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Review of *Winter Quarters: The 1846-1848 Life Writings of Mary Haskin Parker Richards* Edited by Maurine Carr Ward

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Winter Quarters: The 1846-1848 Life Writings of Mary Haskin Parker Richards. Edited by Maurine Carr Ward. Logan: Utah State University Press, 1996. Photographs, maps, biographical register, notes, bibliography, index. xvi + 336 pp. \$29.95.

Winter Quarters, the first in the new *Life Writings of Frontier Women* series edited by

Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, is the result of Maurine Carr Ward's excellent editing of the journal of Mary Haskin Parker Richards, who converted to Mormonism in Lancashire, England, in 1838 and joined other church members in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1843. Most of the journal, however, was written between 1846 and 1848, from the time she left Nauvoo until her husband, Samuel Richards, nephew of the better-known Willard Richards, returned from Britain to Winter Quarters.

The journal, in offering its richly detailed daily life of one young, newly-married woman in Winter Quarters (a sometimes neglected part of the story of the Mormons' trek west), gives us valuable insight into the lives of many women who made the same journey. Mary Richards describes her illnesses—including typhoid fever, malaria, even muscular dystrophy—and tells about the medicines, mostly herbs, used to relieve fever and pain. She writes poetry; she records in detail the counsel of church leaders and her visits with other sisters and their long talks together "about the things of the kingdom." We learn much about quilting, sewing, yarn braiding, and bed bugs. Included also are the letters Mary wrote to Samuel, all reflecting her deep and constant love. Sometimes her prayers for him are written out with considerable care. The journals and letters shed new light on the problems associated with polygamy, loneliness, and anxiety, while revealing as well Mary Richards's optimistic outlook in spite of harsh living conditions.

Ward has included photographs of Richards's handwriting on paper folded and sewn. "The writing," she says, "usually covered the whole page, with no margin at the top, bottom, or sides" because of the scarcity of paper. The book has excellent photographs of the Richards family, useful maps, and a sixty-seven-page biographical register listing and offering valuable information on each person Richards mentions in her journals and letters. Ward's introduction and textual commentary and Beecher's introduction to the series are valuable in and of themselves.

Winter Quarters is an engaging book that adds significantly to the growing genre of diaries, letters, and autobiographies of women whose lives are so often passed over in the writing of history from a male perspective. Readers should look forward to future volumes in the series.

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