

The Inspirationists, 1714-1932

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west, *Re-Collecting Black Hawk* has the potential to provoke similar revisionings in other American places. Part of the problem, indeed, is that Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa are not alone in their projects of forgetting, nor are the Sauk and Meskwaki alone in their continuing vitality. The book should prove foundational for re-assessing similar practices across the nation.

The Inspirationists, 1714–1932, edited by Peter A. Hoehnle. American Communal Societies Series. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2015. 3 volumes. xxxiv, 1,072 pages. Notes, bibliography, index. \$495.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Lanny Haldy is executive director of the Amana Heritage Society.

Throughout its history, Iowa has been an attractive place to settle for alternative religious and social groups. That such experiments do not play a larger role in our state's story is in part because most were relatively small, short-lived, and left few written records. The Inspirationists' communal settlement of Amana, however, is one of the largest and longest lived in the United States. Amana retains a place in Iowa life today. Furthermore, because of its communal structure and meticulous community record keeping, Amana is perhaps one of the best documented communities in the Midwest.

However, the historiography of Amana, from its religious origins as the Community of True Inspiration in eighteenth-century Germany to the present, but especially its communal period in Iowa (1855–1932), has had little development. (This is in contrast to the interpretation of the Inspirationists' German experience, which German scholars have placed squarely in the context of German radical pietism, a religious tradition also not well understood in America.) The obvious barrier to an American scholar interested in Amana history is that the sources are in the German language, compounded by the fact that manuscripts are in an archaic German script. Not only has this limited their use, but it has also obscured the richness and breadth of the resources held by the Amana Church and the Amana Heritage Society. Thus many historical accounts rely on the same old secondary sources, rounding up the usual suspects: Bertha Shambaugh, Charles Nordhof, and William Rufus Perkins and Barthinius Wick, to name a few. As a result, communal Amana is rarely interpreted in the context of Iowa history.

This extensive three-volume set lays the groundwork for correcting this oversight and deepening our understanding of the Amana experience. The editor knows the sources. Peter Hoehnle is well versed in the Inspirationist faith both as an elder of the Amana Church and as an accomplished scholar of its history. Here he has collected and as-

sembled some 100 documents that had not previously been printed or translated into English, presenting a roughly chronological record from the earliest years of the movement in Germany (1714) to the end of the communal period (1932). The documents include personal diaries, letters, memoirs, and historical accounts. Representative examples of two defining genres of the Inspirationists, inspired testimonies and hymns, are also included. (It should be noted that one major document that is promised in the publisher's promotional materials, the diary of Christian Metz, is not in fact included.)

These three volumes contain essential documents that help address fundamental issues in the history of the community, such as the origins and development of the communal system, the community's relationship with its Iowa neighbors, and the evolution of the faith. The editorial introductions to the individual selections and the notes within them put the documents nicely into context. That editorial input is a major strength of the collection. The general introduction is an excellent overview of the history of the Community of True Inspiration, but it might have better explained the selection choices and overall organizational rationale of the set. Why, for example, does the collection exclude the post-communal Inspirationist Amana Church, given that it purports to encompass "the full scope of Inspirationist history" (xxii)?

Another strength of the collection is that while the contents are based largely on what was available in manuscript English translation, the editor was aware of gaps in the story and solicited transcriptions and translations of important documents to help fill those gaps. Even those few items that have already been published—for example, the community letters previously published in the *Amana Society Bulletin*—are now more accessible and are illuminated by the editor. While the focus of the series is American communal societies, this set also makes the European religious origins and fundamental beliefs of the Community of True Inspiration more accessible to English readers (including present-day church members).

The work includes a bibliography and an index, but their usefulness is limited. The bibliography is an abbreviated mix of primary and secondary sources, with half of the listings consisting of the 58 volumes of the Christian Metz and Barbara Landmann testimonies, which could have been cited as a single source. The bibliography reflects neither the state of Amana scholarship today nor the extent of Inspirationist publications in Europe and America. The index is also quite short, referencing primarily people and places.

This work provides an entirely new corpus of research material for English-language scholars so that we can begin to put Amana more

firmly into an Iowa and American context. Use of these documents by scholars will undoubtedly advance the interpretation of Amana and Iowa history. Furthermore, this work hints at the vastness and richness of the archival resources still undiscovered in the Amana Church and Amana Heritage Society collections. As a shining tip of the iceberg, these volumes also should stimulate other researchers to look further beneath the surface.

Finally, given the vastness and value of this collection, the publisher's choice of distribution and price is lamentable. Apparently targeting a specialized market of big-budget research libraries, it offers no wholesale price and retails the set at \$495. Some online sellers have taken this price as wholesale and offer it at a cool \$900, though some vendors now list it at just over \$400. (We can wonder whether books as a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge to the general public are a thing of the past.) The recent acquisition of Pickering and Chatto by Routledge further obscures this title. Ironically, although these sources are now available, they might not be any more accessible. We can only hope that this marvelous collection does not turn out to be the Inspirationists' best-kept secret.

Across the Deep Blue Sea: The Saga of Early Norwegian Immigrants, by Odd S. Lovoll. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2015. 211 pp. Maps, tables, illustrations, notes, index. \$19.95 paperback.

Reviewer Daron W. Olson is assistant professor of history at Indiana University East. He is the author of *Vikings across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1860–1945* (2013).

Much has been written on the subject of Norwegian immigration to the United States, but the story of Norwegian migration into Canada remains an understudied one. Odd S. Lovoll's latest study addresses that imbalance by seeking "to include aspects of the overseas exodus frequently overlooked in historical accounts; it treats the growth of a transportation system of sailing ships, the impact on coastal communities, and the composition and experience of the crew, including crew members who abandoned ship" (5). As Lovoll notes, the shift from restrictive trade to free trade provided the opportunity for Norwegian sailing ships to engage in the lucrative transport of timber from Canada to ports on the British Isles. In turn, the focus of early Norwegian immigration to North America shifted as Quebec City and other seaports in the Quebec province replaced New York as the point of entry for Norwegian immigrants from 1850 until the late 1860s. Competition