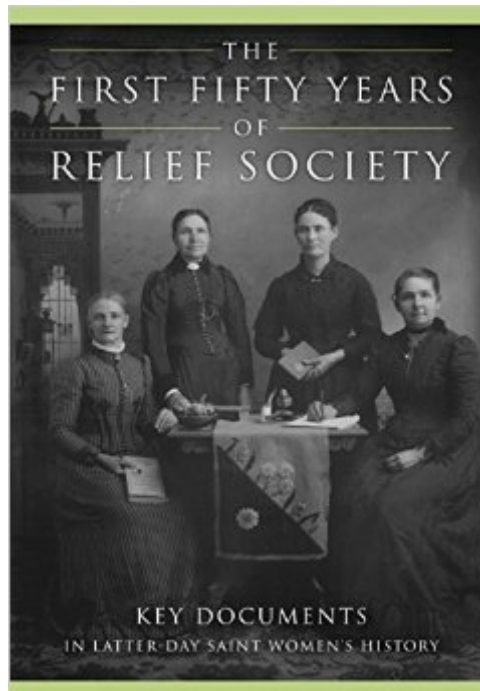


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The First Fifty Years Of Relief Society: Key Documents In Latter-day Saint Women's History



Synopsis

The groundbreaking book that Harvard professor Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has called "the most important work to emerge from the Mormon press in the last fifty years." This collection of original documents explores the fascinating and largely unknown history of the Relief Society in the nineteenth century. The story begins with the founding of the Nauvoo Female Relief Society, and the complete and unabridged minutes of that organization are reproduced in this book for the first time in print. The large majority of the volume covers the lesser-known period after the Relief Society was reestablished in territorial Utah and began to spread to areas as remote as Hawaii and England. Not only did Relief Society women care for their families and the poor, they manufactured and sold goods, went to medical school, gave healing blessings and set apart Relief Society officers, stored grain, built assembly halls, fought for women's suffrage, founded a hospital, defended the practice of plural marriage, and started the Primary and Young Women organizations. Prominent in the documents are the towering figures of Mormon women's history from this period, including Emma Smith, Eliza R. Snow, Emmeline B. Wells, Zina D. H. Young, and many others.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the first publication from The Church Historian's Press other than the Joseph Smith Papers. It is a collection of documents brought together for the first time that cover the first fifty years of the Relief Society, starting in Nauvoo, restarting in Utah, and then spreading throughout

LDS settlements as far away as Canada. The book format and production procedures (transcription, verification, etc.) are very similar to how the Joseph Smith Papers are being done, and at least some of the staff (including editor Matthew J. Grow) are involved in both. And as with the JSP project, much of the book is available for free online. The book contains a general table of contents, then a Detailed Contents listing each document, followed by a list of illustrations, a general introduction, and a description of the editorial method. The main section is split into four parts, covering the time periods of 1830 and 1842 to 1845, then 1854 to 1866, 1867 to 1879, and finally 1880 to 1892. The end matter contains reference material including lists of the different Relief Society, Young Ladies's Mutual Improvement Association, and Primary Association presidencies from 1842 to 1892, a biographical directory, works cited, acknowledgments, and then a pretty thorough index spanning 50 pages. The main feature of this book is the Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, which was kept by Eliza R. Snow and then brought to Utah by her, where it was used in getting the Relief Society going again. This is the first time it has appeared in print, although it was included in the Selected Collections DVD set published in 2002, and more recently has been included in the online documents for the JSP project. Among other things, it has the only sermons given by Joseph Smith to the women of the church.

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