



Dean W. Collinwood, Ryoichi Yamamoto, Kazue Matsui-Haag. *Samurais in Salt Lake: Diary of the First Diplomatic Japanese Delegation to Visit Utah, 1872.* Ogden: Harkness Publishing Consultants, 1996. 72 pp. No price listed (cloth), ISBN 978-0-9651163-9-8.

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A Good Starting Point

In December 1871 the Meiji government sent an embassy to the United States and Europe with two goals. The mission's primary objective was to renegotiate the unfair treaties which had been concluded with Western powers. Their secondary objective was to gain as much information about the West as possible, in order to strengthen Japan. While unable to succeed in renegotiating the treaties, the members of the Iwakura Mission returned to Japan with a wealth of information about the Western countries they had visited. Compiled by Kume Kunitake, a record of the mission's travels was first recorded as *Bei-O Kairan Jikki*. Unfortunately, until recently there has been no complete translation of Kume's compilation. Thus, a major contribution of Dean Collinwood, Ryoichi Yamamoto, and Kazue Matsui-Haag has made the Utah portion of Kume's record available in English. Since the 1996 publication date, their work has been eclipsed through the complete translation, distributed by Princeton University Press as *The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-1873* (2002). However, *Samurais in Salt Lake* remains a valuable record of the delegation's sojourn in the Utah territory.

While totaling only seventy-two pages, *Samurais in Salt Lake* can be divided into two sections. The first twenty-seven pages are devoted to introducing the setting, while the remaining pages are translations of Kume's records. A highlight of these translations is the inclusion of numerous footnotes, which go into greater detail regarding the events to which the Japanese delega-

tion was a witness. The authors deserve much applause for their efforts to address events from both the Japanese and American perspectives.

While a valuable resource for data on the Iwakura Mission's stay in Utah, *Samurais in Salt Lake* leaves many questions unanswered. The authors briefly address the idea that the Iwakura delegation's stay in Salt Lake was influential in prompting the selection of Japan as the first Asian destination for missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in 1901, but little evidence is given, and the argument is not taken up in enough depth to be persuasive. No discussion of the impact of the Japanese visit on Utah politics, which was undergoing tremendous changes, or on the influence on the Salt Lake social scene is given. Some editorial cartoons from New York newspapers are included and shed light on how other Americans viewed the "Mormon" population, but there is no other attempt to look for Kume's comparisons against the other American cities the delegation visited. Likewise, there is no analysis of ways in which the delegation's stay may have affected policies implemented by the Japanese once they returned home. The delegation's first-hand view of the conflicts between the federal government and the Utah settlers must have had an impact on the Japanese. Researchers hoping to answer these questions will not find the answers in *Samurais in Salt Lake*, but they will find a treasure of information necessary to begin linking the histories of Japan, Utah, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

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