices associated with abandoning businesses and the newly prosperous city of Nauvoo. Not only were the Mormons religious believers but, as Black reminds readers, they were also business owners, investors, farmers, merchants, employees, and union members. The city, Black’s research reveals, had eleven mills, eight tanneries, and no less than